

# Tim Palomaki

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## A WELL EDUCATED MAN

"When he was twenty-one he left his home in England, to travel to Ottowa, Canada, to work on a farm. His total fare from Bristol, England was seven dollars," stated my grandpa, Clifton Rogers talking about his father's long journey to North America.

Our ancestry can be traced back to our great, great, great grandparents who immigrated from Bristol, England, and we also have ancestors from Norway and the Isle of Mann. Both of the families immigrated to the Copper Country.

Two years before Sir Baden Powell founded the Boy Scouts, my great-grandpa met him when he was in the Boy Guards. My grandpa's father educated himself through night school and correspondance schools. Eventually all of his fathers hard work paid off, and he trained and educated other people about skills and knowledge that they needed to become bosses, supervisors, and captains of the mining operations. Hundreds of workers took advantage of these classes. In about 1920 he was asked to take charge of the Speas Mine. In 1934 he was asked to take charge of the Athens Mine, and later he took charge of the original Tilden Pit. "I found it necessary to take work home and study it. When we were installing all of the new innovative machinery at the Mather A mine, a lot of it we knew very little about. We would take pamphlets and books home to read, study, and learn about

*did ancestors  
more than this  
passed down  
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UP ?*



them so that the next day we knew if we were doing things correctly," he explained the necessity of his study just as his father had done. My grandpa's advice to the young students of today is to never stop learning, because someday the students will make use of all that they learned. My grandpa thinks back to his father who never had the advantage of going to school, yet he taught himself, and was one of the most knowledgeable individuals on current events until the day he died.

My grandpa has worked for Cleveland Cliff's Power and Light for a number of years. He did things like installing the electrical equipment at the Mather A when they were sinking shaft. He also did some underground electrical work at the Negaunee Mine, Athens Mine, and the Maas Mine. He also worked at the Hoist Dam when they had started to install the first unit, doing blasting, and some drilling.

My grandpa found it real disconcerting to go down while they were sinking shaft, because workers had to use a temporary hoist and just a platform. "It wasn't really a cage that you would go down the shaft with, and as you got near the bottom where they would be doing blasting. There would be no track or guide for the platform to ride on. So when you get down there, you're just hanging in the air," he said. My grandpa also said that when he went down the shaft he could see nothing except where his light was shining since there was no overhead lighting.

My grandpa said that when he lived in a community near the Speas Mine, it was common for the high sulphur bearing rock waste piles to catch fire due to spontaneous combustion. When they would catch sometimes the whole community would be engulfed in sulphur fumes and their eyes, mouth, nose, and lungs would burn



twenty-four hours a day.

"One of my workers got tangled up with high voltage transmission lines and he didn't die but he was severely burned," my grandpa stated when I asked him about accidents he had been in ,or had seen.

For CCI to keep functioning it is vitally important for this area to continue upgrade and improve their product and be able to produce a quality one at a marketable price.

My grandpa had many funny experiences when he was working. "We had to pull in all of the heavy cables to get the power from the transformer into the engine house, so we hooked up some bulldozers and tractors to pull them around. At that time one of the fellows working with me said, 'What in the world did they do before they had bulldozers?', and I remember distinctly Budd Tonkin saying, 'They did a lot more bulling and a lot less dozing in those days.' I think he was referring to our generation at that time, which was much younger than his."

My grandpa is currently married to Ruth Rogers. They have two kids now grown up, and they are Barb Palomaki living in Ishpeming, and Terry Rogers living in Traverse City.

Thank you for letting me interview you. You are a very interesting person with a very excellent memory.