

Chad Ott
interviewing
Leonard Hebert

me - This is Chad Ott interviewing Leonard Hebert at his home on Dec 23, 1987 about his life

me - when and where were you born?

Mr H - I was born in North Greenwood in 1922.

me - How were you delivered?

Mr H - I was delivered in home by a country doctor

me - In the home hey (comment)

Mr H - Yes

me - Were all your brothers and sisters delivered that way?

Mr H - They were all born in North Greenwood yeh, in the home

me - At that time was anybody delivered in a hospital?

Mr. H - No not at Greenwood, well they might of been downtown but not out where we lived, it was all by a country doctor

me - to far from the hospital ney (comment)

Mr H - Ya h

me - How many Kids were in your family

Mr H - Well in counting me there was 5 boys and 9 girls, a family of fourteen

me - Who was the oldest?

Mr H - My brother Leonard, who is now

deceased

me - What school did you go to?

Mr H - Northgreenwood School

me - And did that go through highschool?

Mr H - No it was just up to the eighth grade

me - So it was like elementary to Jr. High

Mr H - Right

me - How many Kid would be in a class room?

Mr H - Well, uh most of the time there was just the Hebert family but once in a while their were a couple of Deliquate boys their was Pepin girl at one time and then at one time their was a Melka Girl and two La Fave girls.

me - so would that be about 25 or 50? ⁽³⁾

Mr H. - Well see, no their were some younger kids, see my youngest sister wasn't in school ya know when I was going through school

me - Oh so it varried a lot?

Mr. H. - Yah see I graduated the 8th grade in 35, 1935 it was, I was thirteen years old.

me - what were your favorite class when you were going to school

Mr H - well my favorite class were Aritmatic I liked reading and a writing, writing was one of my best subjects and I liked science and Physical things living and Physical Things. History was a pretty good subject too we wer pretty good in Arithmatic a time so I kind of favored that

me - Did you have any favorite teachers?

Mr H - Oh yah my favorite a teacher the first one favored Mr. and Mrs. Benate and then there was Fanny Coffe then Buster Lamore, Buster Lamore was top

Mr. H. He was good teacher
(cont.)

me - what subject did he teach?

Mr. H. - Well he taught us, ya know, just everything.

me - Did you play any sports or join any clubs?

Mr. H. - Well No we didn't have anything but a like family or school baseball but Buster use to get us into that he taught us how to really play baseball

me - So it was of school that you played that?

Mr. H. - Yeah, and then ~~we~~ we would roll barrels down 50 gallon barrels down the street, we use to do a lot of sling shot, hunting with the "22's and stuff like that

me - Some jobs you had in school like what did you do when you weren't in school I mean?

Mr. H. - Well we had always cow to attend to and da farm to attend to, weeding in the summer time and then a then in the winter time there was snow shoveling and wood to saw the family chores

me - so your dad was a farmer then?

Mr H - Well Partly he worked out at the mines and then he worked farms small farm wasn't much of a farm

me - what did he do at the mines?

Mr. H - He worked underground at Barnes + Hecker Till it went down, see the Barnes + Hecker went down in 1936. a 26 rather.

me - (interrupting) He wasn't in it when it went down was he?

Mr. H - No he was filling his car to go to work that day at a round 2:00 in the afternoon and Joe Tepin come through there till he run up to the mine the mine had caved in

me - mine had caved in when he got this what had happened?

Mr H - Well the

me - (interrupting) Were there any survivors

Mr H - Oh yeah there were a few survivors but there were 52 I think men stuck under

me - 52, he was lucky

Mr. H - He was getting ready to go to work (6)

me - couple of minutes more and he would
of been under there ^{Mr. H} he must of had
time because he had a 1917 Model
T at the time and he was filling
up the radiator with oil to go to work.

me - well did your family work too? Did your
mother work?

Mr. H - well outside taking care of us kids
she worked and helped in the garden
quite a bit, we always had a good
size garden

me - So a gardener and a housewife huh
Mr. H - Housewife yeah most of her duties
are

me - Did your brother work?

Mr. H - Oh yeah

me - on the farm?

Mr. H - ~~was~~ yeah on the farm, Now then we worked
for Pepin's and the Lafaves see they had
farms but they did logging (next page)

Mr H- and stuff like that and so we work for them
(cont.)

Me- Did you ever give them farm products for them giving you logging, wood and that?

Mr H- No, Most of the time it was what little money we had we had like our own butter and meat and stuff like that, but if run short of butter or lard, then at that time they would give you a dime and tell you to go to the neighbors and get a pound of butter or a pound of lard or something like that.

me- Speaking of money, what would a dollar get you then?

Mr. H- Well (pause) about a hundred times it does now
(laughingly)

me- what would it be equal to in our money today.

Mr H. - (pause) let me see, (pause) a dollar then would be like 5 dollars today I don't think I'm not exaggerating either, I might not be putting it high enough. because a dollar could go a long way then.

me - it could get you some grocery or something?

Mr. H - Yah, because if you made \$5 a week you weren't rich but you were getting by pretty good

me - Yah

me - How do you remember your Christmas's?

Mr. H - Ah most of them were pretty good we didn't get a whole lot you know usually like one sleigh for the boys maybe 1 pair of ski's and then socks and mitts and clothes you know.

me - Stuff you needed for warmth. comett

Mr. H - Yah

me - Were you living during the Great Depression?

Mr. H - much of my time was in the Great Depression

me - How were times like then?

Mr. H - well they were pretty rough, see that's when my dad started working for W. P. A.

me - thats the plan government used to help unemployed workers

Mr. H - Yah, see my dad started their and they were getting \$44 a month, for working on W.P.A and then if you were fortunate and lived in Ishpeming you could get county assistance maybe once a month or maybe sometimes once a year all depend on if they want to give it to you or not You See.

me - How old were you when that was going on?

Mr. H - Well let me see I was born in 22 and that crosses in 29 through the 30's 33 I think I can't remember how old I was aroud 13, 14, 15 years old around there

me - so you were about my age around there.

Mr. H. Yah, because see I was 13 when I got out of school

me - You didn't go to school after the 8th grade.

Mr. H. - No because we couldn't afford, ya know there was no school buses then see so the only we would have to, my dad couldn't drive us, and we didn't have a car that good, The only way we could get to school was with Buses, and there were no buses. That three miles off the county road see

Me - Where would the highschool be?

Mr. H. - The Ishpeming Highschool

me - the Ishpeming Highschool

Mr. H. - Yah the Ishpeming Highschool

me - would that of been ^{the} ~~that~~ far to walk?

Mr. H. - Yah, lets see it about 10 miles anyway.

me - Well, when you were going to middle School did you have to walk there.

Mr. A. Oh Yah

me - How far was that? ~~it about 1/2 3/4 miles~~
~~of the times it about 1/2 3/4 miles~~
~~at one time it was about 1 1/2 miles~~

Mr. A - Most of the time it was about $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ miles
- see they had the school in 3 different places,
at one time it was about a mile and a $\frac{1}{2}$
where

Kindergarten first started school I was in
to help you out, to walk us to school

me - How many funerals when you were growing up
were they any different, do you remember

Mr. H. not too much most of them went to the
hospital and died in the hospital Now the
Pepin family had a funeral at their
house, put the body in the front room
then they come to the house to visit

me - would they hang black wreaths on the
door?

Mr. A. I don't remember that, no, no most
of the time everything was calm they
didn't do much.

me - things were sort of quiet.

Mr. H. Yeah women would put on black dress
they didn't wear pants like they do today
so they wore black dress.

Me - were the weddings // the same as they ⁽¹²⁾
are now?

Mr. H. - Yah, but in them days in order to
have any celebration it was mostly
mornshin'. Some body would go and buy
a pint or a quart or whatever, I don't
remember outside of home-made beer there being
a whole lot of that either they would have
a litte gathering

Me - Yah just a little gathering

Mr. H. - Yah

me - Would they be married by a minister?

Mr. H. - Well minister or priest see we were
catholic we would have priest You
know. See in them days they didn't
mix marriages, Protestants marrying
Catholics like they do now

Me - They all stayed with their
own.

Mr. H. - Yah, if you were Catholic you
married Catholics

me - things have changed since then.

Mr. H. - Yah You bet

me - Did you make your own Moonshine?

Mr. H. - Well my dad made some in his time, it was never abundantly made, just a little bit, they make a little bit for the holidays. But we couldn't get the sugar see the money wasn't their to get the sugar that was the main part of making moonshine sugar and yeast for the fermentation

me - Did you fight in any wars?

Mr. H. - Oh. Yes, I was in World War II

me - what did you do in the war?

Mr. H. - well we were called an engineer metallation but then well I went through basic here in the United States then I went overseas there into France 3 days after D-day

me - were you in the navy or what were you in?

Mr. H. - No No, I was in the Army

me - did you get hurt?

(14)

Mr. H. - No I never got wounded or nothing like that I went right through it without a scratch

me - what exactly was your job to do?

Mr. H. Well most of the time after we got into France maybe a couple of weeks then I could talk a little bit Canadian French and then I would be a translator, but I couldn't do it good because there was so much Canadian Slang to the French

me - Yes I suppose

Mr. H. But I had remembered enough from what my Dad + Mom had taught me that I could interpret for myself what they were saying

me - To tell them the General Idea

Mr. H. Yah

me - Were you fighting Germany then?

Mr. H. - Yah, Germany

me - You weren't involved in the Japanese part of the war then? (15)

Mr. H - No

me - so you were in the other part?

Mr. H - The other part yeah E.T.O. European Theatre of Operations

me - Were there many vaccinations then?

Mr. H - We had Diphtheria shots but we weren't vaccinated for small pox or anything like that

me - They didn't have penicillin then did they?

Mr. H - No, we were in the service when penicillin came out doctor, one of them was in the service in our outfit he was from Wisconsin come up with the male stuff to make penicillin

me - Did you get a shot then?

Mr. H - We were in the service when they started giving out penicillin shots

me - Did they give it to you when you were in the service

Mr H - No mat unless you had something real bad

me - so they didn't have it as prevention, just if you had it

Mr H - Yah that's right see all they used in the service most of the time is sulfa drug for bleeding and stuff like that

me - what were some major epidemics then?

Mr. H - Not that I can remember they had flu season and measles kids diseases Now I had Pneumonia quite a few times.

me - that could be sort of dangerous sometimes

Mr. H - Well yah well through my life I had it 7 times

me - its probably got better each ⁽⁷⁾
time with more medicine they
got.

Mr. H. Well Yah well sometimes the first
time I got it I went to the ^{Isipening} Hospital I was only 8 years old
but I hardly remember that

me - what did you do when you had
spore time? you said you hunted a
lot

Mr. H. Well we used to hunt target
practices with the "22's" and
we made crossbows our own
bow and arrows we would snore
rabbit in the winter time you must
seemed like we always had something
to do pick a lot of berries and stuff
like that you know because we
had cows the milk and berries
could make cakes and stuff
4th of July then we would
pick wild strawberries

Mr. H
(cont)

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- Well see come the Holidays we would pick
blueberries and blackberries, strawberries
and all sorts of stuff so we could have
stuff for Christmas

me - and make Jams and stuff

Mr. H. Jams and stuff, sure

me. Did you get married?

Mr. H. Yah I got married in 1943

me - how many children do you have

Mr. H - we have 7, 7 children

me - how many Grandchildren

Mr. H - We have 24 grandchildren and 20 great-
grandchildren

me - Wow 20 great-grandchildren

me - when did you start working on a job, outside
the farm.

Mr. H - When I was 13 yrs. old, I went firing a
boiler at the saw mill for Tepins

me - What was your Job when you came
out of the service.

Mr. H - See when I was 17 years old I start working
in the woods driving log trucks.

Mr. H. - and then from North Greenwood out North
(cont) here and the Dead River Basin then
we moved to Big Bay Area out pub with
logs

me - Did you do a lot of fishing near the Dead
River Basin?

Mr. H. - Oh Yah lot fishing towards the Dead
River Basin

me - It wasn't as much of a sport as get-
ting the food?

Mr. H. - Well that's all we used to do it for
for the food, we never did it as
much for the sport

me - Nowadays there a lot of people who
do it for the sport?

Mr. H. - Yah

me - What was your last reason job

Mr. H. - Let me see (pause) I think it was
when I was hauling logs
across Malogne Creek and the
bridge went under me I think
that was the last job I had.

me - The bridge came under you

Mr. H - the bridge collapsed, 4 of them in my time

me - which bridges were those

Mr. H - the Mologone, then I can't remember the name of them now

me - did you go into the river

Mr. H - The last time the truck went in

me - did you get out of the truck in time

Mr. H - Yah, and My wife and my youngest daughter were with me. all the logs went pretty much down the river

me - do you still work?

Mr. H - No, well I just work around the garage and the house here, I'd like to go back to work, I'm looking for a job I can handle

me - Just a part-time job?

Mr. H - Well whatever I get, if I get a steady job I'll take it, I'd like to go back to the woods

me - I've seen you out in the garage working a lot, do you do much out there?

Mr. H- Oh Yeh I fix washers, a snowblower, and
lawnmowers, and stuff like that
me- Your sort of a little mechanic?

Mr. H- Yeh I do mechanic work, I can weld and
stuff like that, I worked in the underground
mine quite a while, I don't know if you got
that down, I worked at the J. + L. and
I worked at Morris mine awhile at the
blueberry mine for awhile I worked at the
Camprea for awhile, and then I went on
construction in the pellet mines

me- That's interesting

Mr. H- At the Pellet mine I think I worked
2 weeks as a laborer then I went
to Republic and from Republic to the Empire
by National Mine, Tildon

me- Tildon Yeh

(2)

Mr. H- Then back to the Empire and then back
to Tilden I was jumping around
But I worked on all the Pellet Plants

me- all of them

Mr. H- Yeh

me- were any of those jobs dangerous

Mr. H- No, we had climbing in them, it wasn't
all that dangerous

me- You were an underground miner right?

Mr. H- Yeh

me- what did you do exactly

Mr. H- Well mostly we were on the Ore Trains
Hauling Ore from the shoots to the Shaft
I was a breaker under ground most of the
time. Then at the Blueberry I was Pump-
man. I run the pumps over there until that
Shut down

me- Where were your parents born

Mr. H- My mother was out of Escanaba and my dad well
he was born right there in North Greenwood

me - what kind of gifts did you receive
on your Birthday and Christmas

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Mr. H - You would get sleigh once in awhile
and skis and a

me - Homemade

Mr. H - No they were boughten, pine skis, the
sleigh was boughten, and we get socks
and mits and underwear stuff like that

Me - A lot of clothing.

Mr. H - Uh - H

Mr. H - I don't know if you got this or not, but
when I come out of the service I went
and trained at the airport here to be
a pilot

Me - At K.I. Sawyer

Mr. H - No at the county airport, they
had a training program, under the
Veterans, to go train. I had I don't
remember how many hours I had
I needed 13 more hours to get my

Mr. H - pilots license

(cont.)

Me - Private Pilot

Mr. H - No I would of ran a Commercial Pilot

Me - Oh a commercial pilot

Mr. H - Yeh then I worked on the railroads
for a while to LS and I
then I stayed at the LS and I for a while
the strike is what shut us down
They had coal strikes and the mines
went on strike, well then we
couldn't haul ore. Finally I
was of more than I was working
that's when we left here and went
out west out to Idaho

me - when did you move right here to the
township?

Mr. H - Township here it was just about I think
It was a little better than a year ago

Mr. H - well it was a year ago July 5th
(cont) to the township here we lived on Daisy
street for awhile then we moved into
this place.

me - When the mines were on strike
were you involved in any
of them.

Mr. H - No, well just being on the railroad
like that we couldn't haul Ore
it wasn't that we couldn't
get into the mine but there was
nobody to load because the mines
were on strike. See our
trains were run by coal well
see when the coal mines went
on strike we couldn't run
our trains because we couldn't
get enough coal

me - things started shutting down

Mr. A well they were slowed up

Mr. H - when we came back from I [unclear]
(cont) I started seeking new jobs
trying to get back in the
woods

ME - Getting back to that pilot training,
My dad is a pilot and I know
it cost quite a bit to get the
training.

Mr. H - Well we were under a G.I. Bill

Me - So you didn't pay anything

Mr. H - Except the gas money, and the way to get
there, If I would of made as a commercial
pilot I would of got a job flying

Me - Are stories you can remember about your
life?

Mr. H - Well ah, the main thing that hit me the
most was the Barnes Hecker Disaster
because that was really a disaster
See there was a town near there, well a village
I wouldn't say a town, they had a
store there, seemed like that town
just died out after that came in
overnight

me - sort of into a ghost town

(27)

Mr. H. - even the buildings seemed like that
it's like that town disappeared overnight
of course I was young then
see that happened in 1926 so I was only
about 4 years old I didn't get around
to much.

me - How many of your brothers got married?

Mr. H. - they all did

me - and your sisters

Mr. H. - my sisters all got married
then all my brothers are dead Jim the last
one

me - were you the youngest

Mr. H. - No I was lets see 4th child, see I had
4 older brothers and a sister older than I

me - so did you have any brothers younger than
you

Mr. H. - Oh yes, I was the 4th child there were 10
younger than me

me - see you had quite a family?

Mr. H. - Oh yah, but we were happy close
family, I'd say, we always seemed to
plenty to eat, I don't not remember being
meal, once in awhile it seemed to
sort of tight, we relied on most of our
crops and stuff.

Me - Do you think you were a more fortunate family.

Mr. H - No, No because we were such a big family, when they gave out food we had such big family so like you were allowed one big of flour, see if you were a small family it would last but without family there wasn't so much to go around.

Me - So your meals were always good?

Mr. H - Yah I always had good meals. we didn't have junk food though. we couldn't get a hamburger down town, we would butcher cows and sell to get our meals. mel pigs in the, ah in Thanksgiving

Me - Did you save up your good meals for Christmas?

Mr. H - Sure we would have a good meal on Christmas but Thanksgiving was just usual meal Thanksgiving was like Halloween just another Day because Halloween there was no candy or tricks You didn't have Soap windows because you all depended on everybody for friends

Me - One last question did you do a lot of trading with other

Mr. H - Oh yah potatoes and stuff.

Me - Well thanks for letting me interview you.