

Rose Schultz

12.20.1979

Hermansville, Michigan

Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co.

Start of Interview

(I) Mrs. Schultz can you tell us how the lumber company got start?

(R) Well of course Mr. Meijer owned a large sash and door company in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin and it seemed like the fox values was pretty well logged out the paper and things owned all this land so he had to come north to get more pine for his sash and door from Fond du Lac. So he sent men here and finally decided he had to put this little mill here in Hermansville that was 1879. And oh our records here are just fabulous of all the years and all the pine that was cut they just purchased, I mean all land they could get ahold of I mean just thousands of acres of pine. And so they started the mill here to supply this Fond du Lac plant and of course after the pine was cut what really intrigued him was all the maple that was left, all this beautiful hard wood. That set him on this course of inventing some way of making hardwood flooring.

(I) I see. Now is this Mr. Meijer?

(R) This is C.J. L. Meijer. They called him Alphabet Meijer.

(I) Alphabet?

(R) With all the initials he had.

(I) I see.

(R) So he ventured on this path to making this Meijer matching machine it was called, it would turn and groove the flooring in one operation. Before that of course you can see the floors were just these wide hardwood strips that were kind of plain down and this is really what really Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co. on the map as far as anything special because Ikes Alf Floorings was known all over the country and it was even sent to Australia, some of it had been shipped to Australia. And in the Mormon temple in Salt Lake City. Really gave them a good push, this was 1893 and the temple was just about being completed there at that time and they sent out flyers out for the flooring business for the temple rather and everything that went into the temple we understand was by divine revelation and I think they still follow this, most everything is done by divine revelation so they had seen these flyers something on IXL maple flooring and they decided that divine revelation that this is the flooring that is going into the temple. And they get the order here there was no question at all just ship it, they gave them the demotions to ship the flooring and how much was out there to floor that huge temple. Of course it was in the old building at the Yellowstone National park now Mr. Earl was out there in 1937 and they were tearing up the flooring for some reason or rather, to put something else down I guess. But Mr. Earl asked if he could have a piece of the flooring he wanted to check to be sure what it was and sure enough it IXL on the reverse side of it. So he took a few pieces back home and he matched

them perfectly with flooring that was coming up at off that's awful impress that was almost 50 years later Mr. Meijer's machines were that actuate to be so wonderfully built. Of course there were a lot of later companies got into flooring based on Mr. Meijer's patent because it was a beautiful way to floor and the flooring became practically finished, just plained so beautifully you could see an IXL floor. You know how hard it is it seems the maple in this and in Northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan was just the grade of it is just so hard and you can see here in the office and all the years and years just constant wear hardly see anything it just doesn't wear. So many gymnasiums all over the country, let me show you some of the albums we have here of all the beautiful floors that's been laid in IXL flooring that became the flooring for the Midwest there was hardly a home that didn't have it. Good hardwood flooring it didn't specify IXL in fact Tom Hermansville was known more about IXL than in Hermansville all they did was IXL no matter where you go into all the area that's all IXL town even our bullseye signs promoting the town call IXL town so...

(I) Wasn't there a story of a letter of telegraph coming from overseas...?

(R) That addressed to IXL town I don't know if they said Michigan but IXL town USA I think it the way it was and it got here. Because no one knew Hermansville even around here nobody worked Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co. it was always IXL.

(I) Ok what did those initials stand for?

(R) IXL? Just if you write out I, EX, CEL the very best quality.

(I) Oh I see I see.

(R) I excel. A lot of people get confused when what mix up what those words mean but it's the bullseye and the IXL sign in the middle of it. Now Dr. Earl was really responsible for bringing the company out of it's...

(I) Could you discuss a little of Earl's background?

(R) Alright Dr. Earl well Mr. Meijer was a genius mechanically, he had great plant in Fond du Lac oh my and he had plants all over supplying his sash and door but he was a very poor business man. Well he had three daughters and two of them went to New York one summer and both met this Dr. Earl and told him York who had a very thriving practice he was quite a physician and they became acquainted and later were married so, Dr. earl was quite a thrifty gentlemen he had quite a fortune for those days already saved. So Mr. Meijer kept asking for loans I supposed and he got into him quite deep [laughs] so I guess Dr. Earl when he was just getting worse and worse here thought he'd better come and see what he could do to save the business. Well Mr. Meijer was very congenial about this in the first place so glad they built beautiful new home for them on the hill, it was a mansion of a place they were rich lumber house for the Dr. and his wife but later they got in the outs I think Dr. Meijer kind of resented Dr. Earl taking over more power nearly putting its thing on its feet the way it should have been. And then Mr. Meijer got into an accident and was thrown from his horse and suffered a brain concussion and after that he was just impossible to live with so they broke off relations all together in 1900 Dr. Earl summed all debts of Mr. Meijer's bonds and things that he left outstanding.

(I) Now was it called the IXL Lumber Co. at that time?

(R) No Wisconsin Land because he brought it, it was supposed to be branch of the Fond du Lac plant so they never changed the name it because a Michigan cooperation afterwards but they just kept the name Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co.

(I) So the IXL was just kind of a trade name?

(R) IXL was their trade mark.

(I) I see.

(R) So then Dr. Earl took over them and just talked over with the creditors if they were willing to work along with him, he thought he could pull the company out to get them their money, which he did. And by 1923 nobody seem -- he was quite a prosperous millionaire and it was quite the business Hermansville got to be quite the community they employed here I think 400 men a little more than in its hay day.

(I) And that would have been just in town here at the mill?

(R) That's the early part of the century.

(I) How many men were employed in the woods around Hermansville?

(R) Oh that I don't... course all the lumberjacks went out they had their own railroads here the Wisconsin Land owned four railroads during this time and they would branch out their roads and of course all the lumberjacks went out worked and worked in the woods during the winter they came in. I couldn't really...

(I) Maybe a thousand or more?

(R) I wouldn't venture on that.

(I) How extensive in terms of distance if you could point out some towns were the land holdings for the Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co.?

(R) Well god they owned so many thousands of acers we had a map somewhere showing the Wisconsin's Lands...

(I) Would be like almost to Iron Mountain?

(R) Oh well they owned Marquette up that way and Schoolcraft they owned land in Drummond Island and of course Blaney Park.

(I) I see it wasn't one massive holding it was a lot of large holdings throughout the Upper Peninsula. Would that be from say Hermansville east? Most of their holdings would be from this area east?

(R) I would say more east yes there were some in northern Wisconsin too. In some parts too but I would say mostly East. East and north course all north of Hermansville here. This is where legal area they sold all that land to Kimberly Clark and I think it was 1943 or something like that it

was 16000 acers it was a very great amount. There was holding were extensive all throughout the Upper Peninsula, then they would bring it in by rail and logging.

(I) Now how long did the, we got as far as about the 1920s.

(R) When, Dr. Earl died in 1923 when Herold and Stewart Earl took over the management.

(I) Now these were his sons?

(R) His two sons yes. And then in 1943 they quit the flooring business by that time people where changing to carpeting and all this, maybe not so radically then but another thing that contributed mostly to it was the war and all the restrictions that were being placed on buying lumber and all this and Mr. Earl he was so... he just didn't want to go above the law a lot of other companies stayed in and kind of worked with the government and tried to work it out. He, he wouldn't stand it. So he just closed the place up rather than tried to work under those conditions.

(I) I see.

(R) So so many people left the area then but in 1949 he then started it up again a new electric mill and that mill operated until 1960. But he did keep the dry kills going up till 1964 and did custom dry killing, people who wanted their lumber come in to be dry killed.

(I) Oh I see.

(R) But then he quit all together he had no family members that were interested in continuing the business and so since then up until last year when he died he it was just a matter of selling the lands and trying to get rid of the property and trying to get business into the community that's was what his main interest.

(I) Now is the town of Hermansville a company town?

(R) Oh yes! Oh yes. One house after another just like a company town would build all these little cottages the only other company here really was the Neaman Fox, silver fox farm. They came here in about 1928 and bought a whole lot of land south of Hermansville and built this big fur building like a pellet and things. The fox minks fall of each year. And that was quite an item for the town.

(I) I see this was going on while the mill was working here in Hermansville?

(R) Oh yes started about 1928 but up till that it was just a company town.

(I) Now how many people were living in the town at that time? Or during its hay day?

(R) I think the most population was about 1600 highest we call about 1600 people.

(I) Now in terms of the building that we are in here, this dates from what year now?

(R) 1882. You can see its been practically saved as it was originally up in the fancy woodwork that was all built in made in down in Fond du Lac and shipped up here. I have quite a lot of fun Mr. Alsic[Spelled phonetically] to me one day there were a lot of letters supposed to be in our

vault here written by Mr. Radford, Mr. Radford was Mr. Meijer's surveyor and became superintendent of the mill. But when they started off here there was really nothing, nothing here for anybody so Mr. Radford was kind of a one man army I'm thinking. But every night that man would give a report where he had been. Going out to surveying looking for timber deciding what was going to be cut and all this. And he would write every night and this went on all through the I would say up almost until 1890, this letters of him and all the other people who were here at that time. After they built the building of course they had kind of a headquarters but Mr. Radford was really wonderful man and all these letters he wrote telling of all the things they were doing even building the office and building the town and what they were doing here. All these letter had to go to Fond du Lac to Mr. Meijer well after the break with Mr. Meijer and after his death I think one day they got a letter here saying they had all these letters here in this garage here what do you want to do with them? And they wrote asked please send them up here so they stayed here in the attic and in the vault all these years until a while ago. So you can imagine the data that is in those letters, all the records all the things going on to build this community.

(I) So you have them?

(R) We have the original letters here.

(I) Do you have the complete company records in the vault?

(R) Well part of them went down to Ann Arbor they came and asked if they could get some of these records so part of Mr. Radford's letters went down there. I think almost I would say a third of a truck load, I don't know how many thousands pounds they road it up here. My father in-law Carl Schulz who was one of their whoosers had the job of going through these letters and deciding what records should go down there because we really didn't want to get rid of everything. So we have 1883 to 1888 we have pretty much all the letters and there are a few years in there that are missing. But otherwise we have all the records here not only of Mr. Radford but all the other men too wrote here. Talking about building the office, how it was going and I ran into a letter they had set up a window for this front door here and Mr. Meijer was irate. He said I don't want a window like that I want one with just one single pane. So make another one so knoll post here you'll see it's just gorgeous that goes upstairs its really beautiful I think its oak. But it came and I think it was Mr. Radford or one of the other men wrote said the knoll post was damage and he said I think we can fix it. So when he reported the next day that he cut the post in half and taken the damage part and put it back together and we didn't know this until we ran into this letter. It was just unnoticeable it's just gorgeous piece of carved wood there. But the office was the center of community, it was center of community everything was done here. Justices of the peace of the law, a lot of law cases were held here, the doctor was here he had his table set up there he just contained his practice here which he could help the people as much as he could along with being...

(I) I see.

(R) Along with being the head of the business so all these big medical cases in the hallway were part of his equipment.

(I) I see.

(R) I came here in 1930 so I never knew the doctor. Of course everybody talk of Dr. Earl I guess he was a pretty compassionate man helped people.

(I) So Dr. Earl then continued his medical practice?

(R) Well as much he could. I ran into quite a sad letter when he was writing to board of directors one summer and he just ruined his life trying to save the company and get enough of what he really loved. For hours and hours he didn't even have normal life because it was nothing but worry worry worry but seeing this place so out of all of Mr. Meijer's great holdings and this immense factory in Fond du Lac all that was left was Hermansville after he was done with him.

(I) Oh I see he lost, Mr. Meijer then lost...

(R) Lost everything.

(I) The whole thing except for this company here. Oh I see.

(R) This was all that is left.

(I) Now what is the present statue of this structure of company, the company is still a cooperation?

(R) Just a name.

(I) But it's still...

(R) It's not a cooperation we are just a privately owned business doing business as G. Herald Earl but it's just the trade name that kept them in.

(I) I see they are not into the Lumber business?

(R) They are nothing. The big mill building part was the factory warehouse, the flooring factory warehouse is occupied by Less Brown Chair Company he makes chairs and upholstery furniture. But that's the only activity everything other than that Mr. Over spending a lot of time and money trying to get somebody to use the rest of the facilities there and some in industrial park.

(I) Now what is the statues of this office building?

(R) Well it's an historic site and he has tried to give this to the state or try to get somebody interested in taking it. He used statistic in the vault here and all this stuff is just invaluable but we haven't had any luck. G. Worth has tried and tried to help us along. And the DNR has been here and talked about it too but they say they just don't have the money to support it. If we could get something going locally and that's what they would expect. But it would be a wonderful place here because the rooms of carpets upstairs some sort of agency, state agency could maintain the building. Mr. Earl said if you just couldn't do anything with it he would tear the place down and I wouldn't want to see it go to ruins if that's what he liked to have done. But they would save the vault, just cover it up because those records I'm sure somebody is going to do something. How many million feet of flooring they cut, I mean pine was cut and how much maple and all the

years and all the camp statics there is just no empty records here. Bound volumes of mechanics of the company. If they come and see us and everything. And we saved everything you can see nothing was ever done away with it could possibly repaired or renovated.

[Turns off Tape]

(R) In 1909 the Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co. bought the whole town of Blaney Park. Mr. Mueller had been operating the mill there and got into such debt with the Wisconsin Land & Lumber Co. so they had to kind of auction it off on bids and Wisconsin Land & Lumber co. got that in 1909 with 22000 acres and later they bought the whole times of Semens which is out on Lake Michigan the most beautiful beach land and everything out and virgin timber.

(I) And that was south of Blaney Park?

(R) Um I can't remember I think its east near Gould City.

(I) Gould city?

(R) If you are acquainted up there. And that was great big land holding and that's where they got a lot of their lumber for the mill here. And 1948 then they decided to break up the Wisconsin Land & Lumber company between the two brothers Stewart and Harold so in the final deal Stewart got Blaney Park and Semens and G. Herold got Hermansville and all else here and various other pieces of land in Kentucky and all the rest and Drummond Island things like this so that's how the company broke up. The cooperation was dissolved in 1948.

(I) The Wisconsin Land Co.?

(R) Yeah he just keep the name after that he did business as Wisconsin land & Lumber Co. but it was no longer a cooperation.

(I) I see see.

(R) That's how Harold Earl got the office here and the whole town Hermansville and whatever holdings he had.

(I) Now what is some of the... excuse me go on.

(R) Of course Blaney Park is in quite a mess now they tried to sell that to...

(I) Could you give us some of the history of the development of Blaney Park?

(R) Oh yes most definitely! Harold Earl was instrumental in developing that he reinvented all these little cottages there that Mr. Mueller had built. It was quite the thriving community because there was a lot of people that just stayed there and lived and later they came to Hermansville. They would go between here and Blaney as they were needed, as they need the men sometimes here sometimes there.

(I) I see now was did Mr. Mueller start Blaney Park as a resort?

(R) No as a mill but then after they cut the lumber up there for the Wisconsin Land Co. Mr. Earl though of making this a resort project.

(I) I see.

(R) Mostly reforestation is what he had in mind I guess he was a little ahead of his time because he spent an awful lot of money and made it a beautiful place there were people that were really wealthy, wealthy people from the cities came there and it was just a really fine place to come. But he started that in 1928 then when Stewart took it over he contained it for a while but he gave it out to other people to run the place and he just didn't continue his well doing as well as before and finally I guess Stewart tried to sell it. So he advertised it and got 300 people in Detroit who put 1000 dollars into Benley Park to keep it going as a kind of a privet club.

(I) Oh I see.

(R) But the rest kind of falling apart. So I guess that's Bleney Park will never be put back to the beautiful place it is.

(I) Now who owns it presently?

(R) I think it's back now into the Earl family, Stewart Early family, Stewart has died of course and now I think it's back in the family until it gets settle I supposed it was remain dormant there.

(I) I see. Ok good. Mrs. Schulz can you tell us when you arrived in Hermansville and then what you did subsequently?

(R) Well I came in 1930 just out of high school my home was in Northern Michigan and the Earl's had started this little sheet metal business they made furnace blowers that was just coming new what they called air conditioning at the time. I worked for them until 1965 but we were right in the same office building and I guess I was just a pinch hitting most of the time if they needed a girl especially on Mr. Earl dictation things like that they would call on me. It seemed like I was just part of the organization most of the time anyway.

(I) Now what is your position here now?

(R) Well I am the only girl here now Mr. Lungerhausen is G. Harold Earl's son in-law and he is co- executor to Mr. Earl's estate. Harold Earl died last November 22 a year ago 1979. So the estate is just in limbo now. So the son in law is in charge of whatever there is to do here so I'm working with the estate and I guess I'm just about the only one left who really knows much about, especially the books and things so I guess work for Mr. Smith give him the information he needs. Do whatever there is here we have few maintenance men and payroll and taking care of the rental and what they plant. A few odd jobs like that.

(I) I see.

(R) I am semiretired I just come and work as needed it.

(I) Now I see is this building also a museum then?



(R) We like to consider it a museum but it's not really opened all the time for the public we have days of the year that we like to open it up and really amazed at the people who are so anxious to go through it and amazed at the records and all the things that are in place. Its four stories here and it really is a big place, the fourth floor was originally a dormitory these people, the young people would come up from Fond du Lac Mr. Meijer would keep sending people up here to work and especially those who had to work in the office and do clerical work like this so the dormitory on the third floor was for these people.

(I) I see and what is on the third floor?

(R) The third floor Mr. Meijer had an apartment there later on it became offices finally employed so many people that most of the rooms were occupied as offices.

(I) I see is that true on the second floor as well?

(R) Pardon me the fourth floor was the attic that's the dormitory and the third floor is the apartment we are counting from the basement because the basement was part of the living here. They had a janitor who lived right here that's why we call that the first floor

(I) Oh I see! I see. So this is the second floor these offices?

(R) The ground floor. Yes but the basement had a regular apartment for the janitor and Mr. Meijer had a coachmen... It went against your pay so they rented from the company and they bought factory wood or slabs. Loaded slabs were \$3.50 maybe \$2 for a load of company wood and they took all these things out of your pay whatever you owed so by the time you got your pay they took all these things out you didn't have much left. And for a while they used trade coins we have sample of trade coins.

(I) Oh.

(R) I don't think there are many people that have trade coins left I read a paper on it Goodman there are Wisconsin they destroyed all their trade coins there but we have sacks of them here.

(I) Oh really?

(R) And he wouldn't let any of them go. Many people wanted to buy the coins but I'll show you them.

(I) Well all be darn. You have all of these artifacts then, coupons.

(R) Boxes of them here, five, ten, twenty dollars of course twenty dollars was a lot back in those days.

(I) Oh yeah sure. This is quite fabulous that you have all the records here.

(R) These are all those letters that I was telling you about...

(I) Now are these all indexed or they just...

(R) No they just... tried to divide them up.

(I) Now you said University of Michigan took letters? Is there any rhyme or reason with what they took?

(R) I let's see my father in-law went through and picked out a couple of these and imagine he was very through because he was tried to keep it divided so that everything wouldn't go.

(I) Yeah yeah.

(R) We running into all of these boxes of letters out here. 1882. When I tried to mark some things that are important. Just various --- all these different men worked here and we have all of these original letters is just fabulous. All these boxes this is what started the whole parade I just wish I could remember which bin they are in.

(I) Are these the coins?

(R) No these are the numbers for the men.

[I and R go through boxes in the vault]

(I) This is when they met Dr. Earl I see I see.

(R) She married him. --

(I) So these were the daughters Louis and --

(R) There's a box I don't dare run through it's so valuable. --

(R) There's nothing but records I just kept taking out taking out and long ago they got everything marked and camps, the thing is if somebody you know doing put it together.

(I) So could then you have all the records of through the history of the company. Is there any thought of doing that or having anyone do that?

(R) Well there was some help in Houghton come and help me sometime -- because that's what should be done somebody to put it together. Everything was written out. They didn't have carpentry paper they put it, they wet it at the end of the day. Mr. Meijer used that ... these are the ones from 1871.

(I) Oh my word!

(R) And these are the ones that I found more interesting to read just got so much information out of this from 1871. It took me awful long time to go through and up here all the maps anything if anyone needs any information it's here! I don't know what Mr. Earl was really in foresight so keep records for all these. Where else would you get it?

(I) Here is a section eight ---- so are there plans like Benley Park in here?

(R) I think most of Bleney Park is down here.

(I) Oh you have all the... oh down I see. You have all the photographs too?

(R) You'll see around here the Rice Liters Ensimage and that is a sign of excellence to the pick only the best of a line the best part of a line. Like IXL flooring was considered the best in flooring so they were given Rice Liters Occasion award.

(I) Oh I see.

(R) You'll see Rice Liter signs around here. We have pictures from right back to be the beginning. This spell of Roadall all these things worked right from the time Mr. Meijer came in he just dug into, well he knew what he put it he just wasn't jesting at all. That's what the place looked like. There were so many fires he has every fire listed and what the loss was, there's Dr. Earl, little engines trains, these are little cottages. Talked so much of this four stack mill and this thing burned down so that was last of the four stack mill I remember reading that. When things were personal they wrote. I should give you a photo it shows how big of a place it was.

(I) Oh this is the office?

(R) Oh these photographers would come to town they'd set up little sheds for taking pictures.

(I) Oh really?

(R) Time to read all these caption company stork was a great just great big white building over here. See they just had everything? This is the first school. Mr. Meijer built and paid the teachers himself because we were considered part of Spalding at that time and there's the house Dr. Earl's house on the hill that Mr. Meijer in our company town. Look at all the cottages. This the way it looked out here. Isn't it wonderful?

(I) Just a complete record of the whole town here.

(R) I remember when I came to town here the bullseye was built in rock, white rock out here. This is Meijer's volley. He built this beautiful where our present post office is now a hotel look at the ginger bread on this just gorgeous. Cause he figured fashionable people coming up here and he wanted to have a nice place for them to stay. There were painters who left their oily rags around and the thing caught fire, never had a guest. The place burned to the ground.

(I) Oh my word. When it burned oh gosh.

(R) And the schools, a pictures of every school until where it is now.

(I) Now here is the factory this is the factory that's out there now?

(R) This is when the factory burned... Dr. Earl standing in it he had angina so they told him you should never get excited and he was trying to stand there and watch his building go down and not get excited. This flooring just piles of it. Look at this wouldn't that be worth something today?

(I) Unbelievable it's like a whole city. Lumber piles

(R) Kind of tracks that came out here... I have four albums of this just wonderful pictures of everything that was ever was in the town. This was the burnery that came down a few years ago this picture came down.

(I) Did it cave in?

(R) No they just demolished it. These little communities there was an Austrian settlement over here, just trashy places you know finally we got some moved into town and got he arranged to tear down the subs of the community.

(I) Oh I see were there many ethnic groups?

(R) Oh yes. Austrian there, Italian up here, French up there, German out that way, Italians they are cosmopolitan I guess that was a mixture, Swedish out near Canard. It was really clicky and it took a long time to get a melting pot going too because they were sticking to their own nationalities but finally when factory started running girls were employed here. That broke the ice because then you got acquainted and they intermarried. The Austrians and the Italians.

(I) Oh I see.

(R) And the French so they got mix up after that but before that they were...

(I) Now that would have been about what year?

(R) 20s

(I) By the 20s.

(R) We had Hermansville is a cross road for the Soo Line and the northwestern railroads so we had a lot of train traffic going through here. I ran into one letter there was 100 trains a day going through Hermansville at that time. A hundred trains a day this was the Soo Line and this was the Northwestern line.

(I) I see the tracks came together.

(R) They just crossed. But Mr. Meijer was instrumental in getting Soo line to come to Hermansville in the first place they wanted to go Florence to get mines wish you could read the marvelous he wrote to settle over to the Soo Line headquarters tell them this is the place of the future business for the Northwestern for the Soo Line should be because in the longer run and sure they changed their mind and brought it here. And Chase Osborn was the other traveling - Florence paper at that time and of course he was fighting to get it into Florence but they decided on Hermansville it was quite a win for us. This is just example of how through he was in saving everything. It was quite an operation in its day.

[I and R look pictures]

(I) Now most of this is gone

(R) No the buildings are all there

(I) Just parts of it.

(R) This the dry counsel he always thought the dry council was still be of value to the community for some need custom killings lying around.

(I) So those are still out there?

(R) Oh yes they are there they could be out there a long time. In fact Earl St. John did operate there for a few years. I guess it didn't work too good so he gave it up. These are customers...

(I) These are the pouring machine. All the things they sent to Michigan State?

(R) Yes they have the machine because once they demolished they –

(I) This is quite just a study of the lumber life in the camp that way.

(R) You could spend an awful lot of time going through it...

(I) Here we are just going over it very very quickly.

(R) You can look at the other albums if you want but if you want to go downstairs...

(I) Okk maybe let's go through the office?

(R) This is sort of a mess this is sort of the principle things here. Take care of horses and things. This was an invention colored flooring. Isn't that beautiful? I think even today it would go over, looking for a novel, this is just beautiful. The union was lite by gas lights you see they put some of the old ones back up. Letters of tour the sheets at the end of the day and make a copy. -- Maybe they just old.

(I) A lot of them are in the sort of process of fading. Oh here is the –

(R) Company store. This mirror this beautiful call stand was broken so one day one of the men – buy a new one and back of the mirror was a piece of Boston Globe from 1868 so this is quite and old piece.

(I) Oh yeah.

(R) It seemed like everything had marble on it. Mr. Meijer --This is samples of the floorings.

(I) I see and then underneath they had IXL Hermansville.

(R) Yeah that's how they checked it out at the Yellowstone. They had they own lights and chef. - --- a cash register these are some of the old Dictaphones that were used when I came here in 1930 there is the dictator and the transcriber and the shaving the machine had these round disks that had to be dictated and then we had to put it on the shaver and take off the disk dictation to read it. They used it till it got down too thin. This one is quite thin you see. They tend to break sometime you weren't very clear I tell you. It was a Sony Dictator Sony so clear. Some more pictures of the operation. Factory warehouse... spare no expenses in every detail. These here are some of the cubes and things that Mr. Meijer had in his plant in Fond Du Lac. Just a room has such detail on everything

(I) These like now could be quite valuable because it's getting back to – story and so on.

(R) Yes.

(I) Or even these forms they could make a pattern out of this for some use. Even just to catalog records you know and then the two together.

(R) Valuable. Here shows how his covers, the Meijer covers, the machine was a good thing. –

(I) Oh I see. Not very complicated you just have to...

(R) Make a simple thing.

(I) Put the thing together.

(R) Flooring was – plain and the finishing... this is made out of chicken feed and piece of – this is a lot of gymnasiums and public buildings

(I) Oh I see you wouldn't use long piece you have small pieces you can make designs.

(R) Patterns.

(I) Oh I see.

(R) I suppose you want to see...

(I) I saw the picture.

(R) This is what they used to go out and inspect the camps. Run it on their railroads I ran into the invoice in there they bought this in 1898 and two boys or two men would peddle over and the boys would peddle over what the doctor ordered. They would go out to the camps and ran right on the tracks. These little telephones are still could be some use.

(I) Oh yeah?

(R) One connected at the plant and one at the lumber yards keeps the telephone system was out. Calls his daughter and when he owned the store --- he kept in operation ---

(I) Oh I see.

(R) The blacksmiths tools.

(I) Oh I see.

(R) They just improvised with what they had. An old steam whistle. We can go upstairs. That's place where Mr. Earl could talk to the owners. These are pretty hall trees everybody that comes in the hall they --- and that safe in the vault and when we had a tour here the historical society – this one man from Calumet came here and said I want to see the door of the safe and I didn't pay much attention to it before that but it's so beautiful the whole inside of the door is just really fabulous. --- such long steps unbelievable feel like --. All hand painted like this and this is the only one preserved this one in every room –

(I) Now is this office the way it was pretty much? In terms of furniture and so on.

(R) Well when I came here – so there was a lot of things – but the furniture is from here but it isn't exactly like this all those years I think they kept changing that. This ceiling like Michelangelo [Laughs]

(I) And this was all hand painted? Quite fancy for just an office.

(R) Look at the door, the door trim? See this was an elaborate place he wanted it to be the best north of Milwaukee I guess.

(I) Wooden door handles. Can we go downstairs and get.

(R) Everything marble. They just had everything.

(I) Now this was originally an office?

(R) Yes they were all offices but now he brought things in here to be saved. All the lamp shades.

(I) All the old books that were in the house?

(R) It's a big place. It sure is.

(I) Oh my word look at this.

(R) This is an old matching machine. This is where he kept the –

(I) Oh yeah yeah.

(R) This mirror –

(I) After all the years –

(R) --- here is some pens and here take these too.

End of Interview