

# Chad Manley interviewing Ray Manley

Me - This is Chad Manley interviewing Ray Manley at his home on January 2nd, 1988 about his life

Me - I am going to start off this interview by asking you, when and where were you born?

Gramps - Ashpeming, 1900, May the 30<sup>th</sup>

Me - Where?

Gramps - Oh, the house you mean

Me - Oh, yeah

Gramps - on Cleveland Avenue, where we lived upstairs, my dad had a store downstairs.

Me - Do you remember anything about the store?

Gramps - well I remember going in there, and we had an ice cream parlor in the back, and a my older sister a used to work in there and she would give me a few nice chocolates once in a while and things like that I remember (pauses) My dad used to make his own ice cream, and he also made it for a few other store, candy stores in Ashpeming, Mich.

Me - Um, Do you remember any exciting things during your childhood, (pauses), like what did you do?



Gramps - Well I, I don't have childhood, nothing only a little fire when we lived in a house by the old Common School, in our kitchen, wasn't a bad fire, but I remember our clothes all had an odor of smoke for a few days, and I ah, when we lived at our house on the corner of Bank and Pearl, that is torn down know, and I ah had a sleigh dog. I used to hook up and take for a ride with a sled and a good dog, yah.

Me - What was the first job your dad had?

Gramps - First job?

Me - yeah.

Gramps - Mining, he came here from England and ah. he went up to Champion, he had ah, a nephew up there who was captain of the mine. So that was the reason for coming to Champion, and my, my mother's a dad came out here with a, a five girls and 3 boys from England, They came from a (something) Camion. That's in England, and ah he was a diamond drill setter. In those days took a set a black diamond on the end of a bit, a drilling bit to cut the stone. Yah, and that was, if it fell off the black diamond you were a poor diamond setter but understanding he never lost one. Yah.

Me - Um, did he ever change jobs since that one?

Gramps - Did I or my dad?

Me - Your dad.

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Tramps - Oh yah, he a, he came down Pg. 3  
from Champion from working  
in the mines and started a store  
in, on Cleveland Avenue. I was  
born upstairs and a he a, he  
went along for I don't know a,  
till the panic came then in 1905 or  
1906. I don't remember the date but  
today they call them a depression or a  
suppressions but they called it what  
it was, a panic. The Mines all closed  
and my dad well he said he loaned out  
a quite a bit of money to a take a lot  
of English people that he knew who were  
originally from England and a I guess  
they would never take them back, so then  
had to finally run out of business. yeh.

Me - What did he do after (interrupts) <sup>English</sup> he went  
back to the mines.

Me - his store went out.

Tramps - He went back to the mines. He worked  
underground at the old Lake Mine  
and finally after there he was made a  
shift boss and drilled a tunnel where  
Lake Angelina is now. That was all  
pumped out for that mine and a people had  
gardens down on the lake, old lake bed.  
and a he drilled a shaft from um  
that lake bed into the lake mine for an  
air shaft and then after that Lake Mine  
closed they let the old Lake Angelina fill  
up again. Today back to what it was years ago



Gramps (cont.) - an ordinary big lake

PG. 4

Me - How many children did you have in your family?

Gramps - We had a 6 children, and a 6 children  
3 boys and a 3 girls yeh.

Me - Um,

Gramps - There all, all of them are dead and gone  
but me, but me yet Chad. yeh.

Me - What kind of jobs did you have to  
do at home?

Gramps - Oh, regular chores you know. In those  
days we had a stove in the kitchen, and  
another on in the living room and a we  
burnt hard coal in the living room  
and wood and that in the kitchen stove  
and of course there were ashes to haul out  
and wood to, always had a wood box in the summer  
kitchen, fill that wood box every night and  
haul in a couple buckets of coal to last us all  
night, yeh, cut the grass in the summer of course and  
run errands for my mother and that.

Me - What was the first school you went to?

Gramps - The old Ishpeming High School. The first  
high school built in Ishpeming. I went  
there for kindergarten and then it was getting  
so old and they'd say when a heavy wind it would  
sway they would a, they tore it down and for first



Gramps (cont.) - grade I went to a church, Old Gill Hall, that was where the claspending High School gymnasium is now. Went to that place for first grade and second grade I went to the church on the corner of Bank and Third Street in the basement for second grade and of course for third grade I went up to Ridge Street School, yeh.

Me - Um, what year did you first go to school?

Gramps - 1905.

Me - Was there any problems ca, ca (interrupts)

Gramps - any what

Me - That was when the panic came, hey.

Gramps - yeh, yeh.

Me - Did ya, so you didn't have any troubles going to school or that?

Gramps - What

Me - Because of the panic

Gramps - no (interrupts) Me - Were there any troubles for the schools?  
no, no, no

Gramps - The schools went right along, yeh.

Me - Do you remember any? Did you have any favorite teachers or subjects?

Gramps - Well I had a nice teacher in 3rd grade, a Misses Gerzie or Mrs. Gerzie, and a nice teacher in 5th grade, Mrs. Fisher. They were very nice teachers.



Gramps (cont.) - I liked them real little and my favorite subject was always spelling and a, and English I believe it was.

Me - Were you in any clubs or organizations in school?

Gramps - Oh no. We didn't have any in those small grades. We didn't have any a, they may have had some in high school but not in the grades. They didn't have any clubs. The only club I belonged to was a YMCA. Young Mens Christian Association which was on the corner of Division and Pine Street.

Me - What was it like?

Gramps - What

me - What was the YMCA like?

Gramps - Well it was a big, quite good size gym and a race track up above the gym and a reading, and pool, bowling downstairs. We used to bowl for 5¢ a game, yeh, and a beautiful place for a stay in the winter, cold, ice. That was a beautiful place. I believe our dues were a dollar a month that I can remember and for a nickel we could shower. They would give us soap and a towel and that was a beautiful place. I was always sorry to see that torn down, yeh. (pauses) I was a member of it for a while, from about 12 years old till they, well till they tore it down I believe, yeh.

Me - What was the first job you had?

Gramps - Oh the first job was a when I was 16 I started to carry mail for the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company. I was 16 years old.



Me - What other jobs did you have since that first one?

Gramps - Oh, only during the depression of the 1930's when the whole country was in depression I worked on WPA. It was a government job but we got 25¢ an hour I forgot now if it was an 8 or 10 hour day. I believe it was 8 hour day, 25¢ an hour. I worked on that one summer.

Me - What kind of things did you do for the WPA?

Gramps - Ah, pick and shovel it mostly was yeh. we built a new road around the Cliffs Drive that was the job I had the summer I was on it. After the next summer when the mines were, I worked at the mine office in the winter the mines worked and a few days a week and in summer I worked at a Colvert Gas Station in town and I didn't make a lot of money but I made a living out of it for long hours but I could work for my family living so I was very happy.

Me - You remember any special occasions in your life?

Gramps - Special occasions I guess when I got married. That was sure a special one.

Me - What year?

Gramps - 1927 May 30<sup>th</sup> on my birthday I got married, yeh. Oh nothing ever big happened, you know, nothing of much interest ever happened in my life before that.

Me - What did you do during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July when you were a child



Shane - Oh we went to town as usual. There was a parade in town, fireworks. ~~We~~ dressed up went to town and watched the parade and lots of people walking around and few cars but not too many. There were lots of people in town. yeh.

Me - Were you ever in any of those parades?

Shane - Oh yeh, in a, not on the 4<sup>th</sup> but in the firemans tournament. I think that was in 1914 and I was the fire chief of about 30 young boys all younger than me we had a red jackets, blue pants and a firemans hat yeh.

Me - When you were a child in the summer what did you do with your pasttime?

Shane - Oh played lots of baseball we did of course and a saturday nights when I was older went to town. The stores were all open on saturday nights in these days and the stores lights kind of lit up the town. There was only a, a article back then that spotted here and there in town + we used to go to town and go to the south shore depot and watch the south shore train from Deluth leave for the Soo and the depot were always crowded. Go across to the northwestern depot and watch the Chicago train pull out and then we would go to town and a oh, Old Joe Hill had a candy store where the Butler Theater is now. All wooden buildings on Main Street but the Anderson Hall and Voelkers Building. We always used to get a bag of hot peanuts there and walk up a few stores. There was a Barber Shop there, the Johnny Bush Shop. We would stand outside and eat peanuts and watch a couple of hair cuts. That was a lot of excitement. Then we would take a walk around the Beat. The Beat was from Cleveland Avenue up to fourth street, from South down to Division, and from Division back to Main. That was called the beat. Lots of people used to walk around there. Married couples and everything yeh.



Me - Where was the depot?

Gramps - Ha.

Me - Where was the depot?

Gramps - Depot?

Me - Yeah.

Gramps - That was between First and Second Streets. Where Cohodax Warehouse.

Me - Oh yeah.

Gramps - Where that is that was the old Southshore Depot and across the tracks was the North-Western Depot. They were always packed on Saturday and Sunday nights.

Me - Did you ever ride the trains anywhere?

Gramps - Oh yeah. I rode to Marquette on a train. I rode to Chicago on a train. I rode to Lansing on a train. I had quite a few train rides.

Me - Where did you play baseball during the summer? Where did you play baseball?

Gramps - Up on the Oliver Diamond. That's across from the Oliver Office. Inland's Steel was the last ones to have that office. We had a diamond up there and we played behind the Fire Hall. We had a small diamond there and a the Fire Hall one was also a handball court. We used to play a lot of handball back there.

Me - Um. Can you remember any of the big diseases going around then?

Gramps - I didn't get it Chad



Me - Can you remember any of the big diseases going around?

Gramps - Diseases?

Me - Yeah.

Gramps - Well during 1918 the influenza went around the flu they call it now and that took quite a few lives in Ashpeming and soldiers down in Camp Custard. Several Ashpeming boys down there died from it and one of our doctors, Dr. Braden, died from it and the next disease that came around was polio. I forgot what year it was but no one in my family which I am very thankful for got it, but 1 or 2 people on our street children got it.

Me - Now they got cures for it and everything hey.

Gramps - What?

Me - Now they have cures for it + everything hey.

Gramps <sup>yeah</sup> - Now they have shots of some kind now, vaccine of some kind stops all of that stuff. I hope.

Me - When you got sick did you go to the doctors or did the doctors come to your house?

Gramps - Years ago we all had Company Doctors at Ashpeming and they used to come to the house with their horse and buggy + they had a visiting nurse that came to the house on a horse + buggy or car later and we got all of that and all of our medicine. We got all of that for a dollar and quarter a month from the company. The Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company. Yeah.

Me - When did you get your first car?

Gramps - 1925. A Model T Coop. It was. I think Grandma got a picture of it.



Me - How did you get around before you got your car?

Gramps - We Walked! Wherever we went, or if we wanted to go to Nequamee we took a street car. A street car used to run from a Southpine, out there by Lake Angelina to Nequamee. Right through town we came down Pine Street, down Pearl, over on First up to High Street and from there down to Nequamee and to Marquette of course we always use to take the train. We would go down there, the county fair they used to have it in Marquette. We went down there, me and my mother, many times.

Me - What can you remember about the big snowstorm of 1938?

Gramps - Well if it is the one I am thinking of I remember I left work at about 3:00 in the afternoon + I got as far as the house next door to us. They had a big snowbank there and my car stayed there for about 2 or 3 days till we plowed it out and shoveled + got it out. That's about all I can remember about it.

Me - I forgot to ask you about this but what were the mines like? Were they different than they are now?

Gramps - Oh yeah, Now they manufacture pellets but those days were all underground mines. You went down a shaft to go to work. There were different levels on the mine. Some were very deep. Some weren't very deep, all the mines, underground mines that I had anything to do with was I was in the ore shipping department and we had to ship the kind of ore the customer wanted and of course some of the mines had high iron some had low iron. Some had high silicote some had low. Some with salt we had to mix those with the pepper kind of ore



talk to you to ~~be~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~interested~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~job~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~ship~~ ~~department~~  
~~Gramps (cont.)~~ ~~what~~ ~~was~~ ~~for~~ ~~about~~ ~~5~~ ~~years~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~  
~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~ship~~ ~~department~~.

may ~~to~~ ~~effo~~ ~~raise~~ ~~your~~ ~~self~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~great~~ ~~Depression~~ ~~did~~ ~~it~~ ~~affect~~ ~~you~~  
? ~~pliment~~ ~~way~~ ~~as~~ ~~any~~ ~~other~~ ~~members~~ ~~of~~ ~~your~~ ~~family~~?

Gramps - What? talk - ~~right~~

Me - (repeat question) ~~her~~ ~~get~~ ~~bill~~ - ~~in~~

Gramps - Oh yeah. Well my, one of my brother  
down in Yansing, he was laid off from  
the Auto Plant, I was laid off during  
the summer months. I managed to get  
a job here and there. One summer I took  
over a gas station. I guess I mentioned  
that. I didn't make a fortune but I made  
a pretty living. Next summer I drove  
the Company, Cleveland Cliffs gave out  
wood lots + they chopped our winter's wood  
+ I got a job as truck driver. I was hauling  
their wood for them.

Me - Did you listen to the President on the radio  
or.

Gramps - What

Me - Did you listen to the President or any  
famous people on the radio?

Gramps - Well the first one I believe or I  
remember was Hoover, yah, he was,  
had a saying that "prosperity is around  
the corner". That was during the Depression  
years. He was a smart man but when he  
came the whole world was in depression  
then that time so there was nothing much  
he could do about it and he was on  
the radio and of course



Gramps (cont.) - Roosevelt was the next President + he was on there quite a while. He was the one that instigated the WPA and Social Security + had the Volstead Act repealed. The Volstead Act went in 1918, it cut out the sale of liquor in the U.S., but he reinstated that in 1930's, I guess that helped to bring back a little prosperity.

Me - When you were little did you always listen to the radio because there was no T.V. so you had to listen to the radio.

Gramps - I didn't get what you said Chad,

Me - (repeat)

Gramps - Well we didn't have TV or we didn't have no radio for many years. I think it was in late 30's until we had a radio there was nothing no radio. All we had for entertainment was a talking machine they called it. Big horn on it, you would wind it up put a record on it + it played terrible music but it was some music anyway.

Me - What about The Prince of Wales didn't you hear him on the radio?

Gramps - Did I hear what?

Me - (repeat)

Gramps - Yes, I heard Prince of Wales when he was King of England resign the kings post to marry a commoner they called her, a lady called Mrs. Simpson. Yes + his brother took over being the King of England. He closed his speech by saying "Long Live the King!" I remember that. PG 13



Me - Yeah, I remember, I think I interviewed you  
at the college for a while, I think you were parking  
emo - right, college, I think you were parking

Gramps - College Players, Halqyella - small  
little at raf puram since emo at day, the League

Me - Yeah, to come raise money for the Little League  
express

Gramps - They used to be physical, semi-professional  
didn't do a lot of things, they were in the League  
I remember you had a parking lot, I think they called it, Half way  
between Regaunee + Lshpeming, the street car  
used to run down there, there's a big grandstand in  
the middle of a good sized grandstand + bleachers  
on each side + dugouts for the players. When  
someone from Lshpeming or Regaunee was  
playing there was some big crowd.

Me - Did you like to go watch them play?

Gramps - Ha?

Me - (repeat)

Gramps - You bet I did, every chance I got

Me - Did they come every summer or 1 time?

Gramps - Every summer, used to get a few  
players here from different colleges, you  
know semi-pro. baseball players on the  
Lshpeming team, Regaunee, + Marquette Munising  
had a team + a Escanaba had a team, yeh

Me - O.k that was the last question for  
that interview so I'll say bye!



Me - I remember last time I interviewed you said you used to play baseball in the Legion parking lot and college players came.

Gramps - College players?

Me - Yeah to come raise money for the Little League.

Gramps - They used to be, oh yeah semi-professional baseball players in the old Legion park I think they called it. Half way between Regaume + Ashpeming. The street car used to run down there. A big grandstand in the middle