

Euka Matz's interview with  
Hugo Korpinen

me: my name is Euka Matz, the date is 12/27/84, I'm interviewing Hugo Korpinen, its, his is a personal triumph, he overcame a tragedy and became a successful (pause) worker. okay, for the biographical sketch. your name is?

M.K: Hugo Korpinen

me: and what year were you born?

M.K: 1915

me: where were you born?

M.K. ah... in the section of old U.S. 41 and new U.S. 41 in ~~North~~ Ishpeming township

me: okay, where did you live as a child?

M.K. I lived there until I was 13 yrs. old and we moved to North Lake

me: okay, how many brothers and sisters do you have?

M.K. I had 2 brothers, and 2 sisters

me: how old were you when you went to college?

M.K. 30 or 20 ah 5

me: what college...

M.K. ah wait a minute excuse me now (muttering something) or 38, (pause) no I was 23



MK: when I went to college

E: okay, what college did you attend?

MK: Michigan Tech

E: how many years were you in college?

MK: 4 yrs

E: when did you start working for CCI?

MK: I first started in 1935 and then I went to school, and I started work back with them again in 1942, and while I was going to college I worked for cliffs during the summer vacation then Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas vacations

E: okay, how many years did you work there?

MK: oh, I had a little over 30 yrs

E: when were you married?

MK: 1940, may <sup>pause</sup> 11, (someone else comment on it) (he laughs)

E: how ~~many~~ many children did you have?

MK: I had 3

E: okay, now we can start with the other questions  
how old were you when you started school?  
when you first started school?

MK: 5 yrs old

E: and where did you go to school?

M.K. North Lake, North Lake for grade school, Ish.  
for high school

E: Can you describe what it looked like?

M.K. well, it's ah, it was ~~at~~ <sup>the school that</sup> burned down and a new one was put in it was all the frame building and ah, we had class rooms, I think there were 2 classes in each room, for instance the 7<sup>th</sup> + 8<sup>th</sup> grades were together, 5<sup>th</sup> + 6<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, I think 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup>,  
I know



M.K I think kindergarden was by itself

E okay, did you walk or...?

M.K I walked to school, yes.

E How far was it?

M.K. Oh, oh little short of a mile

E m.m, do you know roughly how many children were in the school?

M.K oh, goodness gracious, (pause) I, I couldn't even make a guess

E okay, did you have, you had different grades + classes you didn't just have one class? right? you had different grades like 7th + 8th grades and you had different grades?

M.K yeah, well, there were, all grades were seperated

E okay

M.K. kindergarden was 1 grade, except that each teacher after kindergarden would have 2 grades that she took care of in the same room

E okay, and how many teachers were there all together?

M.K. oh, let me think here, (matters something) 5 teachers and a school principal

E okay, what were some of the memorable experiences that you had there? do you remember anything that stands out in your mind, anything that you can remember, like anything amusing, or anything that taught you a lesson?



m.k. Well, the one thing that I can remember we certainly had had to respect our school principal & not ah, because both physically & mentally we had to respect him, because if we got into trouble you knew you were in trouble because automatic and some of the teachers were also, you had to respect them, I remember one, that if you were, if you did something wrong she'd take a ruler and she, she did not use the flat end of the ruler and she'd give you a little whack with it and it was always the sharp end, so you did not get into too much trouble that way. Oh, oh I won a couple of prizes when I was in school I remember being proud of my little spelling contest I won, I won a little small chocolate canary that I brought home to my mother and a few other things like that. Oh, they were good days at school, everybody got along well.

E. and you had regular holidays and all that and you...

M.K. Well not too many I think, or, if I remember correctly there were christmasses, and Thanksgiving and Easter and that was about all, there was only about 1 or 2 days on each one.

E. okay, um, when did your father die?

M.K. mm, 1937

E. and what mine did he work in?

M.K. He last worked at the Morris Mine

E. okay, can you describe how he was killed and what happened?

M.K. Well he wasn't killed he died of (silicosis?)

E. silicosis?



M.K. yes

E umm, what is it? can you tell me about it?

M.K. well, silicosis is a, he were all of the time, most of the time where he worked in special places and it was ah, oh what, rock tunneling and rock shafts, and the rock was fairly high in silica, and at the time he worked, they didn't have any preventive measures such as, such as ah, ah, anything to wear in front of their breathing apparatus, or anything that would eliminate that dust & silica dust is just like, well its like a glass and it just cuts up your lungs if you have enough of it.

E how old was he when he died?

M.K. he ~~died~~ died when he was 60 yrs. old

E and how were, how old were you when he died

M.K. I was ah, ah let me see (laughs) I was, lets see that was in ~~1937~~, I was 27 yrs. old  
1937

E your, you, was your childhood life hard because of your fathers death?

M.K. no

E no?

~~no~~ did your mother have to work hard, harder or...

M.K. *quote* { no, no, we had a normal ah family life, I worked after my father couldn't work anymore and until ah he died I worked in the mine and supported the family

E Oh, okay. what were some of your fondest childhood memories that you had at north lake or when you were there?



m on, memories of going back to the old clubhouse playing basketball, baseball, an, an cards just  
the companionship that we had

E did you have lots of close neighbors that, that lived close by to you

m on yes, we lived in a half of a house like all of the houses in North lake were double houses and then of course you had neighbors on both sides and across the street

E did you have a close relationship with your neighbors

m.k. on yes. we were just like one big happy family, north lake was. we'd get together in the clubhouse in the evenings after work or after school, play cards or play pool, bowl, play basketball, it, it was like a regular recreational center. they used to have movies there when I was a youngster get in for a nickel. The small ones, there weren't any seats for them so the small ones would have to sit on the floor in the front, and the older ones would take the seats, whatever was available.

E what kind of nationalities were there in your neighborhood

m.k. well, let me see, finnish, mostly finnish then Italian English, an, they were the three largest, (mutters something) then there were one or two families of different nationalities. There were mostly finnish, English and Italian.

E was it mostly finnish more...

m.k. finnish mostly, then Italian was next, then English after that.

E did you have a lot of community spirit in your neighborhood



K. Oh yes, everybody used to do everything together. If there was wood to be cut, everybody got together to help the neighbors they'd keep moving from one place to another. Same thing if there was a big snowstorm everybody would help each other out. ball diamonds, we used to take care of our own ball diamonds.

E. um, what kind of house did you live in when you were a ~~small~~ child

M.K. Oh, let me see it was 1, 2, 3 rooms downstairs and two rooms, two bedrooms upstairs.

E. where there any in your youth, were there any finnish customs that you used, or anything that you remember, that was like finnish customs that you used

M.K. well, I don't ~~have~~ <sup>if</sup> customs except that we used to have our <sup>steam bath</sup> ~~sauna~~ <sup>sauna</sup> by every saturday, family used to go from one place to another. and butchering season we would, my mother used to get blood from the pigs and we'd make good blood sausage made, we used the head of the pig to, we used to make head cheese and, that was mostly it i guess we didn't have anything special. they had one deal that I can't remember, it was a kind of a fortune telling deal that they used to have at christmas. they'd melt silver and depending on what shape that, that ah, the silver came when it cooled off, the so called serus? or whoever it was could interpret and kind of tell your fortune. well, that's the only, I can't remember too much about it.

E. okay, when you were ill, did you go to a doctor or.

M.K. I never was, I never had any special, or you mean,

E. yeah, I



m.k. Well, if we had an illness the doctor used to ah, used to come to North lake everyday. and ah you'd leave a message at the clubhouse any families that did have any trouble. He would stop there and that was the first building coming into North lake so he'd stop there, and it was the only building there that ah had a place with a telephone, so he'd stop there and get the names of the people that needed, that stopped in and told them they needed a doctor. he'd make his rounds to all the places. ~~then~~ then there was also a nurse that used to make a daily trip there.

E. so mostly you just, like you just took care of your-selves like

m.k. oh yeah. the old homemade remedies.

E. what kind of home remedies did you make what...

m.k. oh, for colds, we used to boil ah, milk and onions and drink that (laughs). and soups and stuff like that, you'd soak your feet in hot water

E. that was like your medicine you used and made yourself

m.k. my father used to have a medicine for cuts and that, he'd go in the woods and cut a piece of Balsm bark and take the juice off and put it over the cut, and it would ~~be~~ act like a disinfectant that was one of the things he did. (laughs) I remember my daughter was talking about coupyvine (spelling) ever hear that

sp? <sup>sp?</sup>

E. No, what is it

m.k. well, this was ah, a setup, a few women could do it but some were able to do it. They'd take a cows horn, clean it out real good. and this



M.K. and this was supposed to clean your blood. And they'd take you, and they'd take a sharp razor in older days. It was the old straight edge, and they'd cut a bunch of holes in a pattern like that, side of the end of the cows horn, just little slits and then they'd put the cows horn against the the little deal that they had cut up, and they'd suck the blood out of there.

E. did you ever do it

M.K. (laughs) NO, I didn't do it, I never wanted to either. But I had a friend that had it done, and he was really embarrassed, I don't know if you can put this in there but, he went to Mayo's and they had to strip down for the doctor and of course the doctor saw all these little blotches you know so he asked him what it was all about so he told him, and this doctor started laughing, and he called the other doctor here, (laughs) and the poor guy was there standing up and another doctor that came in was a woman. She came and looked and they both were laughing at him. And they told him I don't think your gonna get any benefit out of that. But that was one of the finnish cures of something or another. cleaning of the bad blood.

E. (laugh) okay,

massages

M.K. Oh, then they used to have a lot of massages, that was standard. any body with a sore back or anything sore would go see a massouse? and have it taken care of. AND in a lot of cases it worked pretty well. It was never recognized by the medical



m.k. profcSSION, but it worked pretty well.

E. did you ever have that done to you

m.k. yes, a couple of times

E did it work really well

m.k. well it wiped yeah.

~~Mr. Korp.~~

Mr. Korp.  
daughter

Erika, do you know what a mussause is?

E yeah, its a messenger

who or what convinced you to go to college

M.K. oh, I think my mother and myself mostly.

E most of the people worked in the mines is that right

M.K. mm hm

E and why did you decide to go to college instead of working in the mine

M.K. \* Well, I had to do something better than that, working in the mines. its just an ambition I had all the time going to school.

E was it a hard decision to work

M.K. NO. it wasn't hard to leave a mine

E okay, How did people feel about you going to college were they, did they encourage you or

m.k. oh yeah

E yeah, um, How did you get to college moneywise did you, was it easy?



M.K. I worked for it before I went to school. I worked for 5 yrs. before I went to school.

E. what did you do? what did you work as  
M.K. in mining

E. mining

M.K. yeah

E. what kind of job did you do

M.K. well, I started off cleaning track with a number 2 shovel (laughs) and I ended up mining, contract mining

E. was it a fairly good pay

M.K. oh yes

E. um, what college did you then go to

M.K. Michigan

E. michigan

M.K. Tech

E. Tech, how far was it away from your home

M.K. 80 miles

E. How did you get there

M.K. well, ah, I used to ride with some other ~~ah~~ ah, students that lived in Ishpeming mostly, and then 1 year I ~~roomed~~ roomed with the warden of the prison son, so they had the prison chauffeur bring us there and pick us up on the side and take us home

E. did they have any busses or anything that you could

M.K. NO, NO, NO, I had lots of time, we used to hitchhike



E. okay, how much was tuition back then

m.k. oh, lets see \$15 a term, \$39 a year

E. \$39.00 a year

m.k. yes

E. what kind of courses did you take

m.k. mining

E. mining courses

m.k. well, that included mathematically, chemistry,  
physics, but the major courses were in mining

E. um, what was the size of the school

m.k. oh, at that time it was about, 1500 to 2000 people  
i guess.

E. what kind of faculty did they have. was it a  
large one or

m.k. well, it ah, ah, i would say each class ah, ah, the  
teacher had about 2-20 students.

E. and how many teachers did they have all ~~together~~  
together

m.k. oh, i couldn't tell you

E. oh, okay, were there lots of them

m.k. yes, there was quite a few for that day and age  
well, now it's about 3 times as big

E. did you consider college easy or hard or

m.k. hard

E. hard

m.k. mm, hm

E. did you have to study a lot



M.K. yes

E did you get any days off or did you work like or did you have school 7 days a week or

M.K. 5 days a week

E 5 days a week

M.K. sometimes ye, you got a couple of classes off on sat.

E And they had regular holidays where you could go home.

M.K. yep

E did you have a job to pay for your tuition or

M.K. NO

E. NO

M.K. I did that when I came home and worked on vacations

E oh, okay did you make money in college or

M.K. not in college, NO

E after you got done with college, or did you get your first job then

M.K. yes

E what did you plan to do after college

M.K. Get a job as a mining engineer

E did you have to take any special courses after college

M.K. NO

E NO, did you have any regrets about going to college

M.K. NO

E NO, I mean, did you ever come home when you were in college for holidays

M.K. oh, yes, all, on all holidays, and some times on the weekends, but not too often, for the fun of it.



E. What kind of jobs did you have in the mine when you started working for

M.K. Oh, I started off cleaning track, I worked on motors, worked mining, and later on I worked as a mining engineer, and as a mine superintendent and a mine general superintendant.

E How soon after college did you get your first job

M.K. right after

E right after it. Well, where did you work

M.K. Well, I, I worked ah, @ 1 yr. in Canada, but then I came back to school again

E You came back to ~~the~~ school again

M.K. yeah

E then, then after school, the schooling you

M.K. yeah, then I came back to work, then I worked for Cliffs

E okay, did you have to take different jobs before you became the superintendant, when you worked in the mines.

M.K. Well, I went just like, you see mining engineering and operating engineering, then I went on to ~~the~~ superintendant, Mine superintendant

E since you went to college, did it play an important role in your job. did it help you a lot.

M.K. oh yes

E Do you remember any close calls or accidents while you were there in the mine

M.K. In the mine, well, I had a couple of them, one ah, I was ah, surveying the raise? and the fellow working with me, the raise was about 200 ft. high, and I just got through ~~the~~ signing in on, and he was up about 150 ft raise and then we



M.K. - had to measure it so then we started climbing up and at that time, ah, dynamite started, some holes started, were being blasted and stuff started coming down the raise and I kinda ~~thought~~ figured my partner would be coming down with it, the guy I was working with, but finally all the holes went off and he still didn't come down so I figured maybe he was gonna be all right, and ah pretty soon I heard his footsteps coming down the ladder and ah, it gave me a good feeling. And he was okay, the blast had broken through and he was about 25 ft. above it. It would have been about 10 seconds later, I would have been up where it was so that's how close it was. But, that was about the closest.

E okay, what exactly was your job as a superintendent. what exactly did you do.

M.K. well I was in charge of underground operations at the mather "A"

E what did you do, like inspect what they were doing or

M.K. well, yeah, like the planning, help with the planning of the mine and overall, ah, oh, take care of grievences, and a little labor and

E whas it a hard job or was it easy

M.K. NO, NO, it was interesting. something I enjoyed

E was the pay good or better than...

M.K. yes, it was good

E did. you make more than most other people that were working in the mine

M.K. at that time, yeah.



E um, what kind of house did you live in when you were working in the mine, was it a company house.

M.K. yes, it was. it was a house about the size of this here Joan? on Cyr street.

E on what street?

M.K. Cyr street in Neguanee

E. what exactly is a company house

earlier in story

M.K. well, years ago when, well, for instance in North Lake ~~there~~ they're all company houses and ah, especially ah, with areas away from, well, like Ishpeming would be the closest, bigger area, to attract people ah, to where the ore was, gonna be mined they had to provide living accommodations because people couldn't afford in those days to come in & build their own houses. so they built the location, built the houses, built, like North lake had their clubhouse, built the school and they charge I think when we lived in North lake they charged us \$5.00 a month rent for the houses. but that was a way to get people to come in the area to work.

E so, they would like attract people to come

M.K. yes.

E and offer them a house too, was it a fairly large house

M.K. well, ~~it was~~ like I say, we had 3 rooms downstairs and 2, it was for a, like our family it was fine we had, there were 3 children, my mother and father, but for



Mik. (cont.) bigger families it was a little crowded. but in those days, I, I would say it was pretty, better ~~than~~ than what most people ~~were~~ had. 17

E. what kind of neighborhood did you live in

Mik. real good neighborhood, everybody got along well together, everybody cooperated, if anybody had any trouble someone would help em out. we didn't have any trouble that way.

E. were you all one nationality or were there all different ones.

Mik. no, the people that lived on the other side of our house were English, and then ah, across the street from us they were french, and across the alley they were, well then there to us were swede, and french, next door to us were finnish, across the alley from us were finnish + french. so it was all mixed up. Nobody, it was not ah, a location where the finnish people would have one street, the italians would have another street, it was mixed up all the way through.

E. and you all got along good

Mik. Oh, yeah

E. um, what kind of job did you have, and what did you do during the war

Mik. ah, I was an engineer during the war, I worked at all the main offices at Cleveland cliffs, in Ishpeming

- was there a great loss of men gone to fight in the war?



M.K. not that many because, they were able to get a deferment that they they worked in the mine because of the critical industry. 18

E what's a deferment

M.K. well, everybody had got a draft card, and a number and when your number came up of course you had to report for service. but essential industries were needed for the war effort, like iron ore mining, steel, things like that. they could get their people deferred, I mean, they didn't have to go in to service when they were called. it was called deferred because it didn't necessarily mean that you could stay out of the war completely so, you know, if they wanted they could still call you if something else came up. so that's why this area I don't think it's had, did especially the mines didn't have as many people going because of the essential industry.

E So it really didn't matter the little amount of men that were gone. still it wasn't any harder to operate was it

M.K. no we had enough people to operate.

E was there any like, did they ever think of women to work in the mine

M.K. hah?

E did they ever think of women to take the place of the men

M.K. NO, not, not, here

E WERE there any change that took place during the war?



E. in the mine, like any thing that drastically changed

M.K. not that I know of. It was more or less the same setup all the way through

E. But you just had more business because of the war

M.K. oh, yeah

E. how much like, how much were you or how much iron ore were you making during the war

M.K. I think ~~they~~ started off at \$150 dollars a month

E. I mean how much iron ore were you producing during the war

M.K. oh, ore

E. yeah

M.K. this ah, Marquette Range <sup>I think,</sup> ran around somewhere between 4 and 5 million tons. that's in this area here

E. and that was during the war

M.K. yeah

E. where, what, did you work in one ~~mine~~ mine or all over

M.K. I went, to start with I was, did ~~some~~ the ~~surveying~~ surveying at all the or setting mines

E. at all the mines

M.K. wherever they needed somebody ~~to do the~~ that had to do the surveying? then, I became an engineer at the Loyd mine, Loyd + Speeds? mine in Iron River.



E. do you remember the boom & bust cycle

M.K. The depression, that is what you would call the boom & bust. We were booming in '28 & '29 that's when things were really all wide open

E. what exactly is the boom & bust cycle

M.K. well, everybody had a lot of money ~~and~~, there was plenty of work, everybody was spending it things were being over produced & then everything caught up to them, it was too much stuff, and not enough people buying so we got into the big depression. it started i think, in '29 and went through the early part of the 30's for instance, ah, the mines were working 6 days a week say in 1929 and they kept dropping to 4, to 2 & then they pulled down completely around here in ah, 1933 i think. they didn't open up again until the latter part of '34.

E. when did this cycle start, the Boom & bust cycle when did it start

M.K. well, it went on a down trend starting in '29 then it started coming back up again slowly in '34.

E. was it ever prosperous, when was it the most prosperous.

M.K. '29

E. '29?

M.K. that's what they called the "roaring 20's" that's when, the end of the second world war till about '29. everything was coming up

M.K. ~~the~~ the first world war  
daughter



M.K the first WWII, yeah

E and it ended in 1934

M.K yeah, it started to pick up again but very slowly.

E. were there ~~any~~ ~~any~~ many layoffs at the time

M.K everybody was laid off

E everybody was laid off.

M.K during that time, all the mines, the mines were closed

E during the Boom & Bust cycle

M.K yeah, during the Bust cycle, during the Bust part of the cycle

E but during the war were there any layoffs

M.K NO, NO, during the war everything was booming

E. How about after the war was over was there

M.K no, it kept going and, I think they had smaller recession in the middle '50's

E so from the time of the war & after they really didn't have any layoffs

M.K NO.

E NO, just before the war when the Boom & Bust cycle took place

M.K yeah

E they were all laid off.

M.K it gradually started going up in '34, and then '37 was a real good year' cuz the mines were



22  
m.k. working 6 days a week, and we got into a recession from the end of 37 into 38 where everything dropped again. then, from then on because of the war it was a Boomtime.

### end of side 1

E now where were we. I think we were talking about the layoffs or what were we talking about before the tape was

M.k. oh, ah, when ah, see the iron ore industry depends on the steel industry. and ah, if the steel industry goes down, ah lets take a little example, lets say that this years Cleveland Cliff is running + selling ah, 4 million tons, producing + selling 4 million tons of iron ore + the steel industry is taking, okay the steel industry has an asset back, they cut back on their orders + say we go to three million tons the following year. so the 3 million tons would come out to be a 25% layoff in your labor force. either that the way they used to do it years or when I was younger rather than laying off people, they would cut the work schedule, for instance if they were working 6 days a week + thing started to go down the cycle of production or the sales started, of iron ore, started to go down you go to 5 days a week, if it still kept going down you go to 4 days, a week + 3 days a week + then down to 2 days a week if we went below that, after 2 days a week then they could either continue or maybe shut down completely

E where there any special benefits for the people who were ~~to~~ laid off



M.K. NO, an well, during the depression they had government an, an, would give out such things as flour, sugar, + coffee and of course an, they opened up the county an, started to do some road work, most of the people were able to get to work, ~~about~~ couple 2 days a week, working on the county then WPA came in + there was same thing 2+3 days a week. That was government spon-soned.

E. what is W.P.A

M.K. Well, the work progress administration that was set up by the gov't. to provide work all through the country, people, so they could make some money to live <sup>for</sup> on.

E. So, it really wasn't that hard for people

M.K. well, it wasn't easy. it wasn't easy. a lot of people ate alot of oatmeal. Especially alot of people who lived in big families, you see the county now, when they first started out, they were the first to provide work around here. you got paid 25¢ an our, you worked 10 hours a day, and all you could work was 2 days a week, so you had, the family had \$5 a week to live on. so it wasn't very much, even if namburgers were only a nickel, (laughs) a piece.

E. were there strikes on, and unions during that time?



M.K. during that time, no

E. so they weren't very, weren't.

M.K. there were no unions at all there. the unions came here, I think it was 1942 when they came back then

~~E~~ <sup>E</sup> were there anything like strikes or anything

M.K. no, no, but we did get the big strike ~~at~~ here in 1946, you know, after the unions came in. when they shut everything down.

E what was the reason for the strike

M.K. they were looking for more money.

E and how did it affect business, did it cut everything off.

M.K. well, it an, like I say everybody, was on strike so there was no money in the business people, of course a lot of people did have savings and that so it wasn't a complete shutoff, but it, it was tough

E what was your opinion on the strikes & the unions

M.K. I would rather not express it

E okay

M.K. ( I think, I think the unions were a good thing, they came in and I feel they still are as long as they don't abuse their



M.K (cont.) power any more than one comp - 25  
ames did years back

E okay, what else affected the business,  
like anything that made it more prosper-  
ous or.

M.K well, it just, for this area the business  
goes up & down according to how the mines  
go. The mines are strong & then the busi-  
ness is strong, if the mines are an, re-  
duce production for a time, then the bus-  
ness goes down.

E so the more need for iron ore the more  
business goes up

M.K yeah, right

E so they don't need any more the business  
goes down. what was, was there any major  
improvements in the mine

M.K on year, the mining methods were  
changed. and the equipment has been  
changed, you, use an, different mining  
methods, produce more tons per man  
the equipment is a lot bigger & more  
efficient. and ah, for instance, years  
back when I first started the, the man  
was producing, on an average of 5 tons per  
man, that's how they figured production  
by the time the mine closed down ~~they~~  
they were up to 14 tons per man.

(M.K daughter says something to him, I can't make  
it out)

M.K well, bigger loading equipment, bigger  
~~drilling~~ equipment, and everything just,



mx in years when I first started, every <sup>26</sup> thing was done by hand, and now in when the mines closed down there was hardly anything done by hand it was done by machine.

E. what kind of safety improvements were there, in the safety of the men, like what did they improve that would help them out.

M.K. well, that was an, a thing that was going on continuously was to make the mines as safe as possible and unfortunately some of the things that had to be put in was after a serious accident that, it was investigated then you had to try & come up with ~~an~~ an action to try to prevent one similar to that. some of those things you could never anticipate and you tried to but you couldn't and some of them had to come out because of some tragedy or something accident.

E. what were some of the tragedies that happened that had to be improved

M.K. well, an, it was, in my time outside of the Barnes & Hecker, there was really no big tragedy. We had accidents where individuals got hurt badly or killed, but none of any major you know catastrophes in my time that I worked in the mine.

E. what was your relationship with the Barnes Hecker?



m.k well, the only relationship I had was 27  
we lived in north lake and, ~~they~~, to  
give you a little background to begin  
with, of the mining ~~and~~, in an, North  
lake area it was, the oil was found in 1970,  
in 1907, by diamond drilling and they  
first started after the oil was found  
it was, an, a small open pit mine was  
open just south of where the Lloyd mine  
offices were which is where Warsnauski's  
found, that was original mining done in  
that area, and later on when that oil  
that was available ~~was~~, ~~was~~, the surface  
mining, was exhausted, then they opened  
up an, put down 3 shafts, the first, the  
one furthest west would be the Morris,  
I can't remember what the name of that  
outfit is, a, a company working in the old  
Morris building now, but, the next, the  
middle one would be the Lloyd mine where  
Warsnauski's is an, yard is now, scrap yard  
is, and then the farthest one east would be  
what we call the section 16, the section  
16 shaft and an, the oil was originally  
hoisted up through the Cleveland cliffs  
owned those 3. and later on an, the  
Barnes & Necker was opened up which is  
west again from the Morris mine. & all  
of these mines were ~~was~~ connected with  
underground tunnels an, section 16 which  
was the farthest east was an, connected  
to the an, Lloyd mine which was the center  
& the Lloyd was connected to the an, Morris  
& the Morris was connected to the Barnes &  
Necker they were connected on different  
elevations. as the mining progressed



E. all the mines were connected to one another  
underground 28

m.k year, and thats why when the Barnes & Hecker caved in, thats in 1927, an, it was just before noon thats why all the men that were there except one got caught in the cave in. and if it had happened an hour later or half an hour later, most would have been up there eating on surface. my dad worked in the Morris Mine at that time, & after they found out what had happened & they figured it was safe to go down the Morris, then they took a special crew down there & an, to see if it was an, what shape the Morris mine was in. The mine tunnel that was connected to the Barnes & Hecker, was pretty well filled with the mud that had gone out through the Barnes & Hecker Mine. & the only reason they didnt get any more was that the connection between the 2 mines was small & there's enough stuff ~~to~~ & debris, & stuff that could not go through the, this connection, that plugged the hole up. & that stopped the rest of the stuff from coming in even the Barnes & Hecker was filled up right up to the top. so when they went down there job then was to get, to clean up this tunnel that connected the 2 or an that went to the, connection between the two mines. & as they were cleaning this up, they were picking up parts of, of bodies of some of the people that worked at the Barnes & Hecker.

E your dad did that?



M.K. year, he was one of the crew. & when we  
got to where this connection was made 29  
got it all cleaned up they built a big  
concrete an, dam to keep any other an, stuff  
coming in the mine. and they way they id-  
entified the people in the mines because  
an, some accidents where people got, where  
there's no identification possible, you had  
to take a brass check, what they call a  
brass check an, when you went into the  
mine you'd take that with you, it was, it  
was used also for an, determining ~~whether~~<sup>whether</sup>  
you worked that day or not. & all it was,  
was a little round thing about an inch  
a little bigger than an inch in diameter,  
with your number on it.

E they called it a brass check

M.K. ~~was~~ a brass check, well it would be  
just like an I.D. check like in the  
service people had. so that, that was  
the only way they could identify these  
6 or 7 that they did recover part of  
the bodies that they did recover from  
the Morris site

E so the only way they could identify  
the people who died was in the brass  
checks

M.K. Brass checks

E all together, now many yrs. did you  
work for CCI.

M.K. oh, about 35 all together



E did you have any regrets about working 30 there

M.K. no, no. It was a good company. still is

E when you travelled around the world, where did you go

M.K. oh, I travelled through most of the U.S. in the mining area & I travelled to an, Isral on a consulting job

E. were you sent there or was it like a vacation

M.K. no, no I was sent there on mining business, & we spent 1 yr in Canada

E. what did you do just go, what did you do in Isral what did you go there for

M.K. well, they were an, looking at an, developin an oil shale mine to recover oil from the shale for an, field for themselves and I went there to look at the mining end of it to make a study of that.

E. was there a big difference from our mines here

M.K. well, they didn't have any mines

E. they didn't have any mines

M.K. no, they hadn't even developed this mine yet, they just, they had the an, the oil shale property. nothing had been done yet.



E. Oh, okay.

M.K. Oh, well, I visited coal mines just to an visit at coal mines, copper mines, & an, gold mines just to study their mining methods & to see if they would help an, in our mining of iron ore.

E. Like, where did you go to look at this

M.K. Oh, coal mines in ~~Penn.~~ Penn., N. York & went to copper mines in, copper & sil-ur mines in an, Arizona, Colorado, mon-tana

E. So, what did you do like, just see how they mined the gold

M.K. just to study their method of mining

E. to see if you could improve ours

M.K. use if their method of, if we could use their method & improve on our meth-ods which is ~~is~~ a kind of a standard thing that all mines interchange ~~the~~ their ideas

E. did it work

M.K. Oh yes, we had found ideas that helped us.

E. Like what were they

M.K. the biggest thing we had was block caving an, which is kind of a mass production of iron ore, of mining iron ore compared to what we used to call top slicing. and we started, we made



M.K. (cont) a study of that in 1946 we visi- 32  
ted an, mines in arizona, colorado, and  
an, wyoming and then we came back and  
the first, we put that system of mining  
into effect. The first place we did it at the  
athens mine near in nequane.

E → you were just testing it out to see if it  
would work

M.K. well we made it work. we ended up by  
with block caving an, rather. B all the  
mines was under block caving.

E what exactly is ~~so~~ block caving

M.K. well, its an, its a method of mining  
where you an, just develop or you just  
put your, your, an producing tunnels on  
the bottom of the ore body. → then you cave  
you, everything from these tunnels an,  
or into these tunnels from an, you get  
all the ore that's above these tunnels →  
you cave it into these tunnels on the  
bottom of the ore body → take it out that  
way

E So, you can just...

M.K. or top slicing, the other, the slowest  
method that we ever had you start  
from the top → you just take, you just  
take the top ~~good~~ off, then ~~o~~ you drop  
off, then you take another section off →  
keep going on down till you get to the  
bottom. so it was a big difference between  
the 2 methods of, as far as production is  
concerned.



E. so blood caving was more efficient

m.k. yes

E. when were you married

m.k. 1940, may 11

E. oh, okay. and did you attend the births of your children

m.k. ah, I missed the first one I was in Canada for the first one, I was home when Joanie was born, and I guess I was there when Gunner was born

E. were you involved in raising, raising them

m.k. I think so ~~oooooo~~ (we all start laughing)

E. How has your life been after you've been working in the Mine, have you had any problems or

m.k. NO,

E. no.

m.k. my health has been good

E. I guess thats about it

m.k. okay.