

INTERVIEW WITH PETER JUNTUNEN

L'ANSE, Michigan

FEBRUARY 3, 1987

SUBJECT: The early history of the Herman, Michigan, community

START OF INTERVIEW

[Peter Juntunen, age 75, is the paternal uncle of the interviewer's husband Nigel, son of August Juntunen. Peter's three siblings, Henry (1910-1968), August "Uli" (1914-1991), and Oiva (1918-1981) were the children of Peter Matt and Mary (Pekkala) Juntunen of Herman. Father, Peter Matt (1883-1952) and mother, Mary (1891-1971) were born in Finland. Mary immigrated with her family in 1901; her family were among the first settlers in Herman. Her father was Joseph Pekkala and mother, Elsie, nee Juntunen, was the aunt to Peter Juntunen's father. Peter Juntunen died in 1993.]

PETER JUNTUNEN (PJ): This says to start from your parents.

GAIL JUNTUNEN (GJ): [Looking at photographs] Well, these are Nigel's parents here. Right here, that would be Nigel's family. I'm hoping that what we can do, we'll start off by looking through this. And I'd like to, you know, just a little bit of your family history. Why they came to the United States. And what Herman was like in the early days.

PJ: Oh, I just found out a little over a month ago that Herman Keranen and my grandfather Joseph Pekkala were staying in Ishpeming in the same boarding house and they were working the mine.

GJ: And this was right after they had come from Finland?

PJ: Yes.

GJ: And they came from Finland to work as miners in the Copper [Country]?

PJ: No. They just came over here, I guess, and the first available job was mining around Ishpeming. And from Ishpeming they were at the boarding house and people [inaudible]

GJ: But they didn't know each other then? Or that's how they got acquainted?

PJ: No, they got acquainted.

GJ: Oh.

PJ: And you see, Herman Keranen married a widow who had one son and I think two daughters. The one was Mrs. Partenen [phonetically spelled]. You're probably, that's Mrs. Hoopdala's [phonetically spelled; Fanny Huhtala's] sister.

GJ: Oh, okay.

PJ: And also the other one was Whalemus [phonetically spelled; Wilma's] and Ronald's mother's mother. [Inaudible; Gustave Kontio's wife] It was either a Keranen or the older Keranen, [Selma] Keranen Glen Sadi [phonetically spelled], there are even names are not Keranen, it should be Niemi.

GJ: Oh, they were the,

PJ: Because you see their father's name was Niemi. Mrs. Keranen's first husband was Niemi but they took, you see, their father took the name of Keranen, John T. Keranen instead of John T. Niemi because step father was Herman Keranen. And Herman Keranen was the one who came to Herman first.

GJ: And there was no one else in that area?

PJ: No. No permanent residents. There might have been some hunters or trappers or a thing like that, but there were no other families who had planned on establishing a home. There were some people who were just working around there, like some who had been working on the railroad. There were section houses about every three miles that were set up. Those were the only ones, there were no residents in the Herman proper. There was section housing in L'Anse. There was a section housing in Taylor, no, from L'Anse the first section house was just about Beaubean[phonetically spelled; Bovine] in Taylor. Then the next section house was a mile north of Herp[phonetically spelled; Herman] Where my uncle Charlie was one of the section foreman.

GJ: Charlie who?

PJ: Dantes.

GJ: Oh, okay.

PJ: Aunt Annie's husband. Let's see, there was a section in Herman. Then there was another section in Summit.

GJ: And it kept going all around?

PJ: Because they were only about three, four miles apart. They had section houses, so, close together.

GJ: So Herman [Keranen] came in and established a homestead.

PJ: And then they started applying for mail. So they somehow or another somebody decided this was Herman's Siding. Because you see there was a Herman Siding where they had these places where they switched empty logging cars where they loaded logs and all kinds of firewood and anything like that and called it Herman's Siding. So it became, [also reported to have considered placename as Nels' Siding, after Nels Majhannu, but settled on Herman, 1902]

GJ: Because it was Herman's, that was where Herman was?

PJ: Yeah. And that was Herman Keranen was the first name.

GJ: How long did it take before others began moving into the area, then?

PJ: Almost immediately because during the first, there was Herman Keranen and Joseph Pekkala, and Kusti [Gusti or Gustave], G-U-S-T, K-O-N-T-I-O were the

first three families. GJ: Who was the second one?

PJ: Second one was Joseph.

GJ: Oh, okay, Joseph Pekkala. And that is your-?

PJ: My mother's dad. And I think they came... the family came, Mrs. Pekkala... because I was... they must have come in 1901. Or 1900. I don't remember for sure. Because some of the figures that we had as to when they came from Finland, they don't jive. Because Fanni Huhtala and August Pekkala were born in 1901. The first year. As far I know.

GJ: So,

PJ: Because Danny [Fanny] says she was eleven years old when I was born. GJ: Oh, okay.

PJ: And she was the one who helped me get a passport.

GJ: You were explaining on the phone. Because they didn't have records?

PJ: Because there was no birth record in the county. Because the county clerk's office never wrote them down. The treasurer's office showed that my grandmother had received a payment for reporting the birth. No record was made at the county clerk's office. There were several hundred in the county whose birth records were 1911, '12, and '13, but I was [inaudible]

GJ: Had they been recorded before that time? They were after that time, but not-?

PJ: Not during those few years.

GJ: That made it difficult.

PJ: You see, in those days there was no hospital, so all the births were taken care of by midwives.

GJ: At home? And then supposedly the parents had to go and register,

PJ: And sometimes, and in those days the doctors made house calls. The doctor who came to Herman originally came from Michigamme. Most of the time from Michigamme.

GJ: You traveled daily? Not daily.

PJ: You see, Herman had six passenger trains a day.

GJ: Ah, all in a day. So how long of a trip would it have been from Michigamme to Herman?

PJ: It was about a little and [over] half an hour. Because it was only about eighteen miles. Along the railroad tracks.

GJ: So that would have been a tremendous trip? In fact that was a major transport wasn't it, for that time?

PJ: All transport-

GJ: Didn't people have any horse and buggy out?

PJ: Yeah, they had horse and buggy.

GJ: Although in the winter, now that would be another story, wouldn't it?

PJ: You see like traveling from Herman to L'Anse was only eighteen cents.

GJ: Wow.

PJ: Was the fare.

GJ: Now when was that?

PJ: Oh, that was until in the late '30s, early '40s.

GJ: So that was really a reasonable rate?

PJ: [Inaudible] to Marquette was less than a dollar.

GJ: Did people travel a lot by the railroad?

PJ: Oh, sure.

GJ: It wasn't like you stayed all winter long at home?

PJ: We had before. One family who came there, who came from Bessemer, a man came with his wife and two sons, two young sons. Twice before World War I and once after World War I and it was just a little over a year ago when we first met any member of the family. The young son Gilbert came here to Baraga and my brother found him at the state park when he was registering the tourists. And this man, [inaudible] his name was Gilbert [inaudible; Juntunen] he came from Bessemer. He came here for the engineer's fortieth reunion.

GJ: Was he a relative?

PJ: And he looked at my brother and he said 'gosh tootin,' and he was telling my brother that his parents and his two older brothers had talked many times about coming on the train from Bessemer to Herman to visit some relatives. And he told Willy [Uli] that must be [inaudible] Well, my brother told him if he came to Herman to visit relatives, he has to be a relative because we were the only Juntunen family there.

GJ: When did the Juntunen's come to Herman then?

PJ: My dad came in 1903. So he married mother in 1909.

GJ: Okay, so her family was already established in Herman in 1800s [correction, 1901], did he come as a logger, or what was his occupation?

PJ: No, you see, my dad had no relatives except cousins already in the Pekkala family. My dad and mother were first cousins.

GJ: Okay. And he came up to Herman to be near what family he had? And then married his cousin?

PJ: Yeah. And you see he had an uncle in North Laird near Alston. He spent one winter there. And this uncle, who was an august gentleman, his wife was Charlie Dantes' sister, who married mother's oldest sister. See how it's mixed up?

GJ: Well, I get the sense from the Herman community of some time back that everybody eventually was related to everybody else.

PJ: Yes, by marriage or some other way.

GJ: So those families that are still there that were from the original families are still somewhat-?

PJ: There's not too many of those left, you know. Most of them died and moved away, some have found [inaudible] copper near Herman and they wouldn't sell it because they were going to retire. Most of them died before they were retired.

GJ: And then a lot of young people from away have started moving in?

PJ: Herman would be a bigger community if there was property available close by. For people with families, kids, it's just as good a place to live in than in a big city. Because the school buses, are, the snow plow comes every morning, no problem getting into town except for backed up roads.

GJ: What about when you were a kid. Now, were there did you go to L'Anse on the railroad exclusively or were there roads?

PJ: Oh yes, there was a road. You see, U.S. 41 came on through Herman. The original road.

GJ: Now I know near the big hill is,

PJ: Went through Herman. That originally was 41. It wasn't until the '20s, early '20s that they started making U.S. 41 by way of Alberta,

GJ: Why did they change it?

PJ: Because they wanted a better road toward Huntington [Covington],
for example.

GJ: And that was too much out of the way?

PJ: Yep. And there were plenty of big hills and like that.

GJ: Well, when you were kids did you stay pretty much in the Herman area where everything was within the community there, where like now everybody comes to L'Anse?

PJ: Well, in Herman the first co-op effort in Herman was a flour mill.

GJ: Okay, the historical society has-

PJ: And that building now is what used to be the post office. Right there at the four corners. That was the post office building before flour mill. It was moved about three hundred feet, it was near the railroad. It was right next to the railroad track. So that they could even send out feed and they could get corn or grain by train, and if they had a lot of wheeling to do they could ship it out by railroad cars. The flour mill was right next to the railroad. And they had a big gasoline engine. That had only two front wheels, metal, and the rear wheel was two feet wide, or two and half feet wide, course in the middle underneath... Was the only tractor of that type I have ever seen. And it was, it had enough power to operate the entire flour mill. And it would make just as white as you could buy from, you know, the other place they had a flour mill like this ever around here was in Houghton. Houghton had a flour mill that was in operation until a few years ago.

GJ: Was it a successful mill?

PJ: Well, there wasn't enough work for it. So, people,

GJ: Would they grow the grain in the Herman area?

PJ: Herman area, yep. You could grow winter wheat. Winter wheat was actually more successful than spring wheat. Winter wheat and winter rye grew in the bog. And when the snow would melt it would mature earlier than barley. You see a lot of people grew barley. Barley matured earlier than oats. But they kept on, they had an experimental farm in Chad [Chatham] where they developed these earlier maturing wheat and barley and oats and things like that. Cross bred them or pollinated.

GJ: Well where the Keranens and the Pekkala, and is it the Kontio family?

PJ: Kontio means a bear.

GJ: What did they originally start out as? As farmers?

PJ: Nope. No, none of them ever had any idea that Herman would become a community. Because the same at North Laird in Alston where my dad spent with his uncle, they were cutting virgin timber in the forest. That was in the days when hardwood, birch, maple, elm, and all these hardwoods were used to heat the boulders and [inaudible; iron] mines. And all the wood shops and factories. Because at that time coal was not so easily available. They didn't have these ore boats until after, they were around after 1900. So virgin timber forests were cut for the firewood. And that was like at Mallard [?], my dad's uncle, he homesteaded. Most of those were homesteads. And there was a narrow range railroad that would haul

all the firewood and the logs to Houghton Hancock. And some of the other timber was cut into lumber to [inaudible] the saw mills. And most of the hardwood, hardwood was not used for lumber at all because we had pine, and elm wood, and cedar, and that was easier to work with. You see, with a hammer you can put a nail through pine and a hemlock and a cedar log, with a birch and maple even if the wood is dry you have a hard time getting a nail through it.

GJ: So those original homes up there are made out of what kind of wood?

PJ: Oh, the original homes were made out of pine. That was the building material because pine was plentiful.

GJ: Well now, my parents were here, and that was the [inaudible] farm.

PJ: Most stories are these logs.

GJ: Now is that how they constructed most of their houses?

PJ: The Keranen's farm. They farmed a big house where Dr. Lansing's [Lancy's] daughter lives now. The original part was logs. Then 3/4s of the house that is running this way is [inaudible; gesturing] a lot of houses were [inaudible; built like that] and you see where I was born was on the Firetower Hill where grandpa made the log house. Then they added from lumber a frame addition [inaudible].

GJ: But it is right now as it was then?

PJ: No, that was torn down. My uncle tore it down. And he moved the frame part of it to the farm. Its where [inaudible] used to be now. And grandpa Pekkala, he bought the entire farm of Coolius[phonetically spelled; Kallio's], because Cooliu[phonetically spelled; Kallio] was an architect. And his was the first house that had four corners and gables and everything else. And last year all the logs of that house were taken apart log by log by a person named-, the whole house was moved and rebuilt because the house is in Wisconsin. They took the house apart and moved it out into Wisconsin.

GJ: Is it reconstructed there? Have you seen it?

PJ: No. I don't even know what town it went to.

GJ: Oh, it would be interesting to find out. Yeah, that was a perfectly square house, wasn't it, like a box? That was unusual.

PJ: And it was the kind of house where the floor was not fastened to the building at all.

GJ: Why was that?

PJ: I don't know. The floor had its own, it was not a part of the house. I know at one time Grandpa Pekkala had a hard time digging underneath to level out the floor.

GJ: There were no basements then?

PJ: No basements.

GJ: In fact, most of those homes were built on rocks, weren't they?

PJ: No. Some of them yes. Some of them had real foundations. Our house in Herman that we moved to must have been around 1960, because I just remembered when we were moving, and that had solid rock under a part of the-, we never had a basement. And it had a crawl space.

GJ: And this is where Mrs. Lansing [Lanczy] lives

right now? PJ: That is where Mrs. Lansing [Lanczy]

lives right now.

GJ: There was a crawl space?

PJ: That's where we had our winter supply of potatoes. We didn't have to go, after the snow came, we didn't have to go to the woods ever and hope for potatoes. We had to get up underneath there. And it was our own space where most of the canned goods were easy.

GJ: When you were a kid in Herman how many families were living there?

PJ: I don't remember off hand, but it must have been at least fifty in the area.

GJ: Fifty families or fifty people?

PJ: Fifty families. Because in 1930, we had 350 people, in the 1930 census. And in 1940 we had a little over 250. Awhile after, in the late '50s, early '60s there was only that one time Uncle Charlie and I counted, there were only 97 people in Herman.

GJ: Well, I know in the mid '60s, late '60s when I was living there, we used to brag that there were 88 people. Well, we could count them all by name, too. So it was quite a large community at one time, so they had, they must have had a general store, was that where-?

PJ: Well, there was a store. There was a private, there were two private merchants. Uncle Charlie was one of, was not the first store keeper. He was the second one.

GJ: Charlie Dantes?

PJ: Charlie Dantes. But then he, Charlie Dantes tried with another logger to make some [inaudible; money] logging. This was right before World War I. But they went bankrupt. So Uncle Charlie had to keep up his store. And they formed a cooperative. And Uncle Charlie was the first member.

GJ: So everybody in the community joined?

PJ: [nodded] And then Uncle Charlie went from Herman he went to Ishpeming and managed a co-op over there.

Then he came back and in the '20s. For two terms he was the sheriff of [inaudible; Baraga] county.

GJ: We were talking about the stores. What else did Herman have for the community? They had the town hall right? Was that established early?

dPJ: Well that first hall, that was made by the [inaudible; Pyrkija

Urheilu Seura (Amateur Athletes Society)]. Athletic hall. GJ: Was that

for you know, activities? Athletic activities?

PJ: Well it was, I remember the activities, the athletic activities. Even in the '20s, and '30s, year round we had activities. Even during the winter we had calisthenics. These iron bars that we'd do all kinds of exercises with.

GJ: Inside the hall?

PJ: Inside the hall. We had to. We had skiing races every year, every winter. [Inaudible]

GJ: That's the cross country skiing?

PJ: Cross country skiing. Probably three miles or five miles, they had these routes measured out and cleaned.

GJ: I've seen photographs of the picnics that they would have, and they must have been some big event because there's a lot of people.

PJ: Well that time, every time we only had Herman [inaudible] after oh, athletic teams. Well they played baseball more than softball. And we played hockey in Herman on the river, on the wide part of the river we played hockey.

GJ: Where would it be wide enough?

PJ: That's uh, up from Herman toward the area, there are several areas where the river was as wide as a regular hockey.

GJ: Hockey rink?

PJ: Hockey rink. And there are some areas over there when the water was high, why there was ten, twelve feet of water. They had two big swimming pools over there.

GJ: There were a lot of things for the kids?

PJ: And we had a shack where we collected the wood. And it was just like a change room. It was warm over there. Sometimes we'd pack ourselves some lunch on Saturdays,

GJ: Make a whole day of it. Were there a lot of children? A lot of young people?

PJ: Oh, sure. We had, Herman had more than two teachers. We had the downstairs and upstairs. I remember, when I started the school, I would, I started the school the same year as my older brother. I was not quite five years old. And he was six. He was [inaudible; seven] or six. Until the second grade we were in the same grade together. But then they split, there were so many people, so many kids in the second grade, that they put class 2A and 2B.

GJ: Wow. Now is this the school house that's on the hill? Right in downtown Herman?

PJ: That's right. We had as many as, the highest amount we had at one time was seventy-nine and then some people moved and I think that year we had seventy-six.

GJ: In that little schoolhouse?

PJ: Yeah.

GJ: Oh, my.

PJ: First years we had downstairs was kindergarten, first grade, 2A and 2B, and the third grade. Then fourth through sixth grade was upstairs.

GJ: Now, at this time were all the families Finnish? Were the majority of them?

PJ: Well, the majority. All the kids could speak Finnish.

GJ: I was going to ask. Did they speak English in the classroom? Were you taught in English?

PJ: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. In English.

GJ: At home though, did you speak English?

PJ: At home we spoke Finnish.

GJ: Among your friends you spoke Finnish?

PJ: Yes. And the railroad agent, Pete Marrow's [?] seven children all could speak and understand Finnish. Yet they were French. And then there was Preston, before that he was the railroad, the section agent. His kids could speak Finnish, understand Finnish.

GJ: So your conversational language was Finnish. Yet in school you were taught in English?

PJ: Taught in English.

GJ: Were you discouraged from speaking Finnish in the classroom?

PJ: Oh, sure. We never even wanted to speak Finnish in the classroom.

GJ: Why's that?

PJ: Well, we were there to learn English.

GJ: Oh, I see, did you actually have English-

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PJ: Well, I and my brothers, we knew we could count and we could read already before we went to school. Every one of us.

GJ: Was that your mom's doing? Your mother's?

PJ: Well, you see, then in Herman I would say that in the Elementary grades and then later on we had the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth upstairs. By the time you were in the sixth grade, if you were attending, you knew most of the answers for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Starting when we were in the fifth grade, we started coming for our final examinations to L'Anse.

GJ: Would you come on the train?

PJ: On a bus.

GJ: Oh, on a school bus?

PJ: Yeah. Because at that time already they were taking-. No, no, I think we came by train. I don't recall for sure. Because it wasn't until about three years after I graduated from Herman that they started bussing the high school kids to L'Anse. Anybody before who wanted to go to high school had to move into L'Anse. A school board paid fifteen dollars a month so that the people from the outlying areas could go to high school. Because at that time there were no cars or no bus lines or anything else.

GJ: So then the children would come to-

PJ: [Inaudible] Wellen and Ida Wellen[spelled phonetically] for example, they came to L'Anse. They boarded somewhere. Because they got fifteen dollars a month. And at that time, you could find a place where you would probably do some help around the house and like that. And with fifteen dollars a month you could go and work.

GJ: They'd stay with families?

PJ: Yeah, in town.

GJ: But you didn't do that?

PJ: No. My dad lost his sight when I was twelve, so I had to work for him.

GJ: What did you do then?

PJ: My older brother, he had to quit, my brother Henry. He had to quit a couple of months before he graduated from the eighth grade.

GJ: Oh, boy.

PJ: I went through the eighth grade. My brother August, he was the only one who we put through school. Maybe [inaudible] too, but him first.

GJ: Whether he liked it or not.

PJ: And then my younger brother, [inaudible; Oiva] he went for one year to high school, but that's all he went.

He was a high spirit.

GJ: But that was quite common wasn't it? Once you went through eighth grade, then people,

PJ: Yeah, and quite a few of the older people, there were a lot of people in Herman who had already went to school up through the fifth or sixth grade. I was one of those always, and independent. Independent, even since I was sixteen I've never been broke. My, I, you see at home we ran the farm [inaudible] we were working in a shop. We had a nine hour day. We had an allowance. A dollar a week allowance.

GJ: That was pretty good.

PJ: And I saved most of that money. I always had money. My brothers borrowed from me. And I had some idea of what I wanted to learn, so I came to the L'Anse high school. We had Denny [inaudible] was the superintendent. So I from the high school I got books on business and English. I took the entire bookkeeping and accounting class. I bought the books. And I would bring them to the school and the teachers would check my work.

GJ: This was all on your own?

PJ: This was all on my own.

GJ: This was after you had done your work and everything? What was it that you would do on the farm?

PJ: I was driving a team of horses and all kinds of work. And you see at that time we were making a living off the farm, even during the Depression we were never on the WPA.

GJ: Did many families actually make a living on their farms, especially up here?

PJ: There were quite a few. But you see we kept Herman's cool [school] in firewood for about twenty years. During the Depression we sold and delivered firewood for a dollar a tier. Ten dollars a chord.

GJ: Hard work.

PJ: Hard work. But in those days with a dollar you could buy a lot of things. A loaf of bread was five or six cents, or something like that. We sold butter for fifteen cents a pound during the Depression.

GJ: Now this was 19-?

PJ: Actually the depression started getting bad in... started in 1931. But from '31 to about '35 it was the worst. Before they started, before they got CWA [WPA Works Progress Administration], first they had CWA [Civil Works Administration]. On that everybody, I mean one from each family was able to work for a few months during the winter. You didn't have to be on relief to be on WPA, where these small farmers would not have enough cows, and there were a lot of people working the woods. You see, in those days logging was only a winter operation. A lot of the loggers stayed with some of the farmers helping the farmer off, probably for their room and board.

GJ: Did you ever have anyone stay at your farm?

PJ: No. Actually, not for working purposes. We had in the late '30s we had probably one bachelor or retiree who would stay with us.

GJ: And you and your three brothers all worked on the farm then?

PJ: Um hm. Well, my brother Henry got married in '32. So he moved away. He stayed at our house until either late '33 or early '34. He moved to his father-in-laws place. And then later on he would move, before the war he was working in Detroit. I was a man of all trades. I started working in '35 for the department of agriculture. During when the federal government was trying to develop these [inaudible] programs. I was measuring all the crop lands that the farmers planted. So, my uncle started to do this work for the county in the Herman area. But he found out that he went only through sixth grades of school. And his [inaudible] said, we make the scale. So he said, no way I can't do that, he was on the agricultural board for the county. So long story short, I ended up working full time about three months during the year. We paid farmers, one time we paid ten dollars an acre to cut the crop of oats. Because there was an overabundance of grains. We paid a dollar or two an acre for growing alfalfa and clover. And if they used the fertilizers for improving pastures and something like that we paid probably enough to buy the seed.

GJ: And it would enable them to keep going?

PJ: To seed their pastures so their pastures could support a bigger herd of cattle. Cows, or heifers, or whatever they had.

GJ: Were there ever many cows? Was there much cattle?

PJ: Herman had more in the early '30s. Herman had over 500 cows. The co-op sold a forty ten railroad car of cattle feed, dairy feed every three weeks. There was never enough hay feed in Herman. We used to go in the summer when we got our, we rented all the hay fields we could in Herman. Then we would go to some wild meadows that we never knew who owned the land. But there were around the meadows we had about seven miles where we made hay two different years. We'd go there with a scythe, and it was swampy. And we had,

GJ: Not hand scythe.

PJ: Hand scythe. We cut and hand raked. We raked. And we carried. We cut off from a small birch, we would cut a small birch and we would cut like a rope, and we would carry it on our backs a huge stack of hay and then we would put them into these stacks where they would take up a balsam or a spruce tree or a small spruce tree and stick it in that swamp and then we would make a cross pieces and then we would make a stack of hay that would probably be two times a stack. And during the winter we would

go, earlier we would go with the horses out there to make a trail. And I remember we had a white mare that we almost lost it in the swamp. Because it was so soft we thought we could pack it down enough. We had to pull that mare out of the swamp.

GJ: Oh, my. It worked out okay.

PJ: Every year we would make hay probably until end of August. Out in the woods on all the old logging roads, where you see in those days there were no tractors in the woods. Horses did all the [inaudible] of the logs, even those huge pine logs and whatever. And the horses were fed hay and grain and, so all the areas where the horses had been there was good timothy and clover. And we had oats growing because the horse was one of those that could eat oats. They did not digest the oats, the seeds went right through. And beautiful, beautiful hay on all the logging roads and that's where we made hay. The last time we made hay must have been about 1938. This was about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of us. This was land that Healiar[inaudible; Hilliard?] Lumber company from Baraga, for about forty years he was the owner of the Baraga lumber company. So we had made hay there, several tons. And then there was one stack that had about two tons and we didn't have enough room in our two barns, in the hay barn. So we figured that we're going to go and get it. So this one year after deer season we went there to get that, and someone had burned that stack during the deer season.

GJ: Oh, no.

PJ: In Herman during the Depression years and even before, we were buying the co-op handled hay, there were some years ten, fifteen car loads of hay came from Rudyard. Rudyard is near Ste Sault Marie, that's [inaudible; Chippewa] country.

GJ: Oh, you would have two crops of hay each year.

PJ: It was only later when we started developing clover and alfalfa. From the first year or two we would get two crops of clover. From the alfalfa we could get as many as three crops. But clover we usually took that only the first year, because if we took it every other year the clover does not stay after about four years, even all the red clover. After the fourth year there wasn't much clover left. Just timothy, and crab grass, and weed grass. And we tried to keep the wild [inaudible] away. Alfalfa was the type and the clover, we used to get from Sault Ste Marie or from Marquette we were able to get lye. They had a chemical plant in Marquette for the last few years where we were able to get, it cost ten cents a ton to buy it. That was enough for, they charged only ten cents a ton to put it in the [inaudible] and it would come here to Herman and it probably cost us about totally less than a dollar a ton even with the freight. And we would, a lot of the soils were too acid. You could not grow clover well and alfalfa you could not grow at all. In a very acid soil. Acid soil is only good for growing strawberries and stuff like that. So we were, we would get it in a pile sometimes, twenty tons, and that would be enough to take care of our needs for a couple of years. In 1930, Mr. Fred Gercolo [phonetically spelled; Biekkola, Baraga County Extension Agent], in 1930 we got out first county agricultural agent. So we started testing the soil to see what fields need lye. So, we grew our crops, our grain crops started growing there.

GJ: I'd always had the impression that it was really a poor soil from growing anything at all, but yet,

PJ: No, that is not true.

GJ: I can see that.

PJ: That is not true, because you see Pelkie and Baraga over there they have clay. Clay, and actually if you don't fertilize it you can't grow anything at all. During the depression years when we had dry years, we had a couple of years where there was hardly any, country wide we had a drought. That's when they

had the dust storms, that's when we got into Herman Upper Peninsula this was paint brush [Devil's Paint Brush or Orange Hawkweed], a weed that-

GJ: Oh, about when was that?

PJ: It was in the early '30s. And with this dust bowl, with these winds, we would have dust storms in Herman were all of the sudden the women would put their washing out and it would be brown.

GJ: Oh my. Was that just a matter of seasons or years?

PJ: It was two summers that nationwide we had dry years. Certain areas that didn't have any rain at all. There were many, there were tens of thousands of farmers out in the west central, not so much in North Dakota, but farther south in all those areas, even you hear in stories about Oklahoma and Missouri all the land was being blown away. And you see pictures in the old movies where fences were covered with the sand and almost all the small houses were covered in the sand. And the land was worthless.

GJ: And you even felt the effect up in Herman?

PJ: And we have areas in Herman where it's all sand. And that would never, the only time you could grow anything on it was when you had normal rainfall. That land during those troubling years wouldn't grow anything, couldn't even grow potatoes because it rained so seldom it went through like a sieve. Most of the land in Herman was loam. Loam is the richest soil there is and there's only certain areas in Herman where there's clay.

GJ: I suppose the biggest drawback in Herman is the short growing season.

PJ: Yes, it's a shorter growing season. But then again, after the snow is gone, Herman is warmer than L'Anse or Baraga.

GJ: That's true.

PJ: You probably know from experience when you lived there. When it was ninety degrees over there in the south, the second time you left for L'Anse you took a lot of sweaters. Because you came down here, and in Baraga and L'Anse it was freezing. And I asked the weather station in Marquette, it must have been twenty years ago, why? And he said 'look at a map on the wall.' He said Herman is over nineteen hundred and fifty feet above sea level. L'Anse is six hundred and eight above sea level. Herman has such a strong south wind and Herman is 95 degrees. So the breeze comes about, see the wind does not make a track like this, it comes on the straight away, so when it comes past the quarry, it creates a huge vacuum underneath, so the cold air comes against, and it starts a reverse vacuum and it starts coming along from the north, north east wind comes to L'Anse and Baraga. The only time L'Anse and Baraga is really hot during the summer is when there is a south west wind or a west wind.

GJ: Or no wind at all.

PJ: Or no wind at all. Because we have a [inaudible] over here in L'Anse one afternoon watching that big thermometer when it was going over a hundred and it went as high as a hundred and four in the afternoon. We had many years where it was over a hundred degrees.

GJ: Well, going back to Herman. When you were a young man, did you go into the service as a young man?

PJ: No. I, with this training that I had, I became a [inaudible] in 1935, the air force, the army air force, photographed the entire Upper Peninsula. So starting in '36, '37, '38, most of the summer I worked with

the map. The maps were blown up to eight inches to as high as sixteen inches per mile. Every two square miles we had to measure at least one thousand foot lengths. If it was hilly country we had to have at least one every square mile. Because those maps were useless to anybody as pictures because you didn't know how big an area it covered. So we had tripods, we had compasses,

GJ: Would you actually be surveying?

PJ: We were actually surveying. And we had [inaudible] that we would go up on a stick and we would go up and from that area we would go, some places up these hills we could only measure fifteen, twenty feet. Because we couldn't get a level reading. And we had to get a level reading. We could not measure the roundness of a hill. We had to cut the hill into pieces, and that way make a map.

GJ: You must have an intimate knowledge of the area.

PJ: Well, we worked for five counties. All of Baraga county. Most of the southern part of Houghton County. The northern part of Marquette County. And the northern part of Iron County. And part of Ontonagon County. We'd go out with a compass, we'd I'd have my car. The only problem, we were driving my car mostly, I had a '36 Ford. We got hung up on the Kingway road. The road from Covington, it went from Herman, it went to Nestoria, and it went down the south side of King Lake. And they used, good corduroy and whole trees on the road because it the road was sinking. And it got caught under the car. So we had to drive the car the up the [inaudible] because they had to get the car out of there.

GJ: But the log [road], that was the only time you got hung up?

PJ: That was the only time. We had a man by the name of Jacobson from Covington. He had a [inaudible] truck that we used. Sometimes, he said, we're lost. We would go out for about south of Covington on old Ford logging roads or some old pine trails and here or there we would find a big log. From these pictures we had to find a piece of land that we could recognize. Certain points. Sometimes we would find a big log, or a huge pine trail, or a curve in the road. But a lot of times we were on these pine roads. Old time pine roads that had second growth on it. And we would find points that we'd be able to recognize. So that's the point that we would measure. Sometimes it was only eight hundred feet or twelve hundred feet or whatever we measured. And that way, these air bank photos became important to the state highway department, department of agriculture, department of water because we didn't have a defense department then, it was the department of war. And these pictures were then used, they developed, somebody developed [inaudible] so it made our work easier measuring the farmers' fields. They blew up all of these airplane pictures so for every farmer we had plat. That we gave to him on his farm showing where all his fields were and what he had in each field.

GJ: Was that how they originally put together the plat books that you can buy today?

PJ: Yeah.

GJ: Would they have used that original information or had they done that?

PJ: They used that original information from these airplane photos. And you see, some areas actually developed a contour map of the areas where they would build from, what do you call them, these papier-mâché mountains and hills and valley and everything else.

GJ: Relief models?

PJ: Relief models. And so, I became a map maker. I would make, you see for these farmer's fields, before you see the map these airplane photos were not available for use by the department of agriculture until 1938. Started using them. Before we had to use a three foot wheel to measure the number of feet. And

then we had to make an eight by eight map of the plat. And everything had to be down to scale. Because over here, the courthouse this girl had an instrument she would kind of put it, it was made for eight inches to a quarter mile with that she would follow these lines until she could find exactly [inaudible] If the map were not made to scale, it was useless. You could not, they could not teach the girl in the office here, couldn't figure out how many acres were involved. And that was how the farmers got paid. Some of these farmers got a couple of hundreds of dollars a year, enough money from the agricultural administration to buy their seed. They were even paying a farmer for clearing land or he would have second grove, all he had to do was thin it so it would start growing forest trees, and he got paid for it. They're doing even those things now. We didn't pay for clearing land in those days, we had enough problem just to give him enough money to buy seed.

GJ: Well from there where did you go?

PJ: Well, in the winter I worked in the woods to sell logs.

GJ: Was that what all the men in Herman would do?

PJ: Just about, just about.

END OF INTERVIEW