

Dewey Tippett

4/24/94

Ishpeming, Michigan

Interviewer: Mary Tippett Andes

Start of interview:

(Mary Tippett) Let's start with state your full name and your date and place of birth.

(Dewey Tippett) Well my name is Dewey Tippett and I was born January 24<sup>th</sup> of 1921 in North Lake location.

(M) And what is your middle name?

(D) Bangry after my mother's name, family name.

(M) And were you born at home or at a hospital?

(D) I was born at home.

(M) And can you give me the names and the birth dates of your parents and your parent's occupations?

(D) My father was born December the 7<sup>th</sup> in Iron Mountain, Wisconsin I believe and he was born December the 7<sup>th</sup> in 1894 and my mother's name was Mary Edith Bangry she was born on May the 7<sup>th</sup> born at home in west Ishpeming in 1895. She was born and died in the same house.

(M) And your father's name?

(D) My father was Walter Tippett I don't believe he had a middle name.

(M) And what were your parent's occupations?

(D) My mother was a housewife and my dad was during his short life had quite a number of jobs he worked for the state highway department and he was a guard at the Marquette branch prison. And he was a police officer, a night cop in the police force in Marquette and he worked in mines at various times and his last place he worked was when he lost his life working in a mine.

(M) And which mine was that and what was the date?

(D) He was killed Barns and Hecker disaster on his first day of work there. And that was on November the 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1926.

(M) Now can you tell me where you grew up and give me a little chronology of your school, where you went to school? Did you graduate from high school and what did you do after high school?

(D) Well I was born in North Lake location and we lived there for a very short time after I was born and then we moved into west Ishpeming location for briefly and then we moved o Marquette when my dad was employed at the prison and on the police force in Marquette. And then in 19... in the spring of 1926 we moved back to Ishpeming, west Ishpeming and lived at with my grandfather, my mother came up to take care of my grandmother who was ill and she passed away during the summer of 1926. So my mother stayed on to look after my, keep house for my grandfather and so my dad quit his job at the prison at Marquette because it was too far too hard to travel back and forth in the winter months. And he took a job in the mine and consequently lost his life there and so we stayed on living with my grandfather until the time I left home. And I went to school in west Ishpeming through eighth grade and then attended Ishpeming High School and then graduated there.

(M) In what year?

(D) I think 1934. And attended Ishpeming High School and then graduated from Ishpeming High School in 1939 and at that time there was um we were still in the... we were still affected by the Great Depression there was jobs were still quite scarce. So after I drive back and forth for a year trying to get a job at the mine that they were still regular employees who were laid off and the mines weren't working very much at that time. So I enlisted in the Navy for six years and that was June of 1946 or 1940 for six years until June of 1946.

(M) Can you recount for me what you remember... and I guess another piece of information that I would like to fill in is, did your mother ever remarry? And if so to whom? And what did he do? And then also um what do you remember about things that you saw with the local mines in Ishpeming during the time that you were growing up and things that they might have done to help their employees out?

(D) My mother remarried to Russell Hill who also worked at the mine he was a shift boss at what they call the Section 16 Mine and he was working for the Oliver Mining Co. at that time. I don't remember exactly what year it was that they were married I imagine it was I think it was probably around 1930 or 31' to my recollection. He worked at the Section 16 and then he went over to the Holmes Mine and then he had a job there that he quit there and then he got a job sinking a shaft at the Greenwood Mine. And he worked there for a short time and then he had a job as the Lode Mine at North Lake and that's where he retired from the Lode mine. I don't remember what year he retired but I'd have to do some checking to remember to find out to recall this at that time.

(M) Now during the time that you were growing up, were there times when the production was low and there was a need for the mine to make some special considerations to help the employees out?

(D) Not to my recollection... Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company was... I think most of the mines were working down to two day a week schedule. The mine actually worked perhaps four days of work but they split it up so that the employees would get at least two days, try to get them two days a week of work. As much as possible and I don't remember for how long that went because I was quite young at that time and I don't recall too much about what the working schedule was but I know during the summer time they called it the mining company's go out garden plots on company land. And they did the plowing and so forth to give out prepared garden plots so that the employees could, if they wished could have a plant a garden and raise potatoes and vegetables to help them through the winter months. And they also at that time wood was the main fuel that people used so they during their time off they would cut woods and prepare the woods fuel in. The mining company often gave wood logs off company land so they can go in and cut a winter supply of wood. People used to get together and help each other to harvest the wood and then when they'd get it home they'd get together that worked together to help the neighbors to get the wood sawed. And after the wood was sawed up into stove lengths and everything it was up the individuals to split and pile their own wood and store it away there for the winter. But the people helped each other a whole lot back then as good neighbors and family members to help each other because it was pretty much a matter of survival! It would be nice to see that a lot of that same attitude that was would prevail today but you don't see so much of it any more, it seems to be everybody for themselves these days.

(M) Tell me what you remember about seeing the stockpiles of ore staked off during that period.

(D) Well as I recall there that there specially traveling back and forth to town but back in those days you walk you didn't ride because there were very many cars that were running, especially in the winter time. But walking to town you had to travel, walk right by the Cliff Shaft Mine and what they stock pile ground was right out to the road and that right back to some of the houses right along going into town. I remember seeing stakes up along the stockpiles and I was told that those...there were tags on the stakes that you could see I couldn't read them from the road but you could see them. But I was told those stakes indicated that there was a lead on a certain amount of tonnage in the stock piles and those stakes indicated that banks the companies who held a lead on a certain amount of word. That's what the company used to try to keep the miners working.

(M) Anything else about that time that you recall that you'd like to put on tape?

(D) Well at the moment I don't know probably not on tape that come to mind or nothing I can think of right now. There are probably other things that come up from time to time that I can

recall. Since I grown up here there are a lot of things that you start reminiscing about but takes a little while to recall them sometimes.

(M) Let's go back then and picked up where we left off with getting out of the service and the service is a whole other story there is one incident I might ask you to talk about later on but you were discharged from the Navy when and then what did you do after that?

(D) Well I was discharged from the Navy on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June in 1946 and at that time there people that were discharged from service were guaranteed of a benefit of 20 dollars a week for 52 weeks which we call the 52-20 club. But of course that didn't go very far anyway but it was nice to have that to fall back until you get a job. But in August of 46' I got a job working for Negaunee Mining Company there was a Cleveland Cliffs there but Mather A but it was a fairly new mine at that time they were just really beginning to grow so I had a job there. Before I the summer months of my high school days I worked well... the summer beginning of 1938 I had a job working for a contract building a new school in the North Lake location up there. I worked on the foundation part there during the summer months. And we worked for 35 cents an hour mixing and pouring concert and hand shoveling gravel and during the hot days I didn't stop to take a drink of water too often because somebody else is ready to take your job if you slowed down. But we were very well satisfied to work for 35 cents an hour.

(M) Now one thing we didn't mention was that you were a veteran of World War Two and at the time that you were discharged from the service was when the war was over. When you started working at the Mather A, what was your job and do you remember what your hourly rate of pay was?

(D) Well I started to work at the Mather A and my first job was cleaning track that's what every most case had new employees had laborers, I was a laborer but they start off with a pick and shovel cleaning track. Cleaning track is where the hauling locomotives used to haul supplies in and out from the shaft and supplies in and the ore trains would come out so there was a lot of spillage of ore especially on the loading shoots and this place had to be cleaned up to keep the track in good shape. I think at the time I started at this, I was still in service when the first big strike here came being in 1946 I think the strike started in March and ended up in around in June if I'm not mistaken. But I was still in the service at the time so I don't know, I recall but very little about the things that happened with the strike but one of the agreements at that time was the wage agreement. The wages were a dollar an hour but with some shift differential involved there too for a couple of cents for afternoon shift and a couple more shifts for night shifts. Basically I started cleaning track and then I went from cleaning track to timber hoister.

(M) Can you describe how long did you clean track and then what does a timber hoister do?

(D) I only cleaned track for a couple weeks there because like I said it was a new mine and the mine expanded there was new contracts were opening up for contract mining. And that's what most of the guys that were working down there were looking for an opportunity to get into a

contract, as contract miner because you were paid on an incentive bases there that if you work hard you can more money! You were paid usually at that time by, miners are paid by car for producing ore or if they were driving drifts and so on they would pay by the foot for advance heading of a drift. But to get off, you had to kind of work your way up from starting off as being a general laborer, that track cleaner and get timber hoister is when you in hematite mines had when they drove drifts you had to support the ground in there because it just a soft ore. And at that time they were using wood timber and consequently hoisting new supplies to the miners that pulls the wagon and wood timber that's where the title of timber hoister came in. Is you hoist the supplies up in the raises and the supplies would be brought in on trucks and dropped off to different places underneath raises that to be hoisted up to the miners working up in areas above the main level. After timber hoister after you are what the company count job mainly Gwinn scrapping or on from the transfer where the miners can get above the main level a few sublevels up where the ore had to be scrapped out to get into the main raises there for ore shoots to be loaded into cars down on the main level. So there would be scrapper men that be transfer scrapping where they'd be scrapping the ore out and into these... stooping. Stooping were developed the miners what they would do is stooping and that's where they drill and blast in the long holes and they did that some a few back sale days days where they works on what they call a bench stoop or a bench. Drilling holes off the bench and out road the big opening where the stoop actually be a big void as the ore was removed and you can see out and the bigger it got it made it harder to see to see nothing but darkness out there. But they scrapped the ore out through these bill raises and turn it down to transfers and from all the scrapping and that you get some company count jobs was timbering was putting in repair timber. That was a different work areas that take a lot of weight and if they have safe place to work it was place that was taking weight because the ground was moving or coming down nothing was hanging up so they know that the place is taking weight that it's a safer place to work in. So consequently some of these places would get heavy and the timber would break or get down kind of, the drift would get kind of small so you'd have to go and open it up and put in new timber and stuff so you'd have timbering jobs. Contract miners would also repair their own contract but they were places on any level where timber men would do that kind of work. And then if they'd get into contract mining is where you were paid by incentives either by so much per car, you'd get by the car of ore you produced. Or if you are a stooping and if you are drifting you were paid by the foot depending ore would one price and size of the drift would be one thing and a main level drift on rock would be something else again. And in some places where you had good rock you could drive what they call a naked drift there was no support in there with the ground was such an age that it didn't need support. And when you got into areas where you had to use supports and you would get paid a little bit more because you had to use timber, putting up the timber and stuff.

(M) I meant to back up a little bit some of these terms defined and um before we do that we kind of stopped with what jobs you had with, I'm assuming all of the things that you have to described that you moved through. But if you can go in order and tell me um you were a timber hoister for about how long? Um you were a laborer for two weeks a timber hoister for about how

long? And then what jobs and about how long for each of those during the time that you worked in the mines? Without going into detail what they are I'd like to just get that chronology down first and then go back and talk about some of the words that you already started to use.

(D) Well I was a general laborer for a few weeks, I don't remember just how long it was but it was a few weeks and then I timber hoisted for probably um a few months as different opportunities came along and sometimes they give shift to different kind of work too so you weren't doing the same thing every day. But I'd say I was a timber hoister for a few months too and then scrapping for a while but I don't think it was less than a year and I had a job as a contract miner because as I say it was a fairly new mine and it was expanding as new levels opened up and new work areas and whether they could add on more contracts. Because as the mine expanded to get up to his production potentially and production schedule they had to have more mining contracts in order to develop areas and to mine the ore after these areas are developed. You had developing contracts and then those guys who put up, the miners who put up the raises and drove the drifts and then there were some guys, the miners that were moved in as production miners, as taking the ore out. Some men preferred to stay on development and some rather have and stooping took some experience too with the benches and so on. But the method of mining changed quite rapidly too from the time I started down there because they went from the bench slats didn't last very long and then they went to sublevel caving and long hole drilling and even some of those types of mining were modified and changed when they found better systems of doing it. Each new system was mainly... well a lot of it involved safety and the bottom line is cutting cost and cutting production cost. So there is better ways of doing things, safer and cheaper.

(M) That's go ahead now I still want to back track and get some of the terms down but you were a contract miners with all of its various different little other tasks for about how long and then what after that? And for how long?

(D) Well about well we were developing and driving a drift develop in an area for stopping for sometimes they would put up a raise from the main level and some places they had regular raise what they call regular raise line. And their job exclusively was to put up crib raises and the crib raises is a raise compartment with approximately four foot squares. Sometimes you had a single raise that would go up for a latter road and supplies and everything and you had another raise would be sometimes you'd have a two compartments and one side would be for manway and supplies and the other one would be for war passes. For dropping the ore down up onto the main level where it would be loaded into cars and when you put up a raise you cut out what raise and drive drifts and most of these drifts were in ore development were all timbered. And say when I started mining they would use wood, wood timber and over a period of time and for various types of steel supports are different. The steel is more expensive, it's a higher cost for steel to begin with but it reduced a great amount, the amount of repair work that was done so it all in all over a period of time the steel was more economically to use because it lasted longer and it was stronger. And there were times when there was a whole lot of repair work that had to be done

even with steel because when the old miners used to say is you can't hold up the state of Michigan with a couple of props! [Laughs] So when you start opening up an underground down there especially getting into areas where there is ore it takes a lot of weight. And maybe the main level drifts were they were living in what they call the foot log in the rock so that the drifts held up better there and they were... And then when you get into along the foot or close to the ore body and as you get in what they call cross guts that would go into from the main line would be branch line off to into the ore so they can get into the ore body and develop the ore.

(M) At what point... you were a supervisor underground for a while, we need to talk about that for a bit. At what point did you become a supervisor and then what did you do that on all three shifts and for about how long? And then what jobs did you have in order until you retired? And when was that?

(D) Well I was mining until, I think I don't remember exactly when I started shift boss and...

(M) We are going stop here and go to the second side of the tape. We started to talk before I turned the tape over about being a supervisor and about when that happened and what your responsibilities were?

(D) Well I think it was about 1950 or 51' when I went out for the job as the shift boss and at the time we were offer the job of shift boss we were just opening up driving up main level drifts – to second level at Mather A. One of the things that I do remember about that is one of the not ready to take the job imminently because we had in those days what we called big has coming when we had lots of footage and we were going to make big money and I would have lost two times and half on a Saturday and a Sunday night. But anyway when I was offered the job and I said I would take it so I went back into my going into my contact and I wasn't in there very long when the foreman came in and wanted to know if I was taking the job. He said come out right now so I had to start right away. But a job as a in those days a supervisor was they had the mining cap and then the second cap and then they had the shift foreman and then their supervisor was referred to as a shift boss. And you worked three shifts day, afternoon and night shift and you had, mainly you were given a certain area of the mine that you were responsible for and you see that thee work was getting done. And you have general laborers working under you and you had the scrapper men and you had miners and whatever what type of mining was going on and you had a supervisor. So you had quite a variety of things that you were responsible for and seeing that it's getting done.

(M) Can you tell me was each shift boss responsible for one level or for the whole line? About how big would the number of man on the crew that you were responsible for be and how big an area of the mine would that encompass?

(D) Well that varied because sometimes some of the levels that didn't have too many people working on it there wasn't one boss that could take care of one level but there were times when we had as many as four and sometimes five bosses on one level, because if the level covered a

big area then a lot of mining operation was going on one level they were given a certain territory of that level to take care of and that was as if it were your run. That is the run that you make that and you had to cover your territory twice a shift. So sometimes you would the distance between levels and everything was sometimes you would have contracts that would be up and you had to climb up a couple hundred feet to get up to them and sometimes it was easier to go in on another level and start to climb down then it would be to keep climbing from the bottom up. So the way you covered your territory was it was some different variations of how it would depend on what kind of access you would have to the part of mine that you were responsible for. And then at different times you might be given a different assignment if a condition changed in one part of the mine and there was something, part of it would be certain area that would be mined out. Well then, they would be given another area to look after so as the conditions in the mines changed some of your responsibilities would change too.

(M) And the size of the number of men that you would have that you had to...that had reporting to you would vary from how few to how many on a given shift?

(D) Well when I, it varied somewhat but who it would probably be depended on the shift that you are on. Probably vary from somewhere between 20 to 40, 45 men sometimes 50 men on a shift. One of the reasons I recall some of that is because I was, after I got out of the Navy, I signed up the Naval Reserve to protect my rating in the navy and when the Korean War started I was subject to recall to active duty again but my job as a supervisor in my industry in the iron ore mining. As long as I was, they had a file they would send me a questionnaire that I that I had to sent in regarding what my responsibilities were as far my job was concerned. So my job as a supervisor kept me from going back into the Korean War.

(M) Alright you were a supervisor then until for about how long and then what did you do after that and why?

(D) I was a supervisor at Mather A until I think 1959 I think I was transferred to the Mather B as a shift boss. And Mather A shut down a year later and I stayed on as a supervisor over there but there was some changes made when some of the bosses came over from Mather A to be shafted. And some of the other mines shut down, there were bosses coming and I ended up as a dispatcher at Mather B and I think I held that job for fifteen years I guess. But the dispatcher job was to control the haulage board throughout the mine. By radio you would direct the EG locomotives was travelled be or communicated with a radio by radio. And I think there was a time when they were, we were responsible for as many as about fifteen or seventeen motors. Traveling on various, levels and sometimes we had probably seven or eight trains on one level and all travelling on the same track! From shafting sides so you had to direct traffic so that to prevent collisions. Some trains that were going in empty for more ore and those that were waiting to come out shaft bring other train down shaft besides the trains the supplies had to go in and out. There were times when we had some accidents too cause mistakes were made and the motor operator the motormen as they were called the motor operators were not allowed to move



their motor or their train without permission from the dispatcher. And if they got their train loaded they would call into the dispatcher and say they were loaded and the dispatcher would direct the movement from there in the shaft. Sometimes trains would go off the track and there would be and tracks out be tied up and there were times when there was a misunderstanding of the instructions and there would be a collision and some resulted in some serious accidents. I never had any myself but I had three that were involved in bad personal critical injuries to people there. But sometimes the equipment was a little banged up there but the main concern was not so that people wouldn't get hurt. But like I say there was a few accidents involving people too that were seriously injured but it's kind of a time it was kind of a unlikely job because you know you are responsible for the safety of so many people there that making a mistake was always in the back of your minds. So that I stayed there as a dispatcher at the Mather B until Mather B closed in 1979 and on our shift there, on the day shift on the last day of mine work we hoisted the last skits of ore from the Mather B mine on our crew. And then from there I was transferred to the Empire Mine and I went to the Empire Mine as a supervisor and I was a primary crusher and conveyer foreman. Then I held that job until I retired in April of 1983.

(M) Alright lots of terms lots of things to talk about. I think what I would like to do is fill in some of the information about your job as a dispatcher first and then work backward a little bit. I'm particularly interested in what you said about hoisting the last of the ore of the Mather B. can you describe a little bit about what that day was like and was there and special commemoration done of the last hoist out of the mine and do you remember the date?

(D) I think it was July 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> of 1979 that was the last day and then I went on vacation and then it was the middle of August when I started at the Empire. I'm pretty sure it was day shift on July 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> of 1979. I guess there get to take some it was, I don't remember all the detail but there was some official there to take pictures of the last skip of ore that came up and I think they had some T.V. people there talking to some of the miners as they came up from underground on the last shift there as what they thought about the mine. The last closing the last underground iron ore mine so it was kind of a nostalgia day you know that was the last of the underground mine. Over at the Empire Mine and there were fellas that I worked with over there that didn't like the open pit mines very much. And they said if they start pumping water at the Mather B they'd be the first one to sign up to go back underground.

(M) Why?

(D) People liked the... the underground miners enjoyed working underground it was a good place to work.

(M) Why?

(D) Well it was at time it could be dirty job and were wet places and dry places but the people that worked underground had a whole different attitude about their job because there were people would help each other and there was an order of contract miners as they would putting up what

you call, a set of timber was consistent of two legs and what they call the cap. Put two legs on and then put the cap on but some of these caps were too heavy. So you go over to a neighboring contractor I need a hand with this cap, sure go over and help each other out that way. One of things there when you go down to work and underground, it was everyday was the same. You are around you are dressed the same, the temperature could be very cold outside when you go to work you go underground it's nice and warm. In the summer time it would be up ninety degrees it was hot, you go underground it was nice and cool.

(M) About what was the temperature underground?

(D) Oh I don't remember... I don't know if there was any actual, well some places it was different because there were some places that would get hot down there but it would depend on well the ventilation was. They had big fans that would force air down and they had what would come down through, air would come down through a believe Mather A and also Mather B the mines were connected up there that was a band for ventilation. And I believe after Mather A shut down it was a second out it was an escape route for any problems that might have shored up or happened in the b shift side you had an escape route. But sometimes working on the main level would be the coldest because that's where the main floor would be but you had air doors where the mine was controlled by what they called air doors. You could direct the flow of air through a different portion of the mine and to ventilate it by the use of doors and fans. But temperature varied throughout the mine but it was overall you didn't have wear any special clothes for different place you worked. If you go down to work men usually wore an overall jacket or some kind of jacket and when you get into a working place you take it off you didn't have very much, it was very comfortable to work.

(M) Alright clothing is another topic I want to get back to... I guess I'd like to focus a little bit for now on your job as a dispatcher. What was the area called in which you worked and where was it located?

(D) Well they called it a dispatcher shack and you had well when they first began using a dispatcher to direct the haulage traffic they had a dispatcher on each level and the dispatcher would control the trains on just his level. And then I believe they put up maps, what they call a map board it was a diagram of the levels and the crosscuts in there with all the shoot numbers and everything in there. And the crosscut were numbered and the shoots would be numbered and you would direct the traffic to go in and out from more than one level. And finally it was moved to a job on surface and controlled from surface. And then you took care of the whole mine and you answered phone calls for on the afternoon and the night shifts would call in for not being able to come to work or giving an excuse for not coming to work and any emergency you would handle them from there. And then also you controlled at times we held fire drills or emergency drill, not necessarily just for a fire but it would be an emergency drill. You'd wait until all the men got into the working place and then they would blast the word by radio that you were having an emergency evacuation drill and tell these people where to come down from their working

places and where they had to go to report to their immediate supervisor so everybody could be accounted for. These drills were carried on periodically and they were not, the men were never notified ahead of time that they were going to be a drill so that they see how long it would take for these men to reach a safe haven or a place where they could be accounted for and be given further instruction. Whether they had to leave the mine or to go to a different part of the mine that would be safe area for them to be in. So if this happen to be for a fire or something like that, they got to know how to get them out and where to go and mainly it was a rehearsal just a safety factor to find out how long it would take. Just so people would be familiar with what to do if there was an emergency.

(M) And how long would it take once the word was given that there was a drill, and emergency drill until the time that everybody was accounted for?

(D) Well it varied some month from the times when some of the men didn't, weren't too happy about it because they had to climb down hundred and fifty feet a rails or something like that from working up in high place and they would have to come back down again for the drill. It would probably would take seven or eight minutes to get them down to the point for they and then each station had to account for these people. Then it would be, you had to whenever these drills were being held there would be supervisors either in most cases the mine superintendent would be present to see how these people were being coordinated and running in after everybody was accounted for and then they would say ok send the men back to work so then you tell ok they would go over and go back to the work areas again. So it a matter of a few minutes and then you would have men to the places that that they had to, different areas of the mine they had different areas to report to their immediate supervisor. So maybe it would be if you had two bosses shacks on a level or whatever boss they would have gone through they would have to go through these different shift bosses shacks and they would report in there. Then the guys who were out in the manning area of the shaft or the skip benders and cage rider would be down there, some people working around the shaft there would be they would call in over a intercom system and let you know that they were stationed there. So they would be all accounted for.

(M) How was the word passed underground? Was there did the guys in the drifts have radios? Or was there somebody sent up the hundred and fifty foot ladder or could they just yell? How would they get the word to the people in the drifts?

(D) Well it would be of course all the locomotors would have radios and then they had intercom systems there, a place throughout the mine and anybody who happened to be that wasn't within hearing distance of an intercom, most working areas would have one but if there were guys that would be a little bit away from the intercom, why anybody else that was in the working area they would help call to each and they would pass the word on to the others. And go to the evacuation drill and but they were very good about cooperating and passing the word on to each other calling for each other in other words to make sure they got down and report where they were

supposed to go. But they had those radios and intercom system and like such as a PA system and then word of mouth.

(M) Can you describe a typical interaction between you and a motorman when you were the dispatcher? What exactly was said? What would you say what would the person below say?

(D) Well if you had a... at the beginning of the shift when you start off the shift all the lowers on each level the dirt trains in there they would bring their cars out of the shaft and we had a cage flashlight or what we call a cage flap on the side where the supplies came down on and the supply motor would pick up his. And there was a double track there on the flat so that mainly for a place to hold supplies that they would have not taken off the cage and come down on the cage and then they would be left on the flat. And there were some areas inside that would be drifts that would be that would not actually any mining operations going on and there would be supplies would be stored in there. And then over at what they call the skit road or the dump side would be the hollow trains would be over on the other side. And when these... each locomotive was numbered and they had so many cars that they would use, that same cars would be hooked to the train. Except when they came out to the dump and then one train on side and then that would be hauled to the dump automatically and they hook them up, they call it hook it up to the dump and then the hydraulic system would pull the cars through the dump and dump them into the skits. The skits would then you know control the movement of those cars that they were dumping. Well then they get on the empty car side and passed over the dump and get over to the empty car side and there were a couple of tracks over there. And then the locomotive would pick up what his seven or eight cars or whatever, eight, nine car train that they would have. Well some of them leave...they were pretty much a ten car train. But sometimes the front of the train varies depends on what car are available too. And so when they had his train ready to go and the motormen would report into the dispatcher and call in by his motor number. So say like 12<sup>th</sup> level or they'd have 1201 might be a supply motor or maybe that 1208 1209, 12 12 whatever and each motor was number but the little number preceded the locomotive number so you know that he is on the twelfth level motor number eight is ready to go inside. Ok and you just tell him ok you can go in and go in to certain crosscut though you are probably going into... if they had ore that scrapper men would or places would have to be moved pretty much ahead of time. If at the beginning of the shift you knew where you are going to be, where ore will be hauled from. You had maybe three, or four or five or six crosscuts that these miners were working at that the ore was coming from so you say well it's going to 1208 crosscut. So that's a twelve level number eight crosscut on twelfth level. So it would sometimes be 1208 going into the 1208 crosscut but each locomotive was numbered and again you gave them instructions where to go from there. But sometimes you say go in there and there was but there wouldn't be enough to load his train so I just send him to a different crosscut. In the meantime if there was say six or eight ore trains hauling down there you had to coordinate them so that they go in, so sometimes they loaded two or three trains in one crosscut. They would have different loading station in there so they would go in there and load that way. and then sometimes they would have them follow out as many as

two or three trains, you can handle two at the dump, at the dump area at a time and they call it tailing so they go down into the dump and another one would go there an tail room. And when the first train got through a dump and he'd back out and come out back around to the empty car side, he'd have to come back on the mainline and go back to the empty car side. Well you had another one that was always a dam just before you get to where the trains are load onto the cage flat, there is a dump down there that is a big, there's a dam there that the purpose of the dam is in case you have a water problem, the mine starts to flood they put these timbers in the dam and they could block off the level. So that was a place where everybody knew as far as the dam and hold there and wait for further instructions from there. So when the other motors got into the empty car side and the dump was clear then I could have two motors, two trains waiting at the dam but that is one of the reasons for the dispatcher was so before the time of dispatchers you use a shaft light when a motor went out the shaft whether it be supply motor go out there shaft to go pick up some trucks of timber or whatever, supplies you turn on a shaft light. It would be a red light that had a motor, any train coming out that had switch there would know that there is a motorize shaft and he had to wait until that one came in. So in the meantime here is a load of trains sitting there waiting there and maybe there skips are vital empty out there. But this way with a control head with a dispatcher you could direct traffic out there and keep a pretty steady flow of ore of coming out there. It would speed up the operation a lot.

(M) Now when we finished on the end of the first tape you were talking about the older system of having lights in the shaft.

(D) No they weren't in the shaft there weren't lights in the shaft, they were called shaft lights, they were located on the mainline main level at each cross cuts there was a train went to shaft they would turn on the red light. Reefer to the shaft light and that indicated that there was a motor in that shaft and they would have to wait until that motor came back in from shaft. They weren't the lights were outside shaft they were inside. And the motor came in from shaft, the motorman had turned the lights on, is the motorman would turn the light off. So that somebody else wouldn't be, couldn't not... that was a validation of the follows for somebody else to turn the shaft light off. If when the motor that went out shaft turned it on he was the one who turned it off so then they would know that it clear to go back and somebody else to go to shaft when the light was out.

(M) Can you reenter for me, you have established that you might have 1208 going to 1208, tell me exactly what you would say to the motorman on that motor and what he would exactly say back to you. Did you have standard things that you would say to each other so they knew the communication was over and how would that go?

(D) Well if a motor said if... a 1208 was out in the what they call the yard there where the empty cars were kept after they came through the dump. Well you would call in and they would identify himself as he would call in 1208. And he'd say ready to go in. So say ok well if the mainline was clear there weren't a lot of trains coming to shaft well just tell him 1208 hold up in the yard. And

then after the mainline was clear you call 1208 and he would answer you by his number and then he would tell him ok you can go in 1208 crosscut and 1209 crosscut can go into whatever shoot number that you assign him to. And you tell him such and such shoot has... mainly those places where transfer points where instead of loading directly into these cars from the -- but this system it's kind of... went down to a transfer on what you call a top timber. One drift imminently above the other that was what was often a crosscut and then they would the dirt would be stored up in there, the scrapper men could scrap until you say as the train goes on out the shaft. He would what they call bank up, he would keep scrapping up and he was banking it up in there. As soon as the train came in then he could start loading the train and what he had banked up if he had enough to fill a train ok if he didn't well then you take what was there and send you send him to another shoot. But you never referred to a motor by the motorman's name you refereed to it as always as a number, a locomotive number. That way there is no chance of a mistake that two guys with the same name or something on each shift, whatever motor operator after in most cases they, the motorman would be assigned to a motor and that would be his motor he took out every day. And he always had to look out for the equipment on these motor that it was functioning properly and if the breaks were adequate to stop the train when it needed be. If there was any problems showed up with the motor he reported it and then you would take a spare motor or he would have to have a maintenance work on the motor do whatever was needed to be done to get it back into service as quickly as possible. But that was the motorman's job to see that his motor was kept in running condition and safe operated at all times.

(M) As a rough estimate, how many motors would be active on given shift? Did it vary by day, afternoon and midnight or was it the same all the time?

(D) Well it was... each shift was pretty much the same a certain amount of a certain number of trains that would be up operating each day because again the number of haulage trains were geared to the production agent and you need so many trains to get out so many tons of ore each shift. And that's pretty much to a certain number of trains would have to be running quite continuously as fast as you can be loaded and to keep them going so that the main thing was to keep the skip going and it would... and the longer you can keep loading cars on the dump side you were a little bit a head there so that there was any time the skip stops, that's tons lost because you can't the skip can only make a given number of trips up and down the shaft in eight hours. And if any time the skip stopped because there was no dirt that a loss, a loss you can't make up.

(M) Now on these, on the tonnage production expectation per shift was every... was there a tonnage goal set for each shift and incentives that were given if that tonnage was met? And sanctions given if the tonnage was not met?

(D) Well no they... then again there was a little bit of pride in people's work. And there were times when I think there was a need for a certain number of cars per shift and if I am not mistaken some of the records for... I forget now what the record was but if somebody would break a record and then the next shift they were always looking for all the dirt so they could see

if better it by one car. So it was little bit of a time when you knew there was a lot of dirt available if there was a chance to break somebody's record by one car well or tied it you took those opportunities. And even among the motor crew themselves were pretty much competitive with other shifts too because they always felt that the motor crew was just as good as the next guy too and not a little bit better. So I would say one thing about working underground there was a little bit of competition in there which was quite good because it showed that people had some pride in their work too. But there was a certain in order to get well based average thinking of it there was a time when I forget now it's in the neighborhood of twenty five hundred tons of shift or something like that. Sometimes you would get three thousand tons if you had a really had a good day see. The skip was limited to there were fourteen ton skips and if you keep that thing going there were a maximum number of skips there, that trips that skip could make. It would take it something like two and half minutes to go from say down on the fourth floor to the dump on surface up there. So your maximum tonnage was per shift was controlled by that factor the number of trips the skips could make in there. And one time at I think it was the last day of the year at the Mather A when we came within... well then four or five skips I believe it was of the maximum that and we broke the record and it was never broken after that because well only thing that kept it from the getting the last couple of skips there because you blow a fuse on the crusher anytime on inside on the seventh level then the crusher shut down so they miss the last few skips but they even the super was kind of concerned that something might happen when you push it to the limit like that. But I forget now those three hundred and some skips anyway and that never was exceeded after that.

(M) And that happened on one of your shifts?

(D) Yeah on our shifts otherwise I wouldn't have mentioned it. [Laughs]

(M) Now was there?

(D) Off the record something...

[Tapes turns off]

(M) Now let's go back and pick up some of the terminology that we didn't talk about and I'm sure more will come up as we go along. But I'm just going to start with my list and if something seems out of order or you can define it in a little bit better order than I have here that's fine. Um first of all some of the first things that came up were contracts and contract mining, can you tell me contract miners were employed my Cleveland Cliffs and paid a basic rate plus an incentive is that how that worked?

(D) Yeah you had what was called Miners Company Count, they were guaranteed a minimum daily scale with their contracts, if they couldn't, if the condition were such that they couldn't make much on the incentive portion. There were times when various things would happen there that they couldn't actually do contract work and they had do other things so that they were

guaranteed a minimum scale as a part of their contract. But a contract was figured in a number of way depending on what your contract was, if you were advancing a raise it be called a naked raise which was implied that there were no line or support in it. Or a crib raise and that was you were put in the cribbing you were paid a rate so much per foot for advancing the raise, getting the raise. Driving a drift would be depends on the size of the drifts you were and the material you were going to use. Some place were using looking at just regular wood timber where some of the sublevel drifts were. Another drifts were above the main level were mainly eight foot drifts where main level hollow drifts were nine feet, nine foot high and nine foot wide at the top portion of a nine foot cap. Of course than you had a little bit of rake on the lake and a little wider on the bottom but they referred to it as a nine-foot drift or an eight foot drift. And the size of the drift too would depend on the rate per foot they were getting or if you were drifting in ore would be one rate or or if you are drifting on rock would be a different rate per foot. And on lots of the sublevel drifts that were put in there you worked depending on the kind of steel or the supports were being use, the size of the drifts would vary and the height and diameter and you were paid according to mainly the amount of ground you were taking out.

(M) Let me just stop you for just a second, a sublevel drift meant that it smaller than a nine-foot or eight foot or did it mean that it was below the main level? What was a sublevel?

(D) A sublevel would be above or below the main level is always referred to the level, the main level is referred to the level and then what is referred to as subs were any drifts that were developed or advanced in between the main levels. The horizontal drifts between mainly sublevels are drifts that were put in to develop the ore body. Put in above the main level for the development in the ore body.

(M) Um what is cribbing?

(D) Well cribbing was... mainly made from tamarack trees and they were about I don't remember the exact measurements of them but they were approximately four feet, they were maybe a little bit more in length but they were knocked on either end so that you could, they were used to line raises what we called crib raises. And they were mainly put up in areas that were in ore development areas or where the rock was not in such of a nature that it needed support. The opening that was made large enough to accommodate the cribbing and the crib raises would be used for the manways, the flatter roads we'd call them and supply raises and then there would be also raises put up for transferring of ore from one elevation to another, call them ore path raises. Usually the cribbing the crib raises were always lined with three inch hard wood plank to prevent the cribbing from wearing out and the planks wore out sometimes and you had to go in there and replace worn out planks in order to keep, preserve, protest the cribbing from worn out before the area was mined out.

(M) So tamarack was used for this because of its hardness then?



(D) Well it was a pretty durable wood and it didn't, it was tough and it was.... it didn't rot out very easily it was one of the things you had to with a lot of wood that was underground depending on the moisture or the air and the temperature condition down there that a lot of places the wood would rot over a period of time. Lots of wood timber would go rotten down there with a fungus would grow on it and it would be all kind of interesting shapes of fungi that would grow on the wood timber. But cribbing tamarack cribbing was pretty durable stuff for underground, especially that was in a place that was considered to be kind of a wet area there that lasted for a long long time.

(M) How was cribbing different from lagging?

(D) Well cribbing is used to line raises for support and well I shouldn't say... mainly cribbing was made from tamarack tree but they did there was a time when they got into using hardwood cribbing but that was sod, mainly with sod it was square timbers. But mainly for just round cribbing it was used tamarack was used until developed... tamarack began to get scarce and then there was some very little hardwood cribbing used. But the difference between cribbing and lagging, lagging is usually used to split cedar! And that was used to cover over the back through the tops of the timbers that keep anything they put poles over the timber and then covered the pulls with the lagging, that's what keep any rock or ore from dripping through or junk coming loose and kept everything up above the timbers.

(M) What's the back?

(D) The back is usually the roof of the drift. The back is the roof of the drift and then the heading that you are going into and advancing the drifting is called the buffet or the breasts. Say you are going into the breast of the a drift you are going into where, the area that is going to be drilled to advance a drift that's call a breast.

(M) So that was new territory? New undrilled?

(D) Yeah if you are driving a drift in there when you blast out around there then you took the ore or the rock out and put in the timber supports so when you get ready to advance another four or five or six feet then they would have size of supports you were using in there. Why you just drilled out enough to get another set of supports in there but that's always called the face or the breast is where the drilling was done to advance the drifts. When you go up in the raises up in the so the river is going to do the drilling is always referred to that as up in the breast.

(M) Can you define drifting and stooping? I think maybe you just did define drifting but what are the two drifting and stooping and what is the difference between the two?

(D) well the mainly is drifting is a little tunnels you drove in there some would be, most drifting was areas where you advanced, area big enough to work in usually all that was supported. But most of the drifting is horizontal tunnels that access to the ore to where you want to mine under

and they have also they had what they call dog drifts or small access and sometimes working around the stoop area or from one drift to another connecting safety outfit to one main drift, from one work area to another. You have what you call a naked drift or a dog drift in there, just so small just big enough for a person to get through. Sometimes you can stand up in them sometimes you had to crawl through them. But it's just a small drift, but a stoop is where the ore is being mined out and after you get an opening up into an ore body from mainly you start from putting up a raise and then you would... of course there is various methods of taking out the ore but the one I am most familiar with is where they were using some bench stooping and sublevel caving and drilling from sublevels. And where you put up a raise and you started to enlarge the raise and open it up big enough so that the ore you can start blasting into that raise and the more you keep blasting all around the edge of the raise or into that raise. And then you keep retreating down the drift and you keep the stoop, the stoop is the void that is being made as the ore is being taken out. When you are stooping is you are removing the ore and creating the stoop, you have to open up a system of undercutting on a certain amount of the ore body and well it began to cave by itself but it's still a stoop but the ore keeps by its own weight keeps... the ground keeps dropping away and crushing itself and it keeps coming on. You keep removing it from underneath it.

(M) Is that what sublevel caving is?

(D) That's sublevel caving. One of the early methods was... what did they call it, the slice mining where they get up off of a raise and they would drive a drift in and when they get to the end of the ore body in there, they would what you call color down, they would cover the floor of the drift in there then they would blast that whole drift down and they went along side of that and then they'd drive another one in there and when they get the ore of that then they blast that one down. And they keep the matting in there to keep rock from and then when they get the area around the raise mined out then they would drop down, maybe ten or twelve feet and then they'd drive another eight foot drift underneath there and then they worked ahead above. Then the stoop that's up above there is a matting to keep rocks from contaminating the ore as its coming down you are just taking out the ore and then that hold the rocks and stuff back. That was the old slice mining system. Mainly for the mines got into a big... where big production deal and then the fastest and best way to getting it out was by sublevel caving and the stoops and that was much safer way then... stooping was where you had bench stoops in different levels and you would keep and you would go up and drill from there around the edge from a bench around the edge of these openings around the raises to keep it retreating back. And there... was a considerable amount of hazard involved there compared to just regular sublevel caving.

(M) What did the bench and bench stooping look like? What exactly did the bench referred to?

(D) Well you had start off with a naked drift then you go up you probably cone that out from down below what they call coning, they drill a bunch of holes around the bottom of the raise there of course you would have, depending on the height of the ore that you had there you

probably have oh up around fifteen or twenty feet. And you had a little naked drift there and you go over to the raise to connect to a number of these raises and then you'd get up to the top drift up there and then you'd blast the top ore out and then you'd come down below to the next one down below and then you blast that out so that you never under mine yourself. You always keep the bench was always taken down from down below after when you open up big enough around the raise if you worked from a kind of a bench that you work you kind of blasted off a piece of the wall there that you would leave a little arch so that you had something to work underneath so you were out in the open and you worked off of that little bench. And that arch you had left up there you could drill up into that and then you can blast down into there. And when you got the top part down you go down into the sublevels below that and you do the same thing there and you just keep taking it back. Another method of stooping they had was from what the long hole drilling when you just drove in two or three drifts and you connected up on the end there to put up a couple of raises and then you start blasting up. Long hole drilling some of the drifts you would drill forty, fifty-foot holes up in the fan all around the sides of the bottom. Each side of the drifts up there would be probably around the hole between each set would be probably have about every four or five feet you can drill around the hole. So each set you that you would bring up you would drill around the hole and you'd blast those long hold into the stoop but you get a lot of big chunks that way, sometimes that stuff was hard and trying to get those chunks down through a raise down below the bottom there were a kind of a tough situation there sometimes. They wouldn't come down close enough to where you could drill them so you try what you call bombs, putting up sticks of dynamite put long poles together poke them up there and get some dynamite up on the edge of the chunk to someplace it's easier to knock enough of it down to get it to come down so you can do something with it.

(M) Without taking the raise down with it right? So dynamiting was done partly was done to open up the new areas in the drifts but also partly to blast those big chunks loose in the raises as well? Remember any...?

(D) Well you referred to blasting chunks in raise there most of the time it was you were talking when you were stooping or undercutting or caving you are blasting the ore down then you take it out through mill raises on the bottom. Raises that had been coned and then as they are at regular intervals that you had so you would number the raises in the drifts and somewhat control the extraction of the ore by what number of mills you were pulling from. So much out of there can control by the number of mills, the mill numbers and these mills were put up from the transfer drift where you would scarp from. And these mills would be coned out or fanned out funnel shaped so that they would draw the ore down to the opening to get it into the transfer. But sometimes it wouldn't come all the way down so they would be up, that what we called they used a fish poles and put a dynamite bomb on the end of that thing and place it up in there, a place where you figured you could be effective in breaking a chunk of breaking some pieces off so it would come down a little bit closer.

(M) Um let's talk for a minute about long hole drilling and the different methods of blasting that they had.

(D) The first long hole drilling that they were using as drilling from drilling subs ore, from sublevel caving would be used big sticks of dynamite. They were about what we call a two by twenty fours, two foot long sticks of dynamite and they used a certain number of sticks depending on the length of the hole and you always gave a what they call a caller up there so you didn't blast a hole all the way down to the side of the drifts you left some solid ground around the drift there to protect the drift down there, you don't blast down so close to the drift. And then they began to replace the dynamite with using a stick of dynamite for a primer and then using ammonium nitrate and then fuel oil as a blasting agent in there. With an old recharge with the air to force the ammonium nitrate up into the holes and use a long plastic hose up there that would carry the ammonium nitrate up into the hole. Then you adjust it as the holes filled up you gradually retreated with your plastic hose. You had a kind of a tank there that you put the nitrate in and then had air pressure connected to the tank that would force the nitrate up through into the hole. And you grounded the equipment that you were charging up with the ammonium nitrate because the how is static electricity, the nitrate been forced up through the, passing through the plastic tub would make static electricity so you always grounded that to be this equipment to prevent anyhow is static electricity from igniting a premature blast down there. But a lot of that system is used even now in the open pits.

(M) Now do you remember or would you be willing to talk about any close calls that you had or that anybody that you work working with on the same shift had? And any details about it?

(D) Well close calls I had... I guess some I can hardly call because there been a number of them and I think by the grace of god I am still here but serval times almost walked into a blasting situation but I'd really rather not say too much about them. But I guess anybody who spend any amount of time working on underground mines has had situation where they were, they had close calls.

(M) Um do you remember any like inside jokes that the miners had? Were there any like works or phrases that would be used to tease people or that were kind of like running practical jokes that people had? Other than the terminology that was just used for mining do you remember any particular kinds of situation like that that were pretty funny?

(D) Oh yes there was a lot of things there that, well I remember once one time when the Mather A was filling up with water and we were trying to get down there putting in some before the pump houses were completed had to put some auxiliary pumps there to control the influx of water. One guy was down there standing there on the side of the trench there with his hand in his pockets and the master mechanic came down that was in charge of installing the pumps and he went and looked at this guy and he greeted him with a couple of off colored words and he said don't you stand there, do something! Whistle at the steam but don't you stand there! [Laughs]

but I won't reveal the name because one of those guys are still living so. There was two brothers that were contract mining and it was the days when they were still using wood timber and just the timber hoister would haul, hoist up a couple of trucks of timber they'd go through the pile and they'd look for the smallest timber that they could put up. And he said how come he keep looking for the pile to find the smallest stuff, he'd say you'd never see a big timber on the due bill? [Laughs] So I get the same pay for putting up small stuff as I do for the big stuff and the small stuff it's easier to handle and quicker.

(M) So much for the world renowned work ethic, we heard so much about. Due bills, tell me about due bills what are they?

(D) Well you get it was a statement the wages due and there was a time when we used to get them, it be two or three before we got our pay checks there we'd have a due bill and it was a statement of wages that were due. If you were contract mining it was a number of hours you had, number of hours you worked for that half or we were paid for twice a month and you had a first half and second half. Sometimes you had a big half and small halves but a pay period was always referred to as a half if you were mining and this due bill was a statement of your gross earning and it would indicate on there what was deducted for federal and state income taxes and if you had any supplies you had to pay for. And if any deductions for any charitable organizations such as what they call it...

(M) United Way?

(D) United way, United Fund, United Way as such thing you had that taken off and if you had a deduction for maybe for savings bonds where you are saving stuff like that it was all, that would be a statement what your check amount was going to be and what your gross earnings were and then what your statement was what your take home pay was going to be.

(M) So that would be the equivalent of a present day paystub that is usually attached to the check?

(D) That's right. Some of the guys that when they got their due bill prior to when we usually get got the due bills prior to pay day, the guys liked to have a little money on the side for tavern money would add some things onto their due bill there that were false to that when they took their check home, they would cash their check before they were home but they'd show their wife, what I had to pay so much for cage rides or I dropped a tugger down a raise and broke it and had to pay for that... [Laughs]

(M) And did they get away with that?

(D) Well some seemed to get away with it pretty well see they claimed their wife didn't challenge I guess or they weren't challenged they were just satisfied to settle for what the take home pay was.

(M) What was the take home pay approximately say during the 50s what would a half pay be?

(D) During the time when I was mining, first started mining anyway I didn't mine too many years before I went bossing but if you had just a normal deduction for taxes and so on for a half of months' pay when you took home a check for 100 bucks you had a check that was 100 dollars you had a pretty good pay day. Lots of guys don't have to work too many hours these days to make what we had for two weeks' pay but it went a long way. We paid for, we made payments on houses and we had families to support and we managed to pick up an old car once and a while and we lived decently.

(M) On the due bills what were the kinds of supplies that the miners would have to pay for? I mean other than dropping a tigger down a raise?

(D) There were things you would get from the warehouse, one time if I'm not mistaken way back if you needed gloves or something like that you can get it pretty cheap and you can buy it through the company and it was... there was even some other things you could get that you could buy through the company that was cheaper than getting them from somewhere else you know. But for the most of the time like gloves were something that you go through quite rapidly anyway so a pair of gloves didn't last too long down there. So of course you weren't wearing out a pair every day or something like that but if someone needed a pair of gloves on short notice I just go to the warehouse and get them.

(M) Um I forgot what I was going to ask you. Oh were you ever paid in iron coins or script during the time that you worked for Cleveland Cliffs?

(D) No no the early days I guess they did I don't... none of my family that I ever aware of that I knew of that were ever paid in iron script, I don't recall any of that. Only articles that I read about from different times.

(M) Do you remember whether there were ever in addition to gloves and things like that you could get for your use during your job, were there any surplus supplies or things like that the miners would be allowed to purchase from the company? If so did you ever do that and what kinds of things would you have purchased?

(D) Offhand I don't recall... I don't know if there was a time when you could get boots from them or not, the rubber boots and that the hard toed boots I don't remember now too much about some of that stuff I forget.

(M) You don't have to answer this question if you don't want to but um did you remember on your first day of going underground what that felt like knowing what your father's first day underground was like?

(D) That never bothered me I felt pretty much at ease going down there in fact when I decided that was I was going to work in a mine I was kind of looking forward to going to work there. The

only thing was when my... I was still living at home when I started to work at the mine and my mother asked me not to take my mining clothes to the mine before I went to work and she said when you go to work take them with you, because that's what my father did he took his clothes to the mine the day before and so he wouldn't have to haul them and after that he was killed on his first day. So I honored her request but other than that it didn't really bother going to work under mine, I never had any fear of working in the mine.

(M) Was there ever a time when you working that there was a strike or a lay off? And I'm not as so interested in the circumstances of the strike or layoff as what you did to make ends meat during that time?

(D) The only strike I was only in that affected me was in the fall of 1949 and we had a mine went on strike on the first of October and was out until the middle of November but well we got along alright we went out and cut pulp and spruce for with my father in-law. Cut pulp on his property for him and that kept us busy until the mine started back to work again. Of course when the mine started back to work with, I think there was about the fourteenth of November or the fifteenth of November something like that so when we called in we had wood to get out of the woods so we stayed out a couple more days so we didn't miss the first days of the deer season. After that I was... before the next strike or contract was up for renewal there I had a negotiation by that time I was on salary supervisor so from then on the rest of my mining career I never was out of work I was very fortunate in that respect.

(M) Now there was a benefit that you took advantage of namely being able to take a trip on an ore boat can you describe how that was offered to employees and how people were chosen to do that what that experience was like?

(D) The salary employees were given an opportunity during the shipping season there to take a trip on one of the ore boats and there were so many allowed from each property, each shipping season there to take a trip on an ore boat and it was mainly when there was a time for a trip came up you could have, you might end up with a trip that was only goes down as far as Algoma steal and then Soo Locks and then back to Marquette and that was your trip. But some trips were pretty good but the trip was nice and you were on there as a passenger and you were well fed and you could pretty much be with what you wanted. You wanted to go on the ship it was a pretty much a pretty nice trip and you were allowed to take one guest with you mainly men that went on their trip took their spouses along or you could take a member or one member of your family. Mainly it was because of sleeping courters there you could take your wife or you could take your son or somebody along and the trip, some trips would last three or four days and some trips lasted maybe ten or twelve days. Usually when you made a trip it probably be about five or six years or more before you get another opportunity to come along because each one of the salary employees on the properties were given the opportunity if they wanted to take a trip, you wanted to know what you'd get but you'd wait until the others had their turn before they came around to you again. So I was lucky enough to have two.

(M) Did they do that kind of in like the order that you signed up or did they do it, everybody signed up and then they drew lots how did they choose?

(D) I don't know how they actually did it but it was somewhat you'd see the order there is such thing as that the older employees have the first opportunities to get those trips and then in later years the company sold their fleet of ore vessels and they don't have them anymore.

(M) Do you remember any particularly colorful characters that you worked with for whatever reason they might be colorful? Or people that you particularly admired or respected? And why?

(D) We had some pretty good, some real characters that were good workers and everything but they were comical people and we had one older gentleman there Benny Nelson [Spelled phonetically] and he was always so much the story he told but the way he could tell it. I remember one time he when, this was a time when due bills were being were in short two or three days before pay day so he had it was around the last, the middle half of November first half of November and he got his due bill... so anyway the mining captain superintendent used to make periodic trips through the mine to view the contracts and this guy was old Benny was in the contract and he always had a story to tell or some joke some good humor thing. He was always in a good mood so when the superintendent came in he sat down on the side of the drift there and talking and hung his head and the super said hey what's the matter Ben? He said boy you guys sure did me dirty this time. And he said I don't know how I can go home and face my family! And he said what you'd mean? He said well when the due bill came up he had so much money coming and he said yesterday when I picked up my check they made a mistake figuring the contracts and I don't have that kind of money coming. And he said when I got my due bill and I went home and told the family we got money this time and he got a big family and he said we are going to have turkey for thanksgiving. How am I going to go home now and tell them we are going to have chickadees and hazelnuts? [Laughs] That took care of the superintendent and he kept saying those things with a straight face too so... [Keeps Laughing] but he was he used to come up with a number of pretty good stories and some I would rather not repeat here too. But he was pretty good, he said his partner look in the service and came back from service and started work underground again so he was working partners with Benny for a while and they were up putting up a raise and so when his partner came down out of the raise. He had a bunch of stuff he was packing down, the wet bits and other stuff he had there. He said boy come down out of that raise like a paratrooper. [Laughs] With all the junk he had on him and like I say it wasn't always so much the story but the way he could tell it. So there was a number of pretty good characters we had down there, some of them there were from stories there that were pretty good but pretty much left as unrepeated stories I think. So of them might be little off colored and others were not, not to hurt anybody's feelings with something to bank way. That not the Cleveland Cliff way.

(M) Um were there any practical jokes that were routinely played on the new guys when they came?



(D) Oh yeah they there was...they would hang your jacket someplace you took your jacket off to work and you'd find it nailed to the timber or something like that. Some of the guys would do it when they'd come down when they were going to blast they'd place at lunch time, dinner time and then come down and sit on there'd be a plank and a couple of block of wood for a bench there by the what they called the cave where the switch goes into a cross cut so they would come down there where they'd have the fresh air while the smoke was going out. They would sit there in the fresh air coming down the main line, they'd have their lunch bucket and they'd hang up there buckets on a nail. A lot of time going into work they usually hang up there bucket there and then when they come down for dinnertime they'd pick it up and eat it. And sometimes they'd come down for quitting time and they'd be going to be in a hurry to catch the cage and they'd go to pick up their bucket they'd find their bucket nailed to the bench or something like that. So some of the things when you get guys in the cage and its be kicking or something like that there would be 35 men on the cage and all crammed in there pretty tight and you never know who was doing the kicking but you can suspect who they were. But we had one guy on their they'd called him Schmiggy [Spelled Phonetically] and he couldn't stand the fuzz on the peach so they'd wait to get him in the cage and somebody reach over behind him and they'd stick a peach in front of his face and the poor guy had to look at the peach and it would drive him nuts and he just nowhere to go and nothing he could do. [Laughs] It probably usually be a boss on each deck with the men to keep them in order there but there were time when you couldn't nip everything in the butt but there was pulled tricks on the guys every once in a while.

(M) Lunch buckets, there has been a lot of information out there on lunch buckets and different thing like that. During the time that you worked were there a typical type of lunch bucket and what did most of the guys take for lunch?

(D) Well they just I don't know pretty much most guys had pretty much a lunch bucket that we see today I guess. But sandwiches and stuff there because during the time when I started working the mine, working underground you had a twenty minute lunch time was a part of your negotiated contract and you had eating time on the job. Most guys would if they are mining they would, you didn't take any special time there was no special time to eat you eat whenever you wanted. Some guys would go underground and you'd see them underground and they'd get inside and they'd sit down and they'd eat the lunch right away. But most of the time miners would go into their place and work and if they would be blasting around noon time and there'd be some time before the end of the shift there, well they would work until they blasted and then they would eat while the smoke was going out. And then as soon as they get done eating the place would be pretty well cleared out they'd go back and work. When they were working on an incentive bases why the more time you could save and you can keep working on your contract heading way you are making more money that way. But otherwise there were people just the scrapper men or maintenance people and that there they usually around when they get around the neighborhood of twelve o clock well then they would drop what they'd doing and sit down and have their lunch. But years ago before the miners would work something like ten hour days they

would come up from underground and eat and that was during the time before they went down on eight hour shifts and union representation there. Lots of the miners would never carry a lunch bucket and they would come up from underground and especially up around North Lake they used to let the school about 11:30 and then the kids would be carrying up the section six and Lod and in those days it was called Lod and – they would call number one and number two. And the miners would come up from underground at noon time and have their lunch and then they would be brought hot lunches in these buckets there. The kids would help carry up lunches for the guys, of course the guys who travelled from town or something like that they'd have to just carry regular sandwiches. But a lot for these people had hot meals, sometimes a pasty in there and a hot meal.

(M) And you would have been how old when this was done with these miners in those two mines?

(D) Well I can remember going to grade school there because sometimes when they going to North Lake especially in the summer time and playing with kids up there that the kids had to be go home and Ope I got to go home and carry dinners! And sometimes if an older people working in the mine that didn't have any kids at home they'd have some of the neighbors kids would be carry the lunches up there for them, carry their dinners.

(M) We have about two minutes left on the tape, is there anything that I should have asked you about or anything you'd like to add? We didn't talk about the Anderson dog drift if you want to add or anything else?

(D) That Anderson dog drift there was usually if you are driving the dog drift there that's a small naked drift just for access for one or maybe a raise or a drift to another it was just narrow small passage way and you don't get paid for the size you get paid for the length of it. So some of these bench stoops in there where they had a little connecting dog drifts and up there and you had a drift where you could stand up in there and Cat Banners [Spelled Phonetically] coming in and he'd say this kind of a contract that I like to read you got Cat Banners and dog drifts in there so big enough for Cat Banners to fit in there and he was about six foot six and weighted about oh two hundred and fifty pounds I would imagine. He was a big man anyway but he needed room but he'd have to get down onto his hands and knees and crawl.

(M) Or risk getting stuck.

End of interview