

# Jason Heavyside

me: Interviewing William Heavyside 12-5-93  
Topic Iron Mining

me: Mr. Heavyside when and where were you born?

Mr. H: I was born in Marquette February 2, 1954

me: What are the names of your parents?

Mr. H: William & Ruth

me: What did your parents do for a living?

Mr. H: my mother used to work for J.C. Penney in Ishpeming as a clerk before she retired there & my dad was a clerk for several downtown stores in Ishpeming for gait leas when that was operating Stams electric & a few others before that

me: What are the names of your brothers & sisters?

Mr. H: I have three older sisters, the oldest one is a Louis, the middle one is Marge & the youngest sister is Carol

me: Are you currently married? if so what is your spouse's name?

Mr. H: yes I am, and my wife's name is Bernadette

me: What are the names of your children?

Mr. H: Danielle & Jason

me: Okay, How long have you been working in the iron industry?

Mr. H: a in February I'll have worked twenty years in the Iron Industry?

me: Why did you choose to work in the Iron Industry?

Mr. H: well [at the time I thought it would be a pretty good job, a good paying job with good benefits] *possible quote*

me: Please name those relatives that had worked in the Iron Industry?

Mr. H: a actually I don't have too many close relatives, I have a few cousins that have worked in the steel industry a Helen Bjork was one of um. He's retired now, a Russell Bjork & Scott Bjork

me: ~~What are the names of the various mines or buildings that you have worked in?~~

Mr. H: I have worked at three mines I started off at Republic originally & in the late

70's & early 80's I bounced around between Tilden & Empire & a I went back

to Republic a few times & now I am currently working at the Tilden

me: ~~Over the years what kind of~~ ~~duties have you performed for C.C.I~~

Mr. H:

Mr. H: Originally when I started I was a laborer & I got to be a truck driver for a while or about 6 months or so then I got in the shovel mechanics training program & that takes about 3 years, 3 & half years — shovel mechanics standard for about 12 years & I went over as a plant repairman for a couple of years & then I got into electrical posting & I've been doing that for 4 years now.

me: In as much detail as possible please describe the main duties of your current job?

Mr. H: As an electrician were responsible for the main power all the power distribution at the mine all the lighting that's used out at the mine theres thousands of lights out there all the motors & motor control systems so when an operator in the control room pushes a button the proper motor starts or the proper sequence of events happens

me: did this job require any special training or higher education? if so please describe it?

Mr. H: yes because ~~to~~ <sup>in</sup> order to become an electrician you either had to come at minee it was a four year program that the mine used to have or like a lot of people that are coming in as an electricians now at the mine are have been doing it out the outside or had other training. I myself I took several classes at Northern in electronics.

me: about how long did that take?

Mr. H: Oh I probably have taken classes 2 & half three years I could think I could only take them at night because I was working full time at the mine

me: please describe a special machinery or equipment that you can use on the job

Mr. H: we dont use to mach in the way of special equipment the main that we use is a vom meter which is a volt o meter that we measure voltage with or resistances of staff & than we also use an amp probe which is to tell usa now many amps a motor might be running at

me: What is the most challenging difficult part of your job

Mr. H: I guess the most challenging part is a when a piece of a equipment goes down or a piece of equipment wont start when its supposed to operating always likes to go in right now so they dont want you to troubleshoot or find the problem for something

me: Thinking back over the years what was the most difficult duty you had to perform? & explain why

Mr. H: Okay I guess the most difficult duty I <sup>used</sup> had to do was was when I was on the shovel crew mainly because most of the work was bull work a what we call bull work or physical. Just even the teeth that we use on the shovel buckets were over 100 pounds a piece. Just everything was big and heavy & just a lot of staff you had to do

me: Over the years what have you enjoyed most about your job?  
Mr. H: Over the years I think probably the people that I <sup>got to work with</sup> met out there  
I made a lot of good friends out there

me: What are the biggest responsibilities of your job?

Mr. H: Right now I guess mainly to keep things running out there I say  
when an operator <sup>or pushes up a button</sup> pushed a button something starts that supposed to start  
~~something stops~~ that supposed to stop. <sup>possible quote</sup> Mainly just to keep things  
running

me: If it applies to you describe the most dangerous situation  
that you have been in?

Mr. H: I guess I've been lucky I haven't been in any dangerous situations  
I've been in a few scary situations a lot a times your working or 60 ft  
up in the air & your just working on a small platform

me: have you been involved or have witnessed any accidents if so please  
describe them also describe the ways any friends or relatives may have  
gotten hurt

Mr. H: I personally haven't witnessed any accidents or haven't been in any at  
least nothing major. A about 50 years ago or 55 years ago my wife's father was  
caught in a mine blast underground and he was seriously hurt & at the time  
they <sup>thought he</sup> would never walk again he did eventually start walking but he always had a limp  
in fact you can still see the iron ore in his back yet you can still see little  
granules of iron ore

me: <sup>could</sup> you describe any unique or humorous situations you have <sup>seen</sup> been in over  
the years?

Mr. H: right now I can't think of anything

me: please describe your working conditions

Mr. H I guess a we work anything from a nice air-conditioned control room  
to a oh we get out sometimes were working next to the kiln in the pellet <sup>include</sup>  
plant & it can be well over 100 degrees or we could be working in  
a lot of dust or dirt noise sometimes you have water dripping on you sometimes  
your out in the weather so we work just about any kind of working  
conditions I guess

me: How has safety standards changed & what improvements do you see that are yet to be made?

me: *me: (written vertically in green)* Mr. H: Right now there a lot stricter about enforcing safety standards & back when first started for the mine a lot of things they tell ya this is the way they want you to do it but if a piece of equipment goes down they wanted that equipment going they didn't care how you do it you got it done. Nowadays they pretty much stick to the safety standards they don't like to see you taking to many shortcuts anymore. The priorities on safety now back when I first started 20 years ago ~~the priority was~~ <sup>it was more</sup> on the production & I guess there's always improvements that can be made but we were working for a mining industry it's there's still dangers involved so can't eliminate everything I guess.

me: How have you seen the duties of your job change over the years?

Mr. H: Oh I guess right now it's got a bit more technical & more electronics & computers than it used to

me: Please describe what your co-workers are like do you remember any special stories that stand out about them?

Mr. H: Okay <sup>most of</sup> the people are normal everyday people I work with are just normal everyday the just people just like the neighbor next door I can't think of any special stories that stand out about them ~~about~~ the one thing is when I worked ~~in~~ on the shovel crew I used to <sup>(I guess)</sup> you had to be a little abnormal to work in the conditions we did sometimes it was below zero & were out freezing & working with 16 pound sledge hammers to knock pins ~~or~~ stuff with and - any normal sane person would want to do that kind of a job

me: During your career were you involved in any special projects or have you implemented any new programs? if so please describe them?

Mr. H: I was never personally involved in any <sup>real</sup> special projects been around when they started new programs & stuff but that ~~was~~ I was an handy person we were just kinda on the sideline all the time

me: ~~do~~ not have you ever won any awards or have you been recognized in any way for your job performance?

Mr. H: no not really the mine doesn't give out awards for doing good work they let you no if you do bad work you have about that but you don't hear about good job performance (Z)

me: at any time have you felt like changing jobs or career? why or why not?  
Mr. H well I guess I thought about it a few times especially back in the early  
eighties when a lot of lay offs & stuff for about four years there I was  
working six months on 6 months off but I like it up here in this  
area & a if you want to live here working for the mine is not to bad  
good pay & good benefits

me: what do you think the future holds for the Tilden & Empire?  
Mr. H that's a good question a back when I first started working for the mine I  
thought I had a lifetime job, I thought they would always need iron & steel a hopefully  
the Tilden & Empire, will be around another 20, 30, 40, ~~50~~ years yet but a lot  
of people are working hard to make that happen but I to a different apt there  
nowadays I to just hard to tell

me: what do you think <sup>is the</sup> future of the Iron & steel industry include  
me: What does the future look like for the Iron & Steel Industry look  
like in general?

Mr. H, well in general I guess we always need Iron & Steel it's just a  
matter of where it comes from a lot of countries makes steel a lot of  
different countries have iron ore mines so whoever can make iron & steel the  
cheapest is the one that people are going to be working hopefully well be  
able to keep the Iron & steel industry in the U.S.

me: what do you think must be done in the future for C.C.I to  
remain competitive?

Mr. H I guess its what there doing now there always looking for ways  
to cut costs cutting back on work force a little bit at least there  
trying to & there trying to sell as many pellets as they can because the  
more pellets we make the cheaper we can make them

me: what do you think is the key to success for C.C.I where other companies have  
failed?

Mr. H, Okay I guess that one thing a lot of people don't realize C.C.I is a very large  
company they manage mines in Minnesota, they have mines up in Canada, plus the 2  
here in Marquette County, plus so they even operate mines in Australia I think in  
today's world you have to be a large company to survive it takes a lot of money  
to run an iron mine nowadays & start one up especially

me: Looking far into the future how do you think the history will remember Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company & its workers?

Mr. H: Well I'm hoping & that in the future C.C. & I will still be around & still producing iron

me: Now has the role of women changed in the Iron Industry & what direction do you think it will take in the future?

Mr. H: Well when I first started for the mine there were just a few women working in now 20 years later there's a quite a few women working in the mines right now those driving production trucks, and doing running loads and basically doing anything the men are doing right now

me: What skills must the young people of today need to develop if they plan to work for C.C. & someday?

Mr. H: Well now days you need at least a high school education minings getting a lot more technical nowadays & the more education you have the better I guess

me: In a related question what advice could you give to the students of today

Mr. H: A basically stay in school hopefully get a college degree & a 'if you can I think to try an stay in another field besides minings nowadays it's just a to ~~the~~ things are changing so fast that the mine that makes the pellets the cheapest is the one that's going to be working 5, 10 years down the road & in fact right now there 2 mines in Minnesota that may not be around in another year or two

me: How do you think the Iron Industry has changed over the years?

Mr. H: A basically a it just the size of the equipment is just enormous nowadays compared to what it was 20 years ago when I first started we were driving trucks that were 65 tons or would haul 65 tons nowadays a we got trucks that will haul 190 tons empires got one that will haul 240 tons back then the shovels had 8 yard buckets on them empires got one right now with a 33 yard bucket & ~~the~~ just got one with a right now that's got a 38 yard bucket everything all the equipments just got a lot bigger & then computers nowadays when I first started we didn't have computers nowadays it's a part of 6

continued

Mr. H: the job, ~~operator~~ in the operator control room at the Tilden  
a each operator there 2 operators in there they have probably there  
looking at 6-7 computer screens each one of them am,

me: Okay concluding the interview I'll ask you a few questions

please describe what you like doing in your spare time?

Mr. H Oh I guess I enjoy watching sports on tv. I enjoy playing racquetball do  
a little skiing once in a while + I enjoy watching my son play hockey

me: If you had to do it all over again would you make the same career  
choice? why or why not?

Mr. H I guess I would basically I'm pretty happy where I am now  
and a if I made a different choice I may not be as happy as I am now

me: Looking back over the years what <sup>impression</sup> stands out most in your mind  
concerning your association with C.E.I.?

Mr. H Well like I said before when I first got hired by C.E.I. I thought  
I had a lifetime job + the early eighties changed that really quick  
I spent about 6 months on 6 months for 4 years the job just isn't  
as secure as one would hope to be then again I guess really any lifetime  
jobs out there anymore

me: Are you or have you ever been a member of the steel workers union?

Mr. H: yes I ~~am~~ have been since I started for the company as an hourly  
employee you have to join the steelworkers union

me: Have you ever experienced being on strike? if so how many times?

Mr. H A live been on strike four times the first time I started for the company  
+ weeks back when I first started for the company + then 77 we were on  
strike almost till Thanksgiving a course back in 90 we were on  
on strike for almost four months + then in 93 we were on strike for  
a little over a month

me: How do you think a strike actually begins?

Mr. H The company + union just can't settle on their conflicts before the old  
contract ends the only power the union has is going on strike that way  
the company can't make <sup>and</sup> money + they don't make any money then

me: How many employees does the strike usually involve?

Mr. H it well it involves all the employees out at the mine even the salaried ones that are still working & there job changes they wind up doing a lot of jobs that hourly people do were doing & of course it affects everyone that's on strike not to mention the people in the community that own stores or anything else cause when people are on strike they don't have money to spend

me: what is the purpose of a picket line & describe what happens there

Mr. H the picket line is mainly there for informational purposes stuff to let people know when they go by to let them know that the workers are on strike right now & also it shows solidarity with the union that the members who are on strike are backing the union

me: Do you know of any stories concerning an incident on the picket line?

Mr. H No I guess I don't have any interesting stories about the picket line usually when I went to the picket line it was late at night generally its pretty quiet there. at the picket line they like me to keep people there 24 hours a day with 4 hour shifts

me: In general what is the most interesting or unique story about any time the workers were on strike?

Mr. H I can't think of any stories right now. The main thing was how the community supported us usually we got a lot of donations from all the businesses in the area & generally everyone was pretty supportive when we were on strike.

me: what takes place at union meetings or rallies?

Mr. H at the F. Tilden mine they had a union meeting once a month & they go over any correspondence they received during that month & a lot of times a lot of organizations are asking for donations & then they go over old business & they discuss any new business or any problems they're having out at the mine or any grievances that they have going or maybe problems that some of the other unions are having at their mines





me: In your opinion why is the ~~steelworkers~~ <sup>union</sup> important to the workers?  
Mr. H: Well the unions been there to help especially as far as safety issues go they really push for safety for the workers & also they have been very instrumental ~~as far~~ in getting decent wages & good benefits for all the workers


me: Before we end the interview is there anything else you would like to add?


Mr. H: Okay getting back to a interesting personalities on the job I happen to think of one now his nickname is mad dog anybody with a nickname like mad dog got to be a little different a christmas eve one year he came out dressed up like Santa Claus & another time he got dressed up in a leisure suit came out to work like that & in conclusion I'd like to say I've enjoyed working for O.E. & the past twenty years & hopefully with any luck it'll be around for many more generations to come providing many more jobs


me: okay thanks for the interview  
Mr. H: your welcome

Difficult to  
advise to students? need

safety - green   
job duties - blue 

union - yellow 

~~Schooling/training - future~~ 

future - orange 

back over the years pink 