

Julie Paananen's interview  
with  
Wilfred Garrett

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Hi! My name is Julie Paananen. It's February 13, 1993 and I am interviewing Wilfred Garrett, of Ishpeming, Michigan for my Red Dust Interview. The interview will take place at his home in Ishpeming and it is an autobiographical interview.

Me: Where and where were you born?

Mr G.: I was born in the Isle of Man in 1910.

Me: What were your parents' names?

Mr G.: My parents' names were Wally Garrett & Mary Garrett. (They had the same last name) I had no brothers or sisters. I was an only child. They figured, well, one was enough.

Me: What memories do you possess about living on the Isle of Man?

Mr G.: Well, it was a quiet place and people were very friendly. And, uh, we didn't have very much - cause it was at war years - and I can remember going to school and right next to the school was a big field and a lot of German prisoners were working in there. - Planting potatoes and everything like that. Then at night they'd go behind barbed wire - The Isle of Man was a prison camp at that time cause - being 75 miles from the mainland - they knew they couldn't escape.

Glenn: The Germans used to bomb London (they were at war w/ London) so when they got prisoners, they put them on the Isle of Man.

Mr G.: I can remember almost drowning in the harbor. Another lad and I went across to see his father who was working across the harbor and we took his row boat across there. And then when it came time to go home, I wanted to go home & he was going to stay with his father. And I said, well I can get by by going across and stepping on each of the boats - it was full of little boats there.

Mr. G: (cont.) But then when I came to where the steps were, there was quite a ways from me. And like a darn fool, I thought I could jump and catch the steps and I didn't. I was lucky. Some guy came down and picked me up.

Me: How old were you?

Mr G: I was about, say, maybe seven then. Seven or eight.

Me: Could you swim?

Mr G: A little bit, but, I got excited, you know. And then I swallowed - there was a boat, they had one mine there in the Isle of Man - it was lead, and this boat was getting lead, and of course a lot of it was in the water. I got sick as a dog. And I got the devil from my mother when I got better.

Me: Who were your friends & what kinds of games did you play while you were living on the Isle of Man?

Mr G: Of course, most of my friends were boys. We used to play soccer and uh, marbles of course. It isn't like today, you know you didn't have gymnasiums or anything like that. We played cricket. We played poor man's job-like here - I remember when we were kids over here - you'd play hockey with tin cans and a stick - well, that's the way we were. But, uh, everybody got along. You know, if the other fellow doesn't have anything, then you're happy, see, cause you don't know the difference. But its when somebody has a lot, maybe a lot of them have a lot - and you're the only one that doesn't have anything, then you feel it.

Me: How old were you when you came to America?

Mr G: I came here in August and I was 10 in November. We came through Canada. Somehow, they got it all mixed up - we were supposed to come through New York. They got mixed up and we had to take the boat to Canada. Then we got on a train.

Mr G: (cont.) I remember my mother asking a fellow, "Well, where's the train to?" (They used to say Michigan. That's the way they used to pronounce Michigan. Michigan.) I remember when he said track seven. So I said to my mother - well we counted seven tracks and we went over there and got on the train. Nobody said anything to us. So, a long time later, the conductor came around and he said "Lady, you and the boy got to get out. You're on the wrong train." He was going to put us out in some little place. There was a man there and he said "You can't do that to those people. They don't have any friends and they don't know anybody here. Anyway, that was just a bench with a roof on top and a back to it. There was no town - nothing. We would wait there four hours. He said no, you can't do that. So then he told the conductor how to do it and we finally got here - we got here 3 days later than my dad figured we'd get here. He was up there waiting for us every night and we finally made it.

Me: Did he come here a while before you?

Mr G: Yah. He was here first - 7 years before me, but when he and some friends of his (young fellows) were talking, he said "Jeez, I'd go over there if I could get the fair to go. So it was a long time later when this man who was the booking agent said to him "Well, would you still go?" He said "Yes. I'll lend you the money." So that's how he got over here. He didn't expect to find gold on the streets, but everybody that came from the old country thought that all they had to do was get here. He got here and there was strikes. And he had rheumatism. He'd get rheumatism a lot and then he'd miss work, and then there'd be no work, and then he'd have to pay back his board and everything, so it took him seven years before we got out here.

Me: Who immigrated with you to America?

Mr G: Just my mother. My mother and I.

Me: Why did you guys come to America?

Mr G: Well, because he was over here. And to better yourself. ~~You~~  
All these people - they come over because they thought  
America was the place to be. There was nothing over there.  
In fact, when we went back in 1965 - no 1967, my wife +  
I went back there for a trip - they still didn't have any-  
thing over there.

Me: Is the island small?

Glenn: How big is the island, dad?

Mr G: Well the island is about 33 miles long and 12 miles wide.  
(We came out here because my dad came so then we  
came. And my dad was working at a mine.)

If you look at a map - well, you know where England  
is. England is here. Scotland is part of that land.  
It's just a boundary. Then there's Ireland over  
here. And then there's the little island in that sea.  
That's the Isle of Man.

Glenn: The Irish Sea it's called.

Me: In as much detail as possible, please describe your  
immigration experience.

Mr G: One thing I remember when I got to Canada is  
we were just getting on the train and I saw this  
fellow with ice cream. We didn't have ice cream in  
the old country. It was frozen custard. We had it  
in sandwiches. It was good. But I knew that  
was something good to eat so my mother bought me  
one.

Me: Why did you chose to live in Negaunee?

Mr G: I had no choice. My father was there.

Glenn: My grand father was working in Negaunee. He was  
working in the mines. So he already had a job & a  
home.

Mr. G: But its so funny. When he came here, people, well a lot of Manx people came to Ishpeming. So, he had a friend here in Ishpeming boarding so he came up there. (It was just down the street beyond the gas station there.) The day he got there was the day Audrey, my wife, was born. The day he landed was the day his daughter-in-law was born.

Me: What and where was your parents' occupation in Negaunee?

Glenn: Grandma was just a housekeeper and a mother

Mr G: My dad worked in the mines all his life. That's all he did. In Negaunee.

Glenn: Mather B.

Mr G: Maas Mine, Negaunee Mine. Not Mather B.

Glenn: I thought he was at the Mather B. That's where I went underground was at the Mather B.

Me: Did he work at the Mather B?

Glenn: He worked on the surface of the Mather B. The other times he was underground. He had arthritis so bad that his thumbs were all curled in.

Me: Where did you go to school?

Mr G: I went to school at Negaunee. Negaunee High School. I went to grade school, but my whole education was in Negaunee, except when I was a kid over in England. That's the old Negaunee High School. That's not the new one out at Birchview. That's the one that was knocked down....

See the \_\_\_\_\_ Street school was on \_\_\_\_\_ Street. I went to the \_\_\_\_\_ street school, too. Then you had the alley and then the high school. There was a tunnel underneath. (chuckles) Jeez, we thought that was great. First time we went over we were sixth graders and we had to go over to the gym, through the tunnel. Jeez that was a thrill! (Chuckles)

Me: What did you study at school?

Mr G: Study? Well, it was what they called a college preparatory. English, Latin, geometry, Math. All that stuff. We had music. A lot of music.

Me: Did you like school?

Mr G: Oh yes! In fact, I loved school! I hated to get to school! Well, but we had a good gang! It was fun! Besides studying - maybe I didn't study enough! (Laughs)

Me: What special memories do you have of your school & your friends?

Mr G: Well, a lot of the memories, you'd think of... we just played in the alleys. We... - well, there was a playground, but most of the time, like in the winter time in Negaunee in the alley - always in the alleys - they'd have a barn. They'd put a banana crate cut in half and a sack in there. That'd be your net, see. Then they nail that to the barn. The other barn had the other part of the banana crate with a sack in it, and then we'd play basket ball. For hockey you'd save your tin cans and go out in the woods and get your hockey sticks. (We used to buy our own) we had a little club that we put in 5¢ a week and we bought a basket ball and a football between the whole bunch.

Glenn: The neighborhoods back at that time were a lot closer than they have now where everybody's got their own little world. Even when I was a kid, I knew everybody in the whole neighborhood. Everybody knew me. I couldn't do anything without anybody knowing I did it because everybody knew me. Where now, it's not that way. In the neighborhoods back then, everybody got together & did things.

Mr G: It was a different world. You made your own fun. You didn't have any money. We used to go to the show on Saturday and it cost 6¢. We would stop on the way at a bakery because one of the kids had a sister that worked there. We'd go there after 12 o'clock and she would sell us all the old long johns. It was long and it had a little frosting on it. Of course she'd give us a bargain, cause they couldn't resell them. But we'd have a big bag full for a coupla cents. So we'd go to the show and eat them. Six cents was all you had. They had gum at that time. We'd divide it into 6 pieces. That gum would last them a long time. A week..... We didn't hang around down town. In fact, when we'd go swimming up at the lake, we'd see kids on the other streets cause you'd walk to Cedar Lake and back again. Also, we'd walk all the way down to the Carp River to swim.

Me: Or go fishing?

Mr G: Or fish - if you wanted to fish - although nobody ever fished in the Carp River. If they did, they didn't want to eat it. But... um... nope we didn't have much money. But we had a lot of fun. The kids of today have - a lot of them - have too much money. They have things we never even heard about. Of course, we never would have had them. But it was a good world, I suppose.

Me: What special memories do you have of growing up in this area?

Mr G: Well, that was one of them. And we'd go to Sunday School. Once a year we'd have a picnic. One year it would be at Champion Beach. The next year it'd be down on the island. That would be the only times we got to those places.

Glenn: They didn't have cars. So wherever you went, you walked.

Mr G: My folks never had a car all their life!

Mr G: We'd always wanted to go to Champion Beach, ...  
(cont.) because the city trucks would take us up. They had flat solid wheels so the ride was bumpy. They'd just put planks across the back and we'd sit on those planks. It's funny. That's one thing. There was never anything thought about falling off! They never had an accident. They were lucky! A kid could've fallen off and been run over.

Me: There wasn't a top?

Mr G: No! just a regular truck - like a dump truck, only it's big. They used to put garbage in there. For a trip like that, they'd hose it out. We thought that was nuts. You'd always try to get a seat on the outside which was the worst place! Then we'd go to Marquette and some of the rich people in church would always take their cars. But that's the only time I'd get to the island.

Glenn: Or Champion Beach. That was an hour & a half, two hour ride. They didn't have the paved highways you have now. You got two (rut) roads. But, when you think of going to Champion Beach now, you think that it shouldn't take me that long. Well they didn't have a four-lane highway at that time and they didn't have paved roads.

Me: Did you ever do any singing when you were young?

Mr G: Ya! I did a lot of singing. In ~~the~~ the old country, I sang once. They had a kind of a show - some thing like a medicine show I suppose you'd call it. They asked people to go up and sing, but they were older people. My mother told me that day I went up there. So I didn't sing very much. They said "we don't want little kids here." When I came over here I went into the choir almost right away. I've been in choirs now for 70 years. I'm still in the choir. And then I sang in high school - I did a lot of singing. Since I got out of high school, I sang with a lot of groups, and quartets, and solos, and funerals, and weddings.



- Me: Do you still sing a lot now?
- Mr G: Well I'm still in the choir, but I don't sing solos anymore. I haven't been.
- Me: Did your dad used to sing?
- Mr G: No. He could sing. My mother had a wonderful voice, but they didn't sing anywhere. In those days, don't forget that people didn't have much time for that stuff. When my father would come home he'd have to - even when I came home it was the same way - you had to shovel all your snow, chop all your wood, bring in your kindling - do all of that stuff after work. Then it would be time to go to bed almost or time to rest, then go to bed. He belonged to a couple lodges - I did too - I still belong to the Elks - but now, I sing with a group in Negaunee once in a while, but as far as solos - I got one more solo still to go - that I know of - There's a lady in Marquette that graduated with me, believe it or not - she wants me to sing at her funeral! If she dies first! Ya - I did a lot of singing!
- Me: What special features stand out in your mind about the cities of Negaunee and Ishpeming from when you were younger?
- Mr G: The one thing is that shopping was done on Saturday. That was the big day. And stores weren't open at nights, like they are now - or 24 hours a day.... Then everybody would go to town because some people didn't get out of the neighborhood for the whole week! Then they'd walk downtown, do their shopping, and everybody'd be out. The sidewalks would be full of people talking to each other, hollering to each other. Well you don't have that anymore! There's no close ness anymore. In fact, you don't even know who lives on your block, right?
- Glenn: Do you know everybody?
- Me: Not everybody!
- Mr G: But years ago you did, because you didn't walk any further than the block, a lot of people.

Mr G: And women-on wash day-they had to wash all the clothes. On Sunday night, I'd have to put the boiler on on the stove, fill that with water, first get kintling and wood in the fire box so it could be lit and-(without having to move the big boiler much) you'd fill the tubs, one with water and you'd put (bluing) \_\_\_\_\_ in there. That'd be to whiten the clothes. Then my wife would wash-in the wintertime I'd have to dig up the whole back yard and put the clotheslines up. Then she'd hang the clothes out and when I'd come home, those clothes would be stiff as a board on the line. Then you'd have to have lines in the kitchen, then bring the boards in & hang them up & then they would thaw out and all night you were going past those wet clothes. It'd take them the whole night to dry. Then you'd have to empty the tubs. It was a lot of work.

Glenn: See, you got to remember there were no sewer systems, there was no hot water tanks. You don't just go and draw hot water. You have to heat it up yourself \_\_\_\_\_ In the washing machine at that time, you didn't put your clothes in and walk away from it. It used to be those old ringer, type. You had to feed the clothes through the ringer to rinse them out.

Mr G: Well, that one time I remember in the old country, my grandmother had a ringer, but the rollers were about this round.

Glenn: 10 inches.

Mr G: 2 big rollers and it would take 1, sometimes 2 of my aunts to do that, putting those clothes through. Great big thing. Another thing you didn't have in those days were inside toilets. Everything was outhouses.

Me: Was there a special place where you guys hung out?

Glenn: Just the place right out here behind the house. When we were kids, we'd have to go in a potty chair type thing and my father would get up in the morning and have to empty all that in the outhouse and wash out the thing, and bring it back for the next day.

Mr G: When people were sick you'd have to do that. It was a different, different world, I tell you.

Glenn: No television.

Me: What did you do for entertainment?

Mr G: We didn't have a radio! When I was a kid in the old country, we just had candles and a lamp. In fact for heat all we had was a fireplace. And it wasn't warm. Of course, the Isle of Man wasn't as cold as it is here cause the ocean is all around it, but it still gets cold. They've had snow over there. Then you'd get what they call chill (blanes) blaines. They're little sores on your toes from being so cold. I went to school one time with a new pair of shoes and I had those chill (blanes) blaines.

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he got me up in front of the room and he beat the devil out of my legs with a broom handle. He was kicked out of the island after. The schoolmaster. That guy was cruel. But my mother took me out of that school and moved me to another school. They finally threw that guy out of the island because he was so mean. Schools were a lot different. When I went to school in Negaunee, this little school had 5 grades. We had kids that walked over a mile every day. I'm talking 5<sup>th</sup> graders, being the oldest ones so some of them were in 2<sup>nd</sup> + 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. There was no cars or buses. They'd walk all the way.

Glenn: I left the Salisbury School and the next one was the Ridgestreet School and we had to walk to there.

Mr G: Ya. The Ridgestreet School. You know where that is. The Ridgestreet Apartments, That was a school.

Glenn: Every school I ever went to is now an apartment building or is now torn down, except the high school. I went to the Salisbury School, Ridgestreet School, the High Street School burned down. That's replaced with Phelps. Then I went to the Grammar School (was an apartment building that burned down). The Ridgestreet & Salisbury schools are still apartment buildings, but the rest are all gone. The High school is the only school left that I went to. (Ishpeming, High School)

Mr G: It was a different world. One change there is now is (nobody worked in Marquette cause they'd have to stay down there) A lot of houses were built right around the mines. This house was over on that bluff across that lake (Lake Angeline) There used to be houses on the side there. (The house was moved that Mr Garret + lived in)

Glenn: They moved the whole houses. It used to be the Angeline Mine and the Salisbury Mine and like he said, all the houses were around the mine. When that mine was shut down & depleted and went somewhere else, rather than build all new homes they just lifted the houses and moved the houses - right around the next mine then.

Mr G: I worked at a mine by Teal Lake. I had to walk from two blocks past the old High School. The big parking lot in the Methodist Church in Negaunee.

Glenn: They just tore it down when they got the Mather B as their new high school.

Mr G: It was the most beautiful high school in the world. The guy that tore it down - I couldn't understand why they tore it down.

Mr G: I still think all they wanted was a parking place for the teachers cars. I do. I firmly believe that.

Me: What kinds of things did you & your friends do for entertainment while you were teenagers?

Glenn: He was on the basketball team. For some reason, he was by Monsignor Spelgatti's. All the kids from the basketball team used to go over to his house.

Mr G: The basketball team used to always be at my house. The coach lived across the street. He said, "Well, at least I know where the players are."

Me: Who was your coach?

Mr G: Coach Shadford. I'm talking about 19 - I graduated in 1928 so it was a long time ago. One thing I remember about my basket ball days was when we went to the Soo and to Newberry. That was the best trip we ever had. See, we started on Thursday afternoon. It was a long way to the Soo. We had to go by train. We got to the Soo. That Friday he let us go to the stores and do whatever we wanted. Thursday night, I mean. We got there Thursday. Friday we roamed around and Friday night we played at the Soo. Saturday we started for Newberry. We got to Newberry in the morning maybe noon. The coach went and took us all to the hotel and ~~we~~ they were going to book us there and put us up there. But the fellow who owned the hotel said "No way! I don't want anymore basketball teams here as long as I own this place! I had the John DePierce gang here last month and when the coach put them to bed, they tied the sheets together and escaped and roamed around. They ruined the sheets and I still haven't gotten any money for them! I don't want any kids!" teams!"

Well coach Shadford didn't know what to do. He said, "Jeez, I don't know what I'm gonna do! We got to play basket ball tonight. He said, "I can't help you."

Mr G:  
(cont)

So the coach went around right in town, and there was a restaurant on the corner and they had rooms upstairs. God, that was a trip. Cause upstairs, they didn't have any bathrooms or toilets. Had to use a potty. And a big jug for water to wash and for fire escapes they had big ropes with knots all around it and you could crawl down so one lad, that had a nightgown - the rest of us had pajamas. And of course he was the guy that had to try those ropes. And he got down on the street on Sunday morning and they pulled the rope up and there he is in Newberry of all places, hollering in his night gown. Then the manager of the team met a girl there and he asked the coach, "Do you mind if I walk her home?" The coach said "Go ahead." But the poor guy didn't realize she lived way, way out - he froze his ears. They were like two boxing gloves when he got back to Nequaunee. They thought he was going to lose them. But that was the greatest trip. It was a good coach. Nice guy. But, for entertainment, all the players would come to my house and we'd play cards. Not for money or anything like that.

Glenn: You played tennis too. Football.

Mr G: Oh, I played tennis &amp; football. I like tennis. I played a little base ball but nothing much.

Me: Do you have any interesting or humorous stories to tell about the early days in Nequaunee?

Mr G: I just led an ordinary life. I didn't do anything sensational.

Glenn: What about the years you worked at the Blue Link? You must have a story out of that.

Mr G: Well, ya. But she's still in high school. Her questions

Glenn: How about when you were in the opera &amp; you still made the basketball team?

Me: You were in the opera?

Mr G: Well, we had an operetta. I had the lead in it - in a couple of operettas. But then we had quartets and we used to go to Northern. Kids nowadays have a high school band or orchestra and they go to London or Vienna. We went to Marquette - Northern and competed for the UP Championship in boys glee club, girls glee club, and mixed chorus. 3 things. That's the only trip we had too - to Marquette!

Me: How did you do?

Mr G: ~~The~~ We won the UP twice and the girls won it twice while I was in school. We had good choruses. Then we had a quartet, of course. I was in a quartet.

Me: Do you have any stories about that?

Mr G: When I first came over here, like I said, I was in a choir and this was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and there was a play going on at the high school - January . . . so the teacher came to me and like I said - I ~~de~~ been out here for only a couple of months and she said, "They're putting on a play and they want some entertainment between acts and I want you to sing. It was a big thrill for me - to sing in front of the whole high school! In the afternoon, they had the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, & 6<sup>th</sup> graders come over to the school and I had to sing just for them! I don't know why! But the song was called Jimmy Dear, you have to mind the Baby. I had to dress up in a baseball suit and I had a baby buggy and a doll. The story was about how I was just going to play baseball + my mother would call "Jimmy, you have to mind the baby!" You know take your little sister for a walk. There's one fellow that we go to the UFW for fish fries with that still remembers that! He was a 4<sup>th</sup> grader.

Mr G: He remembers coming over to the high school. But, I  
(cont.) like singing. I sang with a lot of groups here.

Me: What other types of sports did you play in high school?  
Or Clubs.

Mr G: Just foot ball & basket ball. They didn't have tennis in high school. You did it on your own. All the other sports you played on your own. There was no money for sports. Just football & basketball. Girls basketball - they ~~didn't~~ play like they do now. In fact the 1<sup>st</sup> basketball game I saw - their uniforms were like bloomers. They would stand at a certain position and pass the ball. They wouldn't dribble the ball. They wouldn't ~~run~~ run with the ball. They could move to certain positions.

Glenn: But when you played, they had a jump ball after every basket. After every basket. They had a stationary guard also. One guy just stayed and guarded the basket the whole game. He never moved. He never took a shot all year because he was at the other end of the gym all the time.

Mr G: He had to stay & guard the basket ~~be~~ behind him. So that's why people ask why there are low scores. You had 4 men. Even when you had the ball, only 4 of you would take the ball down the floor. The other guy would stay back there just in case somebody came. It was silly. But that's the way they played basketball. So you had 4 guys against 5. Five would be defending just 4 men. When 5 guys that were defending got the ball, only 4 of them would go up the floor. So that's why the scores were lower.

Glenn: 2 to 4.

Mr G: Most of them weren't that low. In fact, I remember when Nequaunee made over 70 pts. against Ishpeming. About 72 and 13. That was in 1922.

Glenn: We don't want that in the book, though. (Haa Haa!)



Mr G: Neegaunee had powerhouses then.  
(cont.)

Me: Do you have any special or humorous memories of your years as an athlete?

Mr G: I remember that when I went out for football, they threw all the - they didn't take the uniforms like they do now & have them all dry-cleaned and ready for the players - and a certain player has a certain uniform. We were the scrubs - they called us - when you first go out. All the uniforms and all the shoes were in a big pile. Then you pick and see if you can get something that fits you. I had one shoe with one cleat. They didn't throw anything away in those days. They didn't have any money. The only ones that'd have good suits were the first team. Even their basketball uniforms would be kept and would go down the line. We had uniforms that the high school had 2 or 3 years before that. They'd save them. You'd take them home and wash them yourself. That's why it didn't cost so much to run the school. Nowadays there's too much money left.

Glenn: Players still bring their uniforms home and clean them. You always see kids coming in the gym carrying their uniforms. Except that they got newer uniforms. But the old ones go down to the Junior Varsity, Junior Varsity to the Freshmen, Freshmen to the seventh and eighth graders. So they don't buy new uniforms for everybody on the team. They get hand-me-downs. Although, the Varsity doesn't hand them down to seventh and eighth graders because they'll swim in them. They do go down to Junior Varsity.

Mr G: I'll tell you something else I remember. I was helping the coach with gym classes when I was a Junior & Senior. The year I was a Junior a bunch of kids came in that had the gym class and coach said, "Okay, everybody take a shower." Well, it was 4 or 5 kids who didn't take a shower. He didn't notice at that time, but the next day or the day after he noticed that the kids didn't shower.

Mr G: (cont) He said "You gotta take a shower." They said, "No we can't take a shower." "Well why?" he said. "Cause we're not allowed to take our underwear off. They're sewed on." And when winter would start, some kids had their underwear sewed on and they stayed there till winter was over.

Glenn: Instead of having buttons up the front, their mother would sew it. They were long johns. Instead of having buttons - so they were right through the crotch - you'd put them on like a pair of old long johns with a trap door in the back, instead of buttons in the front, the mothers would sew them on.

Mr G: You couldn't take them off - some had buttons in the back. But they couldn't take them off & put them on themselves. They had a devil of a job. They had to send the school nurse down and finally they had those people come to school and they had a devil of a job convincing them it was for health-wise. Kids wanted to take a shower but they couldn't. It was a funny world.

Me: Did you belong to any singing groups in high school.

Mr G: I said - just quartets & choruses

Me: How old were you when you got your first job?

Mr G: Jobs weren't plentiful. I got through school in '28 in June. Then I went to Lansing to look for jobs. There was nothing around here to speak of. My mother & dad saved money and I went down with a friend of theirs. I stayed with the lady and man and his family. They were from Nequahee originally and I knew them. So I boarded there and I did get a job. It lasted a little over two weeks and then the factory shut down - because depression was coming in. There were thousands of people out of work. And then they had the Durant factory - was advertised - that was going to open up. And a lot of people from Kentucky would come & look for jobs.

Mr G: (cont) But I don't know why from Kentucky. Then they couldn't get a job so they'd take all these little jobs. As little as we had. Some of those people had less and they learned to live on less. To survive. So there was really no work. And the factory never did open up. The Depression was near. Then I came home and the Depression was terrible. You couldn't get work at all and I can remember my dad - at one time all the mines were closed for the most part - and my dad was working on the county with hundreds of other men - and - 25¢ an hour - 10 hours a day - 2 days a week. That gave you five dollars a week. You had to live on that. That's all you got was two days a week. They'd be taken out there on a bus never big enough for the guys that rode on it. So the isles would be full. Standing up. The guys didn't mind it going out but when it came time to go home they would run to see who could get a seat. The rest had to stand up. They had an old shoemaker - he was forced to close and go to work, too. He died. He had just made the bus and he died - a heart attack. I came up here to work instead of my father. I said, "Jeez, I'm home, I'm young, I'm not doing anything." He said, "No, you can't. The law says he has to work. Then they finally gave young fellows a job two days a week - that was out on the roads. Like picking down the banks and making new roads. I can remember after I moved to Ishpeming - then I started at the mine. I was working at the mine. Then I got married and came up here - and the mine I was working for shut down - and they hired only one hundred men back; the hundred oldest men. So I was out of a job. I finally got a job on the county. There was dozens of guys. You know where the road going to North Lake by OK Auto Parts. That road there - that's the road those men built.

Mr G: Every body worked there. Then I got a job at  
(cont) the Hercules. I stayed there for 23 years and then  
that shut down.

Me: What did you do at the Hercules?

Mr G: I worked on the production mine. They get all the  
ingredients and I would make the containers that  
the explosives would go in. Then, they would be sent up  
the line - as we called it - and in the meantime, the  
ingredients would be made at another place and would  
be brought up, and then would go from house to house  
and would be mixed up with nitroglycerine. Then it would  
be put in all the things that I made or was made at  
the building I worked at. Then it would be put in to boxes -  
dynamite and then or else they'd make big tubes - tubes  
like that - 50 lbs. of powder in them. Then they'd be  
shipped to the mines or in war time we made - for Russia -  
and then it was shipped over to Russia.

Glenn: You skipped over your job at the Blue Link.

Mr G: Oh! ya! Yes, I did. I - when I came back from Kans-  
ing, it was Depression - so nobody worked for a long  
time. Then finally I got a job at a little candy store -  
just a hole in the wall. They sold candies and maga-  
zines. I worked from 8 in the morning till 10 at  
night. I had my dinner hour off and for supper, I'd  
bring a lunch to eat supper, 7 days a week except  
Sunday I started an hour earlier for Sunday  
papers. You'd have to put all the papers together  
& people would buy them. Lot of them would have  
their name on them and they'd take them each week,  
then I had one night off and finally I got an  
afternoon off + I'd go play tennis. I had to be back  
at 6 till 10. I was getting \$40 a month. Then it was  
raised to \$60 a month. I was there for about 2 1/2  
years.

Glenn: In the meantime, his father was laid off at the mine so  
that was all the money they had coming in so he was  
actually supporting his mother & father at that time.

Mr G: He had rheumatism, For 2 1/2 years he was home. We didn't have any money coming in.

Me: Was 40 or 60 a lot

Mr G: No, No.

Glenn: Barely enough to get by on.

Mr G: I wasn't enough money. They had to use the little bit they'd saved and bring that. I wanted a little bit. I'd give it all to my mother. When I started to go with my wife, I'd bum to Ispening and walk all the way from downtown up here and at 10 or 10:30, I'd leave here and then walk down town & bum to Ispening sometimes I walked to Negaunee. ~~they~~ <sup>we</sup> didn't have any car. We didn't have money. My wife was working at the Gozzard and she was keeping her mother. She had a brother that worked at the Hercules when he was 18 years old. He just got out of school and started at the Hercules. He started at the part where the explosives were and they had an accident out there & they had a big explosion. A lot of men were killed. One of was her brother. That young kid. 3 weeks later the father died. The father didn't have any insurance - he didn't believe in it - but the money she got because the boy was killed at the Hercules was enough to bury both of them. She had it tough. She didn't have any money coming in. Then the daughters got married & moved away. Audrey was the youngest one so she was there. What she made at the Gozzard kept her mother and her. They didn't make much. I got a little book up there now - I kept it. Sometimes Audrey would make \$7-8 a week. The gozzard - you'd go to work and if they didn't have any work for you - it was a - some would make boxes for the stuff to go in. Others would be doing different things. If they didn't have enough material you'd just sit & wait till they did. Or else go home. Some didn't make any money at all. It kept the town going - there was a lot of days they didn't make much money & they grabbed every penny they could.

Mr G: The tennis courts at the playground - they used to have an ice rink. I remember one year - they crowned the queen out there (rink) in the winter time. I had come from Negaunee - I walked all the way out there and back to see that. Then I walked out there again. I'm crazy! But you did that or nothing. We didn't have money to go to the show.

Glenn: He didn't have a TV till he was 44. I was 14 years old. We got it in 1954. I was a Freshman in high school.

Mr G: You were born in 1940. We didn't have much.

Glenn: Then you only had the one channel and half the time it was all snowy - like trying to watch a pay channel that you didn't pay for. You'd see a figure and you'd be all excited.

Mr G: We didn't have any radio when I first came over here. When radio did come in. Of course they had radio & TV a long time before we had it. They go way way back on radio - but for homes, a regular guy to have it. We didn't have any money to buy a radio. Finally I got when when I started work at the Blue Link and I saved a little bit of money and I charged it and then payed so much out of my little cut of it so we could have a radio. I brought that home and we didn't have anything all week. I thought I'd have to take it back. You'd be walking down the street + some guy would say, "Hey! Hey! I got Texas last night!" All they'd wait for somebody to say this is such and such a station at Texas. Ohh! I got all the way from Texas (very excited). They were excited. From Texas.

Glenn: If the radio waves were just right they'd carry farther on certain days. So you'd get Texas one day + not Marquette the next day.

Mr G: It isn't like now - when you just turn it on. No way!

Glenn: On the Isle of Man there was no electricity when my father was there. Now they have electricity but there's alternating current and direct current. They had direct current so if you bought something over here and sent it over there, they can't use it unless they buy a special adapter machine to change the alternating current to direct current so it cost more to change currents than for the (coffee pot) or whatever you sent over there.

Me: Do you remember anything special or unique that happened on your first job?

Mr G: I wouldn't say anything special.

Glenn: The unique part about his (Lansing) job was it shut down after 2 weeks. Call that bad luck.

Mr G: The fellows (the boss) said, "I'm gonna let you go 2 days earlier than you have to. You don't have to but 3 days from now this plant will be closed. That's on a Friday. Maybe you could go to another place & get a job." (He let me go in the middle of the week.) "Once this place is let go, all of these guys that are experienced - then you'll never get a job!" I went over there and they weren't hiring them there - Oldsmobile. The next week when I went out there were dozens + dozens of men lined up at the factories. (There'd always be a truckload of celery - I don't know why celery. The truck would be loaded with celery and the guys going home would buy celery. There must have been something they liked about celery.)

Glenn: It was probably inexpensive.

Mr G: Up here you wouldn't have people stop to buy celery. It's so funny.

Me: What was the most difficult part of living through the Great Depression?

Mr G: Paying for your bills. Keeping your head above water. And shoes. Kids had to. When I went to school - and when my kids went to school.

Mr G:  
(cont.)

When you'd come home from school, you'd take off your school clothes and put on your play clothes - then go out to play. Maybe you'd have another pair of pants for Sunday School but that's all you had. Kids got it so much nicer now. And a lot of kids don't care. It seems a lot of the parents don't give a darn. They don't seem to know what money - and lack of money - is.

Glenn:

Each parent tries to make it better for their kids so they don't have to go through what the parents went through. Therefore, the parents are to blame cause they spoil their children - and their children a little bit - and each child gets spoiled all the way up. For a while now there is money. If there wasn't money, they wouldn't be as spoiled. There's more money now than the Great Depression when you had to come through it.

Mr G:

There's still a lot of people that have nothing. There's not enough work now - there's not going to be enough jobs. Looking what they're cutting out, even today's paper - Sawyer cutting out all the Benefits.

Me:

What special memories do you have of this time of your life?

Mr G:

It's hard to think of memories except it was tough times. You had nothing extra. People didn't go out. We finally got a car - the plows didn't come around a lot of places. You had to take your car here and shovel out a place and when it snowed again you had to shovel the road. You didn't have any buses coming around.

Me:

Where were you employed the longest during your lifetime?

Mr G:

At the Hercules. 23 years,

Glenn:

23 before it closed down. Then he had to look for other employment.

Me:

Did you like (your job at the Hercules.)?



Mr G: Oh yes. Ya! That was my favorite job.

Me: How or why did you chose to work there?

Mr G: Because I was out of work and I applied for it. There was no choosing. It wasn't a career. It was just work. You can't call it a career. It's like a job at the mine. That isn't a career. A guy looks for a job and there's a job open at the mine - he takes it. Well, he didn't chose it. He just took it because he needed a job.

Me: In as much detail as possible, please describe the main duties of this job.

Glenn: He made the casings for the dynamite.

Mr G: We made the containers that the explosives went in.

Me: Did that job require any special training?

Mr G: I wouldn't say it was real training. You had to be shown what to do but it wasn't something that was real difficult.

Mr G: Special equipment. Yes, we had to wear a uniform. Of course, you couldn't carry matches.

Me: What was the uniform like?

Mr G: It was like a coverall.

Glenn: No matches or smoking because of the dynamite. Plus, they already had that one explosion that my mother's brother was killed in so their safety started taking over.

Mr G: It was a very very safety consciencious company. The Hercules is still running, you know. But they moved out west and they closed the explosives plant.

Me: Did the job have any special rules or regulations that you had to follow?

Mr G: Of course, you had to be careful. You couldn't throw explosives around, because they could explode, you know. When the fellows were taking it up the track, they had to be very careful that nothing dropped. The big special thing was being careful.

Glenn: Dynamite is one explosive, but nitroglycerine which can explode with a bang! If you dropped nitroglycerine, that would be the part that would be dangerous.

Mr G: That's where her brother was working. But man, gee, and it went up. See at that time, when one building would explode - that nitroglycerine was way up on the hill on the top. Then it was run down to other buildings. After that explosion - when it exploded, it took the other building with it - then they had a half-way house. It goes down halfway, then its closed off - all together so there's nothing up on top - then its open again for the other ones. So then the whole plant couldn't go.

Glenn: In the explosion, the buildings were closer together than they were the next time they built it, wasn't it?

Mr G: Well, I don't know how close they were then cause I wasn't out there. This was in 1921.

Glenn: My mother's oldest sister lived next door. She was 27 years older than my mother. That's why that other brother was so much older. He was killed in 1921. My day was only born in 1910. So he was only 12 at that time.

Mr G: Audrey was only about 10 years old. They were living over there in Salisbury.

Me: What was the most rewarding part of your career?

Mr G: I didn't have a career!

Glenn: The satisfaction of making a good lively hood.

Mr G: That I had enough so that we could eat and live. Just like the ordinary guy. You bring home the bacon, you eat it, and that's it.

Me: What was the most difficult or challenging part of your job?

Mr G: I don't know. I didn't have to do anything extraordinary. But I worked in the mine-underground.

Glenn: It's not that kind of a flashy job. It's not like an airplane pilot. It's just an ordinary job. A ditch-digger or garbage truck hauler or a guy laying down railroad tracks. Every day is exactly the same as yesterday. There really isn't highs and lows.

Mr G: You had to be there and do it. And did the duties of your job change over the years - no. You could work there - except when they got new machinery. You'd have to be adjusted to the new machinery, but that would be all. Any other family members work there? Well not in my family, but in my wife's family.

Glenn: My son. One summer - that's all. He was a school kid. My brother Alan worked there as a summer student once.

Mr G: Any dangerous situations - no. In the mine, it's always a danger if something falls on you, but nothing ever did.

Me: Please describe what your co-workers + your boss was like.

Mr G: They were ordinary guys like me. We used to have a lot of fun. Not playing, but we enjoyed working with each other. At the mine, I liked to sing, and I would go right through the whole mine. A lot of us would sing. Everything was good fellowship. You were together more than you are now. Now people - even at the mine - they just work on one little machine and they don't even see the other people. Then when they go home they don't go at the same time.

Glenn: Different shifts. Different crews.

Mr G: You had a day + night shift. You were all there + left together.

Me: Could you describe some fond or unique events that happened during your job

Mr G: I can't recall any, no.

Glenn: What about the time the boss caught you singing? You felt him over your shoulder. When you were singing to the beat of the machine and you could feel something. You turned around and the boss was there.

Mr G: That was Simmons. He worked in the next room. That first day, I was working and I was singing to the tempo of the work. I could feel something and I looked up and there was Johnny Simmons looking at me like that. He was a co-worker. He was a lot of fun! (laughs)

At any time did you feel like changing careers - no. Why not? Well because you had a job and you there was no other work to get

Glenn: It isn't like today's field. If you go to California or Detroit, you can switch fields, but in the UP, there's only half a dozen places that pay the same kind of money. Unless you were at a low job and you wanted to upgrade yourself, but that was probably one of the better jobs.

Mr G: Even today. If you don't work in a mine, where else you gonna work.

Glenn: The only other place is Michigan Bell or UP Power.

Mr G: Changing careers - no. The biggest responsibilities - Well, just do your job, obey your boss, do it in a way he wants it done, and do it in a safe way. And, uh, did I receive any special awards from your employer - uh, no. Nothing special. Usually, it was special if they didn't say anything to you. You knew you were doing your job. And, if I had to do it all over again, I don't know. I'd - I can't answer that. I was satisfied with what I was doing

Mr G: (cont) I would have stayed with the Hercules, but they moved out west. My wife didn't want to go. I didn't want to go, really, either, but she said no. Then I worked at the IGA after that for 15 years. I missed out on a good pension, though but she was happy staying here so we made it.

Me: During your days of employment and beyond, what have been your favorite hobbies or leisure activities?

Mr G: Bowling. I still try (laughs). I still bowl - ya. And singing - singing groups. Any special stories - no. The only places I worked - well, I told you where I worked. At the mine, the Hercules, and the store. Organizations - I belonged to a lot of singing groups and the Elks and Sons of St. George (lodge) a long time ago. I belonged to that Senior Kiwanis for a while. What was that?

Me: That's like the Lions the Elks, the Moose, whatever. You see a lot of ramps around at homes that have people in wheelchairs - Kiwanis build stuff like that. They donate, build, raise funds

Mr G: What special moments - I don't know. I know one - in the mine, when a fellow was buried up to his neck. They hollered to us to get other miners showing. Fear - just the fear because it was still dribbling a little bit. When you can see it dribbling, that means it's about to cave in. Of course the miners were scared stiff too. They finally got him out. He didn't stay in the mine long after that - he got out right away.

Me: What was he buried in?

Glenn: Iron ore. The roof caved in and knocked him down and buried him up to his head.

Me: Overall, what are your fondest memories of your working days, your career, and the life you have lived so far?

Mr G: My fondest memories are the fellows I've worked with. I've maintained their friendship through all the years. You see them and you don't talk about your work too much, but you remember that you worked together. That's what you enjoy.

Me: Do your friends that you worked with still live here?

Mr G: Most of them are gone. One is away. At the mine - all the guys are gone, you know.

Me: Okay. Is there anything else you want to tell me.

Mr G: No. I think that's it.

Me: Thank you very much.

Mr G: (says something more) Especially people who have a little money and want a vacation, they'd come to the Isle of Man.

Glenn: The homes were really small.

Mr G: These are boarding houses. They're all lined up together. There's no space in between. These used to be filled to capacity in the summer. Then airplanes came in and excursion boats, and people had a little more money so they quit coming to the Isle of Man. So they don't have the tourists that they had then. It's tougher on them now. When we were there, a lady and 3 little boys came up and asked my mother, "We're here for a couple of weeks for a vacation, but we don't have anywhere to stay and they told us there'd be places over here." We lived in one room downstairs was the kitchen and the fireplace - your living room & kitchen was one room. The upstairs was the bedroom, with a curtain across to divide it. But my mother took them in to stay with us for 2 weeks.

Mr G: So my mother and her slept in one bed and me and  
 (cont) the kids slept with blankets on the floor. Then when it  
 came time for them to go, she wanted to pay my mother.  
 My mother said, "No, we're going to America this summer.  
 If you would do us a favor, (since they lived in Liverpool)  
 of letting us stay with you for the few days before we  
 go." And we did that. We stayed there for a week cause  
 we went over a little earlier. But then there was a  
 mix-up. Something happened and we got the wrong boat.  
 I wrote to those people for years after. They had one  
 son that was an artist and he'd send pictures. They got  
 lost when my father had to move. In fact, my high  
 school diploma - I don't know where that is. Many years  
 from now, they'd be looking for it and say, "That guy did  
 not even go to high school!" (Laughs)

Glenn: What the Isle of Man is is a manx. A manx cat has  
 an insignia with 3 legs on it. It has no tail - like a bobcat.  
 But they have an insignia (a round circle) and there's 3 legs  
 coming off of it. Maybe you (dad) can explain what the  
 legs mean.

Mr G: The 3 legs means that one leg, knee, is bent to England  
 because England takes care of their laws overseas. Their  
 international laws - but they have their own government.  
 There's a place there called (Kinwall) Cornwall and  
 every year they read all the laws of the island - that  
 week. The other leg kicks at Scotland and it island  
 with the heel up there. That's there insignia.

Glenn: There's a lot of people from the Isle of Man. Dobsons

Mr G: Quays. A lot of manx people over here. The Kellys. But  
 there's nothing in the Isle of Mann now. No work.

Glenn: They have no factories - no industry.

Mr G: This is funny - the 1<sup>st</sup> tin can ever made was made in  
 the Isle of Man and they never did anything about it.  
 I don't know if the guy (inventor) got the credit for  
 it. The waterwheel is the largest waterwheel in the world  
 over on the Isle of Man.

Glenn: The Isle of Man is just a little island. It's not a real  
 big place. 37 miles is maybe from Marquette up to your  
 camp. 12 miles wide isn't very wide. You can see why  
 they kept the German prisoners there. 72 miles before  
 they got to shore - nobody's going to swim the ocean 72 miles.

Glenn: They could keep them behind barbed wire because if they  
(cont.) got out of there, where were they gonna go.

Mr G: It's a tourist attraction (the water wheel) that pump-  
ed the water out of this lead mine. (They're all little  
villages - you notice. There's a lot of hills on one  
side - on the other it's flat.

Glenn: They used to have commercial fisherman, but they  
don't do that anymore.

Mr G: My grandpa was a fisherman. He had his own boat.  
But then commercial fisherman came over and  
they beat them out of it. They'd put their nets out  
and get tons of it, you know. But when I was over  
there, I liked mackerel (fish) so when Audrey & I  
went over there when we visited one of my aunts,  
I said to her husband, "Oh boy! I can hardly wait  
to have a mackerel!" Mackerel, he said. "They  
don't eat that anymore over here. Not unless you  
go catch it yourself. These commercial fisherman  
beat out all the little guys. They go out + catch mackerel  
and bring them in and can them. But they're soft.  
They're like suckers. Nobody wants them. You've heard  
about Ireland, hey. The little ferries and the superstition  
that there's little men. See, the Isle of Man is like that, too.  
The Isle of Man is like Ireland in many ways - the scenery,  
superstitions, etc. Of course a lot of people in the old country  
had those superstitions, years and years ago. I don't know  
why, but I think the world was different then. In  
the Isle of Man, they got a lot of little glens, little  
hills, valleys, and rivers. It's a picturesque place.  
It's nice. Not many people there. Except Douglas, the  
capitol did have 25,000 one time.

Me: When was the last time you've been there?

Mr G: 1967. My wife and I went over there. One of my  
aunts wanted us to come back so we did. We really  
enjoyed it, too.

Me: Is that it, then?

Mr G: Ya, I guess.

Glenn: You should have enough there to come up with a story, hey?

Me: Ya. Thank you.