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Do you remember your dad talking about the old country, for example, where they lived, where your dad's family came from?

Yes from 008. Province I guess was called 008

I think the town was called 008.

Do you know anything about how they lived?

They had a farm.

Were they craftspeople of any type? Did they . . . do you remember them making things for market or anything like that.

No. Just farming.

Do you ever hear them saying anything about the things they used to grow?

No, they just made a living out of it. That's all

So they were just basically farmers?

That's all.

They sold some of their farm produce?

Some of it, yes. And then some of the people in the winter time when things were slow they would go to a different area where . . . maybe a bigger town and get work for the winter.

Some of them did. I don't know if he did that. The little money that they had, they would buy clothing and shoes and stuff, they had enough to eat, but the other things.

Things they couldn't make?

Yes, that's right.

Did you ever hear him saying anything about the amount of money he made, like it wasn't enough?

Money was hard to get over there.

Well the motivation for leaving the country was opportunity?

I think so.

Did you ever remember him saying anything about how he knew America?

No, I never talked about it with him.

How about did you ever hear him saying anything about arrangements for leaving the country? Like how he got over here?

No.

Any particular experiences he had?

Well I know he said that on that boat they took a long time and he was sicker than a dog. I remeber he said that a lot of people were so sick that . . . he was sick too, but not too bad. I guess it took about 30 days, I think so. I don't know what year he came over. When he came over he was staying with my mother's folks and thats where he met my mother.

This is when he arrived here?

Yes, when he came from Italy he looked for a place to stay.

It was at this home.

It was Acardia wasn't it?

No, it was in Tri Mountain.

Elsee said that your mother's parents originally lived in the Ripley area.

Well my mother's parents yes, I mean . . . they could have been up there, I don't know but they could have moved to Tri Mountain.

Yes, because they did end up living in Tri Mountain. Did he work in the dry house, is that right?

My dad?

No, your grandfather.

I think there was enough that is why they came over here.

They were looking for economic opportunities?

Right.

Did you ever hear him say anything about family status?

Well I suppose he was just basically a farmer.

Did you ever hear anything about entertainment? What they did for entertainment? Like getting together with relatives or any kind of festivities?

No, no.

Do you remember him saying anything about births, marriage, entering school, funerals?

I think he was training for a little while to be a priest.

I think that is what he said but then he gave it up. Because he could say all the mass in Latin.

So then he was Catholic?

Yes, oh yes.

Are there any images of Italy, from what you remember your father talking about?

No, he never said too much. All he said was that when he got older, he wanted to go back. That was his intention was to make a little money and to go back to Italy with the family. Then after we started growing, I guess that was after Alsee was born, that is my brother, then he changed his attitude. He said maybe we wouldn't like it over there, you know, a different kind of life. He said . . . that is what he told me. He had intentions, yes, that is what he wanted to go back and he said maybe you boys wouldn't like it. Its better here. Its more freedom. It was different over there you know. You had to work in the mine and you made a dollar or whatever.

Yes, that could be but I don't know for sure.

Do you remember him saying anything about his entry into New York? Just think about it all of the sudden he only spoke Italian and he was suddenly landed in a new country where the language was english.

I don't know there might have been more than one bunch of Italians on the boat anyway.

But you don't remember him saying anything about it.

No. It seemed that everybody was ending up here. The train went as far as Kewanaw and they couldn't go any further. I think that is what happened.

Do you remember him saying anything about his first impressions of America? For example when he landed.

No, no.

Elsee told me that your family never moved around in the United States? Was there any other brothers and sisters with your dad when they came over?

My dad's brother. I think he had two brothers here too but they were in a different area. I think they lost contact with one and I think that he went to California, but they never heard from him. I'm not too sure now. I could be wrong, I think he mentioned something.

But there wasn't any communication? What about letters to and from the old country?

When my dad was here he used to write the old country.

So he kept the contact?

Oh yes, but he had two brothers over there. Of course, they passed away before him.

So he was able to keep up his writing?

Yes, oh yes.

So when he arrived in America he came straight to Kewanaw?

I think so . . . I wouldn't swear to it. But I think he went right over to Tri Mountain.

And that is how he met your mom?

I think so. That is what I heard.

Do you ever remember him saying anything as far as comparing the old country to Americanas far as work schedules, daily schedules, routines?

No, all I know he liked farming and I think if he new that he wouldn't have parked right here. He loved the soil and he loved the ground. He tried farming here and the season is too short. Like I said all you grow here is bolders and eggs.

When I took him to Minnesota once, boy he fell in love with that country when he saw the big field and the nice soil.

This must have been a little further south?

Yes, the lower part of Wisconsin. He said if I knew there was country like that I never would have moved in here. He loved the soil.

So do you think that is why he ended up in Sunny Italy?

Well there were all Italians, b

But the soil was pretty good?

Oh well yes better soil it came off the hills. Then it is warmer in that valley because . . . its 10 or 12 degrees higher than on the hills.

Do you remember him saying anything about having to adapt to American life? As far as the language and customs?

Well he never spoke much ~~xxxxxx~~ English. That all he talked was Italian.

What about entertainment in the country.

Never, he never went out of the house. He never knew where South Range was. He never moved out of the house. Never Work and home. Work and home.

Well work was at ;home too?

He was a fireman, that was his job. He got hurt in the mine I think before he got married. Before the strike of 1913. He got a job on surface and he was a fireman in ;the boiler. This was before or after he was hurt?

After he was hurt. He didn't want to go back into the mine.

After he was hurt he worked as a fireman?

That is right. He stayed on that job all them years.

Do you remeber him talking about working in the mine?

Well he didn't work too long and he didn't say too much.

I know he hurt his back and he was laid up for quite awhile.

Then after he decided not too go back into the mine if he could get a job outside. Just then the strike came on and strikers were on the warpath. I guess he worked during the strike too.

Was he considereed a scab?

Yes, I think so. You may as well say that. He was working.

Did he ever say anything about that strike as to not agreeing with it.

No he didn't he figured he had to work. I want to work thats all.

Was he concerned about his welfare, as far as getting shot

or anything? ~~Qxxxxxx~~

Oh yes, he said it. He was scared.

Were you born then?

No.

You don't remember any of this?

No. I might have been born because I was born in 1912.

But you were just a baby?

Yes, I don't remember any of that.

Did he ever related any experiences he had.

No, he didn't have any.

He didn;t get shot or anything?

I think he said that he went to work with a revolver in his pocket too. He never used it or got into trouble but he was scared so he thought hell . . . I think so.

What do you remember about your family life as a little kid?

Like your dad worked what 10 hours a day? I guess he started with 10 and he went down to 8.

He did go down to 8?

I think they dñd after the strike.

Like what do you remember in a typical day? Did your dad work the day shifts?

Three shifts. Day, afternoon, and night, seven days a week and he would only have . . . Like on a Sunday he would have so many hours off. It might have been 24 hours, there might have been one day off. I forget. He had to keep the boilers going. There was only 3 men and they had to keep the fire going all the time. Maybe it was Sunday morning and he was out until Monday morning. I forget now.

So sometimes he would be sleeping during the day?

Oh yes

Sometimes he would come home and sleep in the morning and work in the day.

Yes, because he had those two rabbits and the chickens. He would feed those. Then he would work in the fields. He used to love working in the fields. I don't think there was no one down there that worked like him. He loved that. He had working too when vacation came too. Vacation time when school was out, boy we didn't have any time to go play baseball or swimming or anything. My dad said nothing doing. He worked to catch up in the summer. Making wood and in the field cutting hay and all that.

How much hay would you cut?

Well just for the rabbit, but we had more than we could spare always. He had some of those fields with the saw, you know. More than we could ever use.

Where would you put it?

In the barn, we had two big barns. Stack it upstairs and some of that hay was maybe 50 years old. Mostly rabbits we had. We had chickens too.

So on a typical morning in the summertime if your dad worked the day before, the evening shift, and he got home late at night and he got up the next morning then you and your brother. . Yes, some of the time we would have to work in the field. Whatever was in process at that time.

What were you growing?

Everything. Corn, beans, potatoes, cabbage, strawberries, just about . . . tomatoes we had. But he sold cabbage too we couldn't

USE all that corn.

Down in Sunny Italy, how much of that did your dad farm.

Oh I would have to show you. Its getting grown in now but I would have to show you.

Now on your side of the street . . . OK I've been down in Sunny, Italy and the road runs right between it, down through the center of the vally. Now you lived on the right side of the street.

Right.

The pilgrim river, which is a creek actually, is right behind your house.

Yes.

Did your dad basically farm most of that valley? Or did the Italians farm some of it too.

Well not all of it, because somebody else had it too. It was in patches. By the house. . . before you get to the house I don't know if you can tell by the fence there, that was ours. The company said plant all you want, take all the ground you want. That's all they said. Then on the right of the creek where the barn is. . . you can't see the barn no more, we didn't do much planting but he made terraces in the hills and he planted trees,

Now this would be on your side. . . this would be a north slope that he did this on?

You bet, right.

What kind of trees?

Apple trees.

Well they must be still up in there right?

Oh yes, their still in there. Then one plot, I don't know how many feet there was, somebody had to give theirs back and then they gave it up. Then below that we had two more patches. They were pretty good sizes. Then below that another guy had farming. Then way down to the bottom here, on the left. There was a road right to the end.

But then there was a road that kind of makes a ~~xxx~~ left turn? Well on that corner was a hill there too, there was a terrace. We havetrees there too. We planted that too.

When you go down to the end of the valley, where the clearing ends, and there is a road that goes off to the left, was there another field back in there?

Yes, another fellow used to work that.

Yes I kind of thought that because going back in there it looked like at one time it was clear.

An old bachelor, yes.

Do you remember his name?

Yes.

What was it?

Donte Mickleti

We used to call him frata.

Why is that?

I don't know, I guess he was a priest one time too.

Do you ever get together with the neighbors for anything? Like to share work in the farming?

No. We did it all by ourselves.

What about any butchering or anything?

No. We just killed our own rabbits and we didn't have any other ones. We had a pig but that was small. One year when

my dad, like I said, had chickens and rabbits and thats all and all that hay was for the rabbits. He had more manuer than he needed and he used to put it in the field.

How many rabbits would he have?

Oh I don't know. Not that many, like he would breed them all the time. Oh, I couldn't say.

Just enough to keep a little extra meat.

yes.

Chickens same thing. ONe year, many years ago, we had a lot then we would kill quite a few in the fall and then can them. Then we stopped doing that too and we had a few for eggs. We raised a few to eat.

Now Sunny, Italy was pretty much strictly Italians, wasn't it? Right.

All Italians and everybody spoke Italian.

Right, same language too you know, there is a difference in Italians. These were all Tosconi.

What is that?

Well I don't know, we talked a little bit different than the other ones. My dad told me that there was one Frenchman one time but that must have been before. . .

Elsie says that one time you dad said that there was 15 or 16 houses in Sunny, Italy.

Growing up as a boy, how many do you remember?

I was just telling my wife the other day. Ten.

You remember ten. Do you remember some of them getting burned down and so on while you were growing up?

My dad said there must have been about 20 homes or even more. They were closed, some of those homes. You know what I mean? Yes. Elsie said that your dad said that when he first built the house, or when his inlaws built the house, there were houses on both sides of him 25 feet away.

Well sure, right in front of the driveway was a house.

Elsie also related a story to me where she said she remembered a lady going up to the company store to buy groceries, you know, Tri-Mountain, and when she came back she stayed up by the shaft along side of the road there. I guess it would be number 2 shaft. She didn't want to come back down to Sunny, Italy because she had lit a fire to her house. Do you remember anything about that story?

No.

Do you remember people burning their homes just to get rid of them?

I heard my dad say that.

Did this go on right after the strike?

Something like that because a lot of homes were burning those days. Yes, I heard my dad say you know, people were getting the insurance, I suppose and then taking off. There was a period there where you couldn't buy insurance because people that had homes couldn't get them. But his place he always had the insurance. But the companies figured there was something fishy and they wouldn't let it out to folks anymore. My dad said that, but I suppose right after the strike people started going away.

Do you remember any . . . well there was another Italian group that you mentioned earlier, a language group.

Piedmont. From the Providence of Piedmont.

Could you talk to them?

Well you could talk to each other. They try to talk our lingo because this is the real Italian language. That is the one they teach all over in the schools, you know, that is the real language. The other is more like a dialect. Then you get into Lombardi that is another providence of the north. That is your name.

I know, but that doesn't have anything to do with it. See we come from the providence of Tusconi.

Isn't it unique, there is a Tusconi Valley out in California where they grow grapes.

I wouldn't doubt it there are a lot of Italians out that way too.

Do you remember any ethnic jokes? Because you know in the . . . Joking or competition between other groups because you know there was Cornish men, working in the mines there and for copper wasn't there mining captains.

Yes, they were all English men. They were the bosses.

Why do think that was?

Well, because they knew mining and they knew how to talk English and all the other foreigners didn't know how to talk. So they just put them in like slaves, you know, put them to work. I know my dad said they were pretty smart those cousin-jacks. They wouldn't put two Italians together. They thought maybe they would do too much talk and no work, so they put

a Finnish, an Italian, and an Austrian with somebody else, two different lingos all the time. Not the same, so you could get more. If I couldn't talk to you, so you keep on working and I keep on working. You stop to eat and you don't say anything but work. Those cousinjacks are pretty foxy. They think if you put the honkies together or the finns, they be yacking and never get any work done. They couldn't talk to each other so they just kept shoveling and mining and shut up. Do you remember any communication within ethenic groups, among groups like rumor, or gossip, jokes and joking, competition. No.

How about any competition, were they any holidays where you got together for like baseball games or . . .

Yes, we had a bochaball alley where you play bochaball. We had a nice one. My dad never played though, but we had a nice alley.

Now can you describe that game a little bit? How does that go? Its like bowling. You have one small ball and then you play like four balls of one kind and four of another one. One had lines so you know. You could play with four partners and you would have two balls each, two, two, two, two, or else two guys competing would have four of one and four of the other one. The one that would get closer to the small ball would get the points, that all. They used to throw it in such a way that if the other guy had a ball pretty close, they would try to knock it out of there and put theirs down.

In a way it sounds kind of like horseshoes?

Yes, its in the same order.

So then if there were four guys playing you would stand on the opposite ends?

That's right. Yes, they did have a little fun then. Bets, you know, drinks or something. But see my dad never got into nothing, nothing at all like that. At nine o'clock at night he would go to bed. He didn't care if the house was full of people enjoying themselves or playing cards he said goodnight boys. But all the other neighbors were different, you know, they would play cards all the time.

This interview doesn't have to center around your dad. You can talk about other things. Things that you remember doing. Oh for the whole community.

sure.

Yes, my mother they had more get togethers like that. Drinking and. . .

Well when you say drinking was it like things that you drank.

SIDE 3

Well what other things do you remember for recreation, for example, card playing.

Well not too much.

Bochaball.

Yes, bochaball they played almost every weekends. The guys, the men. They were up to five o'clock in the morning. Its like gambling, you win, and you buy drinks. That was on the weekends you know. Maybe the mines were working five days a week or they had Saturday off.

Now on Taushi's side they built the terraces up the hillside?
Well not too much.

On the north hill there is terraces quite a ways up from
what I hear? Did they ever used to go up there on the hillside?
I remember Marty saying something about that. They used to
go up there on the hillside there in the shade of the trees
and just, the guys would sit around and drink and. . .

Well I know in legal years, I suppose there was one day where
they would sit down there sure. But we did the most terracing
on our side. They didn't do much over there. The ground was
that way anyway like a step. There was a hole there and
another hole up here on the other part.

Did you ever have a telephone down there?

Yes, we had one I don't know what time they put it in.

The kind that hang on the wall with the big box?

I don't know. We didn't have no phone, except later years
when my dad was alone.

We didn't have electric lights until, I don't know what year
it was when they put the poles in.

You said that at one time you dad had studied for the priesthood?

Yes, I'm pretty sure he told me. In Italy.

Did he have any kind of a church life when he was living here.

Well I don't know. We were all pretty religious in Italy.

Do you think when he came over here he kind of dropped that?

Oh yes, when he was here I never seen him go to church one
Sunday, but we had to go.

What about education? Do you remember any formal schooling
that your dad talked about?

Well he went four years in Italy, to the fourth grade. It would be like eighth grade he said.

What about you?

Me?

Yes, how long did you go to school?

Until the eleventh grade.

And then you went to work?

Yes, I had one more year to go to high school and then I started working.

Those days Jeffers was considered a pretty good school wasn't it?

Oh yes, they had good teachers there. Mr. Jeffer and Mrs. Jeffer.

They weren't the only teachers there were they?

Oh no, Mrs. Jeffers was the principal and Mr. Jeffers was the superintendent.

Then they taught too?

No, Well Mrs. Jeffer did, but she taught mostly gymnastic I think. She was fanatic for that.

What kind of an attitude did you dad have towards education?

You know how some old timers would say the boys should be out working and the girls don't need an education because they are going to get married.

No, he didn't say that but he didn't stop us or he didn't push us as far as I know.

Is there anything you remember about you school life?

Going to school, is there anything that kind of sticks out that you remember?

No. Nothing. I used to like school thats one thing I can tell you. My brother quit right away and all the other kids finished in eighth and ninth grade.

Was there any kind of a stigma about that? Dropping out?

I don't know. Theyparents, I guess, didn't push them and they didn't holler if they didn't go.

There were enough kids not going to school, like today it's a real social stigma if you didn't go to school.

Okay you brother Butch, what's his real name?

_____?

Okay how far did he go to school?

Ninth

What about the girls?

Well they all went too.

They all finished?

I think so.

Do you remember in school any . . . like the Italians sticking together and the Finlands sticking together?

No. Not that I know of. Maybe in the earlier years.

When you still didn't know english real well?

Yes, maybe in grade school a little bit.

Actually when you started school were there very many kids that could speak english?

Well I don't know. No because we all lived in this district of Sunny, Italy and we all talked like Italians.

And all the Finnish kids were speaking Finnish?

Thats right, and when I started school I was about 8 years old

How come you waited so long?

Well I suppose . . . I don't know why I was older. Anyway when my mom brought me to school I would run back home again anyway. As soon as it came recess I would skiddo home. I didn't know anybody and didn't know how to talk and I felt out of wack. I would run home and my mom would drag me back again. I don't remember that but that is what she said. Why did you wait?

I don't know, we lived so far, you know about a mile away from the school and maybe my mom figured it was too far to go and maybe there wasn't any kids my age.

There was a school in Tri-Mountain wasn't there?

Yes, well still that is a mile from home.

Well that is true thats almost up by the highway.

Yes, by the highway.

Was that highway there when you were a kid? Was there a road there?

Yes.

Was it the same road that it is now? Like you go through the curves.

Well, you mean from Sunny, Italy to go?

No from Tri-Mountain to South Range.

Well there was a different road. We used to go through Baltic, the old road and then they made this one.

Do you remember any types of things that your mom used to fix when you were a kid that were really Italian?

You know like . . . well I remember Elsie talking about making Tuctatori?

Oh yes.

Did you use rabbit in it?

Rabbit, chicken, anything.

Crusty bread?

Oh yes, but they made their own bread, you know, baked. Well we used to get it from the store. We used to have crusty bread then too. There was a bakery in South Range years ago. Were there any other Italian dishes that you remember eating also.

Well spagetti, raviolies, and fulanta,

What is that?

Corn meal mush. Oh I love that, then you make a gravy of rabbit or shicken and pour it over and a bottle of wine, that takes the cake. Like my dad used to say fulanta and wine goes good. A lot of people drink it with spagetti, but he said no it don't go with spagetti, not like with fulanta. Certain meals call for it more than others you know.

What about some other meals that you would want to sit down and drink wine with?

You would have to ask my wife, she does them all too. She learned from my mother, my mother was Italian. My wife is Austrain.

What's her name?

May

How did you use your vegetables that you grew, How did you eat them?

Just like now, some beans boil them. Squash, when they were nice and green.

Summer squash?

Yes, with beans and potatoes boil those too and drain them.

Corn we didn't have too much of. Beans we put away lots.

Dried or. . .?

No, canned, and we sold lots, most of that stuff my dad had we were selling them.

Did you pick it and take it to town?

Oh yes.

Or did people come down?

No I drove my dad. First we had a horse buggy or team and then after we got a model T and I used to drive it.

Where did you keep the horses?

Oh we only had one

Where did you keep it?

I forget now. You see my dad was a co-partners with another guy with that horse. We didn't have a barn. . .the neighbors I guess, kept them.

Where did you keep the hay to feed them? In the barn?

Yes, the same hay that we were making for the rabbits and all that for the horse too. We didn't keep him. We didn't have the horse for too long, maybe one year or so. Then my dad got a model T in 1923 or 1924. I was just 12 years old and then I started to learn how to drive it. Then after I got the knack of it I would deliver stuff for my dad.

You didn't need a driver's license?

I don't know, I don't think so.

Did you look forward to driving that?

Oh yes, I enjoyed too. I wanted to drive all the time. We would deliver all the way from Houghton, Hancock, South Range, Huron Town, all the towns.

Where would you deliver to? Stores?

Stores, yes.

Getting that vehicle, that probably really expanded your ability to get out and travel, I mean before that you probably didn't really go anywhere except on foot? Or did you do it with a horse?

No, no, we still didn't go anywhere when we had the ~~XXXXXX~~ vehicle except to deliver the stuff. Then we used it for hunting in the fall. My dad liked to go hunting too, but in the summer he didn't do anything. I used to like to go fishing too when I was a kid, you know on a creek. But hunting he enjoyed, Bird hunting and rabbits.

Was the bird hunting good back in those days?

Oh yes, right by the creek all over. See the fires went through I think it was in 1924 and then after the fires a couple years the vegetation and growth and boy there was a lot of game. Good for birds. No deer there was never no deer down there, I don't know why, I guess there were too many dogs, maybe. There were more dogs than human beings sometimes, everybody had dogs for hunting.

What different kinds of animals did people keep?

Well I don't know, some people used to have pigs, there used to be a guy that had a horse for a few years and one family had chickens and rabbits too and that's about it. No other

kinds of animals.

What about geese?

There wasn't anybody down there. This one friend that had the horse had a goat for a while. They would do more damage because you couldn't keep them out of the field.

People used to fence in their garden and let the animals run loose didn't they?

Yes, you could do that. Put the animals on the inside. But the goats would get in on the inside. This guy had it one time and that was enough. Everybody was complaining you know. It was going in there and cleaning up all the vegetables.

Yes they can be really destructive, I know that from experience.

Yes you got them. You know. They eat like a deer.

Were there any other sports you got involved in. Like skiing in the winter? Ice skating. Hockey?

No I never played any hockey, but I skated a little bit.

Just recreational?

Yes, that all

Where did you skate?

Well we had an ice rink in Tri-Mountain you right on that corner where you make the turn where the store was across, right there where that trailer is. Then the first rink was in the ball diamond over there to go towards Sunny, Italy. The first ice rink we made was the number 1 dam when we were kids because the water was coming out of the mine and the water would be frozen over, then that is when the kids got together I don't know how old I was. The company gave us a pump with a big hose. One year we used that little pond just to flood

it. But that was just maybe a half a dozen of us kids that's all. Nobody knew how to skate yet. Then after they got together they built one by the diamond, then after that they had the one by the store. For years they had that. That is where I learned. I learned on that pond fooling around.

Was there a lot of noise from the mines when you were living in Sunny, Italy? Do you remember a lot of racket?

No.

Now when you were growing up as a boy, the Tri-Mountains mines were running. Were they. . . .

Number 1, 2, 3, and 4 they called them.

One had shut down long before that didn't it?

Yes, I don't remember that was a long time ago. They had a cave in or something I don't know. I was just a kid and then they cut that one out. That is where the creek starts up there too. I don't know if they hit water. That's where Sunny, Italy is way back in there. I don't remember that one. Number 2, 3, and 4 they went for quite a while.

Do you remember when they finally shut down?

No.

Was it the early 30's yes I guess when the depression came. They had just rebuilt that number 2 too. It was all a wooden shack then they made it out of tin and metal it was a beautiful mine.

The tri-Mountain mines they weren't doing as good as the Paindale mines?

Well maybe not. See number 4, they claim, had the best copper that went for quite a while. The last one toward Baltic.

That's what the old timer was saying. Then Tri-Mountain was its own company and they didn't have to _____ about everything. Tri-Mountain was itself.

Oh it didn't start out Copper Range?

No, Tri-Mountain mining company was another company and Baltic was a different company. All different concerns from out east I don't know. Then I guess Copper Range started buying them all.

Tri-Mountain mine where the minerock was crushed, that was down on Lake Superior right? It was Beacon Hill wasn't it? I guess Copper Range had the big mill there but I guess a lot of them were here along portage canal in the early days. There was an article in the paper one time on that. But that is where copperrange had theirbig mill after.

Your dad never worked in the Tri-Mountains though?

Well I really couldn't tell you if that is where he was working when he got hurt or not.

How did the Tri-Mountain mine do during the strike in 1913?

I don't know. I got to go in the car and get a check when I was first working, a friend of mine gave it to me and I forgot to show the wife. Its about a year when I was working how much money I was making. Some of these checks. What do they do with them? He called me one day and said Hey Lou I got something for you. Here are some of the checks when you were working. There no good now.

When did you first start working in themines?

Well first I was working on surface in 1929,

Doing what?

Oh oiling, taking care of the engine holes, cleaning the place, oiling the barrings.

It was all bushing type barrings right?

Oh yes.

Brass?

Right, yes. They had oil cups. You had to keep watching them and then we would replenish them. Clean up the place.

Yes that was my first job.

Was it noisy working in there?

Well when they start hoisting with the steam, you know with those big rods.

Was it a dangerous place to work?

No. It was warm in there all the time with that steam. Humid and muggy from the oil too. All those oil geers vapor you know. I remember one time when, I don't know if it was my fault or not, but the barring went dry and we couldn't get no oil. When they get hot, just tons of metal get hot. I don't know what happened there but boy did I catch heck. The boss you weren't watching. I was watching but usually you go around and feel it and sometimes maybe you need more oil and you can feel how hot its getting. I don't know it just got hot thats all.

So you had to go around and make sure everything was keeping lubricated?

Yes, and then clean it up you know. wipe it all up and polish because you had all those brass things. All those brass things you had to polish and make them shine like a nigger's tail.

Wipe all the oil and sweep the floor and wash the floor.

The engineer was the one that ran the hoist. I could have had his job too, he broke me in, but I didn't like it. Too much responsibility. You had to keep your eyes open, ring the bell. . . make sure. . . and it was so hot up on that stand. You were up there all that heat will go from under that's where the big pipes were, right under the stand. All that heat, on night shift I don't know how you could stay awake cause all that heat. You get so drowsy. It was not for me. I took it over in the daytime. He said you make a good engineer why don't you take the job, you know apply for it. I said I don't like it. Too much responsibility.

Do you remember what you were making as far as wages?

I think I was getting 30¢ an hour or 25¢ at that time. I'm going to show you the check. I forgot, they are in the car. The guy gave them to me last summer just for the fun. He said here are some of your old checks.

How did he get them?

I don't know.

This would be after you cashed them and then they went back to the company.

Yes.

Do you think they would have been taken over when Copper Range. . . They were destroyed.

Now this was the Tri-Mountain that you worked?

No, this Copper Range.

Which shaft were you working on? What ground?

When I went underground was in 1937 when I got married.

Now when you were working above ground. . .

Yes, I was working in Copper Range No. 3. . . no No. 2 hoist.
I was there for quite a while.

Thats not the same one as the champion was it? What they call the Champion now?

Well its the same . . . you know. . . the Champion is No. 4 shaft. Thats the last one. Then there was No. 3 between there and then no. 2 and NO.1 My dad used to work at No.1 all the time. In the boiler he was a fireman. Then he. . . then after they closed No. 1 because they couldn't find much copper and they got shipped over to No 2 to fireman and thats when I was working in the boiler, I mean in the hoist.

Y u did that for eight years?

No when the depression came in 1929 then I got laid off.

So you did have low seniority?

Oh yes, I got laid off and then I hung around for a while then I went to Detroit.

What did you do while you were hanging around?

Well nothing, just bumming, fishing, and hunting. We stayed in the cabin in the winter.

Yes, you were having a good time.

No, not much then after Detroit.

You must have been enjoying yourself?

Oh yes, when you're young you enjoy yourself, you don't need much. Then I went to Detroit and I only stayed from spring til fall and it was hunting time but I didn't come home for that. The boss said stick around. We are changing models its inventory time. You know changing models

This was in Detroit? You were working for who?

For Murray Corp. making bodies for Ford. Then the boss liked me and he said we have to lay you off for two weeks for inventory. But don't go away stick around cause we want you. Well I said I'm going to go home and where I was staying I told the party well I think I'll go home and visit my folks for a little bit then I'll come back and then when I came home that boss that I was working for before I went to Detroit, on surface. He came over to the house and said Louie, I have work for you. Well I was working for awhile during depression but what could you get for two days a week. There wasn't enough money I told them I'm going away. He kept me off on two days even and that's when I went to Detroit. He came over to the house and said I have work for you. I said yes, two days a week? Oh no seven days. I thought he was kidding me. We were starting a new mine then. That globe mine. He said 10 hours a day, or 12 if you want to. I said you are kidding.

What was the pay?

Oh it wasn't much.

Less than when you started in 1929. Well it might have been a little more. At seven days you made up. Well I had an easy job. All he wanted me to do was a watchman. There was an old shaft there. Then they started all over again with a new cement bottom.

You were working as a watchman?

Yes, I had always night shift. With all the tools and equipment they had they didn't want anybody to come in and steal some of that. They went home from 6 to 7 and I was putting 12 hours.

But I had to just make sure nobody came in and stold the equipment.

That must have been hard staying awake all that time.

Then my brother worked there too.

Butch did?

Yes, but he was right on making the base of the shaft, concrete pouring. He was working with the construction workers. But then he didn't like that kind of work.

Well Butch was the mechanic wasn't he?

Well he was pretty handy?

But that is really what he enjoyed doing?

Yes.

So when you went below, what shaft did you work in then in 1937?

I think I was in No. 4 Champion. Well I wasn't going to go and the boss didn't want to release me and things were picking up then, you know I was working at Globe after on surface. Then when I got married, I wanted more money and the more money was in the mine and thats what made me go in the mine thats all, they were paying better wages and I was looking for more money and the boss said don't go and friends said it isn't that bad in the mine, they were in the mine, they said its pretty good in the mine it isn't bad work. Better money yes.

How much better?

Well wages were small but maybe it was a dollar a day more but a dollar was a dollar. I think on surface you were making about \$2.40, 30¢ an hour, and below I think it was \$3.00 something, so it was about a dollar more.

So what did you start out doing?

Oh helping in the brift. Helping the miner, bring in the tools clean out the dirt for him. ~~Yozzwwexkxhxingxngxixxxxxxxixkxng~~
~~xxx~~ So you were bringing in the drilling bits and the drilling rigs.

All that stuff, yes

You had to lug them in on your back?

Oh yes they were a heavy load.

Pull the compressor lines up?

And pull the dirt away from them so that they could get working again.

Then you were responsible for cleanning up the rock?

No in the drifts we had raises I just used to pull it in the hole. They went down and there was a shoot and somebody else took it out. I just got rid of it on my level like this floor and we had a hole to pull it in with a bucket with a scraper with a little tugger. That was my job.

What was the lighting down there like? ~~Wexixwexxx~~ Was it hard to see?

Well we started with carbid lamps then we had electric lamps, you know, battery lamps. Maybe it was a year when I worked and then they canged overto battery lamps. Oh they are better oh yes, I stuck it out since. I was married and that wasit. At one point you started working as a driller didn't you? oh yes, that wasn't long helping the guy, they made bonus and the help was supposed to get it too but he got a pinch of snuff. When I looked atthe check I said I'm doing more work than you.

When you say pinch of snuff, you mean a figure of speech. ~~Oh~~
~~yes~~ that wasn't anything compared to what you were getting?
Oh yes, I was hungry for money and thats why I came in the
mine. I said I want to go on a machine too. Of course in
those days the old timers had the seniority ~~xxxxxx~~ if they
want to go on the drift. That was another type of mining in
the drift. Stolfing is different. Y^Ou drill it and then you
have to select the copper too. You didn't drill many holes
maybe one or two then take the copper and fill the cars then
you had to take it out. Those guys didn't make much you know
but the drift you know. . .

Well the drift was like an exploritory and you were looking for
copper.

Thats right. We made the tunnels and they would come behind
us and they would mine the rest of it. You had to get the
right away like. And these guys were on contract, oh and if
you could see the money they were making. I said I would like
to . . . there are two miners working together, you work in
pairs in the drift and one helper. There are three in each
drift. So he said this one guy said well my partner is going
to retire, he was pretty old 65 maybe. I'm willing to take
you in and break you in on the machine, but I said I know the
company doesn't allow that. If he retires then the captain
goes around and asks the miners if anybody wants to go with
you on that kind of contract, well I don't like that cause
you had to work there. I'm telling you aint fooling around
sometimes I never ate my lunch all day. A lot of guys didn't
care for that. You might make a dollar more. The fellow said

I'm willing to take you so I told the captain I said hey, the miners gonna retire and he said yes, I said I would like to work with this other fellow he was called Mac on a machine. He said we can't do that we have to ask the other miners if anybody wants to go first. And he said you are too young for that anyway. You have to be experienced. I said I can do what they can do. He didn't believe that you know, so he went and asked the miner. I wasn't around when he asked him. He said I have to talk to him personally. I said go ahead he said he'll take me. Sure enough he went and he called me in his office one day and he said sure he was willing to take you so I guess we can do that. Try it, so I was the first guy actually that they took as a young guy to put them on the drift. They always had the old timers. It went down the line older ones if they wanted it. That's the way it went. But I was the first one. Then after I started a couple other guys started complaining and that's what started the wheel rolling. Then a lot of guys started. Not too many but there were quite a few young guys. You make a lot better money there. Maybe doubled wages. If you were making \$3.20 in those days maybe you got five.

Were there any problems with cave in or did you have any situations where there was any danger?

No not too bad. Well there was a couple guys that got buried. Not buried to die but they were shut off from outside source. They had to dig to get to them. There was one level there were it was pretty rough.

Was it sinking?

Yes, full ground, even with timbers.

When you were working on these drifts did you have the timber?

Oh yes, everyday.

So you were doing that even before you started drilling?

Right, that's what I said when you went on the machine you had to muck the ground. You came out of the job, the other ship blasted, then you had to take the oil, then you had a timber, and then drill in and load up, them blasting for 8 hours.

Did you do all your own blasting?

Yes, everything.

How did you learn all that?

Oh there is nothing to it. From the old timers you know. Put the different fuses and cut them different lengths.

Were you working with dynamite?

Oh yes.

It wasn't gun powder at that time, it was dynamite?

Dynamite yes, sticks.

YOU would shove them in the holes?

right.

Then blasting caps and a couple other charges?

One cap for each hole. And you cut the fuses in different lengths so it will go in rotation as you want to break. You don't have to that actually if you fire them but sometimes if one is a little bit slow and they will go out of rotation and it wouldn't break. Well I used to cut them shorter that's how I would start one like that and then the next one and the next one.

Then you would have to light them right?

Oh yes.

Then get the hell out of there?

Yes then you get so smokey when you light a fuse and it starts puffing out smoke. It depends where you were, if you had venalation it would blow that smoke but in the drift you are in a dead end and it would be so smokey you couldn't see the other ones then they come out with an ignite a cord they call it. The cap there was a crimp on the end you put it on . . . it looked like a cap. You had a cap for the fuse and then you had another cap on the other end of the fuse. Not to explode but it would hold that ignitor. It was pretty nice then and then no problem. You strung this wire out through this gap and you lit one ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ end of the cord and take off. That goes on and keeps lighting them all. That was a good invention. I guess some mining company in Canada found that out. That was a good thing then. No more smoke and no problem.

On a typical day, how far could you get down a drift?

One round we call it.

How many feet would that get you down the drift?

We used a 6 foot rod.

That was considered a day if you guys got 6 feet?

Oh you bet.

But in White Pine up there we used to use. . .

Oh you worked in White Pine?

Oh yes, for two years. At first when Copper Range shut down I went out there.

When did Copper Range shut down?

1945.

Well the Champion mine continued running didn't it?

Partly, they closed and ~~xxxxxxxx~~ there were some bosses hanging around. Then they started again, yes

I had a chance to come back too but in the meantime Copper Range was running White Pine thats Copper Range. They told me if I want to go up there for that new mine. I didn't want to go.

Thats not really a shaft mine is it?

Oh we made a shaft. We started with a shaft. We went down 300 feet. Then the vain was bhere only 300 feet then you went out on the vain. We were checking it out thats what they wanted us to do.

Exploritory?

Yes, we had our little skip and we built up a little house and a little dry. There was only maybe a dozen of us thats all and that was more like experimenting.

What year was this?

1945 to 1947.

You worked for two years there?

Yes, then they closed that little one and after that they started the big operation. They got money from uncl~~e~~ Sam. They told me if I wanted to go to Copper Range from there. In No. 4 I knew that that was going to close too and I was going to go to Detroit then and my wife said lets go to the city and then we came up here. Grandma was living by herself so. . . of course she wanted to get me out of the mine all the time so we moved up here. Then they started coming after me to see if I wanted to work like No 3 and 4 they were always short of men because nobody liked it.

Why?

It was dangerous, there were blasts and caveins. But I guess

was a lot of copper there.

So did you work up there for awhile.'

No, they would call me and I said Where to and they said Almic and I said keep it. But I knew they were going to start Gratiot and old timer told me. Seneca mine he said Louie they are going to open that up. Thats a nice mine. Good solid ground the only trouble he said when they ask you tell them that you want to go down when they start. Well they called me about 3 different times and the last time I said where and he said are you willing to go to Seneca. I said yes I'll go there so then we just started there and I finished the time there until 1968 til they closed.

Then in 1968 did you do anything else?

I hung around and then I went to ^{WV}White Pine and put in 10 years again until 1978.

So you worked up until the time just before we moved up here? My wife and I moved to Tri-Mountain in 1978. So you just retired then.

Yes, I think so. Its about that. I started in about 68 or 69. 69 maybe it was. Then I wanted to put those 10 years in so I could get a pension.

So you were going down to White Pine everyday from Calumet?

Yes.

Thats a long hall.

Yes, 89 miles from my house one way. It was 180 miles everyday. But the bus was a little better I mean you didn't have to watch the read anyway?

What were you making when you retired there?

Oh I don't know, \$8 something or \$9 something.

A little bit better than 25¢ an hour you started out on?

When it comes down to it that 25¢ an hour probably went just as far didn't it?

I believe it.

I bought my first car, that 41 Ford brand new \$700. Now you cant hardly buy a car for \$7,000. \$7,000 for the cheap thing. Things are going more yet thats what gets me. I thought they were shut down and start going back but prices are still going up. I don't understand it. Look all the people out of work. Yes its a strange situation.

You're not working are you?

No not too much. I'm going to start farming a little bit at ~~at~~ home. Start raising more vegetables.

Well I would like to try to find out more about Sunny, Italy but I can't think of any questions right off hand.

How about the families do you remember the different families that lived there?

Well there is Katiochies, the Naries, well they moved away not too long ago. The Rodies. The Nickaleties, two brothers, two different families.

One guy was kind of mean wasn't he?

Too the family, well one was single and the other had a family. He used to drink I guess. I was just a kid. but I guess he used to hit the kids and hit the wife. I remember that. She was wonderful really, she used to come over our house OI remember. Your dad used to get grapes from California and he would crush them and get the juice out of them, and then make wine?

Right.

How many batches of wine would he make out of those.

He would make a first wine and a second wine?

Right.

Was there a third wine too?

No. We just made first and second. Some people did. We never did.

Did he ever make brandy?

No. Not here. He wasn't a drinker. He liked his wine with his meals. That was one guy where I never saw go to an extreme like we do sometimes, feeling good. He drank his wine with his meal and that was it. You couldn't get him to drink after meals or anything. He would put the bottle on the table when company came and he said go ahead help yourself. but not him he liked his wine with his meal.

Would he make wine once a year?

Yes, once that's all.

How many bottles?

Well he used to make about 150 gallons

A year?

3 barrels most of the time. 3 50 gallon barrels.

Then would he bottle that?

No he would leave it in the barrels.

Then let all the yeast settle in the bottom?

Then how would he get it out of the barrel?

A spigot on the end.

He kept that down in the basement?

Oh yes.

Do you remember your house? I remember Elsie saying that

house was really small.

Yes, he built that.

He and his father-in-law.

Yes, and I think we added on once.

He did it with wood? coal? both?

Yes, mostly wood but he always had a ton or two of coal for the winter when the winter was real cold, but we burned mostly wood.

What kind of stove did you use?

You mean for heating?

Yes,

One of those long timers. I wish I had that but somebody swiped it.

Was it like one of those old stokers?

no just round sheet iron in the middle and cast iron bottom and a cast iron top and about that round. Maybe that high and it was perfectly straight.

Like a big pipe?

Yes, but what got me we had it put away for years in the barn it was like new no rust or nothing and as soon as we moved out of Sunny, Italy somebody stole it right away. I wanted to take that home. I don't know what kind of metal they made it out of because it wouldn't rust. It was like new yet. Well the outside had the fancy things to make it look good. Nickel. The belly was like a big pipe but it must have been like a blue color. But it was in good shape for all the years it was put in the barn you know moisture.

How big was this barn?

One barn was pretty big because we made it to put two cars in it.

and then we had wood on one side but we never used it for the cars. Thats what we had, two big doors on the front we figured we would put the truck in there and then we had a Model A and then we built another garage and thats where we kept the car. But this one was made for 2 vehicles plus accessories on the other side, wood and junk and everything else. Of course we had them other barns down by the creek add you never see them. Dad made that one after he built the house and he did like you did all out of poles but then he put sheet iron on the poles. He went in the woods and I guess they were all cedar wood unless it was another kind of hardwood. But it looked the same after 60 years. But sheet iron, all sheet iron.

Somebody must have torn it down?

Burnt it. Thats what I hear and somebody set fire to it.

This was after you left?

yes

Does that ever make you kind of sad the way that that went down?

Well thats why after the house burned I didn't care too much. Like that barn down by the creek they should have burned that a long time ago. We had pigeons even. There was another story on the side we had pigeons for a long ~~xxxx~~time and we used to kill the young ones and eat them. The rest was mostly for hay and junk. Then my dad had built the other barn where we had the chickens and the feed for the chickens and another

Corner we had a doghouse for the dog and a playpen.

You used them for rabbits?

Yes.

Did you have beagles?

Well, they were foxhounds mostly.

R^Eally you did fox hunting?

Yes. We had foxhounds, not for foxes, but for rabbits, because they had long legs.

Did you ever do any coon hunting?

No there was no coons around here.

Oh there is now.

Now there is but there wasn't those days. They have been coming up more and more. No I like it and I caught more heck from friends for not moving down there. Cause it was a nice area it was nice in the summer. I mean friends in later years they said hey Louie how come you never . . . well me and my wife we wanted to go but we didn't want to stay alone because there was nobody else living. Like now retiring is different we are home together and it doesn't make any difference. But when you were working day shift or night shift she was alone. It made it pretty difficult living down there as far as the winter times didn't it?

Well they plowed the road right to the house. It was better in the winter than in the summer. Summertime . . .

You didn't have trouble getting out in the winter?

WEll sometimes but the girls . . . my sisters never. . . they plowed right to thehouse. Unless you had a bad snowstorm right ~~waxx~~ away after they took off. The road was actually better

in the summertime it was rutted and they never fixed it.

Maybe the grater would come down once a year. Every time we had a heavy rainstorm it would gouge out coming down those hills. It was rough.

When you were a boy did that . . . ?

Oh no they didn't plow nothing. WE had trails.

I bet that was a good sledding hill?

Oh gosh we used to start from the store and forget it. It was like a cycle going down those hills. We had those little trails and the runners would stay in there and you didn't even have to steer it.

What about when you hit the railroad track?

Oh we would bounce right over it.

There was a depot there wasn't there?

Oh yes.

Was there any other buildings right around the railroad track there?

Other buildings? No not by the depot. There was another house up further toward the mine by No. 2 mine if you know where it was. There was a couple houses there.

Right next to the shaft?

No, no half between the depot was the railroad and shafts. On the right hand side going down.

Oh ok, I know the foundations are still there.

Yes, there was a couple of families there too. Years ago.

Do you remember anything about the Copper Range Livery Stable up in Tri Mountain?

No, see we were kids just going to school there.

You never messed around in there?

No

How did that one girl drown?

One of those cess pools.

Is that behind the old livery stable?

Yes, somewhere around there. They didn't have good covers on there I guess there was some rotted boards.

Oh they just let the horse manure run into the cess pools?

I guess so. Some kind of drainage, I don't know what it was.

Did people go around and get manure for their gardens?

I don't know. They used a lot of it for hydrodents in those days.

Hydrents?

END