

Announcer : ????? of Northern Michigan University, Professor Earl Hilton (Applause)

EH: I hope this system works, I have worn out my voice traveling with ??? Can you hear? Good. I think I should begin by observing that all my life I have found ?? old timers excessively boring and I apologize that in spite of my best intentions I have become one as I am here to bore you tonight but not for more than a half an hour. As you have learned my wife Marion wrote the official history of Northern, its first seventy five years. As I am too understand it I am to give unofficial history. I do not go so far as novelists do who say that all person appearing here are purely fictitious and any resemblance to actual people living or dead is purely coincidental. I will deal largely with a ten year period. I don't date from the founding of the university. My story begins in 1950, in the spring and summer of that year I acquired a second daughter, a doctorate in English, and a job hauling lumber for a man named locally as shaky Johnny. When he and the town were both new he had been a professional gambler and that is what made him shaky. He told marvelous stories while we sat on the lumber piles, they were a bonus in addition to ninety cents an hour. I was ambitious and wanted higher pay but 1950 was not a good year for college teachers. ??? GI's had gone through and no one had yet come to take their place. ??? they can see ??? an instructor who's contract had not been renewed had shot the department head. But I didn't get that job. In fact I sent out thirty some applications and here it was ??? September and no job worth teaching and you don't pile lumber in the winter. I lived in a small house behind my father's house and had no phone but one morning at six o'clock my father came running to say that there was a call from Northern Michigan College of Education in Marquette Michigan. It was eight o'clock in Marquette and Dr. Thomas, head of english, and Dr. Tate, the president were both on the phone giving me a hard setup. Northern was not one of the places I preferred to go but at that point I was not being choosy. I was offered an assistant professorship, they were apologetic about the pay - 3800. It was a bad year in the auto industry and the state teacher colleges then all under on board had taken apparently a two hundred dollar cost of board cut or at least for beginning teachers. But Dr. Tate and Dr. Thomas were enthusiastic about fishing and about the community concert series. That puzzled me for a moment until I remembered I had listed fishing and music as my ????? And I learned later that both men loved trout. All Northern asked for 3800 in 1950 was someone 35 or under, preferably married and of good character, with a doctorate, teacher experience, and a publication. In the spring finances improved, they got the 200 retroactively and they promised a 200 dollar cost of living increase for the coming year. I began to feel more prosperous but there still were summers when I cut part to but groceries. I accepted and started out in a second hand ?frazier? which is a story in itself but I won't tell it. ?? highway 85 went east on

10 through North Dakota on the way I passed Dickinson State Teachers and I thought oh my god I am going to someplace like that. But it wasn't quite. I knew Michigan was an industrial state and what I had really anticipated was an urban slum. But as we passed Duluth and came in sight of the lake and maple trees, my wife who had gone to school in Massachusetts but had been kept by me and the Arab ??? for several years had a feeling that she was coming home. When we drove through mile after mile of woods interrupted briefly by taverns or by towns bearing the names like Trout Creek or ?Match? wood I decided that ??? it did not quite match the thunder basin national vast lands of our own and it was not accessible crowded. So we arrived at Marquette, population 16,000 ??? Well I would begin fifteen hours a week, sometimes eighteen with ?extension? classes, some of them one hundred miles away and advising the annual and sometimes the annual was sent to Marquette University in Milwaukee. Northern was shrinking while they have been growing. I learned later that the vacancy came about because my predecessor, a man I knew from graduate school, had decided at the last moment he would not take another year, he had quarrels with Northern but particularly he didn't like the library hours and as I understand from the stories circulating it wasn't open in the evenings and he took a chair, climbed up and crawled through a ?trench? then ??? he started school all over again and became a doctor of medicine and went on to become a psychiatrist, he reported the MD was less work than the PhD but more boring. Enrollment was between 6 and 700, faculty about 50. For years the physical science has consisted of one ??? Pierce, Kaye, and Peter White Halls all joined together but when I arrived Olson Library marked our present Learning Resource Center but a building which has since been torn down because it was built wrong. And Lee and Carey Halls had recently been opened. Ethyl Carey, Dean of Women, had organized a brigade of faculty wives to polish up Carey Hall in time for the girls to move in the fall term. Behind the main block of buildings was a row of ??? for married students and a few faculty. Behind them were the college woods running on and on, a ??? sort of area. Several people told me the story of a black bear coming out of the college woods and playing about in front of Kaye Hall, the summer before I had arrived until ??? Northern students chased him away in the direction of downtown. Sex roles in that date were obviously stereotyped, men were expected to chase bears, women were not. Men at Northern were also expected to skin deers, then James ?Repor? arrived in 1958 he had to listen to it, I believe it was 17 different talks entitled how to skin a deer during his first year. There was a dress code, women wore dresses. Later there was a slight modification, they were allowed to wear pants if coming from the dormitories way down the line on ?? days. Smoking had recently been allowed on campus but not in class room or office buildings. No alcoholic beverages were allowed on campus, heavy were likely to be expelled like every member ?? in doing so. The student who said he was sick but for being checked up on him and it wasn't

that type of sickness, so were people who skipped too many classes. This doesn't mean that all students were always models of decor, I believe it was in my first ten years that there a drunken argument over whether or not a large ??? in front of Kaye Hall was rotten or not resulted in two students taking a cross cut saw and cutting it down one night, it was hollow in side. I don't believe the administration ever found out who did it or what the cause was but ??? husband knew the right students and they told him. He didn't pass it on. ??? in those years that two of my freshmen were down staters and one from the western U.P. became very close friends. One friday evening it must have been November they started towards the home of the boy who lived in the western U.P. and one of them observed "it's a lovely night let's go to ?wyome?" so they stopped long enough to pick up riffles and sleeping bags. I say them in my class a week later bursting about the bucks they had and they furnished my family with an expression that we have been using every since, "it's a lovely night let's go to ?wyome?"

We were not overloaded with administration besides Dr. Tate there was Max ??? director of ??? and his sort of doubled as what Dean I suppose, he ducked around and visited people's classes. ??? registrar, Don Bottum was Dean of Men, Ethyl Carey Dean of Women, William ??? Director of Student Teaching and Placement and that was about it. There was no union but there was a faculty council recently organized and the AAUP chapter was founded the year I arrived. We were seen as definitely a teacher training institution and the emphasis definitely was on teaching. I was on the research committee, invented by Dr. Luther Ross, and I remember we had terrible struggle getting the school to pay the postage on Dr. Ross's manuscript for his monumetary work on the common house fly. Dr. Ross was a man who could make a book on the common house fly not only ??? but entertaining. ??? could be described as a kind of a benevolent monarchy tempered by a autocracy with ????? Dr. Thomas, Dr. ?????, Dr. ?????, Dr. Halverson, Dr. ?Buroug?. If any of you remember them you remember as men them as men who took no goth from anybody. Dr. Tate sometimes worried about public relations, the image of the university. He has reported to have at one time divided fools into three class; fools, damned fools, and people who write letters to the editors. In those days I sometimes wrote letters to the editors but most of my memories or Dr. Tate are pleasant. Early one he told me what fine reports he had on our teaching. Dr. Thomas then warned me not to take Dr. Tate too serious. He ????? me to know all the ?? on probation. I think he finally accepted me when I was published in PMLA. When my too small daughters came up to school they would sit on the bottum step inside of Kaye Hall and wait for me and Dr. Tate would hurry up out of his office and sit beside them and chat with them. Once he heard exaggerated reports that I was a successful fisherman and asked to go with me. We fished the Yellow Dog early in the morning, did not see a single rise but it was a beautiful

morning, we say a big buck and I think he enjoyed it and he needed and he needed the rest and relaxation. Later I gave him a vase of thirteen inch browns one from the chocolay and one from the dead and I trust he had at least one good trout breakfast before his retirement. I could talk about other administrators but there isn't time for all the stories about Don Bottum or to repeat all of his puns or his word play. Do any of you remember the one that ended " and thus we trap the ?? bore with ??? of ????" and the ??? caught a story to lead up to that. As for Dean Carey the stories that are told about her are standard parts of American Academic Folklore of that period. I find them all ??? introduction to Folklore. It isn't true that she forbade girls wearing highly polished slippers. You missed that one. Or that she outlawed red dresses as being sexually provocative. In fact she wore red herself frequently and looked lovely in it. As for Max Allen I did extension work under his direction and I believe he was along sometimes on recruiting trips to Upper Peninsula High Schools to places like Eben and one time he told me I was becoming famous from Trout Creek to Trenary. Students were overwhelmingly Upper Peninsula, a few from upper Wisconsin but there were a few foreign students. I remember one Chinese, on the average not sophisticated, about average for intelligence and preparation but well above average for seriousness and willingness to work and learn. When I assigned as a freshmen theme, pick a magazine, read carefully several issues and review the magazine a girl named Emma, an amazing number of fine girls named Emma have gone through Northern, choose a women's magazine. She not only read it carefully and reviewed it carefully but it contained recipes so she baked cake and said it was good. But the fifties has been called the age of reformattee but the students that I met were more independent it seemed to me than those of sixties or later. They had varying opinions and they would argue them rationally at some length, ??????. They did not all shout the same slogans in unison. I was pleased with my classes. I remember my first class in freshmen composition where was Laurie Ann Gant, Luther Gant's daughter, in the same class was a young man who when I assigned as a first theme, tell me what you want to be/what you want to do, he said he was going to follow the path of Richard ?Halaberten? probably none of you remember him. A chap who had ?? who visited exotic places and wrote exciting books about it. Sure enough this chap did report at one time covering India, ?Repal?, and Pakistan and then he came back and ended up as a professor of journalism. ??? of my students lived creditable lives, I can think of two from that period who are on Northern faculty now and I suppose that is doing all right. I made a few boring changes while I was here, I believe I was the first to introduce ??? and Hemingway to Northern students and I stayed long enough to introduce Walter ?Persee? and was delighted to find that John ?Crewens? was teaching him too, so the tradition goes on.

Originally I did not plan to stay, I did not anticipate standing

here thirty years later and giving talks to ?Harited? ??? like most teachers I was something of an academic snob and wanted to move on to some prestigious liberal arts college. But in my first year ??? head of math introduced me to fly fishing and ??? and even put me to some good ??? Over the years I became a climated after four or five years I stopped shivering. I learned to wear swampers, I learned finnish jokes and when not to tell them. Besides after my first year I won a post doctoral study wore, Dr. Thomas bought me a drink at the Northend Tavern to celebrate and I went to a prestigious liberal arts college for a year, academically excellent but hundreds of miles from a trout. And there seemed to be a special tension about the place, the faculty were not notably more happy than the faculty at Northern, they sat at the edge of their chairs waiting for the call from Princeton. The students seemed to be under heavy academic pressure, I remember on girl who kept remarking, and I could have gone to Adam State Teachers. And partly too I think myself knowing they were special people at a special place with a special responsibility to put the ??? and keep it that way. When I returned to Northern I also realized that the girls were prettier here, they decorated the landscape better. Over the years I had other offers or invitations to apply but none overwhelming they involved becoming a dean and moving to the flat lands or both and my family was not in favor of any more moving.

Those early years were sometimes crisis years for Northern, I recall one faculty assembly in the fall when Dr. Tate asked Dr. Gant to report on enrollment and Luther said a bit over six hundred if you count in a few from sister institution on the ??? There was talk at one time of closing down some of the state teacher colleges and specifically Northern of course was the target. Sometimes faculty had to be cut and Dr. Tate hated to fire people. I can remember one utter incompetent we held onto until the state of Wisconsin hired him as a major figure in its educational hierarchy. To keep me, Dr. ?Burroughs? who headed History and all the social studies and the graduate program, arranged for me to teach one section of world history but then it turned out that there was enough work for me in english.

In the late 50s enrollment began to turn up again, we gained more down staters and more out of staters. Beginning to be a slightly different type of student. I think the late 50s and early 60s were the boom years of the fraternities and sororities. So with an emphasis on social life and perhaps less seriousness about study. And I suspect that only a minority of those students could've skinned a beaver. Though some of them were still pleasant people, in 30 years here I never had a class that didn't have at least several people I liked. By the early 60s the first of the baby boomers began to arrive. New faculty was added for the ones that were now retiring or thinking of it. Dr. Tate retired in 1956, worn out from trying to attend to every detail himself. Under our new president, Dr. Harden, Northern began an

aggressive program of expansion, our athletic teams began winning. And at this point many faculty that had been unhappy under Dr. Tate began to worry about excessive growth. I can remember being told that 3,000 is the ideal size for a university and we must not allow it to go beyond. Dr. Harden on the other hand talked about a school of 20,000. Of course he was making that figure by extrapolating from then current trends and trends changed as they have a habit of doing. Families stopped adding three, four, or five children and settled on 1.8. In one decade we went from the population bomb to the birth ?berth?. New young ?turks? arrived on the faculty, former young turks were becoming old term legends. Things changed and things stayed the same and I believe my time is up.