FINNISH FOLKLORE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE GREAT LAKES MINING REGION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT 1972-1978
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I: We're in the home of William Ruona, Bill Ruona and Nora Ruona and I are seated in the living room and we're going to talk about all sorts of different things and one thing we just started talking about now was the flu around the time of World War I. Who was the doctor then...who was the doctor around here at the time...was that Buckland?

N: Buckland was in Baraga, I think Dr. Buckland was in Baraga.

B: Yeah he was.

N: And Dr. Von Zellen in L'Anse, wasn't it, those years?

I: Who was coming out here to help the people?

N: Nobody, not that I know of.

I: Were a lot of people dying?

N: Oh, there were quite a few, and didn't they use the Alston Town Hall for kind of a hospital...you find out from some oldtimers in Alston they used the Alston Town Hall.

B: Yeah, for a hospital.

N: For a hospital, and they had several different sick ones there now who they had taking care of them I don't know because, see, I was so young then...but I remember the Pelkie school it was the flu and they come and they closed the Pelkie school...see, and my brother Art and me and I think my brother Dick were in school at the time.

I: Did anyone in your own family get sick with that flu?

N: No, no, and we were staying with my grandmother and my grandfather and going to school because my mother was cooking in the camps for my dad and they closed the school down so then we went up and stayed in the camp for the rest of the winter and then I remember my brother Dick got the flu up there but he was the only one the rest of us kids never got it, none of us got it except him he did get a case of the flu and what medicine they used those days they had a lot of whiskey around up in the camps and they gave him whiskey, whiskey and aspirin tablets, and he had these terrible nosebleeds and that that they had with the flu and he got cured from that.

I: I don't know if that would cure flu.

N: Well, that's the medicine they used but that's the medicine he had.
I: Do you recall any large funerals at the time...I mean like were there many funerals?

N: Not that I can remember...I don't even remember who died of the flu around or not but all I know is that they had that Town Hall in Alston, they had that like for a hospital for a while but now to be sure I don't know who you could talk to to find out for sure but I remember that.

I: Your father was Matt Ruona. Did he come straight from Finland?

B: Yes.

I: Do you recall where in Finland he...

B: Well, he come from Kuivaniemi.

I: Do you know where in the map of Finland that is, like South...

B: No, I don't...I couldn't tell you...call it Kuivaniemi, that's what it was.

I: Did he ever tell you anything about what life was like for him there in Finland, what his father did and anything like that?

B: Well, if I remember right I think it was mostly, you know, they run these reindeer, see, they had these reindeer in farms there, small farms and then they had these here reindeer herds, you know.

I: That's what my grandfather did...would you have any idea how old he was when he came over here?

B: When he came here?

I: I mean to the United States...was he married yet?

B: Yes, he was married, yes.

I: And did he have a family already?

B: Well, he was married but then my mother, you know, come afterwards then...after he was here, I think, isn't that the way it was?

N: I don't know about your family.

B: My memory is...

N: Well, see you were...where were you born, in South Range?

B: I was born in Baltic.

N: And that was in the year, what was that you said?

B: 1903.
M: 1903...well, then he must have came over here around the 1900s then.

B: Yeah, must be in 1900s, yes.

I: Where did he come first?

B: He come into Copper Country up here around to Houghton, I suppose.

M: Located in South Range.

B: Yeah, South Range.

I: Did he work in the mines there?

B: Well, no, he didn't work in the mines, he was a carpenter, see, and he...I suppose when he come here well then he start, well, of course like when the mining company was born well then they were building, you know, new homes and houses, you know, for the people that worked in the mines, so...When did he come to the Pelkie area? How old were you at the time?

B: I don't think more than about twelve, ten or twelve.

I: O.K., well, that would make it about 1913 if you were ten years old.

M: And didn't he go first on that farm down there?

Yeah, on the farm, we went on the farm up on the Sturgeon up there....across what is that there highway. 30...

M: Well, you know where you go to the Pelkie dump, well, down there somewhere back down there and he settled down there.

B: Yeah, on the south side of it.

I: Oh, I've seen that, there's still some buildings there today, I believe.

B: No, we were down in the valley down on the river, see, we lived on the river there, it's a state, you know, it's a park there now.

I: I see, I know where that area is.

B: We were beyond that, see, a little higher up the river.

I: Was that flood country right there?

B: No, it was just the river went through there...no, it never flooded, I mean all the way across, you know.

I: Then you moved closer to Pelkie, didn't you?

B: Well, then we moved in Pelkie from there.
I: And your father started a store here?
B: Yeah, a store here, yeah.
I: How old were you when that was?
B: Well, when he started that I must have been about...well, you went to school there, too, how old were you when you went to school there?
N: In Pelkie? Well, I started...
B: Yeah, you started the same time, same time or probably before I did, or I started before you did, or how?
N: No, I was in school before you came to the Pelkie school, you went to the Pine Creek school for a while.
B: Oh, yeah, yeah, that's right...
I: O. K., we're going to start with picture No. 1, a picture of Pelkie in the old days.
N: Now that isn't your store, no.
B: No, no.
I: No, that's looking from the point of view of your store, I think that building there is Middy Gauthier's Saloon.
B: Yeah, that'd be up this way, see, that'd be that old saloon there across, you know, from the store.
I: What was the man's name that ran that...was that Middy Gauthier?
N: Let's see now there's a building right there...what building is that then...isn't that another building there?
I: That's Matt Oja's store.
N: Oh, well, then that would've been on the same side as Matt Oja's then, I don't remember that now...would that have been that old Bond's Saloon?
I: No, that's Gauthier's Saloon.
B: Yeah, well, like here now, see, that would be, see, when you're going this way that's that old saloon there.
I: Have you ever been in that old saloon?
B: No, I've never been in that.
I: I'm trying to get a description of that.
I wonder whose house that is back there, then, see.

That's a Section House.

Well, what do you mean, Pa, going that way on that side of the road there...I think who took a picture of that old saloon before they tore it down is Nan Kuivanen over there...I think she has because yes, see, because that where they got the Post Office now, that's where that saloon was, see.

Did you recall what it used to look like?

Well, I don't know it was just shaped like that the roof and then down like that and had a, you know, boards in the front like for a porch, you know, like steps.

Like a boardwalk.

Yeah...and then, you know, you know where that's filled in there now where Karvakko filled in there, well, there was a boardwalk went across that swamp over there on the other side there...yes, I always say we had Atlantic City in Pelkie many years ago.

I think so, so they could walk across that to get to the saloon.

Yeah, they could walk across there to the saloon, and that building was just a building like this, plain and kind of reddish brown, dark brown, and just built straight back, that's all...and then they lived in the back, Bond's lived in the back and then the saloon was in the front...then when they couldn't have a saloon anymore well she had like a ice cream parlor, she used to get ice cream in on the train, you know, for the weekend, and everybody run over there and get a cone of ice cream that there came in...I remember I was a little kid I remember that and then I even remember when Bond's were living there, you know, I sort of remember that, I was quite small but then...

What were they like, the Bond's?

Well, they were French people.

What was Tom Bond like?

Well, he was a fat guy, do you remember him, Bill?

I don't remember him.

You don't remember him, yeah he was, oh, who should I say he was the height of anyway...oh, I'd say he was about 5'9...then he was a big, fat man, you know, like these old saloon-keepers look, well, that's what he looked like, and his wife was a kind of small, skinnier person.

Did he dress like a working man or did he...

Well, no, kind of like a working man, you know, he just wore a shirt and then pants and then suspenders, I can sort of remember that a little.
I: Kind of like Paul Karvakko dresses?

N: Yeah, yeah, something like that, you know, that's the way he kind of dressed.

I: And were there any mirrors in there, did they ever have.

N: Oh, yeah, there was like a bar in there, there was a bar and mirror behind there that I can recall...'cause, see, I'd go with my mother sometime visit in the back and that's how I seen the front, you know, a little, I remember a little, there was like a bar and mirrors there.

I: Did the lumberjacks used to have fights in there?

N: That I don't know...now, see, now maybe Ed Silvola would know something about that, didn't Ed Silvola get that building from Bond's then?

I: Yeah, and he had it as a bar for a while and then turned it in to a poolhall.

N: Poolhall, yeah.

I: Is Ed Silvola still alive?

N: Sure he is, he lives up in Arnhem...you know where the road goes that you go down to Filipus' Cabins when you take U.S. 41, well, then just a little way back across there there's a house there and that's where Ed Silvola lives...well, then before Ed Silvola had it his brother had it then...which was the name of that Silvola?

B: Yeah, well, he died.

N: Yeah, but what was his name?

B: What was it, I don't remember what they called him.

N: I betcha Art would remember.

I: But the boys used to go there and play pool?

N: Yeah, they'd go and play pool.

I: Weren't some of the mothers worried about the fact that the boys were hanging out in the poolhall?

N: Well, not too much...there weren't too many going there, I guess, there wasn't nothing to drink there, they just played pool there and maybe had pop and that. My brother Dick when he went to high school my brother Walt they used to stop there and play pool.

I: It was kind of a hang-out like the gas stations are today.

N: Yeah, yeah...on the way home they'd drive to high school with a car and then they used to stop there and play pool for a little while on the way home then
But you know when that Bond's had that saloon I always remember they had two daughters, Laura and Della, and I was a little girl yet, and I always remember that Laura Bond's wedding day, they had asked my mother to make a freezer of ice cream, you know, they had the like the dinner out there and she made this freezer of ice cream, and from these Bonds they had one of these old Overland cars and then they had something you could stamp on it and the cutoff would go off and on, you know, and make loud noise, and after the wedding that day, well, then one of her brothers would drive them and the newly married couple would sit in the back of that old Overland and they'd drive our house where my brother Art lives across the bridge and come back again and then they'd drive down again and they were singing, "When You Wore A Tulip and I Wore A Big, Red Rose" and I hear that just like it was yesterday I can still hear that and, you know, I was a little kid and I run out and I thought that was great big deal, you know, listening to see that couple going across the bridge and then they'd put that cutoff on and would make loud noise and they're singing, you know they had side curtains on the cars the time they were singing...

I: What were they...side curtains?

R: Side curtains on that Overland car, see, they were curtains and you pulled them down, well, then they were rolled up, you know, in the daytime they were singing that "When You Wore A Tulip and I Wore A Big, Red Rose" and I can remember that just like yesterday...it was so funny...that was many years ago.

B: See right here now that's Pelkie, that's our store right there.

I: Here's a better view of...

B: And that's the Section House right here, see.

N: Now who is that little fellow, one of the Oja kids? Sure, I bet that's one of the little Oja boys, isn't it? That's not your brothers?

B: Yeah, that's a good view of the store, yeah, that's a very good view there.

I: What was that store like? What did you sell in those days?

B: Everything...whatever you want, clothes, food and...

I: General store like?

B: Yeah...that's a good picture of that store. Where you get these from?

I: Try to recall some of the things that used to be in the store...like stores in those days were very different than the stores of today.

N: Well, they had a big meat block in the back where the meat counter was...there was a big meat block, wasn't there, yeah, in that corner, that was the meat but there was no coolers or anything then, I don't know how they kept the meat cool there wasn't that much fresh meat, I guess.

B: Well, yeah, I guess they did have some kind of a cooler right there.
N: Did they...that meat block in that one corner and then on which side did they have...one side they had all the canned stuff, wasn't it?

B: And then the dry goods, you know, I mean like the clothes, then clothes were on the other side, see...of course the basement where they kept lot of the stuff that was perishable was down in the basement there.

N: And they used to get toast in in a big barrel, didn't they...the toast would come in, you know, these big wooden barrels I remember the toast would come in in those.

I: Was that stuff from Trenary?

B: No, no, that was before Trenary days.

N: No, no, gosh, I don't know where that toast come from...did it come from Copper Country to your store?

B: Yeah, yeah, I think it come from Copper Country.

N: Yeah, big barrel.

I: Almost everything came in barrels in those...

B: Yeah, it did, yeah.

I: How would they transport the stuff over for your store?

B: Well, it come on the train, you know, railroad, you know, Mineral Range, the railroad ran through here.

I: Did your dad used to do the old egg and butter trading with the farmers?

B: Yeah, the farmers would bring in a chunk of butter and a pail of eggs.

N: Yeah, something like that.

I: Who used to work there? For your dad?

B: Well, it's so long ago.

N: Well, Emma Haro worked for many years, she's dead now...you know there's John Haro, he drove mail for a while in Palkie and he lives over there on the Haro farm, most of the Haros are all dead...but they had this one girl, she never married, Emma, and she worked for years, as long as I could remember...till youse closed the store, till your dad sold the store Emma Haro worked.

I: Who is that in that picture...that's picture No. 10...was that in your store or?

N: I don't know who that girl is, do you...you should know the girls then.

B: Should know the woman, eh?
N: Yeah... I can't think who that is, do you?

B: Can't figure that out.

I: And you can't tell whether that was in your store or not?

B: No, I don't think that one was... it probably could have been years and years and years ago, see, because...

N: See where they had the paper on the counter there when they wrapped things.

B: Would this be in our store then?

N: He doesn't know, see.

I: What would they wrap in that paper that was for the...

N: The things what you bought... meat and, well, all sorts of things they wrapped.

I: Did they have paper bags in those days?

N: Yeah, they had some paper bags and... sure they had paper bags that you bought candy in the paper bags and...

I: What kind of clothes did they handle? At the time? Saks Fifth Avenue fashions?

N: Yeah... working clothes.

B: Well, you know... just ordinary clothes, probably pants and...

N: Shirts and underwear, socks, rubbers, shoes... most of that working... it seems like her face is familiar but I can't think who it is... must have been...

B: Yeah, that's a good picture of the old store right there, eh?

I: Who was living upstairs at the time?

B: Well, we lived up there ourselves, I think, most of the time.

I: Your father and your mother?

B: Yeah, and my sisters and brothers.

I: Was your father... who did your father sell the store to?

B: He sold that to Maki... George Maki.

I: Do you recall when that was?

B: No.

I: O. K., I can get that date from someone else.
N: Yeah, that isn't too far back...I betcha Ralph Jokipii maybe would even know when that is...I can't remember...that isn't too many years back.

I: Maki transformed it...Maki changed the appearance of it.

B: Yeah, well, see, Maki put that extension on there...yeah, changed that, yeah.

N: His mother and his sisters stayed in the store for a while after his dad died.

B: See, Maki put that there.

I: Did your dad then buy a store or go in on a partnership in a store with Matt Oja?

B: Yes, yeah he did, yes, with the store across the street there.

I: Oh, so Oja didn't own the store we're looking at now.

B: No, no...but that other store, there's a store across the street from that, where is that picture.

I: Here...and there's another picture of the Oja store.

B: Yeah, well, that's the one, see where the Post Office is.

I: When was this that he was a partner...did your dad work in the store at the time?

B: No, no, he was a silent...

I: Oh, he was just a financial partner.

B: Silent partner, I think, that's all...when Matt Oja had the store across the street...my dad was a silent partner.

N: But then afterward your dad started a store of his own, didn't he?

B: No, no, he had this store here, he had the store across the street...he had the store this one on this side and then he was silent partner with Matt Oja on the other one, see.

N: Boxes like that...sure do you remember that there was boxes...and then after didn't they start shipping them in paper boxes...but that was a kind of a wooden box, there was different things, that was bakery stuff come in...

B: Yeah, big wooden box.

N: Yeah, and bakery used to come in in those things.

B: On the train.

I: Like cakes and things like...

N: More biscuit, biscuit and donuts, coffee cakes and biscuits and donuts, I never seen really any cake.
I: How in the heck could they sell any of those things? I thought every woman was baking.

N: Oh, but that was new when that come in...you should see them...you should see when that bakery come in how the ladies got out to the stores then and when they'd open that box then there'd be sometimes a hundred flies flying around and those biscuits with the frosting there and everybody pulling out and buying them, sure I remember those biscuit boxes.

I: That created quite a stir among the ladies...they all wanted to try the biscuits?

N: Oh, sure, sure, they start buying, you know that was like a treat because for years and years you baked everything your own so when that started coming in it was like a treat.

B: It was so fresh.

N: Yeah, that was really something.

I: Store-bought biscuits, eh...funny now they think that that stuff is no good, it's only the home-made stuff that's good.

N: Yeah, it's different now.

I: But when that first came out the ladies...I mean would your mother go over there?

N: Oh, yes, sure, yeah, everybody.

B: You know, biscuits and donuts.

N: Donuts, that tasted good...sure that's one of those red boxes on that porch that that come in...Mother had been to Finland and when she come back then that summer, well, she sold the store...I told you...

I: Oh, your father had died then?

N: Yeah, Bill's dad died...Bill's dad was only 54 when he died of a heart attack.

I: And then the mother and the family ran the store for a while?

B: Yes.

I: And then in the fall of 1928...

N: '28, something like that, she sold it to George Maki......they come down to the different houses and they'd get finished and they'd get the next house and the ladies of the house always wondered if they were going to have them for dinner or supper, they had to be prepared so they know...and I laugh it seems that my mother always got them for dinner at night, it's just like they'd make some round and then they'd get to our place by, you know, night time and then they had to feed them out there with the threshing machine.

I: That was quite an affair, wasn't it?
N: Oh, that was a big affair in the fall, and boy, I remember we'd go to school and I'd hurry home from school because I wanted to be home 'cause I wanted to be home when the threshers were there.

I: Sometimes kids would even get to stay home from school on that...

N: Yes, I guess so, and help and that, so...those days of the threshing machine that was really something.

B: That's funny like one thing now too why they had to have such a long belt notice there, too, they got that long, long...

I: Yeah, that's so the weight of the belt would make it tighter.

B: I suppose tighter or something.

I: Yeah, really looks funny...also there was the danger of a fire in the straw barn 'cause that steam engine used to belch and snort.

B: Yeah, oh yeah, that's true, too, when you start to figure it out, yeah, because you had that there fire there.

I: And I guess that was quite a crew...how many people would your mother feed sometime, was there quite a gang?

N: Oh, yeah, there'd probably be nine or ten, something like that.

I: Would she really throw out a spread, too?

N: Oh, yes, you know, they had to try to put on their best...lot to eat, you know, sure.

I: Their best tablecloth.

N: No, they never, no, they didn't do that, they ate in the kitchens or, you know, in the summer kitchen if they had...no, they didn't have anything fancy like that but they'd cook, you know, it was usually apple pie in the fall...that was the big deal, apple pie.

I: Did you go the Pelkie school here?

N: Yes, I went, you know, to that little Town Hall school there.

I: What was that like when you were in there? Do you remember a teacher that you used to have?

N: Oh, I remember I had a teacher by the name of Albertina Stenson and...

I: What was she like?

N: Well, let me see...she was a girl from Covington, Michigan, she came from Covington up there and like those days they only had to go through the eighth grade and they could come and teach school...they'd go to Normal, I think, for six
weeks or something, and they came and taught school, and I think she only had
gone through the eighth grade when she came and taught in Fakie.

I: What was it like with a bunch of kids in there, half of them must have been
French, half Finns, some Swedes...

N: Well, there was mostly Finnish...there were a few French but very few, there
was these Bond kids, there was Harvey Bond went to school out here and Arthur
Bond of the Bond kids...and then mostly all of them were Finnish except the
Larsons and then my family, you know, our family, the Ericksons...that's the
way you remember, don't you, too, Bill?

B: Yeah.

I: How did the teachers enforce discipline in those days?

N: Well, the parents helped them...the teachers didn't have any time like they
have now with them, the parents did because we were afraid because if we
didn't behave, well, the parents got word and then we'd get another licking
when we got home...I remember only once I got caught whispering and they sent
me in to that library and the teachers used to board over home at our home so
much and I remember I got sent in there library...I got out anyway by the
time school was out so I got home with the rest but the teacher never told my
mother and that but boy was I afraid of sitting in that old library in the cor-
ner...see, they had what they called one corner, they had that, they called
that the library, there was a few books in that and they'd stick you in there
when you were whispering, I got caught whispering once I got stuck in the li-

I: What corner would that have been?

N: On that end towards my brother Arthur's, you know, and then in the front here,
see, the front of the school.

B: And on this end there was another little...they had a water pail was there.

N: The water pail with the dipper then...and everybody drank from the same dipper
and that hung on a nail and then when you wanted a drink, well, you dipped it
in that same pail.

I: Was there a pump there?

B: No, they carried the water from outside, there was a pump outside...and in the
morning they'd do...the water was frozen, you'd break the ice.

N: Ice, yeah, and they had this big, big down in that one corner then to heat the
school...they had this big, big stove wasn't it like this around a tin stove
and it was oh about from the floor to the top of that picture there...and then
we used to put our dinner pails around the stove there so they'd keep warm so
we could eat at noon then.

I: Must have been pretty cold in those buildings.
N: Oh, sure it was but you were dressed warm, you know, we wore long underwear then, the kids and things to school...oh, yeah, my parents' home my mother boarded so many of the school teachers that were there, you know, till the later years when they started traveling, well, they almost all stayed at our home...and us kids we hated that because we had to have the school teachers boarding in our house, you know...the other kids could go home do what they want we had to behave all the time.

I: No freedom at all.

N: No.

I: And if you ever fooled around in school and the teacher was also coming home and staying with your folks you didn't have a chance.

N: And then I remember in our kitchen in the old house that we had, well, we had a cupboard in the kitchen, you know, and on top there was catalogs, Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Wards catalog, and then when we come home from school sometime, well, we'd stick our books on top of there, you know, for the study in the evening and then we wouldn't study and I remember one of the teachers saying once, she said, "I suppose you children do like lot that I know that when they come home they stick their books on top of the cupboard and they only take them out the next morning when they go to school"...and we know who that was...oh, those were some days.

I: Well, who would go there early in the morning and fire up that...

N: The janitor.

I: Oh, in those days they had janitors?

N: Yes, there was a man who was.

B: Yeah, there was...they did hire somebody, paid him so much a month...they'd have to, you know, start the fire up in the mornings.

I: One of the people living close by, eh?

B: Yeah, and then they'd sweep up, there was nothing that they did.

N: No, just sweep up.

B: But then during the day, well, then the teacher and the kids would fire that stove up.

N: But that janitor, that Mrs. Mantilla, there was a Mrs. John Mantilla, well, you know Arthur Mantilla who he is, don't you, well, his mother she was janitor, she was a widow and she was janitor for quite a few years and then Ojas were janitors for a while, too, Matt Oja's parents.

I: Manna Oja?

N: Yeah, Manna Ojas...that's what I remember about the school I remember that any-
I remember I used to whisper every chance I got anyway.

I: Yeah, I'm surprised that you only got caught once whispering...I'm surprised...you must have been very...what else did the kids do to fool around...there was more than whispering and giggling.

N: Well, they'd play baseball when they'd go outside, you know, I mean, but there wasn't...I don't know, we just had to amuse ourselves with recess time, you'd just probably talk and visit with each other, there wasn't any things, but at noon, then, we'd have a round hour at noon and you'd get out and play hiding-go-seek or anti-X-over, see, there was a woodshed behind the school then and you'd hear them holler however it was and they'd play anti-X-over and...

I: What's that, you would throw...

N: You threw the ball over the ones on the other side would catch it, how was that?

B: Yeah, and then the boys would try and catch you then.

N: Then they played those outdoor toilets, of course, one on one side for the boys and one on the other side for the girls, and then when the kids, you know, would like to get out sometimes, well, I and a girlfriend we had pretty good tricks, you know, one would go out first and put the finger up one, you know, you had to go up, yeah, and I'd put one or two, you know, and then she'd go out pretty soon, I'd go out one, two, you know, and then they had to let you go out and then we'd stay outside and visit a little while.

I: In the outhouse?

N: Yeah, outside, we used to think of tricks there.

I: Did you have toilet paper in the school outhouse or was that Sears and Roebuck catalog?

N: No, just catalogs...heavens, no, there was no toilet paper...but it's surprising that more didn't get sick when you think of it with that drinking, that, you know, pail of drinking water and that dipper...see, I suppose like things weren't that sanitary those days that's why they closed it down when that flu was and of course that flu was so spreading, you know, so that's why they closed the schools down.

I: Darn right.

N: All the schools around were closed, I think they were closed the winter until in the spring.

I: You would think that they would all...every kid would have a cold.

N: Yes, but that they didn't.

I: It's amazing...I know this Jingo Vachon...

N: Yeah, that writes in the Sentinel.
I: Yeah... used to say that there was always one...

SIDE TWO

N: ...sing that, "Tardy scholar is your name"... they'd sing that song when he'd come... that was Arnold Maki that used to come late to school almost every morning.

I: Yeah... used to say that there was always one...

N: Sure, don't you remember?

I: What's his name? What's this song? That would be good if...

N: "Tardy scholar is your name, you are scolded, who's to blame", what was it, "sleeping every morning till the clock strikes eight, creeping slowly down the school yard gate", and then it went on something like...

I: Was there more to it?

N: Oh, yeah, and then it finished just, "Tardy scholar is your name."... that's all, "Tardy scholar is your name."

I: All the kids would start singing it?

N: ... I remember that, too.

I: And the person would be real embarrassed.

N: Yeah... then I remember another trick the kids had in school sometime, they used to have these inkwells, you know, then sometimes the boys would take when the girls had long hair and they'd stick the ends of their hair in the inkwell, you know, behind them, then again the kids, too, they'd have those inkwells, you know, and have exams, well, they'd push the papers up and they'd look in through the inkwell hole and they'd have some of the answers up in there... there was like holes in the desks and they had like a inkwell there, well, then if you had lifted a inkwell out, well, you could push some papers up in there and you could push some papers up there and see little bit of the answers.

I: You could stash away some notes.

N: I knew lots of tricks.

I: What kind of desks were these, were these the kind that...

N: Like, well, you seen the old ones that they had in the Pelkie school before, did you, you know there was a, well, that was...

I: It was all one piece, right?

N: One piece, yeah, and then the seats behind them... you know, you sat then and that was one piece.

I: They were stationary on the floor.
N: They were stationary.

I: How were you seated there... I mean, were the boys on one side, the girls on the other?

N: No, they were all mixed up... they were all mixed up but there were, weren't there, there was aisles between there, you know, little aisles between... superintendent of all the schools around he'd come and visit just every once in a while, seldom came.

B: He had to come from Baraga.

N: Baraga with a horse and... you know, horse and buggy or horse and sleigh in the winter and he seldom came... but believe me when he came in you could hear a pin drop in the school.

I: I imagine.

N: Yeah, there was a girl by the name of Liantine duKid in school, she was a French girl at the time and Mr. Clinton was the superintendent and his name was S. O. Clinton, initials were S.O.C. and then she wrote that on a paper, SOC, and she put under there "Silly Old Cow" and then she tried to get the attention of a lot of us kids when he was in there, try and make us laugh, she showed that paper SOC, S.O.C., Clinton, "Silly Old Cow".

I: You have a good memory.

N: I remember, I remember a lot of those things.

I: Do you remember Buckland, the doctor?

N: Oh, yes.

I: What kind of a guy was he. I'd like to get a good description of him.

N: Well, I don't know really what to say about him, all I know he was a sort of a short, stocky fellow, but he was a good doctor and he said what was on his mind he knew how to swear, too.

I: Yeah, I've got that already... do you remember did he ever come over?

N: Oh, yes, he used to come up in the country, you know, quite a bit, you know, up around when people were sick, well, they'd call him and he went out and I remember my mother, too, at one time, you know, oh that was years, years back when he called up to Elo and the people there my mother could speak a little Finnish and the people up there couldn't understand him, they almost all spoke English, so then he spoke English so he'd talk to my mother and then have my mother, she'd go with him and she'd...

B: Translate.

I: Did he ever care for anyone in your family?
N: Oh, yes, well, we been down to him, he seldom came up, I think, up to Pelkie but we went down there to him.

B: He took care of your arm when you broke your arm.

N: Oh, well, that was, yeah, well, but that was down in his office in Baraga not up in the country, you know, but we used to get to town quite often, but he came up mostly on like childbirth cases or things like that he came up...remember one time he was on the way, he was supposed to go up to Eio, a lady was having a baby and out in the what they call the Svede Settlement there was some Erickson's living there, they weren't any relation of ours, and they had a horse and that horse was getting a little colt and he stopped there and waited for that first before he went on up to see the lady that he was supposed to take care of.

I: Did he help deliver the colt?

N: I don't know if he did but he was there anyway.

B: Yeah, well, he was one of those guys that like he was more like a horse doctor than a human doctor.

I: He would handle cases that a normal veterinarian handles today, right?

B: Well, of course they talked about him being that type, you know.

N: They used to call him a horse doctor always...but he was a good doctor.

B: But he liked horses because he had horses of his own, see, he had a lot of horses.

N: See, that's only these...not too many years ago when he died...because I had him for I remember Marcy, our oldest girl, well, I had him to her when, well, she was about, I think, well, she's 41 now and she was about 36 or 37 when I had her to him...and he took care of me when I was up in these camps then when I was about nine or ten years old I broke an arm and I remember they took me down at night, we were playing in a wagon and I fell out and broke my arm and they took me down to the doctor and Buckland those days they didn't give you anesthetic to set it he got a hold of my arm up here and anesthetic to set it he got a hold of my arm up here and up here so when he gave it a jerk then the two bones went in place...and they said always said he was so cranky I didn't dare I didn't let one peep out of me I was so afraid of him.

I: I was going to say something like that...imagine a tough, old horse doctor who is used to dealing with lumberjacks all cut up, you know, what happens when a young girl goes to a man like that? (DH: I was ten or eleven years old when I cut my index finger with a big axe at my Grandma Tepsa's and they rushed me to Dr. Buckland's where I was screaming hysterically certain that I was dying. He swore at me and slapped my face and that shut me up in a hurry! He cleaned and bandaged my finger saying that some other doctor would have probably stitched it in which case I would have been left with a stiff finger the rest of my life...something to do with the tendon.)
N: Yeah, he was rough. I was a little bit of a girl then and I always remember that when he caught a hold of my arm down here and he just give it a jerk some way, you know, held it here and then pulled and pulled those bones straight and then he tied it all up with tape and then I had a cast on for quite some time...well, then I remember when I first to him and he took the cast off, well, then it was all taped around the arm here and of course there was little hairs on the arm, he just took that tape and kept on unwinding it, didn't soften it or anything, just unwound it, didn't care how it hurt or anything...but he was some doctor...he was a good doctor, though.

I: You bet...he has patched up many a person, many a lumberjack.

B: Yeah, he was a good bone, you know, bone doctor.

I: And often for nothing, often he never got paid from some of these poor, old lumberjacks, you know.

N: He was a wonderful doctor, he took care of lot of people.

I: What about old home remedies...do you recall any of those...the old medicines that they used to have...I understand that in some of these stores, Oya's store and perhaps in your father's store also, they had a medicine chest.

B: Oh, yeah, yeah.

I: What were the kinds of things in there?

N: Riika Balsam one used to be...and that was spelled out in Finnish like that, Riika, R-i-i-k-a and then balsam, Riika Balsam, and then of course there was Sloan's Liniment and White Liniment...

I: White Liniment?

N: There was a White Liniment...and what all was there...and I suppose they had aspirin and things like that...oh there was several different things.

I: What was this Riika Balsam like, what was that?

B: I don't know, I think that was more for, you know, like for colds or something like that.

I: You'd drink it and it would...

B: Yeah, take a couple drops of it, I guess in water or how they would take it.

N: Yeah...and then of course then when we were home if you weren't out to the store and got any of those things, well, they'd have peppermints in the house and if you were coughing, well, they'd give you a peppermint to put in your mouth when you were coughing and...and I remember when I remember one old remedy they had when they'd have headaches they'd take a potato and slice the potato, you know, several thin slices and put it up on your forehead here and then take a band, I remember them doing that to my brother Art quite often and putting a band around here, a wet cloth to hold that on and then they'd hold that
see, the potato slices were soaked in vinegar, in vinegar, and they'd put them around your head up here and tie that on...for headache...I can remember that, too.

I: Have you ever heard of sugar lump in kerosene?

N: No, I never heard of that...guess that was somewhere else.

I: They did that up in Jacobsville.

N: Yeah, they probably did that.

I: That is pure poison...sweetened.

N: Surprising that the people lived through all of the thing that they did.

I: Did any use balsam pitch?

N: No, not that I remember of...anything like that.

B: Balsam pitch, no...would they use that for cuts or something?

N: But I still remember that medicine chest in your store.

B: Yeah, yeah...what the dickens was the name of that company now that had that chest...was it ?

N: I don't remember but I remember that chest.

I: Oh, one company stocked the whole chest?

B: Oh, sure, yeah.

N: ...time they used to take little Peerless and put on the tooth and for to try and stop toothache.

B: No, that was that there...

N: Out of the pipe, that's what it was, not out of the Peerless, but that there stuff that come out of the pipe and they put that on a tooth, well, what were you going to do when you were far away and you had toothache, there wasn't things so they tried...

B: Well, that was strong, you know.

I: Pure nicotine.

B: Yeah, sure, right out of the pipe, you know.

N: That was kill or cure.

I: And they'd put it right on the tooth?
N: Right on the tooth if you had toothache.

I: What about haircuts, how were haircuts given in those days...who did them? Was there a barber around here?

B: Well, yeah, I guess there was always somebody that could cut...

N: Well, for years when youse were small, didn’t old Wahamaki used to cut hair?

B: Yeah, yeah, did, yeah.

N: This Arnold Maki that I told you we used to sing “Tardy scholar was your name” his dad used to cut hair for the people.

I: And his name was?

N: Well, what was his first name, was that John?

B: Yeah, John

N: John Wahamaki, well, they’re Maki but their name was, you know, Wahamaki then, I remember he cut...

B: Yeah, Wahamaki, but they shortened it to Maki.

I: What kind of a person was he? Describe him...what kind of a character was he?

N: Well, he was just a ordinary, everyday character as far as I know, you know, they lived across from the school there where the parsonage has their office now.

I: You mean he had a barbershop there?

N: No, he didn’t have a barbershop but he knew how to cut hair and people would go there.

B: That old house is still there...Maki lives there.

N: Yeah, sure...and that used to...yeah, Ellen Lein’s first husband was one of those Maki boys...you know who Ellen is?

B: Yeah, then this Arnold then, he come from another Maki.

I: Do you remember the time when the Apostolic Church over there split and they built the church over here...do you remember the circumstances or what happened in those days or anything of that...that was in 1932.

B: I don’t remember too much about that.

N: Well, the date is on the corner of that church

I: Yeah, it was in 1932 that it happened...do you remember?
N: Well, see, I don't remember too much about that because I, we didn't belong to that church but Bill's mother belonged to that but I don't remember what they split over...but I suppose it was just some ordinary differences like the churches have even now.

I: Do you remember the Mineral Range?

B: Yeah, the railroad, yeah.

I: Did you ever ride on that? Either one of you?

B: Many times.

I: What was that thing like?

B: Well, it was a load of logs and then a little train, you know, what would you call that behind, you know, you'd...it always had a load of freight, you know, and logs or...whatever you would have.

N: But at first didn't they have one passenger train and one freight train going to Pelkie?

B: Probably did, yeah.

N: Sure they did, they had a passenger train.

I: There were three trains.

B: Yeah, they probably did in the early days.

N: Yeah, there was because this passenger train used to go up towards Mass City.

B: Was there just passengers?

N: Just passengers, they had a train that was just passengers and then after when there got to be less and less passengers, well, they used to hook the passenger coach on the...behind the logging train and you load on that.

B: ...log train or ore train or...but of course there was that ore train that was going back and forth, you know, of course all they carried was ore and copper...

N: Oh, that was real busy in Pelkie those days.

I: Looked something like that, didn't it?

N: ...bridge went when that rain when that bridge went out...when they had to put that walking bridge over there.

I: That was just a temporary bridge.

N: Sure, see there was that big, iron bridge...there was a bridge over that river just like that one that's down by Johnson's down there, by Emil Johnson's.

I: Oh, really? Like that one?
Yeah, like that...and that went out in the rain that time where that flood... and that flood just came overnight that time.

That was in 1927.

Yeah...my brother was in school then, he graduated that year and I think the Liminga girls and...well, then the farmers then had milk cans on the other side of the river...well, for a while before they got that temporary bridge made, well, they strung a cable across and used to slide those milk cans across on that cable, see...they pushed them on that and they had it rigged up someway so that they...do you remember that, Bill? When they pulled those...

Farmers from Elo that wanted to get their milk to the Mineral Range?

Yes...they'd get them on the cables and then some way they rigged it up on that cable and they'd have it going around some way the cables so that they'd pull the milk cans on the other side of them, and then from my home I remember somebody went there and they'd help, too, with those cans there and then whoever picked them up on this side, they did that until they got that temporary bridge made, see...yeah, I remember that there flood...sure, went to bed that night and the next morning that there river had, you know, raised up and washed that bridge away and everything.

What time of the year was that?

That was in June month...well, just a little while before graduation.

So the snow was gone already and it was just a flash flood, eh?

Yeah.

That must have been something trying to cross that river in the spring and during flood time...do you remember logs going down that river?

Well, I think I remember way back have them talking about it but not too much.

You mean on the Otter?

Yeah.

Why sure, God, can't you remember there was logs they seen Firestone logs there right across from your home there.

You think...well, I don't remember that too well.

You had that there old Remington scaler, I should tease...

Oh, that Agnes...tease her on Remington, yeah...oh, yeah, and he used to scale and he used to stay home, see, those scalers used to stay at our home and everything...everybody that would be around they'd get left down at my mother's boarding.

Yeah, your place was quite a community center at the time, wasn't it?
N: Yeah, it was, yeah.

I: Would people ever stop there because the river was too bad to cross? Or something like that?

N: No, it wasn't that, it wasn't that the river, but I guess she just

B: Well, I suppose it was like these scalers would come, there'd be no place to stay, well, then, you know, somebody would recommend Erickson's and they'd go down there.

N: Yeah, then they'd go down and they'd stay down there.

B: They had, you know, quite large house there, well, you know, there would be accommodations for them, you know.

I: Was it a regular boarding house?

N: No, no, just an ordinary family house, but there was just like they got to go... well, see, then that's how my dad got logging, see, Worcester's must have been taking logs down somewheres or somewhere and some of those Worcester lumber companies' scalers stayed over home...and they were the one...some of them got my dad interested in getting a job to log for the Worcester Lumber Company...that's how they got him to...that's how they got to log for Worcester Lumber Company because there were some scalers that stayed over home and they said, "Why don't you go and see Worcester Lumber Company and they spoke up then for to get a job and that's when they got that first job in that there camp over there with those pictures in...

I: Do you remember trying to cross the river during flood time?

N: Oh, during that flood, oh, you see, well, you couldn't cross it, no, you couldn't cross it then...but when it would flood in the spring when that iron bridge was there but then when that flash flood came, well, then naturally you couldn't...

I: That flash flood knocked that bridge out, the iron bridge.

N: Yes, the iron bridge right out.

B: Knocked the bridge right out, yeah...just that old bridge, took it right out.

N: Took it right out...wouldn't think that, would you?

I: Not that much force...well, did people ever drown there?

N: No.

I: Not to your knowledge...would people get stuck there...how would they get wagons through there?

N: Well, see, then when the water went down, well, then they put this, built this, wooden, temporary bridge across, that wooden bridge.
B: That was on there for...

N: For quite a while before they got...

B: Couple years, yeah.

I: Well, wasn't there another road at the time that went by your house up back of Larson's?

B: No, no, you had to cross the river there.

N: Yeah, I don't think there was any other road that I know of.....he was a pretty good sized man, not too big, but I always remember when he'd come home I notice he had a bald head...or you know up in here that his head was bald...and I can remember he had kind of grayish whiskers that I remember when I was small...

I: About how old were you at the time, was this pre-school?

N: Yes, I must have been only about four years old or something like that.

I: And you were born in what year?

N: 1907.

I: So this must have been about 1911?

N: 1911 or '12.

I: What kind of a family did he have there?

N: Well, they had, I suppose there was a wife and three girls, they were, and they lived just like the rest of the farmers on the farm where they used to raise cabbage and things and I don't know how they got along on those farms, but that's the way they got along, though...

I: Did you play with her children?

N: No, they were older than me, see, those girls were older than me.

I: Do you recall your parents going to visit in those days, how did people go to visit?

N: Well, I suppose there weren't too many to visit those days, they used to visit the Pelkies's, you know, when the Pelkies's come back, and then up to the Larson's but there really weren't, way, way back them there weren't too many much visiting them because there wasn't any way to travel and go...it was then when they got little older, well, 'course there was the horse and buggy you'd go out with but I don't remember them going and visiting, the only time they'd go out mostly was when they'd go to, you know, go to town, you know, to Baraga.

I: O.K., I just thought you might have remembered visiting with the lantern, the old lantern...would you remember the Punikki Hall they had in Pelkie?
N: Yes, I danced there many times.

I: What kind of festivals or things did they have there... can you describe some that you can remember?

N: Well, they didn’t have really any special doings there at all... they just have, you know, just dances and different players come in from here and there... that was built down in that there, you know where my mother’s old farm where she lived, well, then down there on that other side of the road there down in that one just about kitty-corner down there...

I: On the corner of Bert Lein’s old...

N: Yeah... it was just a place, it was just on posts that building, wasn’t it, Bill, and boards around the bottom and then just built up, you know, just ordinary like that... and they had a little stage on it there.

I: I mean they would have musical entertainment then?

N: Oh, yeah, they’d have dances, dances almost every Saturday night. I heard there were a lot many more dances then.

N: Oh, yes, well, see, there weren’t...

B: Yeah... used to get that Viola Turpeinen, she used to come and she was, you know, you probably heard about her, Viola Turpeinen.

Yeah, Fred Waisanen’s boy is doing some research on that.

Yeah, and she used to come and... she used to come and play...

B: Play the accordion there.

I: Who else used to come?

N: Well, then there was a fellow by the name of Jimmy Contratto from Calumet, he used to come down and play and then he’d stay at our place overnight then.

I: What was he like?

N: He was Italian, he was an Italian, he wasn’t too old and I remember he went to the Tech and he was going to Tech then afterward and I suppose he’d come out and play like that to earn money to go to Tech... something happened to him then, I don’t think he even got finished and he died... some accident, hunting accident or something, I think he got killed.

I: What other entertainers were there?

N: Well, I don’t know, and then there was this one fellow that used to play by the name of Ted Leakso, what was it they called him, One Man, Nine Piece Orchestra or something, he played a little bit of every different thing, you know, he played on one, on the accordion and then he’d play something else, then he had a
something he'd drum with his feet, you know, and, well, Ted Laakso with that was just I suppose a joke, One Man Nine Piece Orchestra.

I: How would you think that last name would be spelled?
N: L-a-a-k-s-o, Ted Laakso, he was Finnish.

I: And all the local people would go there and they'd really have a dance...did some people try to keep their children away because it was the Punikki Hall, I mean was there that sort of thing?

N: Well, I don't know, not too much...there maybe was some preaching at home, you shouldn't go, but they all went anyway.

B: Well, maybe was some, yeah, they all went anyway.

N: Because there wasn't anything to do so we used to go...that was when I was in my early teens we'd go because you wanted someplace to go.

I: Did the Communists at the time try to use the occasion to throw out their line?
N: I think they did, more or less, with some that...and actually I think they were putting on these dances and making a little money because I think they used that money for...

I: For their purposes...but I mean to your knowledge these were more just plain dances.
N: Plain dances.

I: Did a person ever stand up at the time and start lecturing?
N: No, no, no, never.

B: Well, they did have that, do you remember that there woman that come down and they had that kind of school in there for the younger...

N: Oh, maybe they did but we were never allowed to go to that...

B: No, but I mean that they did have that woman that came here then, remember?
N: I don't remember that now, see, there's something...

I: Can you remember who she is?
B: I don't remember who she is.

I: See, all those old Socialists or Communists are dead...with the exception of one...and he won't talk, you know.

B: You should go up and see Pelto up there.

N: The Communists or something, you know, that they had some secret thing that they
wore and different ones, oh, sure.

I: They had some kind of band of clothing?

N: Yeah...there was something that between themselves that they knew about but I can't remember what that was...but oh, yes, he was quite radical, you know.

I: He had a blacksmith's shop.

N: Yes...oh, he used to preach about that business and he was the one that got lot of these different ones that went to Russia at that time...that was him that went but he wouldn't go himself, you know, but I imagine he got paid for getting them over there and then they got over there and they couldn't get back anymore...he was one of those emissaries or whatever you want to call them.

I: There were quite a few people around that Elo area that went.

B: Yeah, that was bad, yeah, it was terrible, sold their farms and left the, you know.

N: Everything.

I: I mean there were many families there...Evert told me about that.

N: I don't know if you're a Democrat or Republican...

I: He was really for Roosevelt?

N: He was for Roosevelt because he figured then that Roosevelt was going to be more for his side, you know, but I guess he got mistaken, it didn't go that way.

I: He had mentioned something about he was happy that Roosevelt had gone to visit Stalin.

N: Yeah, see, yeah, I know I remember some things but you don't put them in your mind when you're young and your teens, well, they're not interesting to you, those things so you just don't....

I: I understand he was a pretty good blacksmith...I mean he was skillful but every time someone would come in he'd start preaching to them and he hurt his...ended up hurting his business by driving away his customers.

N: Yeah, that's it...oh, yeah, and the people, you take the majority of the people around here, well, they didn't want that, there was just that, there was that certain group of them because all the rest of the people they had those churches here and they were more or less on the church side, they didn't want anything to do with Emil Pelto's ideas.

I: There was also, you mentioned at one time they had a woman, a traveling woman Communist, come and teach the young Communist children whatever...

B: There was, there was at that one time but I don't remember who she was but I remember that, don't you remember that?
N: No, I don't remember that.

B: Yeah, they had down to the Hall.

N: Yeah, I suppose there was.

I: Do you remember the time they tried to gain control of the Co-op?

N: No, but I recall them talking about that but I remember what date that would be.

I: Do you recall your parents talking about that?

N: I don't know, I don't remember too much, I suppose they just probably had heard it too and happened to mention it but now when you say it they did try and get control of it, remember there was that one Co-op in Baraga and they said that was that type of Co-op remember now where that what is it the IGA store is in Baraga, well, they said that was a old Co-op store at one time and they figured that that was that type of Co-op and that Mass one was and they were trying to swing Pelkie, too, but then they all fell out and that all fell through.

I: What did they call them, did they have a special name for a Communist Co-op at the time, the Finns did?

N: No, I don't remember that neither, Mike.

I: O.K., I just thought they would...I know that they used to talk about there is the Jesus Christ Co-op and there was another name for the other Co-op.

N: There might have been, I don't remember that but I remember that they were, that it was, couple different kind of Co-op and they were wanting to get this Pelkie one, you know, something like that but that it didn't work.

I: Do you remember Whiskey Pete?

N:

I: What was he like?

B: What was he, was he a Swede or Finn?

N: No, he was Swede.

I: He was Swede.

N: He was a little, short fellow and I remember he used to wear those stag pants, you know, his pants they were so short, he was so short, then he had them all rolled way up.

B: Well, you can tell the story about Whiskey Pete, you tell the story.

N: I don't remember, what story?

B: When he'd go on the train there...on the train.
Oh, yeah, this little Whiskey Pete, he had been up in the Copper Country and he missed the train then...and I suppose he had money saved up from when he'd work you know, and he hired a special train take him down to Baraga...when he got Baraga all the people come turning out because they're wondering who in the world was coming down on a special train, off steps little Whiskey Pete...and yeah, that sounds like a crazy lie but that's true.

I: I've heard that...he used to be like that.

B: Is that him in the front there?

I: That's him.

N: Sure that's him, I remember him, sure that's him.

I: Did he ever stop by and stay at your house?

N: Yes, he knew us well, he knew them well, yes, he stayed many a time...he worked, he worked even, sure, that's little Whiskey Pete...he's buried up in the Blo cemetery, I can remember that...I still see those there gray woolen stag pants, you know, and they had them short, you know, cut off up to here, oh, yeah, I remember little Whiskey Pete.

I: He was a good worker.

N: Yeah, and smart...he could figure anything in his head...he was just brilliant, he didn't need a pencil or anything, he could get numbers, he could just rattle them off in his head he was so smart...he came from the Old Country but I don't know just something happened he just, you know, just went and didn't make anything of himself.

I: He had a university education...

N: I think he did, he was real smart.

I: ...and he was just about ready to graduate, in fact he did graduate and he was in theology, he was going to be a minister, and at the last second he said, "The heck with this"...and he came to America and became a lumberjack and he just drank very heavily.

N: Yeah, he was real smart, I remember them always talking about him how smart he was and how good he was in figures, you know.

I: Do you remember any of the practical jokes he used to pull around there?

N: No, no, see, I was too small then again, too, I just don't remember those things.

I: Do you remember any other characters?

N: Well, didn't my brother Arthur or anybody ever tell you about there was old Andrew Pearson, too, there was a fellow by the name of old Andrew Pearson that used to live around Pelkie, he stayed over home for quite a few years...it was quite a few years since he died but he used to be around home, too, and he
lived down on, down where Hietikko's live now, you know, not where Elma lives but where the old, you know where Waino Molanen lives, or what's his name, that Waino and his wife, that used to be down there Andrew Pearson used to live there in a little log house and remember he had a dog and, well, he got it to eat everything and I remember over home they had a dog and it was so particular and wouldn't eat and Andrew Pearson said, "You give me the dog," he says, "and I'll guarantee you after a little while he'll eat" and he said that he could train them so that if he throw a potato peelings in the air, well, the dog would catch the potato peelings and eat them...I have those old, crazy stories.

I: Do you remember Bill Dorphy?

N: No, that name now I remember but I don't remember too much about him.

B: Dorphy, yeah, yeah, no...I don't remember too much, he was that trapper, he used to trap......is that him?

I: Yeah...do you remember him stopping by?

N: Oh, yeah, he stopped by here, too...yeah, I know who Urho is, he's still living, he's over at the Winkler Nursing Home, isn't he?

I: Right. I saw him a couple weeks ago. What was he like when he would come by and...what kind of a man was he?

N: Oh, I don't know, he was, just seemed like he was easy-going, easy-going person, come take it as it comes, you know, and he talks slow and he was interested in what he was talking about, he was interesting to listen to, too, you know, he knew so much history about Pelkie, all about Pelkie and, you know, the backgrounds of the things that he studied...he had that book if you could get a hold of his writings, well, you should be able to...

B: Yeah, well, see now he's all mixed up now, you can't, I went down, I seen him here not long ago, I went down to see him not long ago about a year ago when they said he was all wound up.

N: But Urho, he was a nice...he was a real nice fellow, no harm in him at all or anything, real nice guy.

B: I think he had a kind of a stroke there, a stroke or something, I guess that affected his mind.

PART TWO

N: ...wondered how, you know, what he really died from but I recall that he had been sick or couple days before someone had been in there and he had been rubbing his stomach with and he had some liniment or that that he said he was sick there his stomach was sore, well, anyway the snowplows was they used to go through that night and a snowplow had gone through and a big chunk of snow or something had hit that shack window and went through, well, they thought, wondered if that had killed him but, you know, or what happened 'cause no one seen him and somebody went, who was it one of the Lein boys went there or who went there was it Sulo Lein or someone went down there and looked in there
because they seen this big hole in there when they got in there, well, Kampagusti was sitting then with his hand like on his stomach and he was kind of leaned over on the table like that so they figured he must have died from a heart attack...but they didn't have any autopsy or anything on him those days.

I: Well, how come a hole in the window then?

N: That snowplow had threw, when they had, threw a big chunk of ice.

B: The snowplow had went through and...the house was right close to the road, see, the shack, you know, and I suppose...

I: This is when he was living on Dunsmore's Corner.

N: Yes, and see, someone, I don't know if it was Sulo Lein or someone had went by and wondered why there was that big hole was in the window and I suppose not patched up and they went in to see and I can't remember if the door was locked or how they got in but when they went in Kampagusti was sitting dead there and he was kind of slouched over on the table and he was holding his hand on his stomach, and see they recalled then that he had said that he had been sick to his stomach, it must have been a heart attack that he got when he died.

I: Kampagusti was Gust Johnson...he was the town gambler...what was this he used to say about the Grit?

N: Oh, "Please remember bring my Grit, Box 6, don't forget, Box 6, please remember bring my Grit."

I: And who would go and fetch his Grit?

N: Well, Evert would bring it sometimes, Evert was great to stop in there and visit and...you know, on his way to Pelkie when the days when you'd walk and then Kampagusti wouldn't always go out so they asked Evert to bring his mail in for him.

I: I'm going to have to talk to Evert about that.

N: Yeah, he'll remember that.

I: And the Kujala boys from Klo one night beat up Kampagusti...one of the Kujala boys was at a dance and was pretty drunked up, he was dancing with Nora Huona that night...

N: Yeah, I remember dancing with us...scandal.

I: That night they beat up Charlie Anderson also...see, everyone at that time thought that Kampagusti had a lot of money.

N: Sure they thought it, remember that was, they figured he went in there because he thought he had money.

I: Now how did he walk...he walked a peculiar route.
N: Well, see, he'd go, you know where Waino Maki lives, don't you, well, he'd go in there and go through that swamp and then, you know, make like a half circle and then come out on the other end up there and they wondered why he did.

B: Come out there by the old school house.

N: Yeah, or come out where that old Punikki Hall was across the road there, he'd come out then on that side.

I: And he'd always go that way?

N: Yeah, well, ever so often he'd walk that way and then they wondered, the people wondered if he had money hid under some stumps, that was in the summertime, and then in the spring and the winter, of course, he couldn't go that way...and they thought he had some money there but...

I: Did anyone go follow him out there?

N: No, I don't think so, they never thought of doing that those days.

I: He used to gamble in a little shack which stood where Matt Ruona's old home now stands right in Pelkie, oh, just a little ways northwest of Ralph Ketola's store, Ralph Ketola's gas station...at that time there was no clearing there and there were large poplar trees standing around the shack...later he moved to where Dummore's land borders the Pelkie road, Froberg road intersection. Kamppagusti as he was called was Pelkie's town gambler...who used to gamble with...

N: Well, who used to go there?

B: I don't remember, there would be always somebody, you know, around that...

N: Then Heinakoski used to go there, Charlie Heinakoski, too, you know, guy with the wooden leg.

B: Yeah, probably.

N: I think he used to go there.

I: How was this guy's last name spelled?

N: Heinakoski? K-o-s, H-a- and then K-o-s-k-i, he used to go there, then I don't know who all went there.

B: Heinakoski, he had a wooden leg.

N: Yeah, wooden leg, yeah...and I don't know who all went, see, I was so small and I don't remember when who used to go there when, bet there was those...

B: Those lumberjacks.

N: Lumberjacks around that were different ones, you know.
B: I don't remember, I was kind of young, too, that time.

N: Yeah, but I don't think there was any high stakes, you know, there was quarter, fifty cents maybe, you know, not too much but...

I: What about moonshine, was there moonshine in this area?

N: Oh, sure, there was moonshine...oh, this old Charlie Anderson, well, did Evert tell you the story about Charlie Anderson some way, he was cooking moonshine then in this shack I told you across the river, you know, where that had that shack, and...

I: Where exactly according to today's...

N: Well, see, it's washed away now...you know where Arthur lives...

B: Where Art lives, right across the river.

I: There's a clearing there.

N: No, there wasn't any clearing there now it's washed away where that shack was.

I: Is that where he's taking out the sand now?

N: Yeah, well, somewhere in around that area there...was this Charlie Anderson lived there, well, then anyway Evert knows that story better about him, he was cooking moonshine in the woods somewhere and then, I think he went out and he circled around, he thought he was going far away and he couldn't keep track of where he went and he turned around and he was cooking and he was right near the road and he thought he was way back in the woods, Evert and I laugh about that yet...you should ask Evert about that.

B: See, he had walked way out in the woods...he had made a big circle and he thought he was getting way far back out there.

I: Where no one would see him.

B: Yeah, and instead he kept on coming back...and he was always making it back to the road...had his still there, right by the road.

I: Wasn't there another still somewhere, the Beckman brothers?

N: Oh, maybe, I don't know about them, do you know?

B: Beckmans, oh, yeah, they was back up here,

N: Oh, yeah, and that where Pat Klemetti and them used to go?

B: Yeah, yeah, that's where they used to go, yeah, Pat Klemetti around there, yeah I can...

N: We could probably tell you stories all night if you...
B: Sure, like that whatchacall went to Germany, that there Beckman went to Germany, him and his wife, and he had all kinds of wine he had made, you know, and the god-dammed kids when they broke in they stole all his wine, many, many, many, many gallons I guess, I guess was fifty, sixty gallons.

I: I heard about that somewhere...in fact, the person who did it told me, I can't remember who...

N: Well, Pat Klemetti was one of those those days that was in some of that, too, when he was a kid and he's dead now, poor Pat...but Charlie and that still, Evert Larson was good about that still anyway, well, we get fun, Evert and us, we start talking about when I go to Larson's, we start talking about all these old times, Hilda and us, and we have more fun, yeah, and then one of the houses that my mother lived in, their first house down near the river there, they had school in that one time, and Hilda Larson went to school there...did she ever tell you that?

I: Yeah, that was generally the custom, school was held in a house until the school could be built.

B: You mean at your home?

N: Sure, there had been a...

B: I never knew about that.

N: Sure there was school and the teacher's name was, and I think the teacher's name was Nora Johnston, and that's who I was named Nora after...that teacher.

I: Do you remember Turunen's mules?

N: No, maybe Bill does but not me.

I: Matt Turunen had two mules.

B: Yes, I remember them, yeah.

I: Do you remember any of the things they used to do, I recall they used to get in a little bit of trouble around here.

B: No, I don't know.

I: They used to go into the stores and start eating candy, anything...people would be hauling their grain or their flour in their wagons up and down the road and you'd look and there'd be a mule walking behind it...do you remember any of the ways the kids used to get rides jumping on, hanging on to the back of a tire of a car?

N: Well, yeah, and then we used to ride home from school, you know, on sleighs when they were hauling logs out to Pelkie from Elo and that down our way we'd jump when the sleighs go back if there'd be one going by we'd jump on the runners, you know, stand on the runners, you know, and hang on and get a ride, boy, that was really something to get a ride.
I: Got home a lot quicker.

N: Yeah, and I wonder if Hilda and them remember about who in the world was like supposed to have been like driving school bus one time and hauling kids and then they had manure on the same wagon and they hauled manure on the same wagon and the kids, there was three, four kids, and they rode to school on the same one, I'm sure, you ask, I betcha Bvert and Hilda remembers about that, I remember something about that and I can't remember who that was now that used to haul manure and they said that the kids got a ride on the wagon to school at the same time.

I: This was a more recent question here, more recent history, do you remember the Christmas programs they had at the school? What were they like? Did your daughter ever play a part in one of these programs?

N: Not my daughters didn't no because see when, oh, this school they did, yeah, in this school, the brick school, yeah, my daughters, my kids were in the programs them, but they used to have in those old schools, too, you know, like where the Town Hall is now, or that one they call the Town Hall, we used to have Christmas programs when I was a kid in them...then the boys used to go out and get the Christmas trees, remember, the teachers let you go and get the Christmas tree for the school, and then we always decorated, they made, they'd get these cedar boughs, you know, and then wire, that stovepipe wire, and then they'd wind that there all over and then they'd from one corner to the other and then that corner to that corner and then a bell in the center, Christmas bell, they'd decorate it up for Christmas, the school, and then they'd have the programs, they were always in the evening and then, of course, then the parents would come.

I: Would a lot of people come?

N: Oh, yes, there was lot of people came, well, all the parents, you know, there'd be about fifty kids in school and of course there was some families had four or five children but the parents would all come to those programs...that was really a, that was a big doing in those days.

I: Even at that little school?

N: Yeah, the little old school.

I: Well, the tradition was carried on and Ida ran programs like that...

N: Yeah, in that there school right there.

I: I understand they really had...

N: Yeah, we had nice programs, they had real nice programs then.

I: Do you recall what it was like then at one of these programs now in the Pelkie school?

N: Yeah, well, they used to have like a Christmas play and then singing and different things like that and of course they had that up in that auditorium in the
school there, those programs then, they had a Santa Claus come in for the smaller kids...oh, yeah, my kids were, our kids were in those programs.

I: What part did your daughter play?

N: Oh, I can't remember anyway...Luanne, what was it Luanne always had some kind of part and Marcy, who told me not long ago they remember Marcy 'cause she was always kind of timid and she had one of the more religious parts in the plays always...I remember those plays...and Alice Oja, then they'd have these other kind of things where they'd march in first and then Matt Oja's girl, Alice, well, then she was the same age as our Tuddy and Alice would always be like the leader 'cause she wasn't afraid and of course Tuddy, our daughter, wasn't too much afraid but she'd always be next to Alice and they were always going in and they'd get first going in.

I: Do you remember the Depression days out here? What were they like?

N: Yeah, well, I guess we all know kind of what they were.

B: There wasn't much to do, you couldn't sell nothing and no work and...

N: People just more or less lived, you know, lived off the farms, you know, got along, we got along some way, I don't know how we got along but we did.

B: Yeah, there was no Relief Office that time.

N: And then of course they started that WPA then, you know, and got little bit better but there was a Depression, I don't know how the people got along but they had mostly the farmers then all had cows, see, and then they'd have their own milk and their butter and their own cream and of course you'd trade in a little and get little groceries from the stores.

I: Did you ever churn butter?

N: Oh, sure, down at the old farm, yeah...and I remember during the Depression, well, you got my mother some kind of a churn, you remember, some, and she used to churn butter 'cause you used to like that buttermilk, that was during the Depression...see, they got away after, they got away farming, they got away into buying butter, you know, not churning anymore but then when the Depression come, well, then people started to make their own butter again.

I: What was it like to churn butter, I've never churned butter.

N: Well, I remember when my old uncle August, he used to...

B: Well, it wasn't so bad with that churning butter, you know, if you had one of those little modern ones that you could, you know, it would turn around the whole thing around but then you get some with that crock, you know, you'd get that one with that crock, you know, and that stick, you know, up and down, up and down, Christ, it'd take you a day, you know, to...

N: They used to have one like that over home, they'd make, well...
Take you a day, you know, because you know... 'course had lot to do with that, too, if you had that there cream...

The cream had to be a certain temperature.

A certain temperature, the right temperature, you know, it would take no time, you know.

To get butter, yeah.

Even with that old churn.

Yeah, it would take no time even with that there stick, you know, up and down, but then that one that you'd turn, you know, well, that would, I suppose that would shake it up more.

And that was old Uncle August's job down at our farm, he'd always turn the churn, then after they got another churn, it was just like a big barrel and it was like a hoop and you'd sit this way with that hoop and that was better invention, that was still better.

Yeah, that was... didn't take so long.

What was that called... you used two hands...

Yeah, there was two hands, it was just like a kind of a hoop went around...

Wasn't there just a handle that you turned?

Yeah, some of them, but then we had one of these churns.

Was it a wire hoop that would...

No, it was a wooden hoop about that wide and it went around and on both sides of that barrel, it was a churn and that churn was like on a stand and I remember that churn and you'd just sit like this and it would go around, I remember.

There were two handles on each side?

Yeah, yeah, well, this hoop served the purpose of a handle seeing you held your hand on both sides of, I remember that churn, I can see it right before me.

Lot of butter came out of that.

Oh, yeah, they'd get lot of butter out of that then.

What were your chores that you had to do as a kid?

Washing dishes all the time and dusting, we'd milk cows, I milked lots of cows, I've never forgotten how either.

You'd know how to milk a cow?
N: Oh, yes, that's one thing you never forget if you once learned to milk a cow you never forget that, milked lots of cows in my days.

I: What was it like working in the barn then? I know a lot of women had to work in the barn.

N: Well, of course I didn't, see, there at my dad's, see, we had this old uncle and he used to do most of the barn work, well, we used to help with the milking always so we never really, my mother and I never really did anything else except milk, you know, we'd help with the milking...and then separate, you know, us kids would do the separating...and we'd take turns winding that old separator, you'd turn for a while, then you'd be tired and it'd be the next one's turn, there'd be, you know, quite a bit milk to separate, you know, when there'd be the cream and of course all the skim milk then they fed that to the calves those days, now we drink it.

I: They threw all that skim milk...

N: Yeah, the calves and the pigs got it, sure, and now we drink it...that's the way it was those days.

B: Now we're buying skim milk now, eh?

N: Yeah, we're buying skim milk and it's high price now, too...but that's what they fed the cows and the pigs then, you know, calves and the pigs with the skim milk.

I: What chore did you hate most back in those days?

N: The chore I hated most, I think I hated that turning that separator, I'd have my turn too, you know, I used to hate that turning that separator.

I: Was that hard to turn?

N: Well, I suppose you stood there and kept on cranking and cranking away and it took a long time to separate many gallons of milk.

B: Yeah, it didn't go through those too fast.

N: No, took a long time...then of course we used to sing sometime and it'd go little faster.

I: What did you used to sing?

N: Oh, I can't remember, I suppose some of the songs that were popular in those days, "When You Wore A Tulip and I Wore A Big, Red Rose" and all of those...

I: You can't forget that one.

N: No.

I: What other songs were popular in those days?
N: Well, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "The Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia" and oh, I can't remember all, there was...

I: People really used to dance a lot, though.

N: Yeah.

I: Lot of polka...

B: Yeah, lot of polka, well, of course that's what there was to do was them days, well, there was no cars, you know, hardly no cars, well, you couldn't get around so like that Punikki Hall there, well, that was the only place you could go, see.

N: Yeah, and then you'd all congregate there, you know we used to have lots of fun having those dances like that, it used to be lot of fun.

I: The Punikki Hall was sort of...lot of people would come from far, far away.

N: Yeah, well, Tapiola and Elo always hung out there, Tapiola and Elo, and then all around Palkie, you know, around here, see...of course then later on when got to be better times in the cities, well, then the people started going to the cities to work, you know, but then there was those days before, you know, before they got going to the cities, you know, so much.

B: Yeah, well, that's happened here, too, you know, there's no work around here, kids were grown up, grown up, well, they'd go down Detroit, you know, one would go Detroit, pretty soon another would follow and that's where the majority of them went, see...now they're getting old now they're coming back here now.

I: Was that during the Depression and after?

N: After the Depression and even before that there was lots of girls used to go down to Detroit and then they'd get work, you know, in these wealthy homes they'd be maids, you know, and they made good money.

I: And then they come back, they all come back.

B: Yeah, some come back.

N: Remember right from our place here we couldn't get to the store sometime because there was, before they raised the road there was so much water down there... whereabouts is this supposed to be then?

I: They called that the swamp road.

N: Oh, that's down where the old Punikki Hall used to be, that swamp road, see, sure...boy, did that used to be nice when us kids went to school, the clay in the spring...you couldn't hardly walk.

I: What do you mean, it was...

N: Well, there was so much, it was just pure clay that road through the swamp, it
was just clay... and I remember the first time they got stampsand in, they got a load of stampsand from Keweenaw Bay that came in on the railroad and they put it down on that swamp and just that one stretch from Weino Maki's up to whereabout that Punikki Hall would be and heavens that carload of stampsand just disappeared like nothing in that there clay, it was just clay and I remember a car going through there when I was a little kid, somebody had come from Houghton with a car and going through and how the cars would just skid, they wouldn't, couldn't, hardly stay on the road in that swamp 'cause that clay was so bad.

I: You said it was so bad that it was hard walking through it?

N: Well, yes, and our shoes, we wore rubbers, you know, the rubbers they'd stick in that there clay and then you'd have to try to bend over and pull them on again, oh... that used to be lots of fun.

I: What about walking to school in the winter?

N: Well, I don't know, we just got up and walked there, we knew we had to go so we walked there... and of course then those days when they had those logging camps up near Klo or back up there, Pryor's had camps and then they made ice roads in the winter and then you know there'd be where the horses would go there was just like a ridge in between there where they'd be stepping and then those would freeze and gee, that was good, we thought that was really good walking, you could jump from one of those, one of those ridges to the next one, you know...

I: Did you ever travel on any of those corduroy roads?

N: I probably did have rides on them when I was a little kid, sure, but I don't remember that.

I: There weren't any around here?

N: Oh, yeah, all the way down through, to the old farm of ours... where my brother Art lives there used to be a corduroy roads.

B: Yeah, and remember there used to be corduroy up here by Seppanen's, you know?

N: Yeah.

B: And then by Parkila's, you know, where you turn in on at the Kyro road there, well, it was all corduroy there...

I: Could have they used cedar?

B: Yeah, well, any kind of poles they'd have, poles then and dirt on top and then in the spring then the god-darned things would come up and glug, glug, glug, glug, you'd be going over them.

I: Do you remember driving in a horse and buggy?

N: Oh, yes, I lots...

B: 'Course you drove in a horse and buggy here the other day.
N: Down at Mackinac Island, yeah, sure, he's teasing now...oh, yeah, we used to go
to town and, see, when the circus would come to Baraga then and us kids were
small then my mother and dad would take us down to the circus and we'd go in
this here buggy, they had, they used to call them a spring wagon...why do they
call it the spring wagon, I suppose because they took it out in the spring,
and it had two seats on it, one in the front and one in the back just like an
automobile, one in the front...

B: Yeah, well, spring wagon, well, that was, you know, for enjoyment, see...well,
then the other wagon that you had that big, heavy wagon...

N: That was a lumber wagon.

B: Lumber wagon, well, there was no springs on that, see.

N: Yeah...and then they used to...

I: Ah, so the lumber wagon was harding riding.

N: Oh, sure, that big wheels, yeah, big wheels...then those spring wagons they had
a top on them, too.

I: Like that.

N: Yeah, sure, see that's a two-seater, but they used to have them, you know, with
a seat here and then another seat, there'd be one seat in the front and one in
the back and then the top was farther, like a car, you know, with the seat in
the front and in the back, they'd call this a top buggy.

I: A top buggy? That's Larson's buggy and do you remember Larson's had a funny
horse? They said that when it went to Baraga it would walk on its hind feet.

N: I don't know, I don't remember that.

B: Walk on the hind feet!

I: It was strutting, showing off.

N: That's a top buggy, that's what they called a top buggy...and the other kind
was a, they called them a spring wagon, they'd have a seat in the front and a
seat in the back, I remember we had one and then we'd go down to town.

B: Spring wagon, I never heard about that, I never heard about the spring wagon,
no.

N: Didn't you...and then they'd take us down to, we'd go down to the circus, we'd
get up early in the morning and ride to Baraga and go to the circus.

I: That'd take you quite a while to get to Baraga, wouldn't it?

N: Yeah, that took quite a while.

I: Was that really exciting, though?
N: Oh, well, I guess so! To go to town to the circus, well, sure, that was really something.

I: All that way, eh? In those days I bet...that's something that has come up over and over again, people were satisfied with much less in those days.

N: Well, yeah...that was fun, you didn't expect anything different, I mean, you were used to that and I mean you didn't expect anything different, gee, there was no radio or television, no nothing like that, and you were just happy that way.

I: To go to Baraga or on Fourth of July to get a bottle of pop.

N: Yeah, a bottle of pop and Christmastime an orange maybe and, you know, little bit extra, you know.

I: What were your Fourth of Julys like out around here, what would you generally do?

N: Well, when I was real small I can't remember us doing anything but then, of course, well, they used to go sometimes to Baraga with the horse and buggy then on the Fourth, too, even because they'd have some parades or something down there.

I: But there wasn't anything in Pelkie?

N: Nothing in Pelkie, no, Pelkie never ever had any celebrations for the Fourth, never.

I: And they still do that to this day, they go to Baraga.

N: Yeah, and around different places.

I: Did Pelkie ever have any celebrations other than the Christmas...

N: No, there never was any other celebrations here.

I: What were those early Fairs like, those first few Dairy Days I guess they called them.

N: In Pelkie here? Well, they were more or less just like the ones we got now.

I: They haven't changed all that much.

N: No...there was always a Home Extention booths, the 4-H booths, you know, different things...how well I knew those Fairs years ago when Luamme was in 4-H, you know, oh, my gosh, there was a big time when Fair Day was coming up, that Pelkie Fair, to get all their things ready for the Fair, you know.

I: What do you miss most about those old days or do you miss those old days or are you glad they're done?

N: Well, I don't know, I said, I don't know, I wouldn't mind living my life over
again and doing some of the same things 'cause I don't know you enjoyed yourself, I think we enjoyed ourself more than we do now, you didn't think of going, that you had to go for an automobile ride always or something, there'd be amusement, and I remember some of the teachers, remember when Muriel Giddings stayed over home and was teaching and Johnny Dunsmore come, we were kids going school, and Johnny'd come over at night, we'd play hiding-go-seek and between ourselves in the evening and were just satisfied...do different things like that, go to bed at night and blow out the light and go to bed.

I: You had candlelight.

N: Yeah, kerosene lamps and kerosene lanterns years, years back.

I: Do you remember those kerosene lanterns?

N: Oh, sure, the lanterns and lamps...and that was one of my jobs to wash the lamp chimneys every day, wash those lamp chimneys.

I: Every day?

N: Yeah, they'd wash them, they'd always be sooty, you'd have to wash those lamp chimneys.

B: Well, did you wash them on Saturdays for Sunday?

N: Well, on Saturdays for Sunday then too and then you had to scrub the floor all up on Saturday and...

I: To get everything ready for Sunday.

N: For Sunday.

I: Sunday was the visiting day, right?

N: That was the big day, Sunday, you know, like for visiting then, or...

I: But would people sometime visit during the evening during the week?

N: No, not too much, see, I suppose you just didn't get around to, didn't go around and visit too much in the evenings, I don't know...well, see, then like where my mother and them lived and Larson's were way up on the hill, they never got walking out in the evenings and of course when Mrs. Liminga, when the Liminga girls were small, you know where the Ravi's live and that, well, their mother used to come over and visit over home but then that was, I was pretty big then, I was about 15, 16 then those days but then years back there wasn't never got to but then there'd be sleigh ride parties in the wintertime, I remember them coming up from Baraga on sleigh ride parties up to Pelkie and they'd come up to, you know, our home up there and in the wintertime they'd have a sleigh ride party...we were kids, and then there used to be that Grange Hall over there, my parents used to go to the Grange Hall and then there used to be dances there when I was a little kid and my parents were, you would go over to that Grange Hall and they would have dances over there and different things.
I: Oh, at that time the Punikki Hall wasn't...

N: Wasn't there, no...that Grange Hall, well, that's still on that Bellaire road there, what is it, it's some kind of a shop there, that was big, real popular place years back, I remember I went to dances then, Elsie and I when we were about 15, 16, 16 we went to dances there......we were a kid and we drove down the streets of Baraga...they were like that, yeah.

I: Can you recall any of the places there?

N: Well, I don't know if I remember exactly now.

I: Was that really exciting to go into Baraga?

N: Oh, sure, that was, sure.

I: At that time Baraga was busier than it is now.

N: Oh, yeah, just think one time they had was it 17 or 18 saloons in Baraga...yeah, people hardly believe that...I don't know what street that is in Baraga.

I: That's the Main Street.

B: Yeah, there was lot of saloons, of course there was lot of lumbering and...

I: So that was like going to the big city...I mean you felt your eyes were real wide open and you were...

N: Yeah, yeah...there was so many saloons just in that little town, wasn't that terrible?

I: I don't know.

B: Gee, Baraga looks more prosperous here than it is now, yeah.

I: It was more prosperous there.

N: Yeah, well, they had that mill down there and they had big boarding...

B: Main Street of Baraga, yeah.

N: Couple big boarding houses where the bank was now that was a big, big store there years ago and...oh, yeah, there was lot of things going on in Baraga there.

I: Do you remember much about the Elo IGA store?

N: Oh, yeah, that was, I was married then even and that when Pesola's had that IGA store in Elo there.

I: But didn't they have it very early?

N: No, was there a store up in, no, there wasn't a store in Elo too, too many years back, was there?
B: Oh, Pesola was the only one.

N: Pesola was the first store there, yeah...he had the first store there, Pesola, Arvo Pesola, and then they made, changed into an IGA store, you know, they call it IGA.

I: Is that where you did your business or did you come to Pelkie?

N: No, we always came to Pelkie out here.

B: Doesn't that look like that Schwalm's old building there?

N: Well, that's what I was wondering, it looks like it.

B: That first one right there...but then there should be the street corner right there.

N: Yeah, I don't know, I don't know, Bill...I can't...

I: I heard that one on the left there was Thomas Nestor's office.

N: Maybe it was...I don't remember those, I don't remember, Mike, those places too much.

B: See, like in Baraga there too I guess they had that big fire there, too, that one time and it...

N: Burnt some buildings I guess.

I: Do you remember the grasshopper years when they had...

N: Oh, the grasshoppers, yes, oh, that was terrible those years of the grasshoppers, they chewed like handles on the rakes and everything, that was terrible...and I always remember, well, I was pretty big then already when they, years of the grasshoppers, and I remember we used to go and visit some people by the name of Besander's, Larson's were good friends of theirs, too, and that Mrs. Besander used to make all these good sponge...

SIDE TWO

N: ...about the sponge cake how yellow it was...and she said, "Well, you know it got so yellow now because the chickens they eat so many grasshoppers and the yolks get so yellow in the eggs" and I could hardly finish my piece of sponge cake 'cause she said that.

I: But these grasshoppers would eat the handles?

N: Yes, you remember that, too, don't you, Bill, when the grasshoppers were so bad they chewed the handles and they just like mowed down everything in the fields.

B: Yeah.

I: I mean, did they literally eat everything in the fields?
Yeah, well, you know, the good grass and that in under that was coming up, yeah, it was terrible, well, when you walked you couldn't imagine when you'd walk if you'd walk out in the field it was just like a cloud going around you of grasshoppers... and the chickens were well-fed those days, that's for sure, 'cause I remember that chickens down at the farm, you know, those grasshoppers all around there.

Oh, I bet there were some fat chickens.

Well, sure, there were, well, that's what I told you that when Mrs. Besander said that the sponge cakes was so yellow because the chickens had eaten, you know, so many grasshoppers.

I bet the fish were big, too, I bet the fish were just...

They probably were, too, on that river there.

Did your father have any way of trying to control them?

No, those days they didn't do things or have things like they do now...not that I remember of...just everything just took its course...same with fires years, years back, a fire would start to burn and it would always burn till it, you know, burned through, you know, and there wasn't you could do for it then in the end, well, they'd have to try to get people out with showals, you know.

Do you remember any fires?

Oh, yes, I remember some fires, I remember that didn't Larson's ever tell you about the fire when I remember we sat and worried and wondered how Evelyn got home from school because the fire was burning that way up and we wondered if there was anything left of Larson's farm when the fire had got done burning because the fire was going up towards their way from behind Arthur's place, you know, up through the woods up there, that's why we had so much berries to pick and that years ago because, see, when the fires went through like that, well, then they'd grow up new brush.

Oh, so it was like west of your place, did it go all the way back to what they call Horoscope?

Somewhere it burned, you know, back in through there...and I remember them said it was so smoky up around Larson's.

Did you really worry whether they had lost the farm?

Yeah, you wondered, you know, when the fire was over how they were up there... and Evelyn, I remember the fire when it was going through this one evening she had gone home from school, she was a little girl, and we wondered if she had got home from school even when that fire started going through.

Did you ever hear a story about a man who hid in a well? And was suffocated?

No, no, I can't remember about that.
I: Do you remember a story about some old Farm on the other side of the Otter there who did an operation on himself?

N: Oh, that was old, well, that was Storm, wasn't, Bill, one of those Storms was supposed to operated on himself?

B: Herman.

N: Old Herman Storm, yeah...he had a tumor and they said he cut it out...didn't he get drunk first and then he cut the tumor out...well, that's not, my old uncle August then, this my dad's brother that stayed with us for years, that's what I said he was so close to us when we kids grew up, well, we could, hardly knew which one was our father, the uncle or the father, because he was with us all the time from the time we grew up and he got toothache this one time and he went out in the old blacksmith shop that they had on the farm and he took an old nail and I guess he sterilized it first and he put it under that tooth some way and he pried that tooth out in the blacksmith shop with that nail... and that's no lie.

I: Those men were tough.

N: I know.

I: Now they fill you full of anesthetic, you can't even feel the pain.

N: Yeah, and I remember my mother talking about when I was a little kid when she had had toothache one time and then it got all abscessed her jaw so she went down to Dr. Buckland then, boy, he was master of all trades, you know, and she went down there and she went in to Buckland and he lanced this here, this gum, you know, because it was so full of pus and that and he said he couldn't pull the tooth then but he said when she got home and that went over and that swelling went down to come back and get the tooth pulled out, well, she didn't do it then...pretty soon it kicked up on her again, you know, this here...it got all swelled up again I suppose all filled up with pus again that tooth and she didn't go back to Buckland like she said she should so she didn't dare go back to him again with it so she took a razor and then she, you know, sterilized and burned that razor on the edge and she opened her mouth and she lanced that herself...and then when that went down she went back to Buckland and got the tooth pulled but she never told him that had happened again, she did that. I remember that story, telling about that she took a razor and, you know, lanced the gum herself.

I: How were your teeth pulled at home there, what was the technique?

N: Oh, they got us down to the dentist to pull them always...up to Copper Country we'd go...up to Houghton, see, we'd take the train and go...

I: Did your parents ever go get some of that salve?

N: No, not, but yours did...that there Mummu's, that one...

B: Oh, yeah, what did they call it, what Mummu was that...
M: I don't remember, up on Quincy Hill, wasn't it, or somewhere.

I: Now there's one in Portage Entry.

M: Is there one there...I remember about that salve, well, there was different, lots of people used that. I think somebody over at my home used it, too, they had got it from someone...that was good salve.

I: Was there any blood-letting with the horn?

M: Oh, I heard about that, too.

B: Kuppeni.

M: Kuppeni, yeah, I heard...

I: Did your parents practice that?

B: Oh, yeah, my mother, yeah, she, oh, my mother, she used to go have that done, you know, every now and then, you know, she'd have the aches and pains, well, then they'd take that bad blood out, gee, goldarned crazy, ah, holy god.

M: Yeah, but what they dared do those days, I mean, they weren't afraid, they didn't run to the doctor with every little pain and ache those days, well, you just couldn’t go...you just didn't go.

I: She believed that helped her, though?

B: Well, I don't think so.

M: But she thought it did, though, maybe.

B: Well, thought maybe did, I don't know...that bad blood they had to take out.

M: I remember years ago, too, when they used to wash clothes we had like two tubs in the kitchen, you know, and then they had a wringer that you fastened on just to the tub, you probably seen of those, not antiques, it wasn't even on a stand but it was just fastened on the tub, and I was, my brother Dick was, oh, he's a couple years younger than me, he was small, I was small, and my mother was washing clothes and she had gone away from that wringer, you know, and of course I had to go and try and monkey with that wringer and I turned that wringer and then my brother Dick was small and he come and he stuck his finger up and, see, those cog wheels they were open and he got that finger in that there cog wheel and I turned it and it cut that finger right, you know, he's got still a crooked finger, well, they didn’t go to the doctor with it, they just pushed it kind of back in place and they put a bandage around it and it grew back on again, it's a little crooked but, well, I did that to my brother.

I: That was for wringing clothes?

M: Wringing clothes.

I: And how would you wash them then?
I: What was that like to do that, I've never done that.

N: Well, that was hard work, of course.

B: Why, sure, you'd rub them on that board.

N: You'd just rub them on that board, you know, piece by piece, and then the white clothes they used to have a boiler on the stove then and they'd boil the white clothes and make them whiter.

I: In one of those big, copper boilers?

N: Yeah...copper bottom boilers, you know, yeah...I always remember that time I was small but I can still remember that how Dick went and got near that wringer and stuck his finger near there and I turned and he got caught in those cog wheels, see, they don't have anything open like that anymore but they did then, you know...

I: Did you ever have experience with bears in those years?

N: No, not that I remember of when we were small.

B: You mean bears? Well, we had that one up...

N: Oh, yeah, that year before last, yeah, in our own yard, yeah, two little cubs ran up the tree, they were cute.

I: But in those years there weren't many bears, were there?

N: No, not that I remember of, no.

B: No, seem to be more bear now...

N: Bear now than there was then...I never ever heard of them saying that they were afraid of a bear out in the woods or anything.

Yeah, well, these large dumps have made them multiply.

N: I think so.

I: What about wolves? Larson's used to talk about hearing the wolves and being afraid of the wolves. Do you remember?

Yeah, well, I guess up around on the hill up there, well, they heard more wolves up there than we did down around our place.

B: Well, I don't know if it was probably more wolves, I think they were coyotes I think there.

N: Or something like that, wolves or coyotes.
B: Howl, you know, all night long.

I: Any old stories you want to tell now, here's your chance, Nora.

N: Gee, I don't know anymore....mine was going to be one of the pallbearers and then my dad drove the horses, see, and they had Mr. Larson laid up on the farm then and old man Pelkie, he was one of the pallbearers and old man Dunsmore and I can't remember who the other two were...and then when they brought Larson to Baraga then and they buried, he's buried in the Baraga cemetery, well, on the way back, well, these pallbearers they went in some saloon there and then they all got drunk and then on the way coming back, well, then they had been, they had come down around that Bellaire road there and there was a railroad track there and then when the cutter went over it stuck on the rails then and I guess one of them flew way back or flew out then of the cutter off the sleigh or something got stuck there and then they got arguing about pig feeding on the way home, this old Uncle August and old man Pelkie and then they got arguing who had the fattest pigs then, was it our place or Pelkie's place, and when they come home, well, then old Uncle August he come in the house and my dad was mad at him, he had been driving and he was swearing and then he was cussing away, you know, and old man Pelkie, he'd got home and he was mad when he went home and then Pete King was his son-in-law and Pete King had got after him, I guess, for being drunk and old Pelkie went upstairs up in the bedroom and he had a gun up there and he shot through the floor and they all ran up and thought Pelkie had shot himself and then he said he-he-he-he-he he laughed at them, shot through the floor, well, they said they sure they had got fighting over feeding pigs on the way home from Larson's funeral.

I: That is a good story.

N: Yeah, I remember that then when my dad went and got old Uncle in the house he was small he got Uncle by the collar and he shoved him upstairs to bed and old Pelkie was home and his son-in-law was mad at him and he went upstairs and shot through the ceiling, well, they sure were some birds all right...and that's true.

That was

I: In Pelkie's house that he shot himself?

N: Yes and that old, old, Liminga's don't live in that anymore, you know, Elma lives but then that old building that she had, yeah, he shot through the floor, they said there's a hole there yet you can see yet...yeah, that's old Dunsmore.

I: What kind of a man was he?

N: Well, he was an Irishman and he just sat there and mind his business, well, then this old Uncle August and him, well, they always used to get in discussion that who had the best cream that tasted the most, see, and on the separators you could turn something a screw on the separator and the cream would get real thick and, well, some of the farmers said that you lost more test by that that was better to have the screw a little loose and then have the cream thinner, thinner, and then when Uncle would bring the cows out to the pasture, you know, where this Johnson used to walk through that was a cow pasture on the way back he'd stop at Dunsmore's and then Dunsmore would leave the stub from the cream check in the window at his place 'cause so that my old Uncle August would look at that cream check and see that he had higher test, you know, than they had down at our place
and Uncle would come home and then would be mad because the milk home didn't test just as good as Dunsmore's milk.

I: So they really had a little competition?

N: Yeah, sure, between them, that's where purpose he would put that little stub, you know, from the cream check there and then Uncle would go and then he'd look at that stub, you know, and see that the test was higher...then he'd come down, was the same old story every week and he'd be mad at them because they didn't set the separator home so it would test the same.

I: Oh, there was a problem between choosing whether to get more cream or richer cream?

N: Yeah, you got less but it was thicker, or you'd get more and it wouldn't be quite as rich but...

I: Well, how were you paid, according to...

N: To the test.

B: According to the test, see.

I: And the test was how thick it is?

B: How thick it is, see, yeah...the more butterfat in it, well, the more you'd get for it, see.

N: But then they said you could get just as much out of the thin, you know, only...

I: Because you'd have more...

B: More volume, see.

N: But, see, Uncle, he couldn't figure that out and then Dunsmore got Uncle's bug all the time...and then remember old Dunsmore he in the middle of the winter he'd stand out and pump, he'd pump water for the cows, you know, and he'd just stand out with his in his bare like he's standing right there...

B: Like here now, no hat on.

N: And pump water and no hat on and then he'd show his Johnny, they had a boy named Johnny, how tough he was and he was mad because Johnny wasn't just as tough as him, you know, and couldn't stand out and he'd pump the water like that, you know, just without, just in his shirtsleeves.

I: He was Irish?

N: Yeah, he was Irishman and his wife was Finnish.

I: O.K., 'cause I think somewhere I heard he was Scottish.

N: Well, Irish-Scott, I think both
I: Do you ever remember the days when they made ice like that?

N: Yes, because they used to make down at the home...my brother Walter drowned, my youngest brother, when they were making ice down at the river one time...it was after school, he was a kid about twelve years old, I guess, and he went down and he slipped in that hole and he was just going under when he had his hands up there and they grabbed him before he went under the ice...

I: What was that like, that ice-making in those days?

N: Well, see, then they have what they call an ice house, I can't remember just what it was but it was a place where they stored that ice, I think it was, didn't they used to kind of build them in the banks or somewhere?

B: No, no, they just anywhere, built anywhere, and then they had sawdust, you know...

N: That's the way it was, yeah.

B: They put the ice and then sawdust, you know, and then cover it with sawdust... all over, see.

N: See, they'd have that in the summer.

B: Well, then they'd shovel the sawdust out and take out a cake, you know...

I: Oh, and they had those kind of iceboxes.

B: Iceboxes, yeah, where they would use, you know...

N: Yeah, but we didn't have any iceboxes our place but then they'd have tubs down in the basement or something or in the cellar, you know, and then they'd put the milk cans in that ice, you know, and have that ice around them.

B: But they used to have those there iceboxes.

N: Oh, some had iceboxes but we didn't have any at our place.

B: Yeah, we got one, we got an oldtimer here in the garage here now.

I: That one that Sulo Jokela was...

B: No, that's a different one, I'm fixing up this for my other daughter, she wants one...Sulo, he fixed up one for us.

I: I was over there when he...

N: Yeah, it was real nice, he fixed one.

I: Well, how long would that ice last?

N: Well, it would last pretty well way up in the summer.
B: Yeah, it would last there.

N: 'Cause I remember we sometimes made ice cream on Fourth of July then, too.

I: Seems like a heck of a job taking a crosscut saw and sawing ice.

N: Yeah, but that's what they did.

B: Yeah, that's what they did, sawed up in chunks, you know, about that big, you know...well, they'd be like squares like this here, you know, like this...

I: About two-foot squares?

B: Depend on how thick the ice was, you know...and then haul it in the ice house and cover it up with sawdust.

N: Yeah, just think all the work they had those days...making ice and...

I: They had work...that's what strikes me as kind of funny...on one hand they had work, we have work now, but they said everyone seems to think that people visited more in those days.

N: Yeah, well, where they were close to each other I think they visited more.

B: Yeah, I suppose they did, you know, they'd visit quite a bit.

N: Well, see, like when Pelkie's lived there, well, my parents would get over to Pelkie's, you know, till they moved away and then up to Dunsmore's, those three families were close to each other, they'd, you know, visit each other.

I: Erickson, Pelkie and Dunsmore.

N: Yeah...course then Larson's way up on the hill they didn't get visiting too much 'cause then they were way up there and it was too far, but just think, Mrs. Larson, Hilda's mother, and then she'd come down to my mother's and they'd walk together out to way where that Pine Creek bridge is there was like an old store, they used to walk out there to the store together...and buy groceries.

B: Just before the stores were here.

I: Gee, that's a long distance.

N: Yeah, that was a long walk.

I: You know who owned that store over there by the Pine Creek store?

N: That was some, wasn't that Gauthier that had that?

B: Gauthier, yeah.

I: Oh, yeah, that was the same one, he afterwards moved it over here.
B: Yeah, moved down here then.

N: ...that was my Uncle Matt and he had this horse named Doc and he used to drink quite a bit and he'd get to Beraga and on the way home, well, he'd hook those lines across the front of the buggy somewhere and then old Doc would take him home...walk right home down through and make the turn, he used to go that turn you know where Larue's live, well, he lived up on the farm there and that horse would take him right home, but then this one time he came and there was a gate across from the road and old Doc stayed then by the gate then he couldn't get through the gate to get Mattson home so he just stayed by the gate and Mattson had wait till he sobered up so he could open the gate himself.

I: Boy, it's lucky he didn't freeze, I mean, if that was in the wintertime it would have been...

N: Well, it was in the summertime, yeah, he wouldn't go in the winter, was in the summertime.

I: Now that's a good kind of horse to have if you're going to tie on a bender...and no traffic accidents.

N: Yeah, sure, and old Doc I can see old Doc yet, I remember that horse....every morning before we started school.

B: I don't remember that.

N: Don't you, oh, yes.

I: You had knapsacks?

N: They call them knapsacks, gee, I might even have one stuck away somewhere, they were little songbook about that long and that wide but you know there was just the words to them, I don't know where we learned the music for some of them, I suppose the teacher knew the music and...and then we learned to sing these songs, these few songs...but every morning and then one that we used to sing quite a bit was, "God Bless America".

I: And you'd sing that first before you'd ever start...

N: They would before they'd start school, before they'd start, I always open school with a song.

I: And you really enjoyed school?

N: Sure.

B: That's funny I don't remember that.

N: Yeah, always started school with a song.

I: Anything else, this is it.

N: No, you've got enough of my voice on there now, don't tell anyone that's me.
I: Is there anything you'd like to say to people who might be listening to this a thousand years from now?

N: Well, just say I hope they enjoy it, listening to all the stories.

I: I think they will.