

Hurley, WI

1980

Interviewer:

Transcribed: April 2, 2003

OT: The story is this way. They got married over in the old country in 1882. They went from Tiroe where they lived. Mom was born in France. At the time she was living in Milan. That's near this Milosco town. They married and they decided to come to the United States because in the United States there was a conscript of people going into the Army. Almost every child was subject to time in the army whether there was war or no war. One might be exempt for sickness for family. So they thought they would come to the United States where they wouldn't be all conscripted in the Army or Navy. So they went to Amsterdam or Waterdam, we talked about the two towns together. They took the boat. They landed in New York. They talked Italian, but they were educated German. Tiroians were all educated German. That was Austrian owned. So when they got to New York there weren't many Italians there. There were some, but very few at that time. There's many now. And there were Germans. He talked German while he was there. These Germans said Oh, you speak, read, and write German, you go to Cleveland. You'll get along fine there. So they went. My Dad went with Mother and his brother Constantine and his wife. There was Bertegnoli. He was not married then, but he was a future brother-in-law. His future wife was left in the old country. They weren't going to take any chances. They went to Cleveland and Dad immediately got a job in the Service Sewing Machine Company in the factory. He was making the box top for the old Service Sewing Machine.

?: He was a carpenter?

OE: They were all carpenters from the old country under the apprentice system. The other two didn't get a good job. They would get a job and have to get a job on the boats too. They stayed a couple years or so. In 1882, this will give you an idea, (reading) "The first boy, Herman, was born in Cleveland December 2, 1883. Dad was very acrid, 11pm. The next one, August, was born in Cleveland, 1884. Both December. 11am." Then while they were there, these others didn't find a very good job. A cousin of theirs came along. He had a very good job so he stayed. He was quite a talker. He stayed there. That family is there today, the descendants of that family. They heard about the iron ore discovered in northern Michigan. They made arrangements to come to northern Michigan and they settled in the Lincoln location, which is like the Kerry location to Hurly. In fact, there they built houses. These three carpenters, and there may have been one or two others, built up all those log houses with the help of people. Nobody got paid. Each one worked on each others house. They cut the timber down. They were able to do that without pay apparently. Those houses were open. They put cheesecloth on them in the summer on the windows. They put tar paper on the roof a little later. The doors were covered with something. Eventually each one got finished. They put one up after another. They came in that fast.

INT: They didn't have windows in those days?

OE: Oh yes, but the windows weren't there. They had to go out and buy them. Those towns were just popping up. Most of the houses built around here, to give you an

Hurley, WI

1980

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example...they didn't have plaster. They had sealing for the sides. Then later they plastered them up. Later it did come in. It took a couple years to get these people put up in the business. To have time to set up. They stayed there, then they heard about Hurly. They didn't hear about Ironwood, they heard about Hurly. Hurly was a town that was blasted all over the countryside as mining. It was none other than Burton, the man that built the Burton Hotel. He took all these contracts from his mining lands. He sold his mining lands, the mineral right. The land surface was owned mostly by Northern Chief Iron Company in Wasaw. They sold the mineral right to these people, so much down and a per ton basis.

INT: Was Burton an official in the county?

OE: No, he was a director of Equitable Life Insurance Company in Milwaukee. He had a cottage, a beautiful home on Lake Geneva. There were a lot of money men from Milwaukee and Chicago. They were the ones that started the bank. The Reynolds came up to Lake Geneva. Most people had money with Burton. He advertised the place. This got heard all around. They all started stampeding. I have a book here it's called *The Stampede to the Gogebic Range*. A lot of houses had to be built. The biggest mine was at Ironwood, but they didn't know it at the time, they founded it here. First they found it in Bessemer at the mine up on the hill to the south of Bessemer, Colby. That made them come here. They didn't come here til '87. They walked from Vulcan, MI...I don't know if it's 12 or 15 miles, to Hermansville, MI where there's a lumber mill. The mill is still there. Then they caught some kind of flat car or box car and they came. Three men, no women. They rode as far as Watersmeet. There they had to get off and walk. They hired an Indian or two to guide them here. They didn't need the Indians. All they had to follow was the surveyors where they had already surveyed out and there were woodsmen out cutting for the new railroad. That was coming in from the east. They came here in the fall of '86 and built three houses out here in Kerry. They're all just like...this one right here. They built three houses, no basement. They put up a shelter quick with one of them so they had a place to sleep at night. They wouldn't go out and pay for board.

INT: Were there a lot of Indian guides?

OE: One. That was Indian country. There...they walked from there to here. Then they went back in the late fall and stayed there at their work, whether it was building houses or working for the mine. The mine was...they built shafts for the mine too. They came in March, I think it was 25th. It could be the 23rd, 25th, or 27th. 1887, with the families. They wouldn't think of brining the families when they were building. They wouldn't pay in the old boarding houses to put up families. That would bankrupt them. But when they came, my brother Neil, her grandfather was born. They were waiting for that. On March 3rd 1887 when they were here. They waited for that event. It says here Angelo was born in Vulcan, Michigan March 2nd 1887 7:30am. I'm wrong by one day. When they came, we have...this was a picture here. This was taken a few years later. Here's some characters here. This is my mother. This is my father. My son says, these kids today

Hurley, WI

1980

Interviewer:

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INT: Is there anyone alive that you know who used to run the boarding houses?

OE: Very few because you're going back quite a long while. I was a child then and I'm 78. This is before I was 18 years old. There's very few. But there are people who can tell you what I can tell you. But as far as the boarders, I can give you the names of some of them who had boarding houses in Hurly, but those were regular boarding houses for the miners. That was called...I have the old names, The Commercial Hotel by the Hollards. Then later Mrs. Peacock took it over. She was Mrs. Ivery then. Her husband had been dead for quiet a few years and Landry's wife had been dead quite a few years. They were French. They married and they both worked to run that place. The Peacocks as the Micklet.

INT: Did families ever stay in boarding houses?

OE: No. Most families came here...they stayed at a ??? home. My Uncle had a place...when people came from the old country they could stay up there. You could go in there, child or adult, you could go in and that was a straight honest saloon. Maybe people stayed over night, 2 nights upstairs where the family themselves lived until they placed them. He used to tell us a story about how Italians that came to this country would say they were going to Jile. Jile today means Gile. I remember gentlemen for gentlemen. Anyhow, these people would not come so they would go to the depot to trace these guys. The agent said they let them off at Gilet, WI. They would say Jile and...

INT: So most of the time when someone new was coming over, people knew they were coming.

OE: Yes. When somebody came over like that then others followed. They would send back and say don't stay over there where you get 35 cents a day, come here and get a dollar. Here's what Dad's wages were. This was very much over what the average man was getting. He at least got once and a half what the laborer was getting. In one month, July 19th 1890, that was his check.

INT: \$57

OE: That amounted to about \$1.70 a day. That was with deductions. The deductions were taken off before. It might have been \$65. They had a doctor in here. He takes part out for a month. The others would get a dollar a day and it would amount to \$0.85 to \$0.90 after deductions. That you can take. From the mines...in Hurly here you have...Hurly began...the miner began in 1885. They tell about the new cemetery out along side the railroad track. That was out here. It says here, there have been four deaths. T.M. McDonald November of the new year. W. ??? November 8th suicide. James Pearson April 10th delirium, Andrew Bund in June of fever. All have died beside the railroad southwest of the village. Then you go on here to officers. The town of Von,

Hurley, WI

1980

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Transcribed: April 2, 2003

of which Hurly is a chief element, the following officers were elected. This is 1885. Supervisors: James A. Woods, Chairman, J.S. Soloman, D.P. Onoun, Town Clerk John Anchors, Treasurer, Daniel Kennedy, Assessor, D. McVichy Justices, it looks like there's two assessors, John Anchors and M.F. Hawkins, Constable. Marshall Charles Eldrid, Overseer of the Highway. George Sutherland, Fire Warden...

INT: Was there a regular fire department?

EO: Yes, they usually got a volunteer fire department going. What happened was when they had a fire they'd ring a bell where City Hall was. When that bell rang, teamsters from all over would bring in fuel and logs. When he got there he'd hook onto the wagon. The first one there would get \$5 for getting there and he'd haul the fire wagon.

INT: Where did they get the water from?

EO: They had an old machine, an old farm machine and they'd get down to a well and pump it. I've got a picture of that somewhere here. It aint much use having the 4th of July parade after they didn't use it anymore. But anyway, they built the Court House...it was built for City Hall but with the intentions of being a county. In 1903 Iron County became a county, so in 1902 they began building the Court House. I think I'm right on that. They needed roads. Ashland didn't want to be bothered with all these roads. It was costly to put roads all through the wilderness.

INT: What kind of roads did they have?

EO: They had dirt roads and they had to put logs across them and dirt over them through the swamps. They all come in to Lambeau Trail, which is the old Indian trail, walking or horseback. Some of them could take a boat from Ashland to Saxon Park.

INT: Oh, they take a boat to Ashland.

EO: Some of them did and some followed the Indian trail. I know people by the name Nasser came by walking from Ashland. He said that he'd been working on the railroad going out west for Jim Hill. Minneapolis, St. Paul. Then they came here, they heard about all this big iron ore. There were three of them. It was winter and one of them died. He's the one that built the basement for this house, Andrew Nasser. He said we buried him on the banks of the Montreal River, him and his wife own a bank side. On the Hurley side, I don't know. They usually came in from the Iron Wood side.

****SIDE B****

EO: The people were coming from all over. Many, many people came in from the Michigan area where Dad came in. Many people from Ashland like Edan and Wierden came from Ashland way. From the Michigan way, Dad came and a whole lot of mining

Interviewer:

Transcribed: April 2, 2003

engineers came from that way. There were mines there first. Captains were Englishmen from the old country, from England. They knew mining. They were never captains over there, but they got to the mines since they were children and they became adept to mining like Captain Lucchi. Captain Lucchi was a Captain in the Kerry Mine. They tell lots of stories about that. He knew iron and he knew how to find it. He had a smell for it. Officers that I give you here were the 1889 officers....those were the first officers. Now to go on from here, that is courtesy of Gowdy and Goodell, History of Hurley up to October 1885. 1889 Hurley officers. (reading from paper) The following were elected officials of the town of Vonn...(skip in tape) They had a chairman and they were also apparently the supervisor. But they don't say that here. The city of Hurley was incorporated in 1912. Henry Mead was the head. Then there was Allen George, Lambricks, Joseph Pollock, W. Peter, Donald Grubeck, Henry ???, H. F. VanStratten the Dentist, J.F. Collins, George Murrins (from Kerry Mine), Ben Bergmam, (also from Kerry Mine) Paul Overall, Charles Meno (business man) Angelo Sikkio. They got \$50 a year. The Mayor was paid \$600 a year. City Superintendent Daniel Reese- \$75 per month. Now you asked a question, what was it?

INT: What was a constable?

OE: The constable was a policeman. You had to have quite a few constables because you have to remember 1887 they had more than 7,000 people in Hurley. There are only 2,500 or a hundred less in Hurley. But there were 7,000 people in Hurley in 1887. That's how fast they came in here. They built these little shacks. Then the shacks burned down. There were two big fires in 1887 that burned down the whole main street. They were one month apart. The first one started in the ??? meat company. They had a place in Iron Wood but the main one was in Hurley because at that time Hurley was thought to be *the* town of the range. A fire started in the laundering department of the Gogebic Meat Company. There were two buildings a little apart with a road going back to a big barn which was facing to the east down the alley. That fire took down all the buildings on that side of Main Street and this side of Main Street up to I think Third Avenue. I could be wrong by a block, but so what. A month later came the fire of the Alcazar Theater. The Alcazar Theater was just around the corner from the Marble Hall. It started the third building over, it was three fronts wide and three stories high. That started with a fire in a curtain of the theater part upstairs. The curtain went high up. That burnt everything down to where the other fire came a month before up to this street. From the Milwaukee Lake Shore River Road, which is at Northwestern. The Soo Line was called Wisconsin Central. Up around the corner here, where the Marble Hall is now the Calabranie House, it came around and there was the Burton Boarding House. There was another boarding house back in this block. It burned around another boarding house on the other side. It burnt everything clean. It didn't go into the Burton Hotel. The Burton Boarding House is now the Burton Hotel. That's not the...the boarding house is where people lived, the miners wanted a cheaper room. The Burton Hotel was a pretty fancy place. They got in a lot of Swedish girls from Milwaukee and the area there. Many of them married here. They were dressed up in Swedish lace and waited on the table. That motel was a famous

Interviewer:

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hotel. Burton figured this would be a big city. Mrs. Johnson was one of them. Mrs. Morris was one of them. And I think Mrs. Peterson was one of them. But they were all clean, fine girls from the Milwaukee countryside area. These were clean people. When they got here they met people around here and they married. And there were others, but I can't tell you... They had a big, big dance hall. Every now and then they would have dances in there. When I was growing up... 1910 or '12, I can remember we'd stick our heads in the door and watch. We were just little schaffers then. On the porch of that hotel they used to have every Saturday night, a band concert. The porch was right here, all around.

INT: When you were younger what did you and your friends do for a past time?

OE: We played ball every chance we had that we weren't working. We were always working it seems, but we played ball right in the middle of the road. When a buggy and a horse would come by we would have to stop and then resume play. We broke quite a few windows and then we'd have to work to fix them.

INT: Somewhere, was there a livery stable in Hurley?

OE: Oh yes. There was a livery stable right there where that house is. Right straight across from there is where they kept the cutters in the summer. Then they pulled them out in the winter and put the buggies in. In the side right up to the garage was the livery stable. I remember it well.

INT: Did people just rent horses?

OE: Yes. People would come in town and they'd want to see the mines or go out to Montreal or anything else, they'd come up and hire a horse and buggy. They'd pay so much for that. They called it the Burton House Livery. Morris and somebody ran that to begin with. Then Herrington bought in to it. It was Morris and T.S. Herrington, and finally... the Morris family is down here on Ninth Avenue. Mrs. Subudi... that would be Eleanor, one of the Morris girls. And Tom Morris, the son, I think he's the youngest in the family. I don't know if Johnny or Theresa was the oldest. Theresa, Eleanor, Evelyn, John. Theresa is down in Wisconsin somewhere. The last time she came up she went out to the cemetery.

INT: When did the livery stable go out of business?

OE: The livery stable was taken over eventually in 1912-14 or '15 by Schauer, people in Iron Wood. Vic Schauer and somebody from Iron Wood ran the livery stable and they sold the horses. He didn't want it as a sales stable. Schauer had it as a sales stable and also rented out. By that time when Schauer had it, automobiles had come in. So there wasn't too much of that. It was a sales stable. When Schauer went out, I think he died. I don't know which was first, the Catoy's rented it as an automobile garage. The Catoy's

Hurley, WI

1980

Interviewer:

Transcribed: April 2, 2003

had it burned down. There was another one...Dormidy...something like that, he had a livery stable in the next block on this side right back of where the eating house is on Main Street. The livery barn there was running out. There were other barns that were not liveryies. They were business barns. Eagan had one at the top of the hill about a block beyond the Catholic Church on this side. His house was here and his barn was in back of that. He did logging. We brought in cordwood for business places that wanted it.

INT: And he stored that in the barn?

OE: Yes. He had those draft horses. Draft horses, not like the livery stable. Henry Mead had a barn right down here on Fifth Avenue and Division Street, right on the corner. Those two houses on Fifth Avenue are each half of that barn. They cut it in half and re-done it and then he sold it. One of the things that I always have nostalgia about is the old business town. Right on Second Avenue where Lambert's Boarding was... a cement warehouse on that side. It would be this side of the track. That warehouse was on the other side of the Soo Line track. On the south side on Second Avenue was a big fountain where a team of horses could drive up and each of the team of horses could come up and drink. Along the edge where the water came up there was a place where people could drink out of it, high above. You'd put your finger on this and it would come up. There was another fountain down on Third Avenue where the Bank Tavern is, right on the side of the Bank Tavern about 20 feet in on the side there was one of those iron double fountains where you could drive a team up to drink. Another place in town where there was a fountain for horses or cattle was on Second Avenue which ended down there at the Villa. Right on the side there was the Peterson Slaughtering House. There is a different name now. A fellow from Iron Wood got in there, I know the family well, but it was a Hurley boy...

INT: Were there hitching posts for the horses?

OE: Yes. There's one right now, I think I took a picture of it, on Fifth Avenue south, the last house, one block beyond the Catholic Church, Josephine Murphy lived there, Superintendent of the schools. There was a hitching post, it's down low because the road has been raised. The road had bumps and now it's straight. You can see the hitching post there yet. It belonged to Mr. O'Brien. O'Brien was a salesman for ??? Dexter Company. He was a grocery salesman. He was not a poor man. He was a red head fellow and sold groceries to all the various stores. He had a horse to take him around. I think he owned his own horse because there was a barn behind that. He would come home and eat his dinner and work his way back I suppose.

INT: Were there a lot of grocery stores in Hurley at one time?

OE: Oh yes. The main one was Westler's, which was the Gogebic Meat Company. Then there was Day and Brown who had grocery stores here, people who moved away. Then came in Luscha who had a grocery store together with Della. Right on the corner of

Hurley, WI

1980

Interviewer:

Transcribed: April 2, 2003

Fourth Avenue and Silver on the north west side where the tavern run by...that's the exact place, the last building in the first block. That was Lucia. Then he moved over and bought out Day. Brown was in the next block. Out in Guile, Joe and Mary had a market. But that wasn't...that was 1912. There was a big fire that burned that one down in 1912. Joe and Mary's Meat Market. There was a Bottert Tavern and the Tucci Tavern burned down and it burned down along with a house and a store. Guile was a thriving place. There were some good mines going in Guile. You take...you see a town like this starts up with people from all walks of life. There were many people coming here for the business days. Some wanted to make a fast buck if they can. There was stock sold on these mines. In 1887 they claimed there were over a hundred corporations founded. I've got the papers on it. 80 some were here in Iron County. Or what is now Iron County. These corporations were \$500,000 to a million dollars. This is where the people who had the...not the mineral rights, who took the contracts, they'd sell these. These people would sell stock and they said that money was made and lost in one day because most of the people who came here to run mines didn't have the money to run mines. They pretner all failed. They'd get started and find ore, but it took more money than they had. For instance, the Kerry mine, there were three mines out there. I know the names of them but I can't tell you off hand. I've got them all in my files. They did make a go. In 1887 came Munger with his company. It turned out to be the Pecans-Mather Company by name. It was good ore. About the same time the ??? mine was purchased and started by a man by the name of...the same man that found ore in Ironwood here...one of the first officers of Hurley...Wood. James A. Wood. He found ore in Iron Wood. He was the first chairman of Hurley, but he later moved to Iron Wood. He was also the first post master of Hurley. But John I. Wood...people mixed those names...came over here from the Schaffin Mine outside of Iron Mountain, MI. It was a big mine. He came over here and his group built the Montreal Mine. He knew where to start it. He started it on the Old North 40. They picked it out right on the surface to begin with. After about a year or so he sold out to the people from Cleveland. That was started by John I. Wood, not to be confused with James A. Wood, who lived up in that house where Joe Murphy lived. That was James A. Wood.

INT: Did a lot of the mines use different names?

OE: Oh yes. They all had different names. The Kerry Mine was out here. The Windsor Mine was also part of the Kerry Mine. And they had the Chicago Mine and the Superior Mine.

INT: But the different companies, were there restrictions on the amount of property they could own?

OE: They could own as much property as they contracted for. The mineral...the land was originally by the Washca Northern Chief Company. They in turn sold land, but not minerals, and also contracted for minerals by the ton for which ever way...so much a ton, whether it was ten cents or fifty cents...

Hurley, WI

1980

Interviewer:

Transcribed: April 2, 2003

INT: And they would contract with these different companies.

OE: These different companies would contract. Now if they found that ??? they'd make a contract with these people. Northern Chief wanted it because they got so much a ton. Up to not so many years ago, the biggest part of Hurley was still owned by Northern Chief Iron Company, even the surface mines. Now they are gradually selling off the surface rights but they're still holding the mineral rights. They're not only holding the mineral rights for minerals, but for water in case they use water in these mines. The water will clear itself in so many years. The water will go up and up and up. It goes through gravel. They're talking about going to Lake Superior and everywhere else, but I'm sure all they would have to do is take this mine water. I'm not a water specialist. Up in the Copper Country they can do with that water, it's the most crystal water.

INT: So the mines are filling up with water.

OE: Oh yes. Now, we go back to the mining, you said names...Giabo Mine was the Guile Mine. Montreal was 1,2,3,4,5 and so on. They had ore by the different names. The Kerry had empire ore. If you notice in Guile there are streets named....I don't know if it's Kawcaulin Street...I'd have to look at a map, they sound like Indian names to me. But you see the Kerry Mine had a fine ??? team and it's called Kerry Empires. You talked about what to do...we got off that. Everybody went to see the ball games. They would yell their heads off at the ball games, and they had good teams. The miners had sons that were rough and tough hard working people. The Kerry's had a nice team. I think it was 1912 they had a team that played an Iron Wood team here and it was a 21 inning game. The Kerry Empire won in the 21st inning. I lost that article I had on the game...I don't see it here. I remember the pitcher. I saw the game. Johnson would fire a fast ball. It was like a bullet almost. The player standing at the plate would have one foot out so they could duck if they had to. It went 21 innings and Kerry finally got two runs and they won 5 to 3. That was the longest game that was ever played on the range up to that time, and I think since too. But there were a lot of teams. Hurley had a main team. I played on the ??? which was a second team back in the 1917s and '18s. But the first team...when I was a youngster was the Old Hurley Red Cedar Team. Then there was Hurley's Best. That was Blue Cedar Team. Benny Clifford was on the Blue Cedar Team. He was third baseman and then he was first baseman, then later he was center fielder on the Red Cedar Team. Hurley's Best graduated up to the top teams. There was one...Joe Pollock, he came from the Milwaukee area. There was ??? third baseman. Bud Sheen, I think he was short-stop. Might have been second base. Jack ??? later played first base. ??? Steve Costello, also a center fielder. People like that...oh and Charlie Lennon. He was a school teacher. He had two brothers that were lawyers, Pat and Drell. There were some girls in there too. They were teachers. The old Nicholson family, they owned a mine out in Iron Wood. They bought the rights. The mine was the...just on the other side of Iron Wood. Between Iron Wood and Bessemer there's a hill there. I don't know the name...they dug a hole in the mine. They were taking it out by the wheel

Interview with Otto Ersalmer
Hurley, WI
1980

12

Interviewer:

Transcribed: April 2, 2003

barrow. But he needed money. Then came the Depression of 1903 I think it was. They called it the year of the panic. The mines closed.

INT: All of them did?

OE: Just about all of them did. Theo only one that didn't close...

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