

(1)

Lisa Harrington

This is Lisa Harrington interviewing my grandpa Harrington in his house in downtown Sappeming.

Q. When were you born?

A. April, the 3, 1897

Q. Where?

A. Mequon, Michigan

Q. When did you move to Sappeming?

A. "Oh" I was about 5 years old

Q. "O.K.", How did you get started in the construction business?

A. How'd I get in it?

Q "yeh"

A. Oh I guess it was in my blood all my life, I wanted to be a carpenter in the first place, and "ah" I learned the carpenter trade. Then I went away to a builder's school and I got up to be a superintendent of the jobs

Q. Was your dad a constructor?

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Q. Did he build things too? your dad?

A. (Paughter)

Q. your dad?

A. (I don't get ya)

Q. your dad?

A. Dad?

Q. yeh, did your dad build things?

A. Oh no, heavens no

Q. O.K.

A. He helped me go financially, that's all

Q. (Oh O.K.)

Q. Then you had special training, you went away?

A. Huh

Q. you went away?

A. I went to Chicago

Q. O.K. How many years did you attend there?

A. 4 years

Q. (4 years) Did a lot of people go to college at that time?

A. Yes

Q. yeh, what was the first company you worked for?

(2)

A. I think the first company I ever worked for Wallman construction company

Q Did you work for them all your life?

A Oh no, I worked for dozens of others

Q ^(Really) what was the 1st thing you built?

A The first thing I built, I think one of the first things I built ^{was} the ~~the~~ Steryon Block in Royal Oak, Michigan

Q Oh, um did the company you worked for supply everything? all the tools and that?

A Oh yes, yes they supplied everything

Q About how much did people get paid then?

A what'd they get

Q Did people get paid?

A Oh how much money

Q yeh

A At that time wages were pretty low, and I remember I had men work for me for thirty - thirty-five cents an hour

Q Did you get paid more than them?

A. Oh yes

Q How much did you get paid?

A Well, I don't know I was always paid by the ^{uh} month. I made about 150 dollars

Q Was that good?

A Oh yes that was good money

Q What kinds of things did you build?

A What kind?

Q What kinds of things?

A Oh, store buildings, school houses, alot of bridges

(3)

Q Bridges, was that your favorite thing to build?

A I like bridges, yeh

Q What were some, what were some of the things you made in this area?

A I'm this area?

Q yeh

A Well I built several homes, the school house

Q What was the hardest thing you had to build?

A The hardest?

Q yeh

A Well nothing was hard

Q Nothing was hard

(laughter)

A Nothing was hard for me

Q Nothing?

A No-oo

Q Out of all the things you made which are you most proud of?

A I didn't hear you?

Q Out of all the things you made which are you most proud of?

A Which am I?

Q yeh

A The bridge over the Escanaba River that was, that was over 75 feet span.

(4)

Q: How long did it take you to build?

A Oh, I don't know, I guess I was there about nine, ten months

Q How long did it take to build a building or school?

A. A building?

Q yeh

A Well it takes, uh, it all depends on the size of it, it takes a year anyway

Q a year

A Maybe a year and a half for some

Q Did you ever get hurt building something?

Q Did you ever get hurt building something?

A I got an ankle broken once

Q How did you do it?

A Well we were letting down a big piece of a ~~of~~ siding building like and there was a fella he went in there and walking ^{right} in under it, I yelled at him ran over and grabbed him. And we got out of there but a piece of two by four struck me in the ankle

Q so you -

A But I saved his life

Q That's good. Did the doctor pay for the bill then? I mean did the company pay for the bill?

A. Oh yes, yes there's always compensation

A mmm

A jobs for everyone

Q mmm. Did anyone ever get killed? when you were there? any-
~~body~~ ^{body} ever get killed

A Careless

Q Killed?

A. Oh no

Q No one got killed

A no, no one ever got killed.

Q Did anyone come close to being killed? Besides that guy

A no, no

Q O.K about how many things during your life time did you build?

A How many?

Q Too many to count

A Dozens

Q How many people were on the job?

A Oh well it was a smaller job ^{maybe} four or five up to maybe 20

Q When did you retire?

A When did I retire, I guess I retired when I was ^{about} 70

Q ^{OK.} Um, do you like being retired or did you like working?

A I'd rather work!

Q you'd rather work

A Even now I'd rather be out working

(Laughter)

Q Do you still build and repair things around the house?

A Huh

Q Do you still build and repair things around the house?

A Repair, sure

Q yeh you still do

Q Um how did you go about building something?

A How'd you go about building it?

(6)

Q. yeh did you make the plans or were the plans already made?

A Oh no, no, no the plans were always made by an architect

Q ^{mm} So thats all

A you take the plans and you look at them you start and go up from that point

Q Do you work from like one area up or do you work from the bottom up?

A Oh you work from the footing up

Q The footing

A you put the footing in

Q Oh

A and then the walls, and the columns, and

Q O.K

Q What was the footing? what was the footing level?

A Well ah, the footing level is, it depends on the soil, you take samples of the soil, and some time if the o-soil is not -uh- good enough to put a footing on it can cause the foundations and that you got to drive piling - spiling

Q m-m

A and you got to drive them in the ground and uh then put your footing on top of them

Q Oh. OK. what was the last thing you built? what was the last thing you built?

A - the convent school