

Interview with Jean Baggiorie (Heard)  
Interviewed by Mike Honkala  
November 29, 1998

**Me:** What is your name?

**Jean:** Jean Emma Baggiorie. That's my married name. Did you want my single name or my married name?

**Me:** Sure you can say both please.

**Jean:** Jean Emma Heard. That's my single name.

**Me:** Were you named that for any particular reason?

**Jean:** I think my second name, Emma, was for my Auntie Emma.

**Me:** Where were you born?

**Jean:** In Ishpeming, Michigan.

**Me:** At which hospital?

**Jean:** I wasn't. I was at home. I was at home and it was in March, and it must have been a really, stormy, icy, cold, because we lived up, oh, behind the third street school. And there was a hill and the horse and buggy with the doctor couldn't get to the house, so my father and the doctor had to crawl up the hill on their hands and knees because it was so icy. And then I was born. That was March 13, 1916.

**Me:** Long time ago.

**Jean:** Yah. That was a while ago. I'll be eighty-three my next birthday.

**Me:** Do you have any nicknames?

**Jean:** No. I never did have any nicknames. Cause my name was so short I guess they (her friends) couldn't figure out anything.

**Me:** Do you remember your grand parents?

**Jean:** I only remember my grandmother. This is my father's mother. My mother's father and mother were dead before I was born. My mother's mother died when she was born. So I didn't have a grandmother there. But my father's mother lived with us until she died. Near to fifteen years she lived with us. Yeah. That's the only grandparent that I remember.

**Me:** She must have seemed pretty special to you.

**Jean:** Oh she sure was she was. Yeah I was twelve years old when she died. And she was the grandest old lady you ever want to see.

**Me:** So she's the oldest person in your family that you can remember?

**Jean:** Yes I think she was. Yeaup. Yup. Well, let me see now...(coughs) you know she died when I was twelve and she was only fifty-nine when she died. In those days a long time ago we thought fifty-nine was an old old lady. But at fifty-nine these days you're still young. (laughs)

**Me:** Yeah that's pretty young now.

**Jean:** Yah at fifty-nine.

**Me:** Where you an only child?

**Jean:** No. I was the third one in my family. I had a sister and a brother.

**Me:** What kind of chores did you have to do?

**Jean:** Well when we were young, I mean we had a real good time, I mean I guess we didn't do very much but we used to help out in the kitchen and

my mother worked. In the gossard in Ishpeming. And ah she'd we us kids we we pitched in and helped out at home with the cooking and the clothes washing. It wasn't like today with the washing machines!

Hahahahahahah!!!

Me: Did you have to use a washboard?

Jean: Well Yeah I guess so when I was real young but I don't really remember that to well. But I remember my mother when she got a Maytag (brand of washing machine) that was a big event in our family when my mother got the Maytag washing machine.

Me: What school did you go to?

Jean: Did I? Oh I went to Ishpeming Schools. Yeah I did.

Me: Where in Ishpeming was it?

Jean: Oh... Jist where it is now.

Me: There's many schools in Ishpeming.

Jean: Oh yeah oh oh the the one down-town on thidiv yeah division street. The High School. I started kindegaden school at Phillips school. Then that was all together different then it had a great big yard around it and I started kindergarten there and then I went to first grade down-town were the High School is now and ah that was the grade school. I went up as far as I think it was the fifth grade there, and sixth grade we went to the ridge street school, which I don't think is a school anymore, but it was the ridge street school and then seventh and eighth grade we went to the grammar school which burnt down there on first street there in Ishpeming. And then from there I went to the high-school down town.

Me: you went to a lot of them.

Jean: yeah and ya know ah ah my class was the first class to go into the high school down town because the high-school had burned right down to the ground. And ah they were building a new one so us kidsin my time when we went to school we went to all different buildings for our classes and we went from hear to therein town. You know because the lower grades and when I then passed into high-school and my class was the first class to ever go in therewe thought we were really sumthin' when we had lockers (laughs) we didn't have them before. we had a cloak room before and then in the high-school we had lockers

Me: Did you graduate?

Jean: No I didn't I dropped out in eleventh grade. Isn't that sumthin' aye?

Me: You were lucky then that you got a job.

Jean: Well I didn't work anywere.

Do you remember always having enough food?

Jean: No When we ah up until the depression everything was alright my dad was a miner and everything was fine but when the depression came then we were hungry there wasn't nobody with jobs nobody worked there was no money or nothing. People were hungry and cold. It really was a bad bad time. I know my poor dad he tried to get work and he couldn't because the mine was all shut down everything was closed everything closed. Cleveland cliffs gave out plots of land my dad's plot was over by

lake bancroft and he planted a garden with potatoes and all kinds of stuff and in those days we couldn't afford a car or gasoline or nothin so he walked over there every day and took care of his garden and everything was just ready for him to harvest so he went over there the next day and believe it or not somebody had stolen everything in the garden and didn't even leave him as much as a potato. And that is true! I never seen a man cry but I did then. Terrible can you imagine anybody stealing somebody's food out of their mouth practically cause we were going to be so happy he had this garden you know and now we were out of food someone stole it.

Me: Did you ever find out who did it?

Jean: nope we never did.

Me: You said your dad was a miner did you ever have to help out there at all. Like bring him his lunch?

Jean: yah we would bring him his lunch yah but my dad worked over there at the sixteen mine you where the sixteen mine is not down by the hickory store but the other one anyway there used to be a little store and I know it is hard for little kids that have never seen it to imagine it when I can see it so plain in my eyes anyway there was a little store at the end of the street car line and my mother and me used to ride the street car to the mine which was right there across the road where those great big piles of hematite are and the men would come up and we would be sitting on a pile of timbers waiting for him and I will never forget it the first time I seen my dad get off the cage cause my dad never was a very big man but I was so scared of him because he was covered from head to toe in red iron ore dust. I didn't know him you know and I was so scared cause he came over "Oh hello dear and how are you dear" and I was so scared I cried! I can see it so plain me and my ma were sitting there and after I got to know him that's the first time I had seen him in his mine cloths. yup that was many years ago that was before the depression you know. The depression was the worst time in everybody's life.

Me: Did you find that when you were young you were treated differently than the other kids?

Jean: No. We were all equal.

Me: All equal aye?

Me: What kind of cloths and stuff did you wear?

Jean: At easter we always got new shoes and a dress for sunday school and church. There you can tell that my grand mother lived with us hey. We went to church with my grandmother and I went to sunday school and church. Sunday school before church cause church was at eleven. and then I had to go to church Sunday night at seven. and my grandmother made sure we went to church and we always went to church I always had new cloths for easter sunday.

Me: Did you have to wear anything special for school or have a dress code?

Jean: I don't think so not that I can think of. When we got bigger we weren't aloud to wear overalls or blue jeans but girls never wore pants only

dresses. The only time we wore pants was in the deep snow in the winter. I used to borrow my brothers and hang them in the cloak room. Cause they never closed the schools cause of snow not when I was in school. you had to plow through snow up to his waist.

Me: How far was it to school?

Jean: It wasn't to far from my house which was about two streets over from the hospital so it wasn't that far.

Me: So you never had a job?

Jean: Well I worked at the gozzard for a while I really liked it I enjoyed it.

Me: Did you have any thing to do with wwii?

Jean: no but I sent a lot of letters.

Me: How did the wahing machine change things around the house?

Jean: Well it made it a lot easyer cause you used to heat the water on the kitchen stove on top in a big boiler and you had to watch it very slowly and then put the cloths in then wring then out in the wringer. Yah it made things really really easyer when we got the maytag.

Me: how bout a radio did you have one?

Jean: Oh yeah! my dad had a radio with one of those big ong speaker things you know it was called an "Atwater Kent". that was what kind it was. He used to have that in the sitting room. and we used to sit ;in the sitting room and we had an old faceburner u know and the radio was in the corner next to his chair. And he'd listen to that thing and he'd hear everthing.

Me: Howbout when transistors came out?

Jean: Nope we never had one.

Me: Haw about refridgeration how did you keep your food cold?

Jean: Well I was married when we got a refridgerator. Before that we had iceboxes. then the ice-truck would come and we would get a chunk of ice.

Me: When did you get married?

Jean: In 1934.

Me: Who did you marry?

Jean: Anthony Baggiorie. in 1934. and I had one son. he was born in 1936. he will be 63 at his next birthday.

Me: Did you spoil him?

Jean: (Laughs) oh yes I did. I still spoil him

Me: So you weren't very strict?

Jean: No but my husband was. He was very strict. We never ever had to punish our son. All my husband had to do was speak sharply.

Jean: In 1936 yeah he just had to do your general helping out. help build a camp.

Me: Did you have any animals at that time?

Jean: No

Me: When did you get them?

Jean: when we went to colorado and back we had our horses. before that we lived in town. But my husband did when he was growing up because he lived on a farm.

**Me: Did you have electricity all of your life?**  
**Jean: Yes as far as I can remember.**

**Me: Thankyou very much.**