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Twenty

A MINER'S LIFE

"Don't be afraid to study and know your job," were the words of Marvin Nadeau. I recently interviewed Marvin, and he told me of his mining career.

Marvin Nadeau was born in Negaunee, Michigan, on March 21, 1923. He had one brother named Pershing. Marvin and his wife Evelyn have six children.

Marvin did many kinds of repair work in the mechanical and electrical areas. He operated the electrical shovel and was a hoisting engineer. He also did plumbing and heating work and was an electrician and foreman. Marvin explained his job as a foreman. As foreman he was in charge of all the maintenance in the concentrator section of the mill, There were many crews with supervisors, He had to inspect the work and schedule the crews and to see what else needed repairs. In addition it was his responsibility to make sure that all the parts were on hand for the workers. As foreman those were the biggest responsibilities of his job. He saw the duties of his job change; it is a lot more complicated then it was when he first started. Eventually more education was required.

Marvin's job really did not require any higher education, but he said, "It would have been nice to have more education; that always helps. But most of my knowledge I gained prior from the work at home with my father. I was really inquisitive about

machinery. I learned everything on the job working on different projects." Marvin also went to Syracuse University for one year.

Marvin stated "I would like to add that when I first started and worked my first years at the Mather A and Mather B it was different. You worked more like a family, and the way you did things were different. At the time I worked, things were not in such a big hurry to be done. We did our work, but there was always a friendly attitude and working conditions. With the new equipment and the type of work they had to do, everything was speeded up and it was a little harder to get used to. Not that it was bad just different." he explained.

When I asked Marvin about the working conditions, he told me that it was very noisy. The janitors kept everything clean and the conditions were as good as they could be under the circumstances. When asked about safety standards, he said they have gotten a lot stricter. Currently workers are given more information about safety. Marvin was involved in a special project that he told me about. He was working at B Shaft, and he was asked to build three new cages; which required a great deal of accuracy with angles, grates, channels, and to put them together as a complete unit.

Marvin told me about the most humorous situation at the Mather A. He began, "They kept the engine house very clean and they had mats to walk on. Well, one day a worker was walking through, Well the janitor had just cleaned, the worker stepped off the mat, and he got the floor dirty, The janitor started screaming, threw the mop and the pail at him.

On the more dangerous side of his job, he told me about the most dangerous situation. Marvin and his partner were going up in a shaft to take out a beam, but before they got to the top they hit a skip. They tried to radio down to the engineer to tell him to stop hoisting. The radio they were using as a source of communication was not working so they had to scream and holler for the engineer to stop. They could have been killed or seriously hurt. They never did find out why the radio did not work.

The most difficult part of Marvin's job was finishing a complete repair job for the first time frame. It had to be done within a certain time and be precisely right. They had to have the parts there on time so they could work and get them back. They had to see what they could do ahead of time so they could finish early.

As people know mines change with the times. When I asked Marvin about women in the iron industry, he said, "I think that women will be accepted in all phases of work." He had a woman on his crew and she kept up with everything. There will probably be a few more women hired each year.

Empire and Tilden have experienced a great past but what is in store for the future? Marvin said that far in the future we will remember C.C.I and its workers by what they have given us, not just jobs but help build Ishpeming and Negaunee by furnishing them with repair work plumbing pumps, pipes, fittings, tuggers, steel cleavels, and other things that helped with what was needed. He personally built a batting cage for the Ishpeming playgrounds. C.C.I. was and is a great contributor to the area.

Marvin feels that C.C.I. must increase productivity by

finding faster and cheaper ways of doing things and to continue to do these things.

Marvin has worked in various mines and buildings. He has worked at the Mather A and Mather B, the Ore Improvement and the Empire and the Tilden while at these mines he used different machinery and tools like dial indicators and fuel ingages to intall motors.

Over the years he has enjoyed the challenge of being an hourly worker and doing the best repair job you can and seeing that equipment go back to work. If young kids want to work for C.C.I. when they get older, they should be able to think and plan. "Don't be afraid to give a little extra so when the job is complete you can say I did a good job." he advised.

He also said to get a complete education including college. It will also help in whatever job a student wants to get. If they know you have an education it will only help you in job interveiws.

Marvin Nadeau is a very smart man. I am glad I got the chance to interview him. I learned a lot of new things from him. I hope you learned a few new things about mining you never knew. Marvin retired after forty-two and a half years with C.C.I.