

Eric
Marcotte

eighty-eight

OVER THIRTY-FIVE YEAR CAREER

I enjoyed seeing the work getting done and the growth of the company," said Mr. Louie Marcotte as he told me about his over thirty-five year career as a miner.

Mr. Marcotte began his career as a miner because "It was the best paying job for the area and had better benefits," he stated. His first job was driving trucks at the Lake Angeline pit, then he went underground at the Mather A and was a brakeman. From there he went over to the Pellet Plant in Eagle Mills sampling ore and doing some maintenance. His last duty was as a maintenance foreman for which he went to supervisor's school and learned blueprint reading. His duties as a maintenance foreman were to maintain the crusher, conveyer belts, tailings pipeline, and all the outside pumps & pump houses.

One incident that Mr. Marcotte recalls happened at the Humbolt Mine during the rod mill repair. He said the night shift had started the repair. Day shift workers assumed that the mill was locked out. He went inside of the mill to start scraping the small pieces and two of his fellow workers went up on top of the mill to start burning of the liner bolts. For a break Mr. Marcotte came out for a drink of water, and just as he got in front of the mill, someone told the operator to start up the mill. By mistake the operator started up mill number ten. Which

was the mill that he thought was locked out. "Evidently it wasn't locked out. So when the mill started up, the two guys on top of the mill were rolled right off of the mill. Luckily they didn't go between the guard and the mill; otherwise they could've gotten killed," Mr. Marcotte stated.

Mr. Marcotte also recalls one situation that is rather humorous. "One of the men on my crew lived behind Palmer. He was snowed in one day and rather than miss a day's work, he came to work on his horse! The company was good enough to tie the horse up in the garage. Now that's what I would call dedication," Mr. Marcotte explained.

In addition to dangerous situations, the working conditions were poor. "At times we had a lot of noise and when you are in the concentrator out in the Pellet Plant you got a lot of dust. Also in the winter there was a lot of cold weather which can be dangerous at times." stated Mr. Marcotte. On the other hand he says that safety standards have improved in ways such as when he first started he did not have to wear safety glasses, but now workers have to wear them at all times. The welders get special leather clothing, and the foremen have safety meetings once a month.

About the future, Mr. Marcotte says, "The company is going to have to continue to work on making a better grade pellet at the lowest possible cost. Also, I think the employees should give a fair day of work for the pay they receive." He also says that if the young people of today want to work for CCI, they have to take some mechanical schooling, welding, electrical, and also computer training.

Mr. Marcotte's ties to CCI go beyond his career with them,

for his brothers Robert, Bernard, Donald and Jon as well as a nephew work there also. "I have two sons working for the company, and I hope they can continue their career until their retirement," stated Mr. Marcotte.