

Jon Saari

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"I do not think you will find a better work force than the people in the U.P.," stated Grampa as I interviewed him at his house on U.S. 41, in Ispeming, Michigan.

My Grampa, Milton Hakkarainen, was born October 11, 1930, in the city of Neguane, Michigan. Grampa had one brother, Paul, who now lives in West Minister, Colorado. Grampas sister, Mary, lives in Denver, Colorado.

Many of Grampas relatives have worked for Cleveland Cliff's Iron Company. Over the years CCI has provided employment for; Grampas father, who worked for fifteen to twenty years; Uncle Elmer for fifteen to twenty years; Uncle Willis for ten years; his son-in-law Paul Saari who is still working for CCI; and his Uncle Moddy for forty years. Grampa himself has been working for CCI for thirty-eight & one-half years.

Grampa chose to work for CCI because if a person is going to live in this part of the county, "CCI is as good a place to work in this area," he stated. Grampa first started working for CCI in 1950 at the Moss Mine. From the Moss Mine he was transferred to the Bunker Hill Mine. Next he transferred to the Mather B, and presently he is working at the Tilden Mine.

Grampa performed many different duties at the various

mines. Underground Gramps worked with the backhoe and the track gang who were the crew changing the rails and putting track up. Grampa worked with the miners on putting up steel and repairing the drifts. In Grampas current job he goes to an assigned shovel and hauls rock to the rock dump, or ore to the crusher with the big production trucks.

Grampa had to have to have some on the job training on production trucks when he started hauling rock and ore for the Tilden Mine. He had to ber "broken in" by somebody for about two or three shifts before he wanted to drive the truck by himself.

Grampa had some difficult duties to perform on his f=job. Grampa had to drive in all kind of weather conditions. Grampa thinks that operating the big production trucks is a very challenging task, "It takes something to perform with these big trucks," says Grampa. Even though it is very challenging Grampa still thinks that it is the best job that he could have because the pay is good and the benefits are great.

Grampa had two dangerous situations in his career with CCI, but he didn't know how dangerous they were at the time. One incident occurred when he was driving away after dumping a load of ore. The box on his truck hooked one of the power lines and pulled it down. If Grampa would have stepped out of the truck, he would have been electrocuted. The other incident involved a collision with another truck. "I was lucky that I stopped in time or I would have been killed," said Grampa as he recalled the event. Grampa was driving along in a small eighty-five ton CAT truck, and he crashed

into the rear end of another truck. He broke his windshield and bent the rail of the his eighty-five ton truck.

Ever since that ever occured, the safety standards for CCI have changed for the better. They were required to wear safety belts while driving at all times after the incident. "The safety standards for CCI have improved 500% over the last five years, things are gettin' better all the time out there. We have safety meetings every year. We have safety classes every week. We have to wear hard hats and glasses that have side shields...I would say CCI is goin' along good with there safety...", says Grampa, "the injuries are goin' down out there all the time," he adds. Grampa said that there is lots yet to be done because everyone does not follow the rules all the time.

Grampa had a few "funny" situations. One of those situations was when Grampa was having one of his "bad days". He put his lunch pail down, and he forgot about it. He got in his truck and started to drive off. However it was too late, for he had already ran over his pail! His radio which was in the pail along with eveything was ruined.

"All the years I've been working for CCI, I still think it's a great place to work. If you are going to work in this part of the area you can't find a better place to work than any other place to work than CCI. The money is good and the benefits are there...what more can you ask for?" ended Grampa.