

Interview with Cecelia Loch Parrett
Stevenson Michigan
October 9, 1997

RM: Can I call you Cecelia

CP: Yes, I am Cecelia Parrett, I am Cecelia Lock Parrett

RM: How do you spell your maiden name?

CP: Ce, my maiden name? L-O-C-H

RM: where were you born? in the, where were you born?

CP: Where was I born?

RM: yes

CP: Green Bay

RM: Green Bay, and how did you get to Northern Michigan?

CP: My mother, my father died and my mother came back here to Ingalls and then there came to Stephenson and my step father lived in Stephenson, in Daggett rather, then we moved to Daggett.

RM: I see and what did your step father do?

CP: Pardon

RM: What did your step father do?

CP: My step father was a farmer.

RM: ok, I see. And then what year were you born, the date and the year.

CP: If you don't speak loudly I can't understand you

RM: Okay. What date and year were you born? What is your birthday?

CP: My birthday is November 12,

RM: okay in what year

CP: in 1895

RM: 1895 okay. Now how did you get and then did you go to school in this area.

CP: I went to school in Daggett

RM: okay.

CP: all my life. Kindergarden through high school

RM: Now how did you go to Northern Michigan University?

CP: well I wanted to be a teacher, I went to County Normal then we had to go to another school for short courses. That is how I got to Northern.

RM: So you went there to become a teacher

CP: Pardon.

RM: so you went there to become a teacher

CP: yes

RM: And what year did you enter Northern.

CP: pardon RM: What year did you enter Northern?

CP: Don't ask me, I can't remember that far back.

RM: Can't remember okay. Now could you tell us a little about what you remember of Northern. CP: What

RM: Could you tell us about Northern, what you remember about Northern?

CP: Northern was I went as far as summer school. Most of the time and I wanted to go, I was 6 hours away from my degree.

RM: Oh, ok

CP: I couldn't go the last year, I couldn't finish, because my daughter died and she left a six year old boy and I couldn't see a child without a mother. So I left school, I was through teaching that school year, and I went to live with them for 3 years and took care of him.

RM: Were you able to teach?

CP: I went back teaching, part time school. But I didn't take no full job after that.

RM: Now were you working for a teaching certificate.

CP: Pardon

RM: Were you working for a teaching certificate?

CP: yes I was.

RM: Okay, so you came within a few hours of getting a teaching certificate?

CP: yes 6 hours

RM: 6 hours away okay. What was the college like at that time.

CP: College, well it was a school and we stayed there had a roommate, mostly I remember everytime we left the school the room, we forget to lock the door and the door was locked on us and they had to get someone to unlock the door for us. I don't know how many times that happened but after that we had to remember our key. So we brought the key along.

RM: Now did you live in the dormatory.

CP: pardon.

RM: did you live in the dormatory on campus? The dormatory the big four story building?

CP: The laboratory?

RM: No. the dormatory. Did you live in the dormatory?

CP: yes I did

RM: across the street from the school?

CP: yes

RM: were there many people living there?

CP: yes, there were quite a few.

RM: so you went to school in the summer time and you lived in the dormatory.

CP: pardon. yes.

RM: What was that like living in the dormatory.

CP: Well we had a bed, and a chair in the room. There were 2 girls to a room. We took a double room. And I did, I had a friend that I slept with. The only trouble was every time we went out we forgot to lock the door and our door locked and when we came back we had to have someone unlock the door for us. That was the only trouble.

RM: What was the food like in the dormatory, was it good?

CP: I think so. I hardly remember that.

RM: you don't have any complaints.

CP: pardon

RM: you don't have any complaints about the food.

CP: no I don't

RM: Do you remember some of the teachers that taught you?

CP: pardon

RM: do you remember some of the teachers that were teaching?

CP: Some of what

RM: Some of the teachers that taught you, at Northern

CP: at Northern, no I don't

RM: Do you remember some of the courses you took?

CP: I took English and I what I remember best, I don't remember the rest.

RM: Do you remember the President Kaye? President Kaye?

CP: I don't think so.

RM: another thing, did you remember anything of the Heart of Northern.

CP: the what

RM: The Heart of Northern, do you remember that.

CP: no

RM: nothing like that okay. How did you get from Stephenson to Marquette.

CP: my car

RM: you went by car.

CP: yes I went by car. I had to drive a with my friends.

RM: And you didn't take the train?

CP: No

RM: okay. Did you find it pleasant to be up there in the summer time?

CP: Pardon

RM: was it pleasant to be up there in the summer time?

CP: yes it was. It was nice and cool up there.

RM: What were some of the activities, you went to class and what were some of the activities, did you do any hiking, walking or anything?

CP: no I don't remember except the one activity, we had to do is do a book report and I wanted to make a report on one book, but the professor chose a different book for me and he chose a different character that I should recall and describe. That was the Last Days of Pompey, and he wanted me to describe the old Jew that was on there. Of course the old Jew would gather up anything he could get his hands on and everything was covered up then. But I remember Iona, the blind girl I wanted to describe her, but he had a different idea.

RM: did you do anyother book reports or projects like that?

CP: no I don't, no I don't

RM: that is the only one you could remember.

CP: yes

RM: and how about any other courses you took that you can remember?

CP: No I don't remember them.

RM: and do you remember, what did you think of the city of Marquette?

CP: What did I think of it?

RM: yes.

CP: It was very hilly. I didn't like the idea, I thought it was alright in the summer time, but I wonder how they got up there in the winter time. That stop sign was in the middle of that hill. How they got through that. But I guess they made it alright.

RM: Well we still have problems in the winter time. YOU have to be careful. NOW did you ever take the street car to school?

CP: no. we just parked our car up there and walked to school.

RM: Now how many summers did you attend Northern?

CP: I don't remember.

RM: You went there for quite a few summers?

CP: yes. I went there and I went to ? to ?

RM: okay. Then where did you teach?

CP: I taught country schools. I loved it. I had all the grades Kindergarden through sixth grade. And I liked that. But the last year I had kindergarden through third grade. The last four years I taught. Then I was going to Menominee to teach sixth grade, this school had closed that I was teaching at at that time. And I couldn't go to there because they had consolidated with Menominee and I had contract with Menominee at that time and they had asked for a release from my contract because my oldest daughter had died and she left this little 6 yr old boy and I couldn't see him motherless, no one to take care of him except strangers so he clinged to me anyway he always did, so I took care of him then, that ended my college, but I had planned on going for 6 weeks and clear it up. Because I was 6 hours away from my degree, but I had to leave it go. I haven't regreted it because I loved him more than I loved school.

RM: That is very good, very good. Now where were some of the schools that you taught at around here, were they around Stephenson?

CP: No. I taught at Lake Township. Way out by the lakes. It was called lost lake school. And I taught there for 10 years and then I came out to Edison and I taught there for 2 years before that, before the schools closed. They consolidated with Stephenson then and I didn't want to go into a graded system and but then when I went to Menominee that was a graded system too. So it didn't do any good that way.

RM: Could you talk a little bit about what it was like to teach in a ungraded school, rural school that way.

CP: I liked the idea, it seemed like one grade the lower grades learned from the higher grades. They listened, when they got through with there work they listened to the higher grades and they learned more that way so I was very contended there.

RM: So how many students would you have in the class room?

CP: how many?

RM: how many would you have in a class room?

CP: about 30.

RM: And were all the grades in the room?

CP: Yes. Kindergarden through sixth.

RM: Through sixth, I see. And then where would the students go after sixth?

CP: They would go out to Stephenson.

RM: I see. So how many schools did you teach at?

CP: I taught one two three schools.

RM: At three schools, so Menominee was the last one?

CP: yes.

RM: I see. So you said then one of the schools consolidated?

CP: Whats that?

RM: You said one of the schools consolidated then you had to leave?

CP: Well they all consolidated with Stephenson. Stephenson took over the whole thing. So they all went. Quite a few townships consolidated with Stephenson township and for school matters and they all go there now.

RM: now what did they

CP: I did have a chance to go to Cedarville, Cedarriver, but I liked the other school better so I stayed there.

RM: So where did you live when you were teaching school that way, did you live at the school?

CP: Did I live where?

RM: Where did you live when you were teaching?

CP: Oh I lived on a farm, about 18 miles from school, I had to drive.

RM: Oh I see. okay.

CP: in the winter time that was no fun.

RM: Now what was the, was this your family farm you lived on?

CP: yes.

RM: When I was comming down the road here, I saw Jacob Parrett. Who was Jacob Parrett?

CP: Who was he.

RM: yes.

CP: I, Jacob Parrett, on a tombstone.

RM: No, there is a park out here, there is a park out here with his name on it.

CP: Oh I see, I don't know who Jacob Parrett was.

RM: wasn't a relative of yours?

CP: Must of been a relative of my husbands.

RM: I see. So that wasn't your husband.

CP: No.

RM: So what did your husband do?

CP: My husband was a farmer.

RM: Okay. So do you remember when you lived in Daggett, in that area, were there a lot of German people there?

CP: There were more Swedish people.

RM: Swedish people?

CP: yes. It was a Swedish community.

RM: I see. And what is your background?

CP: Pardon

RM: What is your background, are you Swedish? What is your ethnic background? What nationality are you?

CP: I am everything, I am German, French, Polish, and other dog I guess.

RM: So your family didn't come from this area, they came from Green Bay, originally from Green Bay?

CP: Yes. My father did.

RM: then you settled up here.

CP: But when he died he died up here, and my mother came back to Ingalles where she was raised. Then we lived where my step father lived in Daggett, so we moved to Daggett than after my mother remarried, we moved to Daggett.

RM: So what did they grow on the farm?

CP: Grew sugar beets, cucumbers, garden and grains, corn and other grains, potatoes and things like that.

RM: So did you work on the farm?

CP: Yes I did.

RM: So what were some of the things they had you do?

CP: Oh we had to pick pickles, top sugar beets, pull sugar beets, quite a few other things we had to do. But after I remarried I worked on the farm my husband also had a farm, and I did harder work than that. But I also did a lot of weaving carpets.

RM: Oh really.

CP: I liked that work.

RM: How did you learn to weave carpets.

CP: Watched other people do it. I helped other people fix there looms, so they could do it, they were blind so they couldn't see. And I helped them and bought there loom when they got through and that is how I got started on that business.

RM: Did you make enough to sell the carpets?

CP: Oh yes. I other people brought me the rags and I made it with that.

RM: I see. Do you have any other, we were talking about Marquette and Northern, do you have any other recollections about.

CP: Of Northern

RM: yes.

CP: Northern, no I don't think the school was as large then as it is now. As teachers we used to go up there for conventions and we stopped at dormitory's and places like that and had lectures so forth, such as they do now, I imagine.

RM: When you went there were all the buildings connected or was there an open space between, there was Longyear Hall, and there was the Library one time and then there was an open space that was eventually Kaye Hall or the Administration building with a big stairway and then there was a gymnasium and then there was PeterWhite Hall of Science, does any of that come back as a memory?

CP: I don't remember. I remember there were quite a few buildings but I don't remember what they were. I never had much time to find out.

RM: So you were busy studying then?

CP: yes.

RM: So you took English, do you remember any of the other courses you took?

CP: No I don't, I remember the English better than anything else.

I know I took other courses, but I don't remember what they were.

RM: Well that, do you have anyother, anything else you want to make a comment about?

CP: Pardon

RM: Do you want to say anything else about your life and what you did as a teacher,

CP: At college

RM: At college or anything

CP: we didn't have much time to do much, we studied more when we weren't studying we ate and that was about it. Because we didn't have much time, we did a little shopping once and awhile and that was about it. We didn't have much time then, we went there for three weeks. When you go for three weeks you don't have much time for anything else.

RM: Okay

CP: Three weeks at a time.

RM: Well this has been interesting, I thank you for letting me interview you this way.

CP: Well I was very glad to do it. If I could do anything to help the college I would be happy to do it. Because I like the school very very much.

RM: Have you been back to visit?

CP: No I haven't.

RM: I guess it has been a long time since you have been to Marquette?

CP: yes it has been a long time since I was there. I don't know Marquette anymore. I imagine it is very very different now from what it used to be.

RM: Yes, it is a little bigger now.

CP: We went to teacher meetings up there a lot. but thats most of the time wedid what we did, I remember one time one teacher well the lectures that we had there everybody came in and you know how people like to sit in the back seats, well they came in and all sat in the back seats we sat more in the front cause we wanted to hear and when he came in to give his leacture he said now everybody stand so everybody stood Now stay holding to your chair and turn it around so they did now he says sit down, so you know what happened all the people that were in the front row where in the backand all

the people in the back were in the front. So I thought that was a good idea.

RM: I never heard of that before that's very interesting.

CP: That was interesting to he did that so slick. You know he just had them turn their chairs around sit down everybody in the back was in the front.

RM: Now was this an English course? Do you remember? That this happened in?

CP: I think that it was English course casue we that was what his lecture was about.

RM: Alright well thank you,

CP: I love to read, but I can't read anymore the hardest part that I have the hardest part of my life is when I can't read see other people read and I can't do it but I have to be sastified with what I have. I don't think there's so many people that have so much, so many memories that I have. ? they could have never made it if it wasn't for me, I could help them that much in English and things like that, and one girl now that I';m trying to get her going for nursing.

RM: So your still teaching then after all this time.

CP: Thats what they say, once a teacher always a teacher I guess.

RM: Could you now did you enjoy poetry?

CP: Yes,

RM: And you memorize poems?

CP: Yes I wrote quit a few poems,

RM: You wrote some poems?

CP: I never wrote any, no

RM: But you remember them?

CP: Oh yes,

RM: How did you learn how to remember poems like that?

CP: I don't know it's just easy to do it, their easy for me to remember poetry.

RM: Did you have to memorize poetry at Northern?

CP: I don't think so,

RM: No, ok, Norhtern has changed do you remember just one building that you remember while you were there?

CP: No I don't remember the names of any of the buildings

RM: How about the buildings themseleves any thing about them statures in the buildings

CP: Well the were kind of old and had been used a lot

RM: Where there paintings on the walls or any statues in the hallways

CP: I remember hallways walking up and down and that's all.

RM: Ok but nothing about what was on the walls or statues of Lincoln

CP: I don't remeber any of those I don't know if I didn't have time to look at them or what

CP: It's impossible now, Wouldn't do me any good amnyway

RM: Well you'd have the degree I mean the certificate

CP: Yes I could no longer work

RM: No, but your encourageing people to go to school here.

CP: Pardon

RM: But your encourageing people to go to school here.

CP: Oh yes, I know people who that goes to school there, I have a neice that, a cousin that goes to school there.

RM: oh. And what is her name?

CP: Her last name is Dill anyway, what in the world is her first name, I can't remember it, right off the bat I can't remember her first name.

RM: okay.

CP: But she is a cousin of mine. She is my cousins daughter.

RM: oh, okay.

CP: And I know boys that went there. Now I know her first name, now it comes to me, Malissa Dill.

RM: Malissa Dill and she is going there now?

CP: yes. She is studying French, she wants to be a French teacher. I asked her why French, she said she chose french. I told her to study Spanish.

RM: You didn't study any languages at Northern?

CP: No.

Side B:

CP: I did go to see him and I went to school to. I taught after he died too. He died in '55.

Womens Voice: When did you start school there?

CP: What?

Womens voice: When did you start school?

CP: At the ?, I was teaching already.

WV: So you went to college when you were married?

CP: oh yes, I took all my college courses after I was married.

WV: Did you drive from Stephenson?

CP: yes. I went two summers to Ferris Institute, it was Ferris Institute at that time, it is Ferris University now I guess. Just because they gave the courses I needed at that time I applied while I went there.

RM: so this sounds like she was going to school later on,

WV: Yes not as a young girl but more as a married homemaker she went to school.

RM: yes. So that would make more sense of driving, I was thinking she went when she was a young person it would be 1914.

WV: sounds like she did it as a married

RM: yes. Okay

WV: Did you have kids at home at the time?

CP: What

WV: Were your kids at home when you were going to college?

CP: yes. I don't know how many I had at home, I only had four.

WV: were some of them married already? Were some of them married already.

CP: No.

WV: Were they all living at home?

CP: yes they were all living at home.

WV: okay.

CP: But they didn't mind me going and stayed with there father.

WV: your eye is watering.

RM: Do you get the Alumni magazine?

CP: Pardon

RM: Do you get the Alumni Magazine?

CP: yes.

RM: do you enjoy getting that.

CP: I don't read it now, because I can't see anymore.

RM: but you enjoyed getting it.

CP: I enjoyed getting it while I could read, the hardest part for me now is I can't read. If I could read I would be very happy. But I can no longer read. But I read I had to give them all away.

WV: I can't hear you Cecel, what is it about your writing?

CP: I said I can't write as well as the teacher. The first day I went to school I couldn't write as well as the teacher, so I came home crying. I thought I should write as well as the teacher, because I could read and write before I started school.

WV: Who was your teacher?

CP: What, who taught me?

WV: yes

CP: I don't remeber.

WV: did your mom and dad teach you to read and write?

CP: oh yea I guess so, my mother did my father was dead. So my mother taught me to write and read. I could read and write before I started school.

WV: what can you tell me about your first husband?

CP: My first husband I only had one.

WV: you were just married the one time.

CP: yes.

WV: How many years were you married?

CP: 41 I guess.

WV: That is a long time.

CP: Yep, it was a long time. He died in 1955.

WV: So you have been a widow this long, forty-some years.

CP: Yes, I have been a widow that long. Been a widow longer then I was married....I had a little boy in school one day came up to my desk and he asked if I was coming out to live that winter and I said yes and he said you and your brother, he meant my husband. I said no Natty my husband is dead. He said ya know Mrs. Parrett you ought to get married. This is a little six year old. Mrs. Parrett didn't take his advice.

RM: What is that poem about one day is all we have. Can you tell me about that poem one day is all we have?

CP: Oh you mean

WV: The one that you have on your refrigerator door.

CP: Let see, God long ago has counted out the days each of us lives yrt one day at a time is all he gives. Yet one day we may have jahumbo, the sublime, the rich, the poor. You live one day at a time. So let us all be greatful for that one day that is here enjoying good enduring bad this fortitude ensure.

WV: That is the one! Do you have any other good ones?

CP: Do I have any other good ones? Well I have lots of them.

WV: Tell me another one.

CP: there to long.

WV: Do you have any short ones?

CP: What?

WV: Do you have any short ones?

CP: I don't think so, the only thing that I have is I remember

part of the poem of the old settlers tale.

WV: Tell it to me.

CP: The old settler said: "thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead but even God can't kill them once they are said."

WV: That is very true.

CP: Because he told his wife when he came home that night that the cows were gone and he said that you should have kept the animals in a zoo and shut them in you have nothing else to do. All our lives on me must fall you just lay around and let me do it all. But that wasn't true. That is what he thought at that time, either he hadn't expressed it she would not have died. Because the next day she went out for the cows and she got caught in a rain storm and she died. So that is why he said thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead. But it is true.

WV: Do you have any other good ones?

CP: Not short ones.

WV: That is all right.

CP: Oh I have lots of them: which one do you want?

WV: I don't know. You've probably have lots that I have never heard.

CP: Oh Lockinfore come out of the west to all the border, his deed was the best ?? had known, he rode all alone, he rode unarmed and he rode all alone he was so daring and loved so faithful in love so darkless in ? there never was ? like young Lockinfor he stayed not for break stopped not for storm, swam the ? river before there was known, ?? the bride had consented the gallop came late for flager in love and a ? in ?? the bravely he entered ? the bridesmen and kingmens the bridefather and all his hand on his sword bride groom said never a word oh come me in peace here or come here in war ?? i love your daughter ?? like a tide now I have come with this lost love of mine to lead but one measure drink one cup of wine for there are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far that would gladly be bride to young Lockinfore. bride kissed the goblit the knight took it up he quaked up the ? and through down the cup she looked down to blush she looked up to sign she smiled on her lips but a tear in her eye he took her fair hand her brother Kabar now ? in measure said young Lockinfor

WV: Keep going Cel. I'll be right back

CP: So stately is form so lovely her face but never a haul But I don't know how to say the last word but it means couple never before did a couple de grace but her mother did fret and father iddi fume and the bridegroom stood dangling in bonnet pumeabd the

bridesmaid whispered better by far ?? on touch of her hand one word in her ear he reached the hall door his charger stood near, the light to the cope the fair lady he swung, so light to the saddle for her he sprung, she's won over ? ; ; it was mounting ? foresters, ? they rode and they ran there was racing and chasing the lost bride of Nezerabe never did they see for ? in love so dauntless in more never heard of a gallint like young Lockinfar.

RM: Very good I wish my memory was that good.

CP: If I only knew what that word was it's a Scottish word It means a couple. It must mean a couple because there were two people dancing. But it's a Scottish word, Scottish I don't know.

RM: Maybe I can find out, there are some people I know up in Marquette, that are Scottish.