

William Lucas

Tape #1 Side #1

June 20, 1994

260 Prospect St.

Ishpeming, MI 49849

Mary Andes Interviewer

Let's start with getting your full name and the date and place of birth.

Full Name: Bill Lucas, William Sakiri Lucas- January 5, 1911, born at home in North Lake.

Parents Names: Born in Finland, William Sakiri Lucas, Ida Lucas- Father born in Simo, Mother from Kemi, they were young around 19, or 20 when they came over to the U.S., father came over first, they were married in Ishpeming, father came over with another fella, Finland was occupied at that time by the Soviet Union, and the Czar was recruiting Finnish boys into the Russian Army, because they had some war going on in Russia, so they skipped into Sweden, and from Sweden to Norway, from Norway then they took a boat then into Canada to the Soo, from there to Ishpeming. Before they came to Ishpeming they went to Covington, a friend of my Dad's sister was married to Footala, he was the king of the Finns at that time, he was wealthy, and he had over a hundred men working for him all the time. So my Dad said we might as well stay here, dad got into the saw mill crew right away, he was pretty handy with machinery. He picked this up in his younger days, he worked in big boats, and he knew how to operate machinery and steam engines. So he operated the steam engine at the sawmill. His partner was doing every kind of work, and then they worked the week and my dad got paid - .50 cents a day or something. He told his partner it was payday, his partner said I didn't get paid, his sister said you already got paid, I gave you a shirt. He said I'm getting out of here, my Dad said I'm coming with ya. At that time my Dad was on the sawmill, and a Canadian came there one day, and wanted Dad to come to Canada with him, he was opening up a huge sawmill there. Dad said no I don't care to go there, but Dad said one thing I can always remember he had a beautiful daughter. They came to Ishpeming then and got a job in the mine. And then mother came to Ishpeming then. **Did they know each other before?** They knew each other before then, he gave her a ticket to get there. **I want to ask you a couple of questions about what you remember about growing up and what you saw about your Dad, not necessarily what he told you, what you saw what you know of his work and what mines he worked in, and for about how long. Do you know which mines he worked in and approximately when that might of been?** My Dad worked hard but played hard too. He used to go out and get drunk on the weekends, I can always remember that when I was a little kid, he'd come home raring drunk, but he never lost any time from work. He was known for good work at the mine, but then when he'd get home he was, he'd always abuse my mother. He wasn't a very good father at home. **Do you recall what mines he might of worked in?** He worked four different mines for CCI, lead man in shaft work, worked at Holmes, Lloyd Mine, #1, and Barnes-Hector Mine, and Greenwood Mine. **Now did you speak Finnish when you were growing up at home?** Yes, all the time. I spoke Finnish all the time as a youth, and was interested in reading and learned to speak English very good. I think when I was about second, first grade already. That was always my hobby, right now today, I'm reading all the time. **Did**

you grow up entirely pretty much in Ishpeming then? Yes, I was born in North Lake, about a year old when we moved to West Ishpeming, right across the street from where your Grandma lived on Marble Street, living in Ishpeming all my life. **Where did you go to school, and did you graduate from high school, and if so when?** I went to school 10 grades, and it was in the spring of the year I took sick, me and a friend of mine, we both came down with yellow jaundice. We must of picked that up somethin' in the swamp water, we were drinkin' we were out camping, you know. I suffered then for a couple of months, and it was too late to go back to school anymore. I figured well I'll continue in the fall where I left off, but my Uncle came here from Chicago and he talked me into coming to Chicago with him. They left here in the fall and I went with them, in 1928. **What did you do in Chicago, and how long did you live there?** I worked in Chicago for Western Electric Co. for 3 years. I was in an assembly line I was a chaser, that was nice, there were 80 girls and only 4 men there. A chaser he had to kept the girls supplied, every girl was on a machine and the belt kept moving, and had the tools with her, little screws in a telephone, (about 70 pieces in that telephone), you wouldn't believe it. And each one does each little thing and it keeps going, my job was to make sure they had material for every girl. If I couldn't have it in the warehouse I'd trace where they were makin' it, they'd make everything themselves. I'd run all over the plant and try to locate it, I didn't have to do much searching after a while, I'd know exactly where to go. I left there in 1930, they cut down to 3 days a weeks, heck I wasn't making enough to make my board, so I said when I come on vacation I wrote them a letter and I said I'm not coming back. I came out here and start working the woods and I made better money in the woods then I did down there. Do you remember, this is back to the U.P. then. **Do you remember how much money you could make in a week in the woods?** In the woods a \$1.00 a day. **And you did that for about how long?** Oh we done that a couple of years anyway. Because a \$1 then was worth something, because we'd go pick up our groceries, we would get a whole lot for a dollar, imagine eggs were selling 10 cents a dozen. They weren't paying anything for the pulp, everybody was cutting pulp, every farmer in the area was trying to raise money someway. You'd maybe get 2 cents a stick, well you had to cut an 8 ft. stick, say you got about 5 sticks off that one, that was 10 cents. **Do you remember at that time other things that stand out in your mind about the differences in prices of things?** Oh yes, they were a lot cheaper. It's hard to compare it considering what they pay now, but they were cheap. You could buy a weeks groceries for a dollar, you can't do it now. The last job I was cutting for was Cully Hakkinen, he died now. That was north of Ishpeming, behind Weppala's there. I cut for him all summer. In the meantime I applied for work for the Company, I got a card to go get examined. So I told my boss Cully Hakkinen, I said I'm going I got a job, I think anyway, for the company. He said I'm sorry to see you go, you're a piece maker. He said I wouldn't go in the mines, I ruined my health in the mines, I said I'm going anyhow, so I did. Much to my surprise during World War II who should come in the mines but Cully Hakkinen himself, and he was working for me. He worked for me as a helper, we called him big mitts you know. He just come in there long enough so he would get social security, that's all he was interested in. He worked there for about two years. **You mentioned big mitts, why did you call him big mitts?** Because he always wore the leather gloves without the fingers on them, mittens; we all used gloves, but him with his without the fingers on them, mittens; we all used gloves, but him with his great big mitts. **I'm going to back up just a**

little bit and help me place a couple of the places that you talked about. Out north is a real common term to people in Ishpeming, but anybody who is not from Ishpeming wouldn't know where out north is, and behind Weppila's. Could you establish the county or names of the county roads that are there today? Behind Weppila's the road is called Robust Creek, and people go to the camps they cross that little Robust Creek. And that Robust Creek originates behind Grandma's field back in the middle of the swamp. That's where it originates but a lot of places its' underground. **Would you happen to know the name of the county road that goes out there?** No, I don't, I've seen it, it's 573 the main road. Then off of that it's the north camp road, and the south camp road. **You got a card to get examined, what kind of card was that?** You get examined, every new employee when they go to work for the company you get a card to get permission so the doctor would examine you to make sure you were fit for the mine. The company would pay for the examination. **Can you tell me when you started working for Cleveland Cliffs and in what mine?** I started for CCI at the Cliffs Shaft Mine, I worked on surface. I worked there about two months, about the end of shipping season, around November 30th. Then when I was through there I got transferred over to Lloyd Mine. That's where I was then for quite a few years, two years anyway. Then when I left Lloyd Mine I come back to Cliffs Shaft where I spent 30 years, and when Cliffs Shaft closed I ended up at Mather B. That was my limit. **Ok, and you started at Cliffs Shaft originally when?** I started at Cliffs Shaft originally on December 6, 1935. When I started on surface it was laying cellar plank, at that time they used to unload the iron ore outside. And then instead of laying it on bare ground, we had long planks we had to put just like a sidewalk. And then we had to keep that thing spread out you know, make sure there was always, you know good, when the big shovel would come thru you could scoop up instead of scooping up dirt, he'd be sliding on the cellar plank. I was at the Lloyd before the Cliffs Shaft. I was at the Lloyd Mine three years. **Do you happen to remember maybe the first day that you went underground at the Lloyd Mine?** Yes, I remember the first day. Did you know Tom Tippet? He was Captain of the Mine, him and I got along good, because he was good friends with my Dad, he worked for him years before that. He done me a lot of favors you know. That first day I started I was put on the electric haulage cars for hauling out iron ore, the big long trains you know, there's always two breakies sitting up the front the motor man on the other end, you know. We're coming out of a crosscut going a pretty good clip you know, I jumped off the motor to throw a switch you know so we could go free wheeling down the line, and he happened to be standing just about 10 feet away, waiting for us to go by, and he flagged the motor man down. Right away he said Billy don't you ever do that again! I was kinda dumbfounded what is he saying, he said don't you ever get off that motor till it stops. From then on I learned a lesson. He said I has to come to a complete stop. One thing I had to give him credit, if he have you heck you had it coming. But he never carried a grudge, he'd forget about it you know. He was a pretty good boss. I worked only about two weeks and he called me in the office, and he told me Billy would you go mining? I said I sure would, so I got mining. **That seems to be a pretty big milestone, from the guys I talked to, they had a chance to go off their first job and to do mining. Can you tell what was more attractive about doing miner than doing the brakemans job?** There was more money in it, and you were stationary, like the breaking job you would just hauling that stuff out to shaft, and it was cold, riding in that draft. You be froze you

know, and then come back inside, load again, that was lowest paid there was breaking on the motor. That's where everybody got their start. **Do you remember what the pay was?** The pay was around .68 cents an hour. **When you were doing mining can you describe how the day would start from the time you got to the mine and what kind of do in order, including the clothes changes and all of that.** All miner's they worked on two shifts, three shifts some of them. Whenever the previous miners or gang finished up with, they made a report of that to the boss. So the oncoming boss knew what was in your place before you got in there. If you needed langing or poles, timber or anything like that, well you'd make sure you reported that to the guy that was hauling it in, and were always prepared. **What is lagging?** Lagging is split cedar, used for covering the side walls of your drift. A drift is like when they put a tunnel thru you know, a tunnel about 8 x 8, they keep going with that, blasting and drilling, then moving the dirt out, then put a set of timber in there, big timber; up two on the side, one on top, and then they put poles and lagging on top of that then, so nothing will come thru. So it makes everything safe for you working underneath. And the same thing on the sides they put lagging in there. They'd take a log and split it in about four, seven foot long. You needed poles for on top, lagging going on top of the poles. **So you're basically making a safe hallway to pass thru to get to the new ore.** Ya. **Was the Lloyd Mine hard ore or soft ore?** The Lloyd Mine was soft ore. **Can you describe for me, you would get down the shaft and into the drift. Can you describe for me what it looked like if someone had never been underground? What color, what did it smell like, was it cold, hot, wet, dry?** Before I went to, ah what you call, I worked at Inland Steel you know, before I went to any of the other mines. My Dad was working there, so he got me a job there and I was kinda nervous because I had never worked underground. It was just an open hole on surface, and just a gate around, you know. And I got into the cage with all about ten men in the cage, and I plunked in there. We got down to the level, the level is where they level off and drift in you know. The boss said "hey you", you take that motor and take it in the first cross-cut and empty out them shoots. I had never been underground in my life, I never seen a motor, electric motor with a trolley pull on it, trolley wire on it. And where it was parked, you know. It was parked right over a open grizzly, a grizzly is a big pocket where they dump ore down, you know, and from there it goes down into a shoot and into the cage. I was wondering how in the heck, from past experiences I had been riding in Chicago on the street cars and I recognized the controls on that what you call, Hollis? Motor was the same as I had seen in Chicago, you know. There was the levers there you know. So I knew you get the power from the cable overhead, so I put the trolley pull up on the trolley wire, and I put her in reverse and I started moving, and I moved in way inside, I was going really slow. I finally got in where the dirt was supposed to be hauled out, and there was the shoot, big hole into the roof. And there was just planks in front, and I looked up there and there was chunks there bigger than this here. They were, some of them were over two feet in diameter, and there was two planks there and I tried, and the trolley wire ran right in front of the thing you know. I looked at it and holy jees, there was a bar and you had to lift them planks up in order that dirt to slide out. Soon as I start prying I'd miss a little bit, I touched the trolley wire. There was four forty's line you know. Talk about your sparks fly! I never tasted so must spark, I mean salt, copper that morning. Laugh-

TAPE 1 SIDE #2
WILLIAM LUCAS

Eventually the boss came around, I had three cars loaded, I said holy jeez, I'm gonna get electricuted here. I said there's one big chunk back there, I said, I can't get that out! He said well leave it there, you come with me. So we came out of there and took another route, and went inside and he said I'll take you up to a certain contract up over, up on the hundred foot you know. I figure where in the heck is that. And we climbed, we went on a hundred foot climb up the ladder, straight up. And to think that when you try and climb a ladder that's straight up for one hundred feet, what that is. And we got up on top, I'll tell you I was all out of wind and he was out of wind too. And then we walked from there, it was all open, stocked out you know, big honeycomb place. And we walked for quite a ways, there was a man scrapeing dirt into the shoot. So he said, Billy you stay here, and help that guy, you know, scrapeing. So that's where I worked the rest of the time that I worked. It was gassy, everytime you'd climb that 100 ft. raise, your head would just pound. The gas in there, from smoke, mostly smoke, it was inadequate ventilation in there. It was a dead end in there, going on three shifts, doing a lot of blasting and that, the air was, they had fans on the level but not up in where the men were working up there. It just circled around in there, and I'm glad I got outa there. Because when I got hired there, Cap Crawford, he lived here in West Ishpeming. Cap Crawford, said Bill he said, were gonna hire you on for, there was six of us that got hired, you'd be hired temporarily. He said, when they get through with the shaft he said, then I gotta replace the shaft crew inside, and you guys will be left out then, we'll call you when we need you. But I never did go back, although I did get a call to come back later on, about a year later, but I didn't go back, I was working at the Lloyd. I spent many a nights sleeping out in the lawn there, especially working afternoon shift. My head was just pounding, I thought it would split. Sure, it killed a lot of guys. **So you didn't have any breathing apparatice, or anything like that.** No, they didn't have anything, no. **You say it killed a lotta guys, you mean it literally killed a lot of guys? Or was it just really hard on them?** They all suffered from that, there was very few that reached retirement age. **And this was at the Lloyd Mine?** This was at the Greenwood, you know. **Oh. Now we didn't talk about the Greenwood Mine at all. Where does that fit in? Is that before the Lloyd Mine?** That was before the any of the others, you know. That was in 1935. **How long did you work at the Greenwood Mine?** I worked there just maybe about 5 months, that's about all. **Couple of words I want to ask you about. Describe for me, paint me a picture if you would with words of what it's like to be in a ladder road. What is it exactly, and I also want to know when you're climbing 100 ft. were there any trap doors in between, as a safety mechanism?** Ladder roads? It's wooden ladders, ordinary wood ladders, placed straight up, and that's the one you use to get up there. You have to climb those ladders, just like an ordinary ladder, only they were made heavier. **And this was inside of a basically a rocky tunnel that was just big enough for a guy to go up? How big around was the hole?** The ladder roads itself, the miners put them up, they were about four feet square. The inside was naked, we called them naked, they were bare. Because it was hard ore mine, ya. **So the Greenwood was hard ore?** Hard ore, ya. They had hard ore and they had good ore. They would of stayed there longer, but their reserve, what they had leased or owned, had petered out. They tried to I think purchase some from the

other side of their line, but whoever owned that would not sell. There was about three hundred men working there at the time, sure. **I've heard that one of the differences between working a hard ore mine and a soft ore mine, is the way that the ore would stick to the miners' clothes. Was there a difference that you perceived?** Well it stuck more in the soft ore, because it's wet, mud. **And what color is it?** Red. Hard ore is more bluish, blue steel. The hard ore mine at Cliffs Shaft, there's hardly any timber at all. The only place there's timber is in the shoots and that's about all. There's some on the catwalks, you know, and ladder ropes and that. Everything is naked. **I wanna ask you, backtrack and clarify one other thing you said about the Lloyd Mine. You said that the opening was a hole in the ground. Was there any kind of structure over the cage and stuff? Was it all enclosed, or was it exposed to the weather?** There was none. This was at the Greenwood now. There was just a open gate. I don't know if they put one in after I left from there, but there certainly wasn't any when I left there. **So the shaft then went down? Ya. And then there was some kind of mechanism that would run the cage? Oh ya, the hoist. The engine house was back about a hundred feet, then they had ropes coming from the engine house up the high tressel. The tressel was right in line with the shaft. The cage was coming up the rope would go up the tressel thru shib wheels, and then down into the engine house. So then when the cage would ride up and down, was the cage enclosed on the top, or was it open to the weather?** The cage was open to the weather, all seasons of the year. **I've got information from some people about the helmets, and the lighting system and things. Could you describe the lighting system in the Greenwood Mine?** There was a light-bulb strung every thousand feet or so, and what do you call ah, they tried to keep them there. But I don't know they didn't hold up. They seemed to burn out in no time, I seen a lot of bulbs there that were, that should've been replaced, but everybody depended just on the miner's lamp. They had carbide lamps then, they didn't have electric lamps. Electric lamps didn't come into use until '37, something like that. **Can you describe what a carbide lamp looked like and how it operated?** Well it's in two pieces, the top piece got a big reflector there, and the bottom piece you put the carbide in there and then there is a little container on the side, you open that and pour a little water in there, and that makes a gas. You close the bottom, and on the side of the lamp there is a scratcher, you scratch that and it flares up. Before the day is over, your flame is gonna keep getting shorter and shorter, because the carbide is gettin weak already down below. **Can you tell me in inches how big the flame was when it started, and how big in inches when it run out?** The flame run out about 5 inches. I know because when I started, even at the Lloyd there we got carbide lamps. Right in that first couple days, rang out the shaft with Hollis car your light would almost wanna fade away, strong breeze you know. So you had to turn your head away so the light wouldn't go out. But imagine them guys worked in the mine before they had carbide lamps, they had candles just on their hats, and a little flame no bigger than that there illuminated the place. No bigger than about 2 inches, no wonder there was so many accidents, they couldn't see what was overhead. **Did the carbide lamp have any particular odor?** Yes, ya. **Can you describe, is there anything that it's similar to?** No, it's an acid. And it's strong orodor, sulfur, ya. **So that combined with the odors of all the blasting and the rest of it.** Yes. Ya that was it. You always carried a can of carbide with you, nice little flat container, and a lighter, scratcher. It was good because there was not anything better. The reflector was about 3" diameter of copper reflector, that would shine out, you know. **Can you**

tell me about many feet, if you were alone in a darkened area with just the carbide illumination, how big a circle of light would that carbide lamp give you to work in? Oh it'd give you about 8 - 10 ft., somethin' like that. **And it would burn for approximately how long?** It would burn pretty good for about 3 or 4 hours, then you would have to shake it up or add a few carbide in there, maybe a little water. You didn't need much water, because the reservoir in there didn't hold more than a couple of teaspoons you know. **Well by the time your lamp would start to run out, how small a space would it light?** Well it wouldn't light very much. You could just follow your footsteps, just barely. You wouldn't step in any dangerous place. **Were you ever in a place when your lamp went out and you were left in total darkness?** Yes. **And then how difficult was it to re-light?** In Cliffs Shaft Mine even, I had my lamp go out, and I was in an area we didn't have light bulbs in there at all, you just stayed put. You didn't dare move, you didn't dare! It was just pitch black, if you tried you'll be liable to fall down some hole, because there's holes all around you know, and then you didn't know what you were stepping into. I had that happen once, and I figured I'll just sit there, because somebody'll come along. But after that even, pretty near every miner carried matches with them. With a match you can at least you know, see some distance before it blows out. **What did that feel like when you were under there in total darkness, and not knowing how long it would be till someone might come along?** It's scary, but you know that as long as I stay here there gonna come thru here. Somebody's come thru here. Only thing it's pitch dark! Sure. You wouldn't want to be in there, what'd you call, too long. **Your experience with the carbide lamp was at Cliffs Shaft. What system was there at the Cliff Shaft, at the Lloyd, and the Greenwood, for keeping track of who was underground and who had come up?** We all carried brass checks with a hole in it and you'd have a little clip, and you would put it on your suspenders, you know. And everytime you went underground, it was issued to you in the dry you know, where you change clothes, there was a board there. You'd go and take your number, there was a man, the time clerk; he issued out the checks for every man. You always took your own check, and that way they could check who was going down. There was no fooling around with that, you know. Everytime when you come up then, you handed your check back, to the you know, the check man. Usually our time clerk, at the Cliff Shaft Mine, he'd always be there in the morning when we're going down, and he would be there always at 3:30 when we'd come up, he'd made sure. And if there was one short, right away he'd would come down the dry and find out if so and so was out today, cause his check wasn't turned in. Cause they want to make sure nobody was left underground, see. **Do you ever remember an incident where somebody was left underground, and what happened then?** Well they weren't, they were just left accidentally, you know, they were late comin' out. And they figured well he might find his way out, or he has some problem, and when he did come out, he said he had trouble with the electric wire you know, they had to replace the wire, and they missed their cage, but then they took the other cage, you know. They just called for the cage and the guy in the engine house sent the cage down and they come up. **How would they call for the cage?** Well we had telephones at shafts. They had telephones at Lloyd Mine, and it was just a box, and then one mouthpiece there like the old time. And so many rings you know, and so many rings for the engine house, and they could call different levels. That's the limit of their telephone use. Even in Cliffs Shaft they had no communications with the workers way inside, no telephones. If a guy got hurt way inside his partner would have to walk out, you know.

Somebody would have to walk out and notify, because big mine as it was, they had one telephone at the Shaft, nothing was, the transmitting service was poor. Like at the Mather B, you could go in any contract and get in touch with the dispatcher, right away. There was a transmitter there, you could call him anytime. **What would you guess would be a typical walking distance route, typical walking time, from the shaft to one of the typical working places? So if somebody was injured were you talking maybe 10 minutes for somebody to walk back out and get help, or 20 minutes?** Oh, ya. Some of them work in places it would take a good 15 minutes to get up the place, you know. They walk on the level, and then take laterals up and they have to wander, oh god all over up in there. Because on the Cliff Shaft it's huge, because imagine they mined that for one-hundred years. Any everything that came out, nothing was put in place. It's a huge acrofire right now, cause it took five years for it to fill up with water. **Would you be willing to say in the time that you worked in all the mines, and presumably would be in one of the older mines, what kinds of injurys would there be in situations like that, and is there a worse one that you recall that you would be willing to talk about, and if not that's ok.** Well we had quite a few bad ones. But lot's of 'em were broken legs. I had a broken leg twice, both were freak accidents. **Would you tell me how you broke your leg?** I was boring, when you have loose after a blast, I was boring up high, I had a long bar about 12 ft. long and I was prying that thing out, you know, and I finally got it loose. And it landed on a chunk, and that chunk ricochet and bounced over on my ankle. Imagine, I said of all the goofy things that happen. **And what mine would that have in, and approximately when it happened?** That was Cliff Shaft Mine, I was off about ten weeks, something like that. **And how did the other one happen?** The other one happened at the Mather B. My partner and I were both drilling in the brest, I was through drilling, and he was having trouble pulling his rod out from the brest. I figured I'm gonna give him a hand, so I walked over, I got in front of his machine and start pulling at the same time. When we're pulling out the brest caved in, you know, from on top, and chunk no bigger than that coffee pot, bounced off me right on the high bone. I felt a sting like, a bee bite, I ignored it you know. And then it was gettin close to dinner time, I sat down and I tried to get up, I couldn't get up it was hurtin so bad. I said oh, oh, there's somethin wrong, so I get a hold of the dispatcher and the motor came and gave me a ride to the shaft. And I was home for another 12 weeks. **What does stoked out mean?** Stoked out, means all mined out, there's no ore left in there. It's like a big hole, you know. Well some of them stokes are real huge. Like Cliffs Shaft, there's areas there they could put the Gossard Building in it. Great big, big arches, you don't see the tops, you just see fog up there that's all, because they been mined years and years ago. Lot of those places, the engineers say they did not mine Cliffs Shafts out, they still made a profit last year that they worked the mine, but they couldn't sell the ore anymore, because everything was going pellet. They tried if they could make a pellet out of it, but they couldn't make it. They probably could nowadays, they have the method, because they're mining Republic, and they can make pellets out of Republic ore, well they should make it on there, but they pulled out. But they have the finest shaft there, the cage is there yet, they never did take it out. That's one of a kind in America, of that type of cage, it's automatic. It's a Swedish make, that skips, oh they're huge skips there. **So you think that the cage at Cliff Shaft is superior to the one at the Mather B, which is a newer mine? Ya. Do you have any thought why that type of cage might not have been used at the Mather B?** Well, I don't know why they didn't. They had

their cage, and from what I hear, well we used to pack down almost about 70 men at a time, double deck. **Seventy per deck?** Ya. When they got orders to close the mine down, they capped it with cement, and pulled the cage right up underneath the cap. When the cap was all done, they took a torch and cut the cable, and the cage went down, they left it down there. It went down there with a roar. **You said it was an automatic cage, in what way was it automatic?** Everything was buttons, just like in the hospital, you could call for it anytime. There was a big instrument board there, and all the levels and everything goes on there marked, and if the cage was available and where it's at, and if it's on call you had to wait till whoever releases it, you know. Like if you went to shaft, and you had to go up you looked at the dials, see what bulbs were lit. If everything was ok, you just press the button and the cage was coming. When you get inside the cage, and when you close the door that made the final contact, up you went. Silent, just like in a hospital! **Another term that I want you to define is the brest.** When you get up against a solid wall to drill that is a brest, an undrilled face of rock. **Are there any other things about the Greenwood and the Lloyd Mine that you think are noteworthy that you want to talk about.** Well there isn't much I can remember about the Greenwood Mine. Well I was there such a short time. The Lloyd, it was hot, almost 60-70 degrees.

TAPE #2 SIDE 1

William Lucas

June 20, 1994

Interviewer: Mary Andes

It was really hot because the places were real low, and they had a caving system there, they called it, slicing contracts they called it. The places were real low, they were always continuous pressure from up over, because the ground was just pressing heavy. I worked with one miner, we had just gone in maybe about 30 feet and we didn't get through drilling, and he said well, he said we go and have lunch now. So we come back and we didn't even have time to shut the air off, when we just got our dinner pail ready, and opened up, all of a sudden, the whole top, the back, come down, just like that. My partner didn't say anything, he said that's enough! Imagine if we had been in there one minute longer, we'd of been under it. There was no warning at all. The new place was all covered, and the white was so great and so high and large, it come down and flattened everything down. You know what he did, he grabbed his dinner pail, and he went up. He never came back, sure. Well there I was all alone again, and I had a light there you know, and the boss came thru, and he already knew that my partner had gone up, so I said the place come down, I said yup it's flat. Well he said, Billy you come with me and I'll put you someplace else. I don't know it didn't faze me much, but it sure did the other guy, my partner. He never did come underground anymore, he's from Gwinn, he said that's close enough. Imagine, we walked about 30 ft. and we were just gonna turn the air off. I already had my lunch pail in my hand, I'm gonna find a good place to eat, and boy geez that was somethin'. One day I was working on another contract, and I came down on a level, and there was an Italian fella, he wasn't mining, but he was a timber hoister. And he always stayed on the level. His job was to hoist lagging and pulls up the raise to the miners up over him. And he was just hoisting some what you call some lagging, he

had a big coil of it there, say about maybe two dozen sticks in a bundle. There happened to be loose coil, he didn't see it. There was a loose coil inside and when his partner started to tigger up on top, he thought everything was ok. Those tiggers you know, they start off with a jerk, he grabbed him, the rope was around his leg, and he was on top the lagging pile. He went zip! Up there! I tell ya, and then when he got to the top, the other Italian fella was up there, he looked, Tony! And that's when he said I heard two Italians fish. Oh did they go to it! Lucky he didn't get his leg cut off. It's a miracle that he survived! That he was on the other side, he went on the travel road side which was more open, and he rode the thing way up. He was up there about 40 ft. His leg was caught in the rope, he got bruised up but it didn't cut his leg. They were going at it in Italian!! Good thing I didn't understand what they were saying. **Great story! You said in the Lloyd Mine they used a slicing system?** The brest was pretty wide, they'd start from one side, then when they get as far as they're allowed to go, then they'd come back and they'd move over another 8 ft. And they keep fanning it out just like a wagon wheel spoke. **And they were cutting or blasting?** Drill and blasting, they'd go in about 40 ft. and when they were all through they'd pull out. And they start again the other way. In the meantime, their old workings they were caving in, and settling and that. **So if you were looking at the brest, to do these fan shape slices would the dynamite be set then in verticle rows?** You had to drill a pattern, you drill about 15 holes, each hole about 6 ft. long. Say four in the top, four down below, and then down the helper sides, so you cut out a block, just like between these two doors here. A bunch of holes on the sides and the bottom center and the top. And when you charge them with dynamite, then when you lit the fuse you always start lighting the ones that would go off first, see. You paused, you know. Maybe a few seconds, so they would go off in patterns, they wouldn't all go at one time. They had to be spaced, ya. That was what was done for a slicing contract. **When you were describing the caving incident where your partner left, when it was all over, you said you had to shut the air off. This was some kind of hydraulic piece of equipment you were using?** They were all done by air, you know, air drills. At the Mather B is where you had a caving system, long hole drilling. You'd drill holes forty, fifty, sixty feet long. A pattern right across, and then you charge them. **So this incident in the Lloyd then, you had to shut the air off on the hydraulic drill. Ya. You said during that incident the back came down, what is the back?** The roof over your head was timber, sometimes the force was so heavy, that it'll break the timber, just crush them, you know. **Was there a dry at the Greenwood and the Lloyd?** Yes. **And it was a separate building?** Yes. At Greenwood they had a good dry. That's one thing they had a good surface dry and heated. And the Lloyd had a good dry, ya. They had full-time dry men. We had Angello Bosio, he was a dry-man. I remember one day I was outside, it was afternoon shift, and we had a water tap outside, we went there to fill our canteens to take underground. Angello Bosio saw a frog, a green frog, in the little spillway there. He reached down and grabbed the frog put it under the water tap, down the hatch it went. He went down live, imagine! **Did you have to be a member of a union to work in any of the mines?** Oh ya, I was a member of the union. They really improved a lot of things. We got our good pensions, retirements, which we never had before, medical, although it was costly. Those strikes, they really cost a lot of money, the first one. **If you were involved or more than one strike happened during the time that you worked, when did the first strike happen while you were working underground?** We just got married, I think it was 1946 it was. That was a long

one, it started in the wintertime, and that didn't settle until the following fall. That was hard, because you used up what few dollars that you had set aside. Boy, then they wanted you to be on the picket line. I went a few times, but I think we were up North. **What was it like being on the picket line? What season of the year would that have been?** In the summertime. **What kinds of relationships have on the picket line, was everyone pretty committed to the strike? Or was there some disagreement?** Oh it was, I don't know, they had different thoughts about it. They just would be hoping it would be over. **Are there any particular incidents that may of happened during that strike of '46 that stand out in your mind.** Not that I know of. I didn't take in any of their meeting. I didn't go to the picket line too many times, maybe three or four times. **Were you aware of any disruptions in the neighborhood or anything like that?** Well around here, not that I know of. I never knew of any. I know there was shooting around a house over there, some cars were banged up and that, but I think there was more activity downtown than there was here. **Can you tell me a little bit more about the shooting and what precipitated it?** This guy he came out of his house, and he fired two twenty-two rifle shots at guys, but he didn't shoot at the guys, he just scared them off you know. The guys were hollering and protesting outside his house, and calling him names and that, and then he went inside. He was opposed to the strike. **Were there any consequences for him? Was there any police action, was he ever arrested or anything like that?** No, there were no charges were filed. **You said there were some things that happened in town, I presume that's in downtown Ishpeming area. Do you remember what kinds of things happened during that time, volatile?** I don't know that there was outside agitators that came in here. You'd see them downtown, there'd be three, four guys in a group, and they were from Minnesota. There was one from Ishpeming, and they were getting paid \$25 a day, for insiteing the miners around here, down in the taverns, buying them drinks, getting them aggitated you know. Most of them were outsiders, and from Copper Country, quite a few. **You said the agitators were getting \$25 a day. At that time do you remember the daily wage would of been?** Ya, that was way above scale, we didn't even get, ah, a good miner would get about \$8 a day. **Do you remember there being a lot of tension among people that normally would of been freinds, as a result of the strike?** Well I don't know. It made a lot of bad feelings alright, between the relatives and that, but it's soon forgotten. **It sounds like the strike would have lasted maybe nine or ten months. How did you make ends meet, what did you do for a living for that time when you couldn't work?** Well I think, did I work cutting pulp? No, that was after that then. Cause there were quite a few other strikes then too. Ya, we had our savings. **The strike of 1946 would of happened during the time you were working at Cliff Shaft? Ya. What other things do you remember at Cliff Shaft that were better than working at the Lloyd or the Greenwood?** In general, the working area? We had fresh air, it wasn't fresh, but it was fresher. It was cold, where you had hot, humid conditions at the Lloyd. Over here the average temperature was 48, sometimes colder. Because would be drilling at Cliffs Shaft, our machines sometimes would wanna freeze up. We'd have to blow the exhaust on the machine to blow the big slug of ice on top of it, you know. Cliff Shaft you wore heavy mine underwear, a pair of pants, then your coveralls on top of that. And the same thing, a heavy wool undershirt, and then regular shirt, and jacket. Then even you'd get cold. And your boots, you'd wear heavy socks with nips in there, (them little half socks) that come up to your ankles. **What kind of lighting did you have at**

Cliff Shaft? When I went there they were just introducing the electric lamps at Cliffs Shaft, around 1938. **Were you a miner at Cliff Shaft the whole time?** I started out a trammer. **Can you describe what a trammer does?** You start with a pick and shovel, you clean out what the miner had blasted. You'd load that into cars and haul them out, you know, load the train. Instead of having machinery, in some places they couldn't get machinery in there, it had to be done by hand. **For what reason couldn't they get machinery in there?** The place was such a way, it was up over high hills and dales in there, they didn't want to put machinery in there because the miners gonna be in there only for maybe a couple months. He had to get through some way in there. **Clarify for me then, the floor then of the drift wasn't flat. Was the reason for that?** It was flat, ya. **But you said it went up and down, hills and valleys.** Well the stokes themselves, you know, where the ladder roads went up and down through canyons. **Now was the reason for that the rock was too hard to make straight passages?** They just mined where the ore was. **You said that you worked as a trammer with a pick and shovel. About how long did you do that?** Oh about a year and a half, then I went mining. **Then did you mine the entire rest of the time, about 30 years altogether?** I mined the rest of my duration there. **During the time that you worked in the mine, was working for Cleveland Cliffs or working in mining, considered to be about the best job around for guys who didn't finish high school or didn't go to college?** Yes. **For what reasons?** Well it was close to home, the money was good at the time, and the work wasn't too bad, you know. They had a lot of machinery there, nice bunch of guys to work with all the time. In fact, the miner he was actually his own boss, you know. **In what way?** He prepared the place the way it should be, what to do and where to drill. He made sure it was safe, sure. **Did you have the impression that people took a lot of pride, and really cared a lot about the quality of their work?** Oh yes. A miner had to take good pride in their work. He's the one who had to work under it, cause he had a bard loose, and he had to make sure that there was nothing left up over. Otherwise if you'd be walking underneath, a piece would fall off, it wouldn't have to be a big piece, that would kill him, cause that stuff is heavy and sharp. He made his place safe. We had safety men that would come through, and they check, ya. **I understand in some of the other mines like the Mather B particularly, the pay system was such that if you were a miner you got a basic hourly rate, but you also got a bonus for footage. Was that true in the Cliff Shaft also?** Cliff Shaft we got paid what we put out, if we didn't put anything out for the half, say the first 15 days, you still got your basic pay. The basic pay was company count, we used to call it, you know. **That was about how much?** That was around \$5 a day. **You said the first 15 days you would get company count, what happened if you didn't make your goals after that?** If you had saved some ore out, they'd give you credit for what you got out anyway, it wouldn't be much. You had to put out 10 cars per shift, say it was a ten shift F, you had to put out a hundred cars. To clear over company count. Anything over company count, then you got contract. **And the contract wage would have been what?** They got paid so much a car, that's the way it was. The Captain he could jiggle some of them books, he paid some of them old timers, they got paid good even if they didn't have a pound out! I know one guy said I get the same all the time, Cappy he pay me good! Because he was bringing him turnips, beef, pork, he didn't have to buy anything.

TAPE 2 SIDE #2

William Lucas
June 20, 1994

The old timers made sure that the Captain was well fed. So the Captain he favored those old timers, you know. **Can you relate the incident told by the person who worked at the Cap's house?** She'd come there in the morning, she said there'd be these old miners, 5:30 in the morning, they wanna sneak in there before nobody would see em', and they'd hide out, throw the package and say here's for Cappy, and he'd say his name you know. One morning there was three of em', imagine pork, and beef, potatos, turnips, and what not, he got all kinds of stuff! And another thing, you know the Cap he favored them, he had a camp at Wolf Lake, and he recruited these old hens there always on the weekend. He'd drive em up there, but they had to bring their own grub! And he'd get out there, and he'd have a work crew cutting firewood. And them guys would be out there with crosscuts, and axes, and sledgehammers. They'd split and pile wood and everything, then they ate their own grub. Well it's time to go home, Cap would gather all the grub that them guys had brought with 'em, and he'd put 'em in his own pack sack. He said you guys don't need that anymore, he'd put 'em in his car, you know. He took their grub too, and then he said they were coming back from Wolf Lake and they run out of gas out by Dexter, out here you know, ya, by the big pasty shop out there. And he said we had to push that car, all the way from there up to Ishpeming. Imagine those four old bucks pushing that car! It was a Touring, I can't remember was it a Ford Touring or what. One of them guys he worked close by me at the mine there, and it was payday and the boss came around with the list, and he said how much we made, you know, for the half. And I said jeez, I said, I made a dollar you know, and this old guy oh I get a dollar all the time, imagine, and he wasn't producing any ore that half! He was just getting ready and barring loose, and he's there smug you know, it pays! Oh boy. **Any other things about Cliff Shaft that particularly are memorable? I guess I want to ask a question about the ore at Cliff Shaft. You said it was hard ore?** The ore was hard blue steel, in areas, well it just so happens where I worked on fourth level that area was considered the hardest ore in the mines. And I had the honor of breaking in a lot of the machines, anything new that came in, in the line of drilling machines, they said take them in to Billy Lucas' place. And I had sometimes four and five machines there, trying out, they were coming out with Gardner Denver, and Joy, and Chicago Nomatic, Engersal Rand, and what the heck were them others. And then they're trying out different bits, they were converting over to carbiluc bits now, detachable bits on rods. And I had salesmen from all them companies trying out their brand of bits. I even had a young engineer from Sweeden, that was one machine we tried out, yes it was a Swedish machine. He was trying what his machine would do in that ground. And he got all his, he had a machine there that was closely guarded. When he came, even there, he had it in a leather suitcase like, under lock and key, imagine. He was there one week with me, I got a kick out of it, and when it was dinner time, you know what he had for dinner? A big coconut! Sure! He had a great big coconut, he busted it and eat it. I said that's all you're gonna eat? He said that's enough. Engineer told me something too, he was taking up Geogology and Mining, and he said he had three years in technical school in Sweden. But before he could get his diploma, and graduate, he has to go out and ore someplace for one year in the line of mining, no matter what it is, iron ore, or coal, or silver, lead, or copper. He said that's what he's doing, then he goes back to Sweden. He said he

had good drills with them, that Swedish steel, you probably heard about it. Because you couldn't bend it, you know. It would take a long twelve ft. pipe you know, and you'd put it in the hole and drag it right down to the ground, it'd spring right up just like an arrow straighten out, it wouldn't bend. Where our steel you'd put a pipe in a hole, pull it down, it would stay there. They had a secret, you know, that was military secret. He says anybody working in their mills are under tight security, it's hard to get in them places even, they check your background and everything. He said some of them places there's 15, 20 guys workin', one guy doesn't know what the other guy is doing. CCI bought one of their machines, you know, and they bought one of each of the others. That was a delay for me too, for all the time I was there, they were takin' up a lot of my time, testing you know, they'd want to run one bit in there, ok, stop. Pull the machine out, check the bit and all that, you know, then they'd have to record. Well heck I wasn't getting any dirt up, I just got company count. They benefited by it! Sure, I told them bosses. I got about two dozen rods here, they're all in my way. Cause when I start drilling I got to find out where the part for each one now, they're all different make you know, type of thread, and the shanks on them. They were there you know, for I'd say one year. **Is there one of those pieces of drilling equipment that you felt was the best, after seeing all those in operation?** There was one that was a Chicago Nomadic, that was a light machine, and it could drill as fast as any other. The others were heavy, say ten pounds more, means a lot! Specially when you got to keep lifting it up, and dragging around, then you mount them on the jack lick, you don't have to drill them, you mount them on that lag, you have to know how to use that jack like that, it's a lot like a hydraulic in there. **I need to have you describe what a jack lag looks like.** The machine, it's a tube in two sections, the top section goes down into another tube down below, and the machine is on top, and the hoses are hooked onto the machine, and the jack lick. And when you turn your air on, it raises up the tube and the machine comes up at the same time. Then you can stop at any level you know, any highth, you gotta know how to use it, cause I was the first one to use them. All kinds of monkey business. **So you were the market research person for all those.** I sure did. It was a big jump, you know, from the previous machines, we had the old type machines, they were on a tri-pod, and that piece of junk was heavy. You needed a man and a board pack them around you know, and then the machines were big water liners, they were about three ft. long, and they'd slide on a rack, and you'd feed them with a crank, air drill. Well they eliminated all those old type machines, and lots of the old time miners at the mine, they resented that when they come up with them jack licks. They had some fun with them, cause once you didn't know how to operate them, turn the lag on all of a sudden that thing would jump up and it lift up in the air. They curse them more than once. One time there was one Italian fella, he came to work in my place there, he worked on the side there, and how the heck was it, he was gettin the scrape but he needed an eye bolt hole. An eye bolt hole is when they drill a hole into the brest, you know, and you put a piece of steel in there with a wedge and a ring on it, so you can put a hook on it, and the block. And he had to drill that eye pin hole, and he was all alone there, he couldn't get that bit started, he was pretty green with that machine, you know, and that jack lick. As soon as he turned the air on he started to go up, up, and his rod was going up, and he come down you know, and he fell down. Well then the boss come thru and I told him, I said Stag over there is having a hard time getting that eye pin, I said you better go over there and give him a hand. So he went over there, Bob what you call, I won't mention his name, the boss, he grabbed the machine, he'd never been on

one, he figured he's gonna put it in there. Soon as he put the air on, right away that machine went up, and he went right summersault. And he cursed, he threw that thing down, he said, Willy, he says, come on over here and put this eye pin in for this guy. The boss couldn't, he had never mined in his life, he was made second Captain. Laugh- Another thing I was was gonna tell you about. About Murphy. Over a hundred years ago, way in the upper levels, they said a man was supposed to have dissappeared, and they said they actually have seen his ghost up there, you know. This fella that was puttin that eye pin hole, in my place you know, he happened to be up in that territory workin'. And one day the boss went up there and he was in his workin' place. He said what's the matter? He said, I seen him, I seen him! What'd you see? I seen old Murf. He said go on! Yup! I seen him, I seen him comin' ahead. He come right through that puddle of water, and he said he was comin' right at me and he had one eye. He said that's when I took off. Well he said I don't believe that. I'm not going back, he said you'd better go. But he said if I see him again I'm gonna jump down the raise. Well boss figured, I don't want you to jump down the raise, tell you what, come on with me. So they come down from second level all the way down to fourth level. The boss said Billy I won't mention any names, but he seen Murph up there. Can you give him something to do out there. I said ya, he can start cleaning out, I'm gonna drill. He stayed then for a couple of months. They found a place for him then, steady. But he said you gotta go down to Billy's place, and Billy will watch after you. He was gonna go down the hole! Jump down the raise about a hundred feet! **Did anybody ever know whether Murphy only had one eye?** Nobody ever knew whether Murphy had one eye, but that was a rumor from over a hundred years back. The boss came thru, where there was Sundeen a engineer, he was with the second captain, and the second captain casually told Sundeen how that fellow over there, he seen Murph up there, you know. Well Sundeen turned around and told second captain how do you know he didn't see you, how do you know? He said he could of seen him. He said well you imagine long enough you think, he said, they'll appear. And that was believable when the mine first opened up, and places were small and that you know. Geez. We found a lot of places where miners had worked, years and years before. The miners had to pay for everything that they used underground. They had to pay for their powder and fuse, and hose, everything was charged on their new bill, imagine. **How do you know that?** Well I talked to a lot of old timers, you know, they said that was the way it was. We found a piece of hose, regular rubber hose, about an 1"x 10 ft., and what was wrapped around that hose, there were wire and piece of tin, old rubber, and burlap, about a foot thick! I brought that up and showed that to a captain, and I said what do you account for that? That's when he said that the miners had to pay, they had to buy their own hose. That poor guy he said he was trying to salvage whatever he could. He didn't get very much air out of that hose, sure. Then we found big bundles of candles, the one bunch was like a bunch of bananas, still tied with a string. Probably a guy hid them there and forgot em, or either got killed or something, who knows. God, they said the old Cellwood Mine behind the hospital there, right behind the brownstone shops. You can go from Cliff Shaft Mine into old Cellwood Mine, and there is something to see in that old Cellwood Mine. Of course it's under water now, too, you know. **But you've been there?** Ya, I've been there, when we used to work before I went mining, I was workin up in there, you know, trapping. And we'd get through our work what we had to do, we'd tell the boss we're going up in the Cellwood after. He said you can go but be careful. And just to explore around, they had latteral wooden rails, only about 14" apart, and

little cars about 3'x2', then them guys when they'd load them cars they had to push them, all way out to a raiser. That was something! **What else did you see in the Cellwood Mine?** Got into one opening there, you would swear that you's in the cemetery. There was stalagmites you know, ice, they were so thick you could hardly squeeze through them. Water dripping down all the time, it was somethin pretty. That room was about 30'x10', something like that. Then the huge timbers holding that place up you know, the back, the cover over it. Big square timbers about 16" sq. some 20' long, one after another set at an angle to hold the back way up. We often wondered how they ever got them up there. What method did they get, cause they had to go on an angle, geez, I'll tell you that was something. Then there was right were those stalagmites were there was one room set aside, and there was a horse barn in there, or mule barn in there. You could still smell them mules, you know, in there. And outside the mule barn there was a big, big pile of boots, leather boots and shoes, and the tops were split on every of them. I said what the heck was the idea! He said when a guy broke his leg, he said, they cut the boot off, then threw the boot and sent the man up. He said there was a guy gettin hurt every week. **Do you have any guess how many boots you saw laying there.** Oh I'd say there must of been a good dozen or more, they were old-time shoes, hobnails. That isn't like they had at Cliff Shaft, some of them old Finns they had boots out of car tires. There was quite a few of em, cut a piece off an old tire and nail it on to their mining boots. **Why would they do that?** So they'd get more service out of their boot that way. A pair of boots at Cliff Shaft you would be lucky if you got eight months out of them, the ore is so sharp they just tore right into em, you know. You could wear leather shoes there, they were, although I had rubber boots. **Would the boots have re-enforced toes in them?** Oh ya, safety toes. **And you had to replace the boots almost every 8 months, what would it cost you for a pair of boots at that time?** At that time, they're around \$8 or \$9, something like that. Then we had, when we worked in the shaft there, they had a Canadian boot that they introduced. That was a stiff boot, the instep was so stiff you couldn't bend it. Just like two pipes on your feet, that didn't go over so good. **When you would replace boots and things like that, would you get those at a store in town, or was there a place that the company provided?** We got 'em all at Lopberg's, that was the general store. I don't know who's there now. I think there's a U.P. Tax Service there now. But Lopberg he was the general distributor for all mining clothes, if you didn't have the money, put it 'er on the books, pay when you can, he was good. Ya.

TAPE #3 SIDE 1
WILLIAM LUCAS
July 12, 1994

You mentioned that there were other superstitions that miners had, or that there were some superstitions beside the believe in the ghost of Murphy. Can you tell me what some of those superstitions were? Ya, we'll make one correction on that, instead of Murphy the name was Jeffrey. Jeffrey was supposed to have disappeared before 1900 in the upper levels of the Cliff Shaft Mine. That was the rumor. Then this Italian fella happened to be workin' up in there, and it was beginning to bother him. When he saw Jeffrey, well he just went bezerk. He threatened to

jump down the hole. The boss happened to walk in there, caught him. He said if I see him comin' around again, he said I'm gonna jump down that hole. Boss said no you can't do that, I don't want to see you get hurt. You'd better come with me. He come down the lower level where I was workin'. He said Willy, he said, you take care of him now. And I did, for a couple weeks there, you know. But he never did go back up there. And who knows, it could of been, in let's say in around 1880 or somethin' like that. Maybe he was covered up with some fallen ground, or stuff like that. Anything could of happened, there was nothin' safety in them days you know. It isn't like it is now, you're checked every hour to find out if you're still around. But as far as any other stupertions I don't know of any others. **Was there every any talk about women in the mine underground?** That was ah, ya they did. **I mean women as workers. What would they thought of a women working underground?** Well, at that time they didn't as far as women working underground, I never did hear of any word mentioned about women working in the mine. Although they had worked at open pit mine in Negaunee, at Old Jackson Mine, they were working on surface, you know, cleaning up, I don't know what they were doing, but there's pictures. But I don't know of any ever workin underground. **You mentioned a couple of nicknames for guys or for their kinds of jobs they did. Can you think of any other nicknames?** There's not too many, lots of em were usually called by their last names, you know. There was Gussu, and they had some, how the heck would they, Mudbox, skinner, skinny, I can't think of any right now. Oh Little Beaver, I can't think of any right now. **Do you have any recollections of the strike of 1946?** The strike of 1946, that was a long one. That was costly, if you had a few hundred dollars saved away, you just had to use up that you know. Then those from what I heard afterwards, the officials they were gettin money from the union, you know, the union officials, but we never got a penny. Not one penny. And when you're off for six, seven months, you know, that hurts. But we rolled through it anyway. By the time we started back to work, we'd start all over again. Just lucky to be back to work. Tempers were short, father against son, and stuff like that. Some of them still haven't been forgiven. Lot of old guys were charging their groceries and that, then when they got back to work, their money started comin in they start trading with somebody else. I know one character right here in the location even, not far from me, he's charged up a huge bill over at Cullet's Store. When he got back to work, he quit going Cullet's. He said that Cullet's said pretty good, here I fed him right through the strike, when he gets back to work he don't come around anymore. You know it's an awful thing to do. There was quite a few of em and that hurts. **How difficult was it to save money before and after the strike?** You just had to make up your mind, that every pay check you got you just took some off the top. You say this is going aside, and the rest we'll just divey up what were gonna need now till next payday. We didn't get paid every two weeks always, you know. But we got back on our feet. And then work harder, harder you work the more money you got, ya. **Can you tell me a little bit about Cullet's store, how well you knew the storekeeper and how much business you might of done there?** Storekeeper was right here in West Ishpeming, Cullet's Store. He was a young couple, he was married to a local girl, Typola girl, and he was good. He carried a lot of the miners you know, on there. We didn't charge up there because we had the cash to pay for our grub. Then we were livin out the camp, so that helped lots. We had all we want to eat, we were eating good. But I know the storekeeper, they were left. That was the only one around here, I don't know, I think in town some of the stores were giving credit, a lot of credit, you

know. **Can you remember when you wanted to get more than company count and did you go back into mining after that or what?** Oh ya, I stayed mining, but I took, finally they all these engineers that were with their company, advertizing them. They were satisfied, they spent their time which was allotted for them. Some two weeks, they finally went their ways. The results that they got, they turned it into the company then, and to show how much, cause they had to keep an accurate count of every foot of ground that they drilled in, and how long it took them to drill, and all the other problems they had. They asked me even one time, what's the best machine Bill? Well just out of plain sight I said well, if I had my choice I'll take that Chicago Nomadic. Why is it you want that Chicago Nomadic? I said because, it's lighter and it drills just as good as the English saw there. English saw was about 10 to 15 pounds heavier, and more bulkier. This was more smaller and compact. And it come with a good jack-lag that you put the machine on top for lag, you know. It's like a road-runner, ha, that's what it was you know. Anyway I didn't hear anymore about it, then as time went on there was a new Chicago Nomadic come, but they also bought some of the others too. They not only bought a Chicago Nomadic, they bought Engasal Ram. They still didn't want to give up their old customers that they carried, you know, in the old days. Cause the other companies were coming out with new type of machines also. So they got four or five different machines, no I counted six one time, there was Joy, what's his name now, um, what'd I say now. Did you know Captain Tom Tipett? Did you know his boys? Roy and Doug, and there was another one. Wilfred, I know Wilfred, I worked for Wilfred at the Mather B. What was one, there was a, we used to call two-shot, it was the youngest boy. He was a salesman for Joy Manufacturing Co. He was selling Joy machines also, you know. But I never had anything to do with him, concerning machines. Ya there was Wilfred, and Dougie, they were nice guys. I worked for Wilfred when I first went to Mather B. I was walkin around in there one day, and I was in a place close to where I worked, my regular place, you know, I had to get somethin. I went through one cross-cut and I was lookin up in the old workins' up there. I was wondering I seen his light comin and happened to be Captain Tipett, you know. And he asked me what are you doin here? I said, well I'm just goin through. He said you better not hang around here, he said geez, we both looked up an old stope? up there, and he said it looks pretty bad. We better get out of here, it was already abandoned you know. And he said that'll liable to come down any time, so what you call, we left from there then, you know. I saw him quite a few times after that but the mine is big you know. He never did come around where I was workin at the end, you know. **About how long you stayed mining at Cliff Shaft before you moved to Mather B? And what year was Mather B?** I stayed mining at Cliff Shaft till 1968. I was mining right up to the last, and as soon as I went to Mather B, I continued mining. But as a different type of mining, entirely different. **What were the big differences that you noticed between Cliff Shaft and Mather B?** Cliff Shaft is wide open, stokes. Stokes is one big hollow. Like you've seen pictures of Carlsbend Caverns, that's the way it is, you know. You see different workings at different elevations, that's what I mean by laterals. And everything was not on, it isn't all on level ground, there's workings up higher. In order to reach those places, they have to have ladders. And then they'd splice sometimes, two, three ladders, to get higher up, zig-zag, you know. So I was mining all the time, all my life I've mined. Every type of mine you can think of. Shaft, that new shaft in town, I went down with that about 1800 ft. something like that. And when I was at the Lloyd I worked on weekends in the shaft, repairing shaft, and I was mining

during the week. But Saturday nights I did get overtime, I got in trouble even out there. Ha ha, at North Lake. There was, we were workin five days a week, and Captain Tippet told me he said, Billy do you want to work on the shaft over the weekend. He said ok you come out so and so in the morning. That was good I was gettin extra time and a half. That kept up for three, four months, and all of a sudden we went down to four days a week. Those Italians guys at North Lake, they started complaining. They said how come you got that young Billy working, he's a single man, he said me married man, we got dozen kids, I need the money. He said you turned it down when it was offered. But you were satisfied with five, some of them even went to the Cap's house. And told him he said, we want that work. So Cap called me in, and he said, well Bill they're raisin hell because your single, and gettin an extra shift. I said that's ok, let em have it. So they got their, you know, extra shift. But I didn't mind. Sure, I was satisfied. Cause I had been out of work, I went right through the depression, you know, I was tickled pink to get all the money I could get. And that's the way it was. **Was it very common for guys to turn down extra shifts that were offered to them?** Yes. Lots of 'em, they figured they were makin good money. Fridays, well they give em a weekend to raise hell. But when they got cut short, that's when it hurt. **You said that you worked about 5 years at the Mather B and it was quite different from Cliff Shaft. You talked about Cliffs being very large, and the ore was a lot harder. What other differences do you remember about the two mines?** Well it's one thing with ventilation, it was good at Cliffs Shaft. It was so huge, and the constant draft, you know. Then they had the two shafts, A shaft, and B shaft. Air circulated right through, all the time. You couldn't stand one place, you know, too long, otherwise you'd get cold. You had to wear, like wearing clothes for mining, you had to have heavy underwear, heavy pair of pants, then your work pants on top of them, or overalls. And then with a heavy undershirt, and a flannel shirt, or wool shirt, and a jacket on top. At Mather B, you could've, in some of them places, all you need was a pair of pants and a shirt, and cut off sleeves right up to the elbows. Day and night difference, Mather B is hot in some of them places. Tell ya, it was smokey. Oh was he smoke, they would be blasting all day long, you know, the trammer that would barring down chutes, they'd have to blast, you know. The smoke would go through, ya. In Cliffs Shaft smoke was more bluish, it was red at Mather B. **Was there a difference that the way the ore stuck stuck to your clothing at Cliffs than there was at Mather B?** At Cliffs the ore would slide off, it's a sharper particles, shiney, real shiney stuff. Not at Mather B, it was just like tomato juice, you know, stuck right on. Sure, that was somethin. **You told me that you had helped to sink the newest shaft at Cliff Shaft. What year was that, and can you describe that a little bit for me?** That was in 1961, we went down between the two shafts, they put down another shaft. They started right from surface. I didn't get in right at the beginning the first two weeks, until they got through the solid ground, you know. They had to get down about 30 ft., all the gravel and stuff. But from there down, then it was solid rock. Then they had to drill the whole thing out, and blast, handle the dirt, and pull it up. That was a nice shaft put in, we worked on three shifts. It's a shame that they had to stop, cause that shaft was the most modern shaft. The hoist for that shaft is the most modern in the country. It's automatic, and you don't need a cage rider to escort you know, when you go in. When you go it's just like in the hospital, you go there and you see the dials there, it's marked on there. If it's available the light is on, you know. It tells you where the cage is at the moment, and if you call for it, it'll come and you ring what level you want

it on. Everything was button control, and quiet, just like a hospital. Sure. And it held, I think 50 or 60 men on each deck, so pretne'r 90 to 100 men at a time. Boy that was somethin, too bad they had to leave everything down there. But the hoist is still up there. They said that eventually, the way were told that when they every opened up the Cascade Mine in Palmer, that's an area East of Palmer in there that Cliffs owns. That is ready for mining, but they said they'll use that hoist there. But it's idleing up there, I guess it's collecting dust. The same hoist they put on bigger skips on there, you know that holds up, they could load more ore in the two skips than before. They didn't use it not too many years, and then all of a sudden the word came that the mine is closing. It caught a lot of the guys by surprise you know. But they said they got in a hurry to try and pelletize that ore, but they did not find a method. They tried their best. Probably if they tried it now they would, because it's similar to the ore that they have at Republic. That is hard ore, and they're able to pelletize that. But now they could use Cliff Shaft ore, just like they figure on Republic, making bricketts instead of small pellets. That would work good. You ask any of the old time miners, even there, they never did play out Cliffs Shaft, there's a lot of ore left. What Cleveland says got to go. They had Tilden going, Empire, Republic, deep mines were a thing of the past. Sure, that's the way it goes. They shut her down and let her fill up with water. Leave everything behind. There's millions and millions of tons of iron, scrap iron that's down there now, sure. Motors, buffers, pumps, transformers, rails, trolley wire, there's sixty miles of railroad track under there, sure. Ya, ya.

TAPE 3 SIDE #2

William Lucas

July 12, 1994

During the 5 years you worked at Mather B, was there anything in particular that stands out in your mind about the Mather B? One thing about Mather B, you can say that it was smokey. A day didn't go by that you didn't get smoke, somebody's you know. Some of the places were mud, you'd walk in there. And the transfers and the ropes, you had to be continuously on the lookout for low places. When there's scraping even, of geez some of the scrapers and tuckers were in such places, you couldn't get in there hardly to operate, and you were bent over like this, operating the machine, 200 ft. out you know. And the place was coming down, you know, caving. Of course, that's the way the scraper men had to work, you know. Us miners we didn't come under that, and the hurry up you know. Oh you had to be very careful when you're walking on a level even. The motors would come around, full speed you know. You just had to find a good safety place, back into one they go by zoom! Quite a few got killed that way. They come down the ladder road, step right in the track and there's a motor comin right through and ran em over, you know. **How would the men know if the motor was coming, was it noisy?** There as a boss Bart Judici, he came down a ladder road, and he stepped on the track

and the whistle was blowing, you know, or the siren. Usually when the motor leaves from inside they pull the switch so that alerts everybody down the line. And he was halfway down the line on the curve, and the lights were flashing and the noise was on, you know. Boy he looked, he didn't see anybody, that's where he made a mistake he shouldn't have gone. Soon as he stepped out the motor come behind, sure. They didn't have time to watch, they just ran over. They should of stayed right back on the ladder, wait till that motor goes, cause he knew the motors coming. The lights were flashing, and they make a noise when they're flashing. That was a sad case there. It happened on the same shift, but on a different level, you know. We didn't hear about it until later on in the day, through the intercom, you know. One thing good about the Mather B, they had a good intercom system there. Every mining contract had a intercom system hooked up there, and if you ever needed anything all you had to do was get on the intercom. Called a dispatcher; if your Dad was on, get your Dad right away. Relate what the problem is, you know. Like them motor men, anytime they moved well they'd have to call your Dad, and then he'd call back and say ok the coast is clear now. If it wasn't clear he'd hold em back you know. Cause he had everything on a chart there and he knew just where they all were each minute. That was a hard job on the nerves there, keep track of all them motors there. Not only the motors there were other repair crews in there and they had to be watching each other you know. That was somethin', there was a lot of close calls. Some of them timber hollers when they'd come thru on them curves even, you could here that bell on their motor ringing, you couldn't see it, so much moke you know. Until they wizzed right by you, you know. **Was the smoke from the blasting?** Ya, they would blast anytime they want, the scrapper men. They had to pull the dirt out and it was hung up in the chute, they put a charge of powder up in there, blast er down, then come down, ok for a while, then scrape. That's the way it was. Smoke, smoke smoke! Lot of times it was so thick you had to get down on your knees to find out where the track is, you know when your walking. That was the worst part of it. They cleared out for a while then continue because somebody was always blasting. I wished that Cliffs Shaft would of kept going, I probably would have worked another three years more. Cliffs Shaft was nice and close to home, we were on one shift only. Everything what you done today, you got it facing tomorrow morning see. You know just what you're gonna do. You know just what you need, and you plan for it. Most of the time the miner was the boss in the contract you know, he done what needed to be done. He had to make the right decisions and he had to make your place safe, cause it was your neck. You had to make sure, he looked up to see any cracks up there or anything, see it loose, take it down, sure. And if you didn't get it down today you got it down tomorrow, sure. Ya. Some of them chunks were big too, you know, that were up there. You test them with a bar and they sound solid, but some of them chunks were so big, you know, even a crack in there they fooled ya. You just had to be careful. They had lots of them blasted down you know, use powder get them down. But I never had any come down on my head anyway. I made sure of that. **So when all was said and done you retired in 1973?** Ya it was October 15, I decided to call it quits. I worked altogether 37 1/2 years. **Did I ask you about your brothers & sister names and when they were born?** There was Ida, she was the oldest sister, there's Lila and Jenny and Lee and Lep and I'm the only boy. Lempy was the youngest child, I'm between Jenny and Lila. The only one that's living is Lila and Lempy, Lila's in California and Lempy's in Rapid River. **Where were you born?** I was born in North Lake. **What things do you remember about growing up in North Lake?** I can't

remember too much cause I was so young, I couldn't of been maybe a couple months old, that is a blank. Then we moved to West Ishpeming and right across from Bengry's house there's that double two-story house, we lived in that I think that first winter. Then my Dad bought this old one right next to us here shortly after that. But as far back as I remember, the closest I can think back is when we marched to West Ishpeming School from the old school in 1916. And it's marked right there on top of the school. It was winter time and couldn't of been no more than 4 or 5 years old. **Where was the old school?** Right on the corner of Center & Silver street. That was our homestead all those years until I went to eighth grade. I went from fourth grade up to sixth grade. I skipped fifth grade. I went to High School four years. It was around springtime, and I took sick, and I was sick for a couple of months, more than that even. And then my Uncle came up from Chicago for his annual vacation here you know, and he talked me into comin to Chicago with him, so I went. That ended my schooling right there. I was sorry afterwards, I never did finish, that's how it was cut short. I worked for Western Electric made telephones, all your anset mountings. I worked there for three years, I would of worked longer even, but they cut down. The depression was comin on, and it was really hurting, they cut it down to 2 days a week. I felt sorry for a lot of them guys, they were married you know. Even I was concerned cause heck I wasn't makin enough to pay for our room and board. So then I come home, ya. **Now you said you were already working at the Lloyd Mine when you were single. When did you meet Coreen and how did you meet?** Up North! Ya. I saw her a few times up there and I used to see her up there pickin berries, come around to the camps and that. Met her at Emil's there a couple of times, I got aqainted with her, so. That's the way it went. **Now the camp that you have was that your parents camp?** Ya. **And just for the record that's on the Little Dead River, right?** Ya. **Can you tell me what you did, did you ever have a date or did you pretty much see each other when you were picking berries or things like that.** **What did you do for courtship?** No we didn't go on any dates, we took in the shows like that and the town on business. Winter was comin' on too you know, so kinda hurry things up. And we went on a lotta hikes you know. And went fishing, done a lot of fishing out there, and roamed around. Scaled all them big mountains up there. Carved our initials on a lot of trees, they probably still there. **Just for the record give me you wifes maiden name.** Coreena Korpi. **How long after you met did you get married, and what's the date of your marriage?** It was '46, about a year after I think. **Do you happen to recall when you would go to a movie what a movie ticket would of cost?** At that time, I think they were not even 40 cents, ya. **How many children do you have?** Right now? There's Pat and Paul and Eric, and Karen, 4 ya. **While the kids were growing up what kinds of things did you do as a family?** Well we went on trips, not long ones. We spent a lot of time at the camp, ya. Lot of berry pickin, that's one thing we done when we were small too. We done lot of berry pickin. That helped like during the depression. We'd, like my Dad had a huntin' camp out Flat Rock, and he'd load the kids in the car, bring us out there for a week and leave us there. And we'd pick berries all day long. My sisters and I, we'd pick maybe bushels a day, and he would come on weekends and bring empties and take the full ones in. We made more money than he did in the mine, imagine, on blueberries. Every morning when we'd leave the camp each kid had a twelve quart pail. And we had that full by 11:00, and in the afternoon we'd pick up another twelve quart pail. Imagine five kids, imagine the berries. And we didn't have to go far, like here across the street, it was just grapes, there was

berries all over. You just get tired of pickin' one place, you just move over here. Just kill the monotony you know. Ya. But we enjoyed ourselves out there. We'd always be home by 5:00, have supper. Them days there was no radios or anything you know. Go to bed early, have bonfire and the whatnot, you know. Listen to the cyottes and hear the owls. **What about the time when your own kids growing up? Was camp pretty much where you'd spend vacations or did you take trips or anything like that?** No we didn't go too far, we spent a lot of our time at camp. It seem like the car just went there all the time. We did go well, Escanaba, places like that, Copper Country, Porcupines, Norway. Within a 200 mile radius, that's about it, you know. **Was it very hard during the time the kids were growing up to make ends meet? Were there things that you did that would help to stretch your money?** There was a lot of little expenses kept comin' that if you had a few dollars saved up, well you'd figure I'd get somethin', but somethin' would pop up. Well you had that little cookie jar, you tap that all the time. But it seemed like we always made it though. There was expenses, hospitalization and stuff like that, injuries. Nothing major you know. **I think there was one thing that was unique in growing vegetables out North. Can you tell me about that, how all the families connected to the Korpi's grew vegetables and stored them in the basement out North?** Oh you mean the miners? **No, Grampa Korpi's field of potatos and carrots and all that.** Oh yes. He raised a lot of potatos, turnips, beets, and wonderful strawberries. Boy he was gettin a lot of vegetables, we'd go up there potato diggin' time and everybody would help. Scatter em off, in a hurry sometime, and get em in before it rained. Same thing with the turnips. One thing you got to hand it, they had lots to eat and more than enough. He sold a lot of potatos, rutabagas, turnips, and he sold a lot of strawberries. I'm suprised none of the boys have kept up the strawberry patch out there. He had a good spot out there, and great big strawberries. One thing you got to hand it to Grandpa Korpi, during the depression he did not go hungry. He had everything there at home. All the vegetables, potatos, and the meat, he had chickens, and he sold milk to the dairy farm. That was Grandma's end, of the selling milk. On weekends he would load up the truck and take in a load of hardwood, firewood to the customers in town. He'd collect \$20 and it was nice income. Compared to the people living in town, they were on welfare; they didn't have a thing. And they were destitute. But all those farmers that lived outside in the rural areas, they went through the depression good. Cause they had the foresight to plan for their survival. There was enough to eat, that was the main thing. And cash comin' in on wood. He got one merchant, one dry goods merchant in town, he said, he say's the only catch I see, he said, comin' into the store on Saturday's when Matt Korpi comes, he said there's a twenty dollar bill. Guy's downtown there just walkin' around in their Sunday suits, and on welfare you know.

**TAPE #4 SIDE 1
WILLIAM LUCAS
JULY 18, 1994
260 PROSPECT STREET
ISHPEMING, MI**

One of the things I didn't ask about your early childhood was what language was spoken in

your home before you started school? Finnish, both father and mother spoke Finnish, we did not start English until we started school. Then the mother and father both picked it up from us. So eventually they got to be quite good at it, you know. Mother she was always interested in reading. And she'd look over our books, she'd wanna to know what is that, and how to pronounce it. It was interesting, you know. Sure. And when mother used to belong to the Kalevise? they always used to look forward to Mrs. Lucas. You have to lead now the singing and the program for tonight. She was the master of ceremonies always, at the meeting. And she tied into it, she handled it very nicely you know. And during the WPA days there was a program put out by the government, it gave some help for the older people to pick up English and History, and read and write. And mother heard about that, she enrolled immediately. The teacher used to come to West Ishpeming School, once a week. And that was a lot of fun. She got to be pretty good. At home all her friends, there was about 4 or 5 of them, they were all neighbors, but they were male and she was the only female. They would always come, and stop at our house, then they'd go to put, put, putsn' down the path to the school. You should of them discussing their assignment, what they were supposed to have for that day. And then they were laughing and giggling, such fun how to pronounce so and so word, they already forgotton how it was supposed to be. But that was something. Mother was very disappointed when their sessions were then cut short in the spring. She was lookin' forward to it. But she got along alright anyway. But she was good in Swedish also. She could speak Swedish to quite an extent, she learned that in Finland. And father he could speak pretty good English, although he couldn't write it. **Did he learn English from you, from his children?** He learned from communicating, working with men at the mine. That's the only way he picked it up, and at home. Us kids talking, he picked up words, and after working in the mines for many, many years he had to give up a good job. And he was offered a good job in Canada to take over and supervise the sinking of a shaft there, cause he was an expert shaft man. And he didn't take it, because I can't write English, I can talk but I can't write it. Take it anyways, we'll solve that, but he wouldn't go. He should've because there were a lot of modern day bosses that I had, they couldn't make out their daily report. Their wife had to make their report at home for them. They didn't know spelling, oh geez. It was interesting, just to listen to those old people, they would have their assignment in front of them, looking at each other and want to know how was it again that we was supposed to say it? **Do you have any idea when you were growing up how many of the people, or what proportion of the people in the neighborhood spoke Finnish?** I would say a good 85% in this location. The Finnish they dominated the language around here, there was Finnish, English, French, that's about it. We all got along good. A lot visited each other, all the kids grew up together, played ball together, fished, school, inter-marriage. Typical American! Sure. We used to live right opposite your Grandma's house in West Ishpeming. She and my mother were very good friends you know, about the same age at that time you know. Mary could speak very good Finnish, did you know that? All her friends were Finnish you know. Mother used to go over there and pick up more and more English. I think we lived there for maybe one year or so. Then my dad bought the old house next door. **That's another question I wanted to ask you. You spent most of your childhood living in the house next door to where you are now. How many years of your life have you spent living in either this house or the house next door?** Since 1957. Fourty years in this house, and maybe 10 years in the house next door. **Do you think it was more than that?**

It could've been more than that, maybe closer to 15, 20, something like that. **Can you tell me what the Caliva's are, what that club is for?** The Caliva is a lodge, it originated in Finland. It's a social lodge, friends meet, they read the Caliva, that's the what would I say, read quite a bit in Finland, poems on Caliva, it's still strong in Caliva, Ladies of Caliva they call it. **Tell me about your Dad and what did he tell you about his job sinking shaft?** He said one thing you got to work hard that's for sure, and you gotta make sure everything that you do, you do in a safe way so you don't get hurt. Of all the years that he put in sinking shaft he never did get hurt. It's a miracle you know. And from what I heard the other guys talking, he said geez there wasn't a job that he wasn't able to do. If it came to be a dangerous job that they kinda hesitate what they're gonna do about it, he would go in right away and solve the situation. One time there was sinking shaft at Holmes Mine on afternoon shift and Dad was a shaft miner but he had a week vacation at the time, so he was out hunting. We got a call from the mine they wanted to know if Billy Lucas was home. We said no, he's out deer hunting. Can you get a hold of him? We said well we haven't got a car, but we get somebody to drive out there, tell him he's got to come to the mine immediately! We got a problem. So we hired a truck and went out there, and dad come home got lunch and went to work. That spoiled his deer hunting. But it was a job that the others were afraid to tackle it. It was so dangerous, but he'd done it. They appreciated it too, that was for CCI. Then it was the following year, deer hunting season, dad was out at Flat Rock. Almost on the last day of the season, he shot a huge buck, and he had to leave it out in the woods. He figured well I'll take it in the morning and drag it. During the night the storm got so bad that they had to pull out. He said there was snow up to their belt, and he had to come in. And when he come in he told em at the mine, he said, he had to leave his deer out to camp. Couldn't get out. Well the company offered a team of horses and a buggy, to go out there and get it in, sure. Ya. He said take it, we'll even put a driver on there. Ya. **Did he take them up on the offer?** No, he left it there. The following spring we went there, just knocked the horns off the skull, hung them up on the camp door. They stayed there for years. Then from Holmes Mine he went to the Greenwood Mine, that's where he ended his work. He got sick and couldn't continue anymore, but up till then he had the Lloyd and Barnes Hecker. He knew what shaft work was, timber, big, big timbers. He was an axe man, he knew how to use it cause he had to do lots of chipping and cutting. He was a powerful man, he was a bigger man than I am. I think he was about 6'3". **Do you remember the day you got married and what your wedding was like?** Ya it was December 3rd of 1946. We got married at the church and it was snowing, I think we must of had about 2 feet of wet snow, miserable. We didn't go anyplace, we went out to camp. And we had just went through the big depression, you know all that summer out of work. So we didn't have the money to go on any long extensions, you know. **That was the same year that there was that hundred and some day strike? Then you were working at the mine at that time, right?** Ya. **Tell me about when your kids were small, and what Saturday's were like?** Well if it was summertime, we would all go on trips, go out pickin' berries you know. We didn't go over 200 miles and be back always the same day. Spent a lot of time at camp, Presque Isle, Lake Michigamme. Then out the farm. **Tell me who's farm it is and where it is?** That's at the old Grandma Korpi's farm north of Ishpeming. It's still there, and I hope it stays there. **Tell me what you remember about the Saturday night sauna rituals?** Oh there was quite a gathering, everybody got stories to tell and it was just a lot of fun listening to Grandma and Grandpa tell

some stories, you know from way back. Cause Grandpa had a history, he roamed around quite a bit in his younger days you know. He's been all over, he related some stories you know, what he done, where he worked, the hazzards, the pay. It was something, you know. Then his neighbor Woody Franson and his buddy used to come there for a sauna also, you know. And then they'd all chip in then, and they were talkin'. And Grandma was busy making coffee. **Let's talk a little bit about reading. You said your mother really liked to read and that's a hobby of yours. Tell me what you like to read.** Well I like adventure, mystery, travel. Ever since I was in school, reading was my specialty. I love to read, and I could memorize. The teacher would give us an assignment, maybe 4 or 5 pages. I was always the first one to finish up, in class you know. They would give us so many minutes, I was good for memorizing. I love to read, maybe that's why lots of it's passed on because we're all bookworms at home. There's a continuous flow of books comin' in from the library, and good books. I've read, grade school even, I read all of Kirwoods, you name it, tarzan. It's funny they do not teach geography hardly at all, it's neglected. And we had geography at West Ishpeming school. I like to read ancient history and I still do, you know. Lot of books you read, half ties in with ancient history and that. All of Asia and China, incidents that happened thousands and thousands of years ago in there. The only way you hear it is from these authors, you know. There's some really good books, ya. One good author is Mitchner, I got one of his at camp now I'm reading, 1,052 pages, cause I counted them last night. It should be good. **Do you have any idea how many books you read in a month, or how many books you ever read?** Oh I would say hundreds that I've read. **Do you have any other hobbies that you like to do besides reading?** Well there's lots, I like to go to camp, and I love to hunt and fish. Although I haven't been doing too much fishing. I still like to hunt. Last year I didn't go hunting 'cause my knee acted up. Two previous to that I had luck, eight pointer both years. I'm gettin' the itch again this year, if my leg holds up I'm goin'. Gotta get one more. **Gotta polish off a couple of old crows in the process too.** No I haven't had old crow for a long time. **(That's just a reference to a the camp log at my father's hunting camp where Uncle Bill enters the daily deer sign record and the number of old crows that have died that day).** **Let's move along to church. When you were growing up was church an important part of your life?** Yes. It was every Sunday, I went to Sunday school and was confirmed. I know the Catechism by heart 'cause I was good memorizing you know. I doubt if I could remember it anymore, and the bible. Ya. My parents were strict, you had to go to Sunday school. **Tell me about when your own family when your kids were growing up, did that habit continue when your kids were small?** Yes. **Do remember being a lot of things that were organized around church activities or anything like that. Was that as important when your kids were growing up, as it was when you were growing up?** Yes, there's a lot of activities for the older ones there. We start takin' interest in baseball, then they had horseshoe, basketball, football. There was a period it was stagnant, then all of a sudden all the sports came. It seemed like all the young kids went to the ball games and stuff like that. **How would you describe what the neighborhood is like, how big is it, what kinds of people are your neighbors?** It wasn't so quiet as it is now. It was a rough neighborhood, there was a lot of drinkin' going on. There was no taverns and the men more or less used to drink at home and that kinda of spoiled it cause there was a lot of fights goin' on. Things started to change gradually, you don't hear about that anymore. Although there is some family disputes once in a while, domestic problems. It has

changed quite a bit. Quite peaceful, they respect each others property. In the olden days, I know mother every time when she washed rugs outside, and she hung the rugs to dry, she made sure they were dry, you wouldn't leave them out there somebody would swipe them off the line.

There was a lot of drinking going on when you were growing up? Yes. Had it changed a lot by the time your own kids were growing up? Oh yes, yes. It was prohibition. Then the taverns started comin' and they'd start to drink downtown. That's were they consume most of their drinkin' now. **Somebody told me once that in this neighborhood that there are really deep roots, meaning that there could be three or four generations of the same family living in the neighborhood. I wonder if that's still true.** It's possible. I know there's quite a few, I couldn't say there's four, but I could say there's at least two or three generations in one household, you know. It's quite nice neighborhood now, ya.

**TAPE #4 SIDE 2
BILL LUCAS
260 PROSPECT ST.
ISHPEMING MI
JULY 18**

It was fun working at Cliff Shaft Mine. On paydays it was quite a scramble. There's some characters there, they couldn't wait to get up from underground, some didn't even pause to go into the shower. Soon as they took off their dirty clothes on goes their clean clothes and just wiped their dirty face in a towel, and put on shirt and off they go. And they had to run all the way downtown to their favorite tavern. Sure. And it was somethin', especially on pay day, there was so many of 'em. One fella he didn't go to the tavern, but he gave one of 'em guys a ride to town. He said are you goin' to town, he said ya I'll take a ride. He had a bundle of clothes he was going to take home to get washed, you know. And he forgot 'em in his friends car. He left 'em in the back, you know. His friend didn't notice that the bag and towel was in the back, until a couple days later, he's wondering what in the heck smells around here!! He said it was unbearable, he looked and there was this guys dirty underwear and towel just as brown as the iron ore. He threw it out of the car, left it outside his garage, he said if he wants it he gotta come here and get 'em. And his friend didn't know where he left his clothes. You know there's guys then too that would not change their clothes, their dig in clothes. Some of 'em were so honest to god, they'd go many, many weeks, months, they stunk. And their towel that they used to wiped theirself off, well they'd hang it on the door of their locker, you know. Well anybody going by could smell that. Well at times it got so unbearable that they couldn't stand it, I know one guy he took a towel and he threw it in a garbage can on the other end of the building. And boy the guy, you know, came up from underground then to look for his towel, he's gonna shower, it wasn't there, it was gone. And he went like a maniac, wanna know who stole his towel. Nobody squeeled, nobody said a word. Then they told, they reported that incident, they said somebody better put him wise to it. He's gotta change his towel and clothes. Imagine that, to be told to keep clean. And he stunk! I used to change mine every three days. Cause when your workin' your sweating and all that dirty iron ore water, sure. But them guys that would race on a payday to hurry to get down to the bar, they

figured the well might go dry. Ha Ha **Any idea, was it half of the guys, or a fourth, three-fourths of the guys that would head to the bars?** No, not even a fourth of the guys. They would of had about a dozen or so guys that favored the bars. They could not resist the temptation, stop in there cash their check, a shot and a beer, then that started. They didn't get home until nine, ten o'clock at night. Sure. **They probably didn't have much paycheck by then either, huh.** No. There was even one guy, he worked at the mine, and he used to tell his wife I gotta buy so and so articles for the mine, I gotta get a new hose, and I gotta get some kind of a gaget for his machine, and that. He said that'll run about \$11 maybe you know. His wife, she fell for it, you know. When he cashed his check at the tavern, he kept 11, 12 dollars for himself. And she had been telling some of her friends, she said, I don't understand how John, he can't never make enough money, he's always paying for something, you know, at the mine. They were surprised, they said he's kidding you along he gets that free, sure. Imagine. Telling his wife that he's gotta pay for all that, you know. **Did you ever find out what happened when she told him that she had found out?** I don't know, I never heard. But he drank quite a bit and he got runned over by a car up the highway up here. He was mean. An alcoholic, you know. But he got away with it for a long time, he was paying for all that expensive mine equipment. Here it was all free. **Do you participate in any other clubs or organized activities now?** Well I belong to the Kiwanas, I've been with them about 15 years, and right now we have about 29 members. These are all members who are retired, our youngest one is around 78. But we'll work together a lot with the Kiwaanas noon club. They interchange, got a lot of help from the noon club on a lot of different things, you know. It's a lot of fun. But I haven't been there for a couple months now so, I know they called me up last week wanted to know if I was comin'. But I just couldn't make that day, you know. But just so happens always on every Thursday I got something to do. Ya. **Would you describe yourself as a do-it-yourselfer?** Well, pretty close, ya. Just wanna do it, I can do it. It might take time, I'm not afraid to tackle it. **What kinds of things do you like to do?** Well, I like construction, sure. Workin' with lumber stuff like that. Tools. **We haven't talked a lot about Aunty Coreen. Did she work while the kids were growing up?** Ya. She was a practical nurse at ICU at Bell. Ya, she hasn't been retired too many years. **Now that your retired what kinds of things do the two of you like to do?** Well we been busy out there in the garden, flowers, stuff like that. And monkeying around the house. **You still have your camp too, right?** Ya. **You basically have two homes, your home and your camp.** Ya. **A lot of miners do have a home and a camp. How do you think it was possible on a miners income for you to achieve so much, where some other people who maybe made more money would not have ended up with two places like that?** That camp was originally started by my Dad, about 70 years ago, my Dad bought this lot from the Weippala boys. And just on a small scale; money was scarce. He salvaged a lot of lumber from around the different mines and that, you know, for sill work, floor joice, as you can go down the basement at the camp there now, all the two by sixes, and now they're all iron ore covered. Fir timbers, most of it is salvaged material, and then he kept adding a little at a time. When he could spare a few dollars, he would put that on the camp. And finally he got able to have one bedroom in there, and then we added on addition on there afterwards, you know. Then we added on a little addition on the other side. Ya. And I got part of the basement dug out, and got running water. I put up a sauna, I love my sauna. Got two saunas now, here this weekend. Heat the sauna up, put the fire on early about

3:00 in the afternoon. After supper then when you go for sauna you come outta there you think you went through a wringer. Tired, pooped out! I stretch out and I fall asleep. I'd wake up 4:30 in the morning, sure. That's when it really is good for you, as long as you don't get chilled off you know. Nothin' like have sauna, although there having right now difficulties with the people that own camps up there with lawyer corporations. We're fortunate we have private property, we don't have Longyear. I feel sorry for them people, where they gonna get that money, sure. That put us elderly people, although they have been paying \$500 a year lease, but Longyear Corporation wants them to buy the lot. A 300 ft. lot at I don't know, maybe \$80 a ft. or something like that. Especially if your up in years you gotta think twice before, a lot of them said that they can't afford it, they'll have to sell. So there's gonna be a lot of camps for sale. And there is a lot of beautiful camps there. There's camps that are over a hundred thousand dollars. One even there is a, it's almost like this here like a Czars winter palace, glass, triple deck, imagine. Glass all around! That was \$92 thousand dollars he put on that camp, and he's on leased land. But he's got the money, he'll buy that lot, sure. There's some that's higher than that. **I just want to ask you one more question I think, and then we'll be all finished. When you mentioned sauna, it occurred to me that while you were growing up in the neighborhood, did every house have a sauna outside?** When we were growing up, yes. Around here there was saunas all over. We didn't have any but up here there was Korpi's had a sauna, and Kallio's had a sauna, Loninin's had a sauna, Leitinen's had a sauna, and who knows all the way down. You could go anywhere, 5cents, for a nickel you had a sauna. And we'd go there, and some of them were big, lotta room, and you'd go in there with a bunch of old bucks, and you this tiny little kid, go get up there sit between two big guys that were real big. You look at em like that. And you sit up there, and you could'nt move cause they'd squeeze ya in. And they were throwin' water on the rocks. It's getting hotter and hotter, they didn't mind they could stand it! Pretty soon I couldn't hold it no more, I bailed down from there, crawled out! They laughed, oh you got to get used to it. Then they'd sit in the sauna with cedar boughs, they'd be batting themself on the back you know. You know they don't go for them cedar boughs anymore, that's a traditional winter you know, with cedar boughs. Summer it's birch limbs, you take branches about that long and tie a nice bundle and they swish that birch. That's a traditional Finnish sauna. And we sat for a long, long time, now everybody's forgot about that. They don't go for that swishing. And a lot of people have electric saunas now, but it is not the same. It is not the same as a steam sauna, you can notice it right away. I been I think two of them, as soon as you get in you can sense, there isn't that odor that you have in the steam that's present, that's in the old pipe woodstove. **Just for the record, describe for me for anybody who isn't familiar with a woodstove steam sauna. Can you describe how a sauna should be set up?** Well you know you gotta have a sauna stove, and you set the sauna stove in the room where you're bathing. And make sure it isn't too close to the walls, having it about two feet away from both walls so that nothing will burn although there is cement blocks, they won't burn. You partician the sauna off, and where you're gonna bath they'll be a door going in from the other way. I have running water into the sauna, anytime I want water, I have a barrel there if I want water, I just open the tap and fill the barrel up. And from there I fill the hot water tank that's in the sauna box. That's in partition you know. Then I have a drain on the floor that runs into a septic tank, you know, so there's no water layin' on the floor. Then I have a ceiling in there, keep the heat from going up

too high. Two benches there, one lower one, and one top one. There was one year our grandson, when he was growin' up he used to bring all his friends you know, at the school, sometimes there'd be about a dozen. Those kids in the sauna, now there was laughter, joy, all on that bench, just like a bunch of little heads there. And when they get through take the stairway and jump in the lake, swimming. Back up in the sauna again, they used to do that, all night sometime, sure. And that sauna made a lot of use. Right now even, here except that he can't wait to get out to camp and have a sauna. Says he hasn't had any since almost two years now, been gone so, ya. In the sauna in Finland, even around here in the olden days, years back, there's a lot of children they were born in the sauna. That was what you call, ah they didn't have the hospitals, there were way out in the wilderness someplace, heat the sauna up and they would deliver, sure. **Is there anything else that I should of asked you about that I didn't ask you about that you'd like to talk about regarding mining or anything else?** Not that I can think of. Sometimes when you try and think it doesn't come. Then all of a sudden someday it'll pop up, but at the moment I can't think of anything right now. **Good, then I think we're all finished. Thank You. Of course after we finished turning the tape off there's always one more interesting tidbit that comes up. Let me ask you to describe the water pipes you saw in the Cellwood Mine.** Yes, well we were walking through an old stope we saw this, it looked like a two-by-four up there, strung along side of the wall. And you know what the heck is that, on close examination we noticed it was hollow. It had been made out of three inch stock and formed into a long tube. And that stretched for about sixty, seventy feet, all along the drift and it went up into the shaft and up the surface. They didn't see any pipe around there, so they must of used it for to get water for their drilling machines, just from them wooden troughs of pipe. Imagine they made them air-tight, water-tight too, you know. They could cut in on that, same just like you do on metal pipes, you get water in any other direction. Cause when we got through at the end of the shift, we got through with our work, our exploration rather that morning, we told our boss about that, and he was an old miner, but he was a shift boss also. We asked old Jack, to think that they have wooden pipe in there, he said ya, that was the thing. He said, while metal pipes was unknown and even it just, the conditions and the tools that they had at that time, they made that Cellwood was quite big. There was big stokes there, how they was more men killed there, cause all they had to go by when they were workin' on there was candlelight. Imagine a candle stuck on your cap, and that isn't very good light. And to work under that, then you didn't know you couldn't see up higher what the dangers were up there. And when their loose would be coming down or where you gonna step. The accident rate was high at that mine, and but they took out a lot of ore even so. Then I don't what reason they had for abandoning the mine, they run out their lease or what, but they close the mine. And then it was CCI they had that as a escape route, a safety exit, for the mine in case any disaster or anything, it was never used. **Would you have any guess on any dimentions of the stokes you saw at the Cellwood mine?** The depths of them? **Yes, how high, how wide.** Oh some of them are a good twenty feet, good twenty feet, and long. Some of them went prednear a hundred feet, then they branched up into different areas, you know, sights and that you know. The mine that a different elevations, I don't know how far the Cellwood Mine how many levels they had there, but we were on the sixth level at the Mather B. If the Cellwood was more than 6 levels I don't, I never did find out. **And you were in the Cellwood how many times?** The Cellwood, I went

twice there. That's were the staligimites were, oh that was something. You go through this one door, and it's just like comin' in that door there, and that room was about this big.

#5 SIDE TAPE 1
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That was interesting going through this one door, this heavy steel door, step back, look, there was staligimites, they were up oh geez about 8 - 10 feet in height. And they were just like weeds coming up in the garden. They were all over in there, and thick! We says what in the heck is that, water was dripping down through the ceiling and it was freezing. And to think of all them years that Cellwood had been abandoned, all this had formed. Non of 'em grew no more than about 10" in diameter, but they were pretty, just like a bunch of candles, the shape, and there was hundreds of them in there. But we were able to wiggle through that course of staligimites and got to the other side. There was an open stoke there and that was up maybe thirty feet high, and we followed that for a ways until we got where there was this one little shack. That's why I'm telling you about them boots that were there. That must of been a sort of first aid station or something. Because there was the boots with the sides cut open, we were admiring the type of boot that they had them days for wearing. There was nothing safety about them, they were just plain leather soles with pointy toes, like cowboy boots. Not wonder there were legs broken in there. Everything, some places they had huge timbers holding up, proping up the backs you know. Some of those timbers even, they went through one section of the mine there, there was quite wide at that spot and they had these timber up at an angle, holding up, proping up the back. And we was wondering how in the world did they ever get those timber up there. Cause they were up there about 18 - 20 feet high. There were 16" timbers, that's big already. They put them up like hanging up like from this angle, had to catch up on top, so they wouldn't fall down. And there was one must of been a dozen of those props holding up, and there was a little track going by there where the men used to tram the ore out, had little cars. Them cars were about the size of this here one-man buggy. Imagine pushing that little buggy along the rails, wooden rails, there was no metal rails, all wood. And the rails were about 16" apart. He'd get his little cart full, he'd go push it down a couple hundred feet, get to a dump, he'd dump it, he'd come back for more. He'd go down to another level, probably somebody else picked it up. It was handled many times before it finally got to his final destination, before they could wheel right out the shaft, you see. That was something there. **Do you remember seeing any tools or any things like that laying around the Cellwood Mine at all?** No. I can't think of anything else. Oh there was old candles. We found a couple old hats. And candles still inbed inside the candle holder there, like a spike there. I was sorry we didn't get a chance to do some more in there. But the first night we went in there, we told the boss already that when we get through with our work we got a couple hours to spend, can we go in there and look around? He said you can go, but whatever you do be careful, I don't want anybody to get hurt in there. Make sure you're outta there at quittin' time, and out shaft. So's, ok. But then right next across the road, from the brownstone inn there's

another shaft there, it's a J Shaft, that goes down on an incline. Right behind what's that clinic there, Dr. Swammi, right behind up on that little grade there, you notice that one tall building comes way up. That's a shaft house, that shaft is capped over, it's concreted everything. That went down, it was put down at an angle, so it comes down into Cliffs Shaft. It went way down, it was quite a deep shaft too. I was never in that territory, I couldn't say what stokes they had there, they must of because there was quite a few good size stock piles around there. **Was that particular one called the incline mine?** No, they just went by J Shaft. **Anything else?** You hear a lot in the papers about this old mine workings and that, and old mine pits, and there is a lot of them around here now. They have not been able to really close them off. There is one over here going out south, before you get to the Greenwood Mine, there's a road goes up in the hillside and there's that one there, what the heck is that mine again, Pitch Mine. That's quite a deep mine there, and there's all kinds of old pits around there. They had put a fence there, that fence was all rotted out, and Correen and I even once was there took a look down in there. And we could see down many hundred feet down in there, and it looked awful you know, because all the timber and everything had rotted out. The fence that was there it wouldn't hold anybody back, any animal even going through there would stumble in there, they'd fall in there. There was never, it should of been fenced off. I don't know if that has been done today, even. That danger, you fall down in there you'd die. All you can see is water down in the bottom down in there, ragged rock on both sides, you know. And same thing all the way up north up there, there's oh mine there well we call them test pits, they called them mines in them days you know. And some of them are water filled. There's one barbbed wire around, but that had rotted, and there's nothing there to prevent the deer or person from walking right into them holes. I came across, behind the Big Dead many years ago, it was bird hunting time, I was on the rocky ledge there, I started going down on the south side of it, and it was pretty smooth rock. And all of a sudden my feet started to slide, you know, and I thought oh, oh, I'm going fast. And all of a sudden I grabbed a hold of a brush that was on the side of me, and I stopped, and there all of a sudden my feet kicked over some brush that was front of me. And all of a sudden a hole appeared in front of me. Not quite as big as this here. And I look, what in the dickens! I said, boy, another second I would of been down right down in there. But somethin' held me back, I grabbed at ya. And down there, I could see down there about twenty feet, there was water down there. I said holy gee! Thinkin to myself wonder how deep that thing is. So anyway I circled around, on the bottom of it, or the other end, and I dropped a good size rock down there. By geez, I could see the bubbles comin' up for a long time, so I knew that's more than twenty feet down there. Whoever had mined there, this was before 1800's, it must of been. Because all that wood that was on top of it was rotted, and it just disappeared, just like sawdust. That's one thing that safety men, they don't know nothing about them. They should be, even a deer happened to walk through, or a rabbit or anything they'll fall, they'll never get out. Cause the inside of that hole was just as shiny as a gun barrel. There's a lot of old pits up there, according to the book that I read, there's over 160 mines that were started in the 1870's. Right after the Civil War, just behind the Big Dead there's three old mines there, the Pheonix, the Fire Center, Holyoak??? Mine. And the Holyoak?? Mine is the biggest one there that they, that's right at the interesection of the Little Dead and the Big Dead where they come together. I walked in that, there's a drift that went in there about 500 ft. or so. Inside there was a side drift, went to the right side, and there was a

shaft that went down from there them. I don't know how deep that shaft went down. That was silver, lead, and gold in that mine. Then I guess everything petered out. If they had the treatment that they have now, and the mechanism they could make it pay. But them days they were after the gold nuggets. Now their mining is like powder, it just one ounce to about 50 tons of dirt. That's what it amounts too, sure. They gotta handle so much dirt now. I read these articles the last couple days on western mining, oh boy. It's a problem. There's a lot of 'em go belly up, they start off big and all of a sudden their haven't got the resource to continue and they'll leave a mess behind. And who ends up cleaning them up is the EPA, sure. And this is all over out there, and it lists all different companies that have paid heavy fines. **Do you remember the name of the book that you read that identified all the locations of the old mines in the Big Dead area?** Yes, it's available at the library, Michigan UP Gold Mines. I think it's even available at the Upper's. **Is that Dan Fountains' book?** Ya. It's interesting. **Start again to tell me the story about the test pits north of Silver Lake and the sale of bogus stock certificates.** Yes. Dad bought some when he was a young miner in Ishpeming, and he bought one-hundred shares of Tenanuck? Copper Mining Gold Stocks in New Mexico. I often wondered whatever happened, somebody said this, that company went broke. I thought to myself, I wonder if it did go broke, maybe they just deliberately swindled people around here. Quite a few people told me, they said you should of had some way, if you could of traced the origin of that company, you know. It's all on the certificate, one-hundred shares at \$1 a share, you imagine. That Dad paid for that, he never got nothing. But he still got it, maybe it's still good. **Was there stock sold like that sold for those test pits north of Silver Lake too, or was that something entirely different?** No.