

Jan Rader

Sixteen

Hard, Dirty, Greasy, Unrewarding Work

"It's hard, dirty, greasy, unrewarding work" said my father John L. Rader, as he shared with me, his history of working in the iron industry. I never knew how hard he worked until I sat down to interview him.

John was born to Phyllis and Harry Rader on June 27, 1947, in the town of Battle Creek, Michigan. When he was four years old, he moved to Ishpeming where he grew up with his younger brother Bill.

John enlisted in the Navy where he travelled around the world. When he got out, he married Susan (Hintz) Rader and he began to pursue a teaching job. John's effort to find a career in teaching did not succeed, so he applied for a job at the Mather B mine in 1974 where he held the duties of a stope scraperman, and later on a miner underground. The Mather B mine closed, and John was transferred to the Tilden Mine where he has held various jobs. When John started working at the Tilden Mine, he began as a laborer. He eventually worked his way up to a plant repairman where he did machinery repair, welding and pipefitting. His current job at the Tilden Mine is a maintenance mechanic.

John's duties as a maintenance mechanic is to do mechanical work and repairs on the large shovels and drills in the pit.

Working in the mines, John has been in many dangerous

situations. Once while he and his partner were working in a drift, a large chunk of ore the size of a refrigerator fell and missed John and his partner by about five feet! John has also witnessed several accidents. He himself has suffered an injured back, a broken hand, broken ribs, a smashed foot, several cuts, and lots of burns.

John does think safety has come a long way in his twenty years of working for CCI. In his early days in mining, safety was not stressed very much. He says the only reason they did have some of the safety programs, is because it was mandated by law. CCI then realized that it was not to their benefit to be having people hurt on the job since it cost the company a lot of money. Safety is now more of an issue at the workplace, and the federal government has also stepped up it's inspections. In general, safety has come a long way and has improved in many ways for the good of all of CCI's employees.

John's job can also be very challenging. He must figure out what the problem is and a way to fix it when an operator tells him that the machine will not work. The most challenging thing that John has done in general was to put an air raise in at the Mather B Mine. A vertical tunnel was driven straight up 250 feet from the seventh level up to the sixth level. John was also involved in the magnetite conversion, which is expected to add about fifteen years of production to the Tilden Mine. Now while working in the pit he has been involved in the erection of three brand new shovels.

Even though John is usually hard at work in the pit, there is some time for horseplay. John was able to tell me about a humorous situation. He said that there was a man who loved to

eat, and he would eat anything that someone did not want. While this man was gone, John and his friends put soap in a gigantic piece of cake.

When the man came back he ate the cake and said how good it was. However, later he had to use the bathroom.

John has come from a long line of men who have worked in the mine, his brother William, father Harry, uncle Jan, uncle Clifford and his great-grandfather August Anderson have worked in the mines. Mining is almost in John's blood. CCI does not give awards but John does have letters of recognition in his personnel file.

With John being working for twenty years at the mines, he knows a lot about it. John feels there will always be a need for steel and the Empire and Tilden have a life expectancy to run until the year 2015. John feels the mines will run their life expectancy of twenty years and probably even longer.

John Rader is one of the most interesting men I have ever known. He is a hard working man, willing to work forty hours a week in the mine to support his family. I feel lucky to have interviewed him and find out what what his career of working in the mine is like. Thank-you John, for