

My name is Nichole Schneider and I am interviewing Mrs. Elsie Hooper at her house in Ishpeming. Today's date is February 26th , 1997 and it is 5:00 pm. Mrs. Hooper is going to talk with me about her life as a student at Ely School.

ME: the first question is...when and where were you born?

Mrs. Hooper: I was born in Diorite on August 7th 1924

ME: What is your full name?

Mrs. Hooper: Elsie Emilia (Hunniksula) Hooper

ME: how old are you?

Mrs. Hooper: How old am I now? I'm 72....

ME: what was your childhood like?

Mrs. Hooper: I had a good child hood living in Diorite was fun we had a lot to do. We spent a lot of time out doors, there was a lake we swam in the lake all summer long I was the youngest of ten children so I didn't have to do anything at home...you know. I didn't have any chores or anything all I did was play. We had the bluff to climb, we had the woods to go into.... winter time there was lots of hills like stock piles and stuff to slide down. It was.....my childhood was a lot of fun.

ME: what about games you played during your childhood?

Mrs. Hooper: games.....well...pung pung pull away, and simon says and we used to go around in a circle in the snow and chase each other in the snow there was some kind of a game there. A lot of the games that the kids now still play...I know my grandchildren



play a lot of the same games that I played. Kick The Can was another one.....

ME: what was the first one you said?

Mrs. Hooper: Pung Pung Pull away?

ME: yeah...how do you play that?

Mrs. Hooper: all i remember is the name i can't remember too much about what...I really can't remember how it went the name of it just came to me.

ME: how many people were in your family?

Mrs. Hooper: there were ten children but three of them died young so actually seven. And then there were my mother and father. There were three that had died before i was even born.

ME: what are your brothers' and sisters' names?

Mrs. Hooper: The ones that are still living now you mean? I only have two sisters left. one is Evelyn Niemi and the other one is Martha McGregory.

ME: What were your parents' names?

Mrs. Hooper: My parents names were Maria and Isaac Hunniksula.

ME: did you have any pets when you were younger?

Mrs. Hooper: cats... a lot of cats..because we had a barn and we had a lot of cats i think i had one dog at one time...

ME: did you go to church?

Mrs. Hooper: yeah...we had services out in Diorite once. I don't think we had a Sunday school but we had the Bible Baptist church used to come out and do a summer school.

ME: what church did you go to?

Mrs. Hooper: Bethel Lutheran



ME: did you ever get punished for something when you were younger?

Mrs. Hooper: no i can't remember being punished. No i really can't remember punishment so if there was it was very little or very light. I really should say I got punished for something because everybody gets punished for something don't they? But i really can't remember but if there was it really wasn't....bad.

ME: could you describe a typical life as an elementary student in Ely School?

Mrs. Hooper: probably you go to school and you learn and go there and have classes and homework. you know its seems school is just a part of your life. sort of a routine.

ME: did you go to highschool?

Mrs. Hooper: yes I did we went by bus to Ishpeming highschool.

ME: did you go to college?

Mrs. Hooper: no. no thoughts of college at that time. Not for many of us. We didn't even consider it at the time?

ME: did you get homework while you were in school?

Mrs. Hooper: I can't remember much homework in elementary school. But we did get homework in highschool.

ME: What schools did you go to?

Mrs. Hooper just to Ely and Ishpeming High School. It was called Diorite school at that time though.

ME: what did you write with?

Mrs. Hooper: what do you mean now?

ME: well pencils...sometimes they had the little ink wells and the pen...



Mrs. Hooper: oh yes.. I remember the ink wells I hadn't thought about that for a long time. Yes i can remember using the inkwells.

ME: was it messy?

Mrs. Hooper: sometimes. Sometimes kids messed around with them intentionally.

ME: what did you write on? did you just write on paper?

Mrs. Hooper: yes.

ME: what was lunch like?

Mrs. Hooper: hmm. what was lunch like...in elementary school i lived right next to the school so i went home for lunch and in highschool we took our lunch with and we ate in the home economics room.

ME: did they have a hot lunch program?

Mrs. Hooper: not when i was there.

ME: did you have a cloakroom?

Mrs. Hooper: yes.

ME: any cloakroom stories?

Mrs. Hooper: I know that the teachers would sometimes punish the kids by putting them in the dark cloakroom. I can't remember it happening too often but it did happen. I know my daughter tells a story, and i think she already has it in here, about when she went to school. About, the teacher put the boy in the cloakroom and he ate the teacher's lunch.\*laughing\* But don't repeat that one.

ME: could you describe recess?

Mrs. Hooper: it was always a lot of fun. it went by too fast.



mostly we went outside. The boys played ball and the girls played jacks, we played a lot of jacks, and jump rope. But in the winter time we would make this thing in the snow and chase each other it was some kind of a game, it was an organized game but i can't remember exactly how it went...no playground equipment then, of course.

ME: how long was recess?

Mrs. Hooper: I don't remember if it was fifteen minutes or a half hour.

ME: could you describe the clothing you wore?

Mrs. Hooper: We didn't have snow pants like they wear now and long cotton socks and dresses girls didn't wear pants. Coats scarves mittens none of the nice fabric that you got now to keep the cold out. I can't remember getting that cold when you're younger anyway.

ME: did you ever wear uniforms?

Mrs. Hooper: no.

ME: what about holiday celebrations at school?

Mrs. Hooper: yeah. we celebrated every holiday in school. and George Washington's birthday and Lincoln's birthday were big days as where they aren't now. There all hooked into one day, presidents day. Valentine's Day, Christmas, we had a Christmas vacation, like they do now.

ME: how were unruly children handled?

Mrs. Hooper: well, they were put in the closet or put in the hall. Isolated. Some were hit, there was hitting. But the teacher didn't do it unless they were really bad. I didn't see it happen



too often. Or they took away privileges.

ME: what was the highest grade you attended?

Mrs. Hooper: 12th

ME: did you switch classes when you were in highschool?

Mrs. Hooper: yes we did.

ME: How many teachers did you have?

Mrs. Hooper: do you mean in elementary or highschool?

ME: elementary.

Mrs. Hooper: probably about four or five. In Diorite school one teacher taught two or three grades. He'd be working with one class while the other class did their study time. I don't know how they did it but it worked.

ME: did you have sports in school?

Mrs. Hooper: No. we didn't have sports or music, at least in the Diorite school.

ME: Did you have minorities or recent immigrants in school?

Mrs. Hooper: no.

ME: did you have any that didn't speak English?

Mrs. Hooper: not that i can remember. if there were some they learned fast. not that i can remember specifically.

ME: what kind of activities did you do in class?

Mrs. Hooper: could you explain what you mean by that?

ME: different projects you did. any kind of projects you did in school. In kindergarten now they color. stuff like that.

Mrs. Hooper: I really don't have a memory of anything like that. Valentines, mother's day things i remember.

ME: what year did you graduate?



Mrs. Hooper: from highschool, 1941.

ME: were there any drop outs?

Mrs. Hooper: yes. lots.

ME: about an estimate of how many dropped out?

Mrs. Hooper: from both schools?

ME: yeah.

Mrs. Hooper: possibly one-third. that might be high. I know in eighth grade two-thirds went onto highschool. about one-third dropped out the first year.

ME: how many students were in your graduate class?

Mrs. Hooper: in highschool?

ME: yeah.

Mrs. Hooper: it was a big class. I hate to say a hundred because if i put it in there and its wrong and somebody sees it and its not right...I'll go get my manual. From eighth grade there were about ten or fifteen in that graduating class, at Diorite. I better not do a number on that.

ME: did you have extra-curricular activities?

Mrs. Hooper: are we in grade school again or highschool? nothing at Diorite. when we went by bus from Diorite we couldn't stay for any extra-curricular because...eight miles, and some of the parents didn't have a car, gas was expensive we were lucky to get to school by bus rather than participate in extra-curricular activities. That was something that us kids really missed out on. That and the sports. Music was always after school so we missed out on a lot then.

ME: what courses did you take?



Mrs. Hooper: Home Ec. we only took one. i know they have a lot of them now. But at that time we only took one.

ME: Did they have married women teachers?

Mrs. Hooper: I think most of them were single. I think they almost had to be. Did they have to be in the '30s? Some got married after.

ME: how big was the Diorite school?

Mrs. Hooper: Four classrooms and a library, plus two small offices and a handicapped room and an auditorium downstairs. This room was also used, the auditorium had a stage, so it was also used for church services every month, summer bible school, wedding reception showers and other community affairs. We had poor age too, which on Friday afternoons was great too. The girls learned to sew and the boys learned woodworking and stuff. It was great, a lot of fun.

ME: did you have any after school chores or jobs that you had to do?

Mrs. Hooper: no. Like i said I was the youngest of a big family...dishes probably.

ME: did you get an allowance for anything that you did?

Mrs. Hooper: no.

ME: how old were you when you started driving?

Mrs. Hooper: 48...\*laughing\* I took drivers training after my husband died.

ME: what did your first car look like?

Mrs. Hooper: it probably was a model-T.

ME: do you know how much it costed?



Mrs. Hooper: no...

ME: did you go to kindergarten or preschool?

Mrs. Hooper: there was no preschool but i did go to kindergarten. <sup>!!</sup> I remember crying so hard because I had to leave my mother and my mother was right next door! <sup>!!</sup> ✖

ME: how old were you when you started?

Mrs. Hooper: five.

ME: what is the name of the first teacher you had?

Mrs. Hooper: I don't remember that. It could've been Liddia Laakso. She was my favorite teacher.

ME: do you remember any other teacher's names?

Mrs. Hooper: My brother taught me. George Hunniksula. There must've been more but I can't remember any right now.

ME: what grade did you enjoy the most?

Mrs. Hooper: I can't remember any specifically that i enjoyed more. I enjoyed grade school more than I did highschool.

ME: do you know anything about a fire at Ely school?

Mrs. Hooper: That happened before my time. I was inquired about it because I had heard about it too. I figured you'd asked something about it but that was before my time so...

ME: how much was the price of a movie?

Mrs. Hooper: about a quarter.

ME: how about the price of pop and a candy bar?

Mrs. Hooper: a nickel.

ME: did you go on field trips.

Mrs. Hooper: I can't recall that.

ME: do you remember anything about the snowstorm of 1938?



Mrs. Hooper: yes i remember that. I remember that distinctly, the tunnels and having to walk on the big snow banks with snowshoes. I definitely remember that. It was kind of scary, it was kind of scary but it was a lot of fun too. No school you know?

ME: how long was school canceled?

Mrs. Hooper: probably about two days.

ME: How high were the snow banks?

Mrs. Hooper: we had some dandies this year but they were higher than that. Of coarse, we didn't have the equipment back then either to move the snow around. about five or six feet. I've got a picture somewhere, of the snowbank.

ME: did your parents go to work during or after the snowstorm?

Mrs. Hooper: I don't remember that. There's so many things I can't recall.

ME: after the storm what did you do outside?

Mrs. Hooper: same things as the kids do now snow tunnels, snow forts, ski, sled.

ME: what kind of things did you do during the storm? while it was going on....

Mrs. Hooper: probably stayed in the house. Pretty dangerous to go outside in that kind of weather.

ME: any stories about the storm?

Mrs. Hooper: nothing distinctive that i can recall?

ME: what are the better/worse times during the storm?

Mrs. Hooper: i don't know I guess when you're a kid it's all pretty much fun. I guess the best time were the fact that we didn't have to go to school and the fact that we could make



tunnels and tunnel around in the snow. I don't know what the worst times would be, i guess the fact that our parents worried a lot. We didn't really worry too much about it.

ME: How did you get rid of the snow?

Mrs. Hooper: the plows eventually came through. Not as fast as they do nowadays but they took care of us.

ME: was it a fun time for you?

Mrs. Hooper: oh...yeah.

ME: In the Barns Hecker...was anybody close to you killed?

Mrs. Hooper: anybody close...no, not that i remember...when was the Barns Hecker?

ME: 1925

Mrs. Hooper: i was only a year old so i wouldn't have realized, i remember them talking about it a lot after, it was talked about but no there was no one close. But like i said my father and my brother were working at the Blueberry Mine but they had worked the opposite shift and they never did go back in the mines again, they got different jobs.

ME: how were the school children affected by it?

Mrs. Hooper: that i wouldn't know either like i said i was only a year old at that time, you'd probably have to talk to somebody older than me about that.

ME: how were you affected by it?

Mrs. Hooper: well at a year old you're not really affected by something like that. They told stories about it, it was quite a tragedy.

ME: The Depression, do you remember anything about it?



Mrs. Hooper: That was in '29 right?

ME: I'm not sure...

Mrs. Hooper: I don't know, my family always had, they had jobs my father worked he was a logger and my brother and sister taught school so really we had no lay-offs or anything but the Depression and that I don't remember that much about either I was so young...but i can't remember going hungry or put it that way.

ME: Do you remember Black Tuesday?

Mrs. Hooper: What was that?

ME: I don't really know anything about it...it was during the Depression.

Mrs. Hooper: I don't know anything about it either.

ME: did you have any foods that were treats during the depression?

Mrs. Hooper: Well, I don't know probably fruit. Fruit, candy maybe.

ME: World War 2 what was that like for you?

Mrs. Hooper: I had just gotten out of highschool and gotten married and my husband had went into World War II three months after we were married. He went over seas almost immediately he was in the Pacific Theater. He didn't get home for three and a half years later. I raised our daughter alone and he didn't see her until she was two and a half years old he didn't get home until she was two and a half years old. I remember a lot of the friends and people that we knew going away to war. I remember listening to the radio every night, we didn't have television of coarse, we listened to the radio all the time to see how the war



was going. It was difficult for everybody. Lot of casualties.

ME: can you tell me anything about war bonds?

Mrs. Hooper: I did buy war bonds at that time. occasionally pay like \$19.50 or \$17.50 and then in ten years you'd get \$25.00 back. A lot of people bought them.

ME: how old were you during this time?

Mrs. Hooper: in my early twenties. Late teens, early twenties.

ME: was this a scary time for you?

Mrs. Hooper: oh...yeah.

ME: What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about the war?

Mrs. Hooper: Well, I don't like war, I don't think that it's the way to end conflict but I suppose that's the way it has to be sometimes.

ME: OK the Strike(mines) 1946, can you tell me anything about that?

Mrs. Hooper: We were away at that time we had moved to Ontanogan. My husband had come home from the army and we had moved to Ontanogan. I wasn't too much aware of the striking going on here.

ME: Did you have any childhood games that you used to play?

Mrs. Hooper: We played house a lot the girls played house, jacks, and jump rope and I don't know Kick the can, like I told you pung pung pull away but I don't remember how it goes. Simon Says ... probably a lot of the same games that the kids nowadays play.

ME: was everybody included? anybody excluded?

Mrs. Hooper: I think we were pretty inclusive. I can't remember kids being left out. Maybe I didn't gnathic don't know. I really



can't really remember kids being left out, unless they wanted to be or unless they didn't want to play. You know...?

ME: what was your favorite game?

Mrs. Hooper: I don't know if I have any favorites really. I did like playing jacks a lot. That was recess time, we played a lot of jacks. We played a lot of baseball too. Had a lot of baseball fields.

ME: do you have any childhood stories?

Mrs. Hooper: I guess the one I can remember the most is the first day of school. How I lived next door to the school, and I remember crying broken-heartedly because I missed my mother so much and here she was right next door. I remember that day very plainly, the first day of school. I don't remember too much after that. That was the only day I was lonesome. I can imagine how kindergartners feel on the first of school. I can remember we had so much to do. Looked for adventure, hiked through the woods looking for adventure, climbed the bluffs and swam in the lake. In the winter we climbed the stock piles. There was always something to do we just, played played played, we had a fun time as children.

ME: Did you have any pets?

Mrs. Hooper: we had cats all the time because a barn and cows and we always had cats and a couple of dogs too.

ME: did you have names for them?

Mrs. Hooper: yeah, but I can't remember any of the names.

ME: oK. when were you married?

Mrs. Hooper: 1942



ME: what is your maiden name?

Mrs. Hooper: Hunniksula.

ME: how many children do you have?

Mrs. Hooper: five.

ME: What are their names and how old are they?

Mrs. Hooper: Kitty (Kosaski) is 54, Sandra (Berra) is 50, Linda (L'Huillier) is 46, Lloyd (Hunniksula) is 41 and Larry (Hunniksula) is 37.

ME: OK. Do you have any grandchildren?

Mrs. Hooper: Yes, eleven. One died last summer, she was Kitty's only daughter. She was murdered. But you don't have to put anything about that in there.

ME: I won't. I'm sorry to hear that.

Mrs. Hooper: Their names are, let's see. Sandy's are Julie and Steve; Linda's are Billy and Tammy; Lloyd's are Kirk and Eric; and then Larry's are Justin, Jenne, Kiara, Cassandra, and Jacob.

ME: do you have any hobbies?

Mrs. Hooper: Knitting and sewing.

ME: what do you like to do for fun?

Mrs. Hooper: well when you get to be my age...I enjoy my hobbies, quilting at church. Occasionally, well I don't even enjoy shopping really. I lead a very quiet life to tell you the truth. Mostly church.

ME: Do you have a current photo of yourself or any other photos we could use.

Mrs. Hooper: let me go look. A current photo of myself?

ME: yea...



\*looking at photographs for a while\*

ME: do you have any yearbooks from the Ely school?

Mrs. Hooper: I keep a lot of stuff but I don't think I would've kept them that long. When you move, which we did, we didn't move too often but that's when you get rid of all that kind of stuff.

Mrs. Hooper: do you have anybody else we could interview?

ME: I think Kitty had suggested Margaret Mullins. She would be able to talk about the fire.

ME: anybody else?

Mrs. Hooper: I know of somebody but he would never let you interview him. The janitor from over there. He would have a lot of stories because his father was on the school board over there. But he would never, Don Grund, But I'm sure he would never allow it, But it wouldn't hurt to ask. He's about 9 years younger than me, he's retired now. But He would have a wealth of stuff to tell you about the Diorite school. I have a history there because all my siblings went to school there, of coarse I did, and all my children went to school there, and three of my grandchildren went to school there and many nieces and nephews went to school there. We have quite a history there.

ME: really? Do you have any of their phone numbers?

Mrs. Hooper: Let's see...Margaret Mullins...485-1175....Don Grund's is 486-8525.

ME: anything I forgot or you would like to add?

Mrs. Hooper: oh yeah...two of my siblings taught there and one who was on the school board. At the Diorite school they had buses

*Jade*



there who brought in the kids from Clarksburg and Greenwood and one man was, he's about my age now, but he talks about how many apple trees he planted by throwing his apple cores out the window of the school bus.

ME: Who was that did you say?

Mrs. Hooper: Bill Robinson

Mrs. Hooper: We had subjects like Hygiene

Mrs. Hooper: at that time they called behavior, on report cards, they called it deportment.

Mrs. Hooper: Let's see we had geography, history, grammar, art we had only about once a week. Our janitor was really strict, he was *add*  
stricter than the teachers actually. We were scared of him. That one janitor out there at Diorite. I think you covered most of this stuff with.....with your questions.

ME: oK. well thank you very much.