

Peggy Mattice
Narrator

John Esse
Interviewer

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Craigville, Minnesota

Peggy Mattice **-PM**
John Esse **-JE**

JE: This is John Esse in Craigville on July 8. I am up here interviewing Ann Mattice. Ann is also known as Peg, and I am kind of partial to Peg myself, but it is a real pleasure, it is a beautiful day, and it should be very interesting interview with a lovely person who has spent a good portion in Craigville which is kind of on the deteriorating side at the present time.

Peg do you want to go back to where you were born, and when perhaps?

PM: Yes, I was born in Eveleth in 1903 in the month of August. Then my folks moved to Bovey, Minnesota and my father's name was Steve Anderson and he had a store there. From there we moved to Virginia, Minnesota, and I went to school at Roosevelt High School. Then I went from there to Duluth, Minn. and took up nursing at St. Mary's Hospital. Then from there I went to the Twin Cities and I worked there at the Emporium and lived there several years.

JE: What was the Emporium?

PM: It was a store. The name has changed since but I don't know what it is, I haven't been there for a while. Well then my mother passed away, and that was in 1940 and I came home, and I always had an allergy, asthma and I had it very bad and it always seemed to be better when I was up here in this air. So I decided I would find a place to live around this area, get back in the woods as far as I could and this was it. Someone referred me to this area. I came up where the lumberjacks were, and I've never seen a lumberjack before. Never heard of them before of course their considered rowdy and rough people but there really not. They are very meek at times and they are good and they are very generous and they don't create too much trouble of any kind. They usually used to come in from the woods and they would have a few drinks, and usually stay in town until their stake was spent. People assume that a lumberjack is a dirty person, they are not, and because they may have a shirt or clothes that are wrinkled but they are not dirty they wash the clothes and there clean. I've seen lumberjack camps where the floor was so clean that you could eat off it. It was just sparkling with hi-lex it was white because it was scrubbed so well. They would make little sticks to make racks for dish towels and hand towels on and stuff like that. There were several lumberjacks, did anybody tell you about the funny names that some of them had. Oh, they had peculiar names that is the way they were identified. Like goose neck Hans and white Oly, and gold tooth Nels, and whiskey John and tamarack Slim I knew all those

people, and I think they are all dead now. Curly Joe, crooked neck Joe and Steve Garovich they called him Steve getaway, because he could never make a good getaway. He's is dead now too. So we had a lot of those people, and they were really comedians you know, and somebody asked me once, why don't you have a TV. I said that I have live entertainment I don't need any. It was several years before I acquired a television set.

JE: Did you own a bar when you first came up here, Peg?

PM: Well I worked for Mr. Walsh, I came down here and I wanted to get up in this area and feel my way around, and Johnny Walsh was an old man and he said that, he met me and asked me what I wanted to do, and I said I don't know I just came up to see what this was like up here, and so he said if you want a job I'll give you a job helping me tend bar and so forth. I said that I don't know anything about tending bar, he said there is nothing to it I'll show you also. After I worked with him a while he cut me in as a partner with him. So he said you know there is nobody that wants to see an old guy like me, they would rather come in and see a nice attractive lady like you, and I need you. He was alone then and he was practically up in his eighties I think. He was quite a peppy old gent for his age. He had a lot of speed, and so did I. Well then that's how I got to be here and I've been her 35 years June 14. When I fell down and broke my arm I got so that I wasn't physically capable of working any longer down there, and I had to just close up. I built this house just in time to get in settled in here.

JE: What kind of things did the jacks do when they came into town?

PM: Oh they come in, they would have their check and they would cash that and then they would start drinking you know, there used to be 7 places her, and they would go from one joint to the next, and so on. Ya.

JE: Were there any call girls around in town?

PM: Oh, there was girls in all of the places.

JE: Oh, there were?

PM: Oh sure.

JE: Well back in 1940 what would a call girl get?

PM: They would get all they can I suppose.

JE: I mean what was--

PM: You would start with \$2 or \$3 you know and go up. Some times when those guys are pretty sneaky they have quite a bit. Lumberjacks are very generous with their money. Ya, they just throw it away. Sometimes I've seen them where they cashed a \$200 check and never take it off the bar, and open the door and hauler timber and everybody would come running in and have a drink, and if somebody is broke they would hand them 20s and 10s and just about give the

money away. That's the way they are, typical lumberjacks, and very few lumberjacks were married, they have always been bachelors. There were some that were married, there was one that lived in town here it was Spike Ookerland and he was married to a lady friend of mine and they had 3 children. He's moved away from here now.

JE: Did they have rooms upstairs above these places?

PM: No. In my place I had rooms in the back, but I didn't have any stairs, but this place did. This was supposed to be a hotel. I'm the only place that had running water, bath, toilet and so forth. I had that all in my place, because when I come here there was nothing, just the walls, there wasn't even a chair to sit down on.

If you got intoxicated you fell on the floor and that is where you laid, and somebody would come in and they would step over you, ya know. It was something quite unique for me because I have never seen anything like that before, and I thought since somebody was lying on the floor they should be helped to get up, and set down in a chair or something or helped to get him up some way, but no they said that's all right just let him sleep. There wasn't only a bar in my place, but I remodeled it and I put tiling on the floor and fixed the bar all up, and cleaned it all up, and installed plumbing and everything and everything. I put new siding on and a new roof, because the building was pretty well deteriorating. It used to be an old grocery store. Two fellows by the name of Johnson Brothers, and they had it as a grocery store. One time I think there were three or four grocery stores there, before I got here in 1940. I suppose they supplied the camps and the local people around here. One man lived back here was an old homesteader he said now, and he lived back over this way, and he said they used to come to town here they would have to cross the river in a boat down here and there used to be just a cow trail going clear down through Bigfork, all the way down. Just a trail, muddy trail. Some of these fellows when they went to get groceries, I think they said they had to go by the river and go to town in a boat. Then they use to have a railroad going through here, they called it the Guttin-Liver line, did anybody ever tell you that? Ya, they had that which went through here and they had a big landing up here at camp 29, they use used to land the pulp there and haul it to International Falls, this way it just went to Deer River. That was just before I got here, and they had take that out of here, but you can see where the old railroad was there.

You can see that real clear when you go from here to Effie, and you could see the old line in there where the tracks were taken out.

JE: There used to be several big camps around here, and the first time I had ever seen a lumber camp, some people took me out there, and it seemed to me that there must have been an awful lot of people in there. (Men) It looked to me like there was a couple hundred men in there in the camp, and they would all be eating and nobody says anything.

PM: They don't talk. There is no conversation at all. They just eat and get up and go away from the table, and they have excellent food in these camps, and they have good cooks, they have a couple of cooks, a couple of bull cooks, to do the heavy work, you know, cleaning, dishwashing and so forth. They had bunk houses and that is where all the men stayed, in the bunk houses. For a bath they had a pail suspended in the air on some kind of a stick, and they had a rope on it and

they would fill that with water and that was a shower.

JE: When these jacks came to town and have their girl, where do these girls come from?

PM: They come from all over.

JE: They do?

PM: Some of them you never found out, because they never talked about themselves very much. They were kind of quiet about stuff like that. I know one girl who lived here at one time, her name was Patsy something, and she was very young and someone had met her here in Superior and they brought her here, and she had a sister that was a nun, so she came from a sanctimonious family. I don't know what happened to her, she left here and I don't know where she went. Seems to me her sister the nun was in Alaska, and I think she went there. Maybe she converted I don't know.

JE: Do the girls make pretty good money?

PM: Well I guess sometimes we did, ya but spent it as fast as we got it.

JE: What do they spend it on, clothes?

PM: Oh, buy drinks for the lumberjacks. We got it from the lumberjacks, spend it back. No they didn't care about clothes.

JE: Oh really?

PM: No they didn't care about clothes at all.

JE: So they were having a good time out of it too.

PM: I suppose, yes. Oh once in a while they would get into a wrestling match somebody would get drunk. We had all our trouble makers come from Effie. They created a disturbance and they came from Effie. They would come down here and just look for trouble. A lot of times they would get a good licking well they were at it, because they got fooled. They thought they could do anything they wanted to do. They didn't get away with it. Oh, somebody's has some stories out that lumberjacks were hit in the head and robbed and thrown into the river. Their body is floating in the river. Now my neighbor passed away a couple years ago, and she was in her 90s, and she lived right over here, and I know her very well and she told me a lot of this history and she said, she never heard of such a thing. Never heard of it. One day two fellows came in my tavern down there and they were dressed up and were looking around, like they were in a museum, and there was nothing to look at except the walls, and I said, is there something I can do for you, and the one fellow said, oh, we heard a lot about this place. I said what did you hear about it? The first thing they told me is they hit you in the head; they rob you and then throw you in the river. Where do you live, Minneapolis? Yes. Well I'll tell you, they shoot, they stab, rape and choke and threaten and everything else that's bad every day of the week, you don't hear that

do you. You don't understand that do you, but this is Craig, that is different. Then they made their exit in a hurry, and they didn't say any more.

JE: Now I heard that story too, a place on the river. I asked Bill Rajala about it and he said that is a bunch of bologna.

PM: Ya, fiction. I said to somebody the last time that somebody mentioned it, I said what they used to do, this river starts down around Wirt ya know, and I said it winds all the way around, and along the way some where somebody fell in the river or got thrown in the river on the road on the way down, and it got to Craig her, and we got blamed for it. No such a thing ever occurred.

JE: Does the county police ever come down?

Oh ya.

JE: What did they do?

PM: Oh, they just look around. You know how officer of the law do, look around see what you are doing. To see if your going by the laws or what.

JE: Were you going by the law?

PM: Who, me? No neither did anybody else. They weren't going by the law. Years ago on the range or any place you could get a drink in any 3.2 place. Even in a place that didn't sell 3.2 beer. Sit down and ask for a high ball and you'd get one. I've been in places where they never saw me before, International Falls, and they had plenty of girls in that International Falls.

JE: Did they?

PM: Oh you bet. Lots of them.

JE: Those places are not around anymore?

PM: No, no they are out, almost everything. Everything with the modern trend has clamped down now. Well I think what the problem is, when you're in that type of business Uncle Sam doesn't get his cut, income tax. They can't tax your body. You know the other night they had they had some kind of a hookers convention in San Francisco, and I would have liked to been there. The girls were on television, and they don't think they are committing a crime. They don't do anything to the male, the man, he gets away with murder. The girls they want to throw them in jail and fine them and all that junk. It really isn't a crime when you come right down to it. Of course this one girl was giving them some guff, but there were 3 of them hookers that gave it right back to her with both barrels.

JE: Did girls ever feel badly about themselves because they were hookers?

PM: No, that is a profession like anything else. Sure. I would never encourage it in anybody myself, but myself I don't think it is a very healthful occupation, because you run into a lot of obstacles at times. Like one of those girls on TV. Said that they get beat up and sometimes they get robbed if they got any money and they get into a lot of trouble outside of being arrested occasionally.

JE: Was there any occasion like that in Craig?

PM: No.

JE: The lumberjacks talking with other women seemed to have been the kind of people that were very courteous to one another.

PM: They were ya, they were very polite and kind of shy and everything and they were very nice, real good guys and kind of comical too. I remember one time this lumberjack, he was a little short guy, and he had a funny name, he was a Russian and he lost his dentures and so someone had found a pair of dentures that weren't his, and he stuck them in his mouth and tried to wear them, we told him you can't wear those you have got to go to a Doctor and get your own fitted. He couldn't save that at all. Oh, he was funny, and he was always bumming cigarettes, so I had some of these cigarettes that go bang, bang, some sales men went through here used to sell those, and so I said to somebody, there is a guy coming and he is going to bum everybody for cigarettes, and I put some of the loads in the cigarettes and I said if he comes up to you give him that cigarette. So he lit the cigarette and it went bang! Bang! And he just held his hand like this. He had tobacco in his eyes over his mouth. Boy he was funny. Those people were funny and they are just as honest as they can be. Oh, lot of times when it was cold weather, and I didn't have any room for them to sleep but I would get a blanket and a pillow and they could lie down in a booth or on the floor it was warm in here you know, and I would say if you want to help yourself to any of the drinks go ahead. They would touch anything. So they are very honest people.

JE: Did the jacks back that time have cars or did the girls take them back to camp?

PM: Well I'll tell you, most of the time the lumberjacks were around here, they walked several miles. They have any cars. It is just in the recent years, not too long ago that they acquired automobiles. The bosses don't approve of that, because they would go to town and there would be work to do and they would pile up a whole gang of guys and go to town and drink. Well that didn't go well with the boss. As a result a lot of them didn't have a job when they got back to camp. Of course the boss used to get drunk himself, and he used to allow for that a lot of times, but if they done it to frequently there was something urgent to be done. You can't have help like that around; it is just like any other outfit.

JE: That is right, right. Were these girls very attractive gals?

PM: Oh ya.

JE: What did they do Peg, for health problems for cleanliness?

PM: I don't really know.

JE: Were there any diseases?

PM: No, those girls that give it away get that.

JE: They can't sell, it, so they would give it away.

PM: They give everything that goes with it. A package deal.

JE: A package deal, ya.

PM: We got one girl around here that has had 7 illegitimate kids, without the benefit of a marriage license.

JE: Is that right?

PM: Ya and the oldest one just got married recently. She is 26 years old.

JE: What did the girls do to keep themselves from getting pregnant?

PM: I don't know they didn't have a pill at that time.

JE: No, there was no pill.

PM: Oh, there is a lot of them girls that got kids.

JE: Oh they did?

PM: Oh sure. Many of the girls were into that kind of business, because they couldn't survive, they couldn't get a job, and they had to do something to make a living and some of them had 3 or 4 kids already. Latch on to some sugar daddy and have him buy clothes for the kids.

JE: Well could they make more money being a hooker than working in the war plant in Minneapolis?

PM: Well a lot of these girls did work at one time. Like I said, when they were unemployed they had no alternative and they had to resort to this other.

JE: Were the prices higher on pay day, and toward the end of the month prices go down again?

PM: No not really, I don't think so. You know like I say those type of people usually they are quite generous, a couple hundred was a big stake, and some of those lumberjacks didn't come in to town for a while and they would have maybe eight, or nine or even a thousand dollars. Ya really a big stake. They would come in maybe once a year, but boy nowadays with the modern trend of things they want come in every weekend. They don't want to stay in a camp, which I

don't blame them, because in a camp it is pretty isolated, you got a bunch of trees to look at.

JE: Get pretty crusty sitting around there.

PM: Ya, ya and so far away and everything, you know.

JE: So I suppose when those guys came to down they were ready for some action?

PM: Oh ya, hot they were nice fellows.

JE: Peg, what was around Craig, was it pulp going to International Falls?

PM: Ya.

JE: Craig at that time must have been really booming?

PM: Oh, when I come in here in 1940 it was pretty quiet.

JE: It was?

PM: Oh yes, there were six places here, let's see there was a place down by the river, there was a Jewish lady that run that, and that is the place that the fellows called big Charlie's. Charlie Warnstaff. The next place was Johnny Walsh's wife had that. Then the place where I am that was Johnny Walsh's also. His wife ran one place, and he ran the other. Then the hotel over here, and that was built by some Finnish people.

JE: Were there girls over there too?

PM: Well, at times, not all the time, they didn't have them like they did down at the other end.

JE: Did the hotel have running water?

PM: No, nobody but me.

JE: Just you.

PM: They just had a well in the back end somewhere. Out in their yard or something. They had a place called, Mr. Walsh owned this property here where I am, and right down where my pump house is there was a big building there, and I guess they called it the 'Big Ship' that is what he told me, and he had girls and stuff in there. Then there used to be a, oh I told you about the grocery Stores that were here, post office. There used to be an old fella here, oh he was awful dirty, his name was Pete Riggins, and the postal inspector come, he had the post office, and he said, well Mr. Riggins I'll tell you, you've got the dirtiest post office in the United States. He was allergic to water, he never used it. His face was just black like he could be colored or Indian or something he was so dark. You know when you don't wash your face for so many years, it

gets that color.

JE: Oh goodness. Do you have any special stories?

PM: I don't know.

JE: Things that occurred down there?

PM: Yes. Well I know a lot of stories and stuff that happened down there.

JE: Why don't you tell me a couple?

PM: Well, I am going to tell you what just happened to me Friday night. We had the 1955 class had their reunion, so these young people there was no place to go and they used to come to my place, and they had this reunion and they called me on the telephone and invited me to the reunion Friday and I was a guest of honor there, and they gave me a prize and it was three monkeys, hear no evil, see no evil, no evil, I didn't talk about my customers, and I didn't give out information. Somebody would call up to see if somebody was at my place, and I would say I'm not an information bureau, and I said if you want to know who is here come on down and look at them, come down and see. I don't give information over the telephone. So those kids all knew that. I wasn't supposed to sell them drinks, but I did. They all had money so. They had some of their names and stuff, and they gave me a little book too. They called me and they didn't know if I would come or not. That was so many years you know.

JE: Yes.

PM: They all lived away from here, some lived in Wisconsin, across Wisconsin and one lived in Washington, and California. Even little prizes there, and mine was one that got the prize there, and one fellow, he's a bachelor; I guess he's going to get married now and they gave him a little doll in a plastic bag. It was nice; we had a nice time there. I didn't have to spend much money. I bought a couple of drinks. They paid for my dinner, because they had 42 guests and I think they each sent in \$10 dollars apiece. I heard one of the girls say there was eighty some dollars left over, and they didn't know what to do with it, so I said buy the house a drink, that is the easiest way to spend it. There was a lot of other people there to. So they bought a drink for us. Down at the 38 club down there. Quite a few loggers came in.

JE: How about some particular stories of some events in Craigville? Did these guys dance when they would come in?

PM: Ya, sure. They knew how to dance, and they could keep time to the music with the spoons that is real clever, I couldn't do it, but these guys could do it. There were a couple of them, there was this little old Frenchman, he wasn't old and he could do that very nice, and a lot of them could dance. Most lumberjacks keep everything a secret about themselves; it is hard to find out anything about them. They kind of wandered away from their families, some of them had been married you know, and it was hard to find anything out about their background, because they don't dare to reveal that, because when you go into a lumber camp to work they don't care about

your history or anything just so they got your social security card and that is all. They don't know if you've got a wife or a girlfriend or what, or kids or anything, unless you got to know them real well, I knew a few of them real well that had families and nice kids and I would get after them to get Christmas cards and I would help mail them out for them and stuff like that you know.

JE: Is there any particular bar tender or call girl that was special Craig? Yourself, Okay. We will accept that. You're still the favorite one.

PM: They are all gone and I'm still here.

JE: What did you do to, you're a very outgoing person, and I imagine that helped?

PM: Ya.

JE: Considerably. How to meet people.

PM: You have got to know how to approach people and how to talk to them and I had people come into my place like in the forenoon, and they would come in to maybe to have one drink and maybe have a sandwich or something like that and they would be there all day, you know.

JE: That is good for your business.

PM: Ya, at this party the other night they wanted me come down and open my place up down there, and they were going to come down the whole gang. Oh, they said they had so much fun, and I was shaking hands and they were kissing me and oh god they were wonderful and they wanted me to dance, Sub Herala, he use to be the principal in the school, and at the banquet somebody was saying he was a relation of some sort. He said well Peggy he said I think the kids learned more in 4 years from you than they did in school.

JE: Did Sub ever come up here?

PM: Sure, he'd come here a lot of times. He was the one that was dancing with me the other night. Sure, I know Sub.

JE: Oh, he is funny isn't he?

PM: Ya, ya. He was telling about a thing that occurred to him on a vacation trip he took to Spain I think, and he got into some controversy over something about his visa, he didn't have it made out right, or he didn't have it with him, this guy maybe sassy with this man, I don't know, but he socked him one and gave him a black eye.

JE: That sounds like Sub. It sounds just like him. So Sub came up and participated in sporting events?

PM: Oh yes he was always around. He used to come up here quite frequently. I remember one time; he came down here and went fishing near the waterfalls down here you know. So he went down there and it had been rainy and muddy like it is now and it had a trail in there and it was quite difficult to go through and I don't know but he fell into the mud, lost his \$30 dollar boots and they went clean out of site, because they went clear out of site and he couldn't recover them, and he lost his glasses and he came to my place and he was covered with mud from head to foot, that sounds like a song, and he said any kids around here, find my glasses and boots and I'll give them five dollars, but nobody ever found them, so they must be clean out of site down at the very bottom of the thing.

JE: Did Sub ever pick out one special girl that he liked?

PM: No, he would just dance with anybody, or whoever was available. Oh ya he's had girlfriends.

JE: Ya.

PM: Nothing very permanent. I remember one girl he went with and she was a nice girl and her husband had died and she was visiting relatives up here in Effie and Bigfork, and he went out with her several times and previous to her trip here before her husband ever died. I guess she figured it was just a waste of time and she went back to California and married some man out there. He didn't like that very good. He don't intend to marry anybody else.

PM: No, I don't figure they were ever really close enough.

JE: I met a lumberjack that I interviewed yesterday, he is 92 years old, and in the Bigfork hospital and he never married. Like you said before, it seems like these fellows never married or they went away.

PM: Oh, I guess they didn't have time, they were too busy working, and when they got through working they were too busy drinking. Some of those guys were darn nice fellows, good workers.

JE: Very strong?

PM: Oh ya, there is one little bitty guy, he weighed 135 pounds, I weighed him 135 pounds, I said you are so small I'm going to weigh you. How can you work in the woods you're so tiny. He just laughed. I talked to somebody who was his foreman and he said that he was a real good worker, and a meat cutter, and he can compete with anybody, a lot of the bigger fellows.

JE: When did Craig really start going downhill?

PM: Well when I closed up. Couple of years ago.

JE: How about these other places where they closing?

PM: Well he was open a little bit, but they never did go into this place very much anyhow. The only reason that some of them went there was because he had a room upstairs, and sleep. There was a bed and a chair. They had never improved it. It was a kind of a dirty place too. The lumberjacks don't like to go into a dirty place, let someone tell you about it. They don't like that place over there it is dirty over there.

JE: When did the last call girls leave?

PM: Oh, that has been a long time ago. I would say about 20 years or more.

JE: Back in 1950?

PM: Ya.

JE: Why are you a democrat?

PM: Oh, a lot of things, I was raised that way.

JE: Ranger right.

PM: Oh, I used to on the committee when I was able to get around.

JE: Well you did financially well, in your business.

PM: Ya, I think I did.

JE: Well you've got to save your money and not make mistakes.

PM: Sure, you can't goof off and get people mad at you and lose your trade.

JE: Ya.

PM: Ya, some people got some stories out that I chased them off with a gun. I don't know how to use fire arms in the first place anyhow. I did run one fellow off with a revolver. He got so rowdy and using foul language, and I refused to serve him anything, I wouldn't even give him a glass of water. He was drunk when he came in and I asked him to leave and he got real belligerent with me and he tried to strike me, and he wouldn't get out and he was throwing stuff around and making a big nuisance himself. So I got this gun out I told the people I was closing up, so I got most of them all out of the place. Well I thought well everybody's out, and they don't like to act smart unless everybody's watching them and then he can't show off to anybody. Then I got this gun out and I told him now get out of here before you get your head blown off. He said shoot right here, I said you're not going to point the place up for me. I didn't have any shells in it. I had an old pool stick that had been here in the moon shine era, and it was before I got here, there was no moonshine when I come, and this pool stick, I've still got it down there, and it is about that long and the head is loaded with beebees.

JE: About a foot and a half long?

PM: Ya, and boy that thing is hard; if you hit somebody with that you would kill him. I would just show to them, I would say look at this pay or else. Nope. There is the door. They had a lot of respect for me. They didn't get to smart.

JE: Did the guys have any fights over any of the girls?

PM: No, even the kids, the young people that come, like this here class reunion thing, a lot of them would come down and they would go outside in the car and come back and another guy would go with the same girl, and they didn't care. There is enough there for everybody.

JE: Will the girls stay right down there with you Peg, and sleep overnight with you?

PM: Yes, I had a couple of bedrooms there, 3 bedrooms in the back and they used to stay there and they would help in the bar and help me clean and everything like that. They weren't like some of these ultra, ultra gals you know. They got them in regular places like in Superior, Minneapolis and Chicago.

JE: Oh, do they have places in Superior?

PM: Oh, lots of them.

JE: Is that right?

PM: Did you know that?

JE: No, I never knew that. They used to be up by Hurley, Wisconsin, but they wiped that out. That was cleaned out.

PM: Well you know going to Hurley, Wisconsin, we were on our way to Milwaukee and Chicago, I had some relatives in Milwaukee, and we went through Hurley, Wisconsin. So that night I see a great big neon sign, girls, girls, girls. This has been maybe 15 or 20 years ago, and I said I would like to go down and see what's going on down there. So we went down, and we went into some of these night clubs and they had some pretty seedy stuff going on there, like taking off everything, striping and all that. They charged a big price for their liquor and everything. A bottle of beer cost 50 and that was a lot of scratch in those days. A shot of liquor was \$1.00 or something like that, for watching the girls up there showing their bare behind. One jumping over a fire I thought that she was going to catch fire on her bottom. She was doing a dance over this fire. Then she came up to me, I was sitting at the bar with a friend, and she came up next to me and she was trying to get this guy to go to bed with her. I don't know if he went or not, because I drank my drink and left. Then I went to the next place. Another place we went to, they had a great big bar and they had a master of ceremonies there. I'll tell you the language that he used wasn't fit to be repeated, but they had some beautiful girls in there, and they all looked like models, they were tall and slender and really pretty, young, and they had on real sleevey chiffon clothes, or negligee's, and they were up there just picking these things off. This emcee

was doing all the talking, I can't remember what he said, it was something I remembered for a long time, but it has been so long ago I forgot. I had to go to the bathroom, and the bathroom, it seemed like that building was a half a block long, I went way in the back to this bathroom, and when I came back I said to Richard I said funny one of those girls didn't come and plank herself down next to you. He said don't worry she did. What did she want? She wanted me to go to bed with her. I said, why didn't you go? No, not today. He probably would have gone if I wouldn't have been there. I said which one was it I'll buy here a drink, but he wouldn't tell me. There was about 8 or 10 of them there.

JE: Well these girls you had down here Peg, did they do dances or striping?

PM: No, they didn't do anything like that.

JE: What about these modern massage parlors?

PM: A guy came into my place one time, I don't know who he was and I didn't ask who he was and he didn't identify himself, but he looked to me like a man who was in some kind of important kind of capacity, and he was telling me how he was in a place in France, and he said it was very exclusive they have signs right in the window that are advertising these girls. He said he went up to this girl, and he said oh, she was a beautiful girl had a beautiful apartment, she had maids there and everything, you know real plush. Usually a girl like that you don't have anything to worry about. They don't have a whole lot of guys either. They just have somebody whose money that is not going to take a chance.

JE: Do the health inspectors ever come?

PM: They do to look at the place.

JE: But they wouldn't bother the girls at all?

PM: They were cleaning or working or talking with somebody.

JE: Did you ever have any problems with a special agent come in and pretend he was a lumberjack or something?

PM: Oh yes. There was some kind of a thing, a guy came into my place we were remodeling then, and he said who is the boss here, and I said I am. The carpenters and everybody were sitting around, and we had the place kind of torn apart. I went in the backroom with him, and he said to me, he was taken up some kind of a donation for some police protection thing. He said you start writing out receipt, I don't know he started with \$75 or something and then I said I can't give you \$75; I'm fixing my place here. Fifty and he went all the way down to down to twenty bucks, and I said I'm not giving you anything and I don't owe you anything, you ain't protecting me. Then he got the hell out there and he took his briefcase and wheeled out. He pulled everybody's leg in town but mine.

JE: He got some money then?

PM: He got some money off of everybody but me, everyone of them, sure. Not me I wouldn't give him nothing because he didn't have it coming to him, and I told him so. He got mad about it, but I didn't care. Another time a guy come in here real smart aleck, in the first place he had no business in here, he was a liquor inspector and I had no liquor license, and he had no business in my place.

He said to me, you've got one of them ah; it's some kind of a liquor stamp. No. Why not? I don't need it I ain't got no liquor. Oh, all you places sell liquor, he was real belligerent smart, so he said can I look around, go ahead help yourself. So he went into my kitchen but he didn't go into my bedroom or I would have pulled something if he would have. I would have told him off good then. He didn't go in there, but he was so smart and he went into my kitchen he didn't look to hard, he came out of there, and he didn't get much satisfaction so he wheeled out of there. Then I heard that he was in Chisholm or Hibbing and somebody shot at him and dam near killed him. So he must have been a dink.

JE: That's okay.

PM: Nobody liked him; he had a very bad way of approaching people about anything. He asked me if I had whiskey, and I said sure I drink it myself I don't sell it.

JE: How old were these jacks that came into town.

PM: Most of them were, oh there were some young fellows, but not to many, mostly in their 30s and 40s and 50s. They lived a long time.

JE: Oh yes, they were in good shape.

PM: Sure there are some of them that are still alive. Some of them live to be almost a hundred years old, just like me, I've been dead 2 or 3 times, and I'm still here. I have had so many accidents it is no wonder I am even able to get around at all. I'm beginning to feel better now.

JE: Bill was saying that there was an older fellow working for him, and he was about 75 years old and he had never met any gal before, and he brought him into your place and he said that guy just went goofy, and that he had to come back all the time. He spent all his money.

PM: Oh ya I suppose. That Bill, he used to come to my place and he would want to sit on the bar. Get your hind end off of this bar this is like a table, don't sit on this. He would do that just to tease me you know. We had a big ice pick, we didn't have electrical appliances like we got now, I took this ice pick, and of course he had 2 or 3 pair of those real thick pants, so it didn't penetrate very far. But I got him off that bar.

JE: He is quite a character.

PM: Oh, he is a nice guy.

JE: Ya, he is.

PM: All them Rajalas are pretty good. This John Molan the lumberjack Mr. Bill Raj ala mentioned as making frequent trips to the bed room is an arrangement, and Mr. Bill was unaware of. As an old lumberjack in his eighties, sex was a farfetched thing with most of them; they were not accustomed to this sort of joy. So when Bill insisted on John engaging in this ordeal he offered to foot the bill. So each time Jack Molan was given a 5 or 10 by Bill he would sit and visit and sip on a beer and the girl got the money without any sex. Bill doesn't know to this day that's what took place. Any female is pretty safe with an 85 year old male or even younger. So every time Jack came to town the same thing took place and it was fun playing the joke on Bill. Yes there is a lot of good people up here.

JE: Everyone that I have talked to, Peg is really enjoyed their life.

PM: Ya.

JE: Their a different breed of people, they've been rugged, and have worked hard.

PM: There was this man and he talked kind of broken, and he said look it here and he kind of stuttered, I've been down to Pe-Pe-Peggys and she is so st-stingy look at the skinny little atches she had given me.

JE: Now, do you have a family, Peg?

PM: No. Well my mother passed away in 1940, when I come here. I came up here after she passed away.

JE: Who is the good looking girl there?

PM: I am her god mother, she lives at Aurora, she is a beautician and her name is Zabrachi, her husband is a barber in town there, the only barber. She has got 2 little boys 9 and the other one is 11.

JE: Was there a church in Craig?

PM: No, we used to have a Mr. Peters, Rev. Peters that used to lease the old store building up there once in awhile. He would have a kind of a congregation occasionally a few people would come. I am catholic myself, and I go to Effie or Bigfork.

JE: What did you say in confession?

PM: I just told him, you're not a priest. I never killed anybody or stole anything so I guess I can't be too bad.

JE: Well I imagine that you accepted this as a way of life, and you enjoyed it?

PM: Oh yes, I had lots of fun here I got along well with the people. If I had somebody that came in that belligerent from drinking, I just ref used to serve them. I never tried to evict anybody bodily, you know tried to touch anybody and put them out, because physically I couldn't do it anyhow. When people are drinking they are pretty strong. I know I don't want anyone touching me, I've never been evicted. I turn off the music and tell them I am closing up. I tell my friends leave for a while and then come back after while; I want to get this man out of here. So they would go along with me, and that way I didn't have any problems, they would come back and apologize and everything, ya know. I only used that stick one guy. He was a young fellow from Effie and he came into my place and he was always belligerent when he drank, and especially this day. He was taking stuff from the top of the counter like napkins and matches, little boxes they were, and he was grabbing this stuff and throwing it on the floor, throwing it back in the bar and calling me abusive names and being just mean and just being nasty. He was spilling bear on the bar, on the floor, and so I told him to stop it. Well then he got up and he stood up on the foot rest by the bar and he threatened to strike me. When he did that anything that makes my blood boil, was that, somebody is going to strike me. I told him he better behave himself. So I had a couple of young fellows escort him out to the car, he would go out one door and right out the other, and he would be right back in. So when he came in he got worse than ever. So when he was going to strike me, I just grabbed my stick and I rapped him one right on the beaner here. It drew blood, and of course I didn't hit him real hard, because like I say with that club you can kill somebody, and I just gave him sort of a love tap. Well anyhow that took the wind out of his sail. I got some antiseptic and some warm water and cleaned him up and wiped the blood off and cut some of the hair around the cut and taped it up for him, and fixed him all up, and he was a perfect gentleman. He went into the service and he got a good licking when he was there, because he showed me that was nothing that scar he got from me. He said he had it coming and he apologized for his behavior, and every time even after he was married he would come down to my place with his wife and his children and everything you know. Ya, and he has always been real good to me, real nice. He knew he was drunk and he had it coming. I told his dad, I gave Kermit a crack with my stick, and his dad said next time hit him harder. That is what his dad said. So really I didn't have much of a problem, in reprimanding people because they misbehaved. They usually were pretty good.

JE: Did some of the married guys from down here hit a girl once in a while?

PM: Oh lots of them. In fact one guy was right from town here, and he had a half a dozen kids, and they didn't have shoes or stockings or half the time any clothing to wear, and he was going, and this was a Norwegian girl too. He was going down the hail with her and I happened to see it from behind the bar, I could see, I had a direct trail going that way you know, and I just went back there and grabbed right by the back of the neck and pulled him back. I said mister your going the wrong way brother. The girl got mad at me too, but I couldn't help that. A guy that has a wife with a half a dozen kids, and half of the time nothing to eat, will spend money like that, that is out. I wouldn't go for that.

JE: Ya, that is for sure.

PM: Another time there was a guy and he came and he was the fun of those girls, and he came out and said she robbed him that is what he said. I talked to this girl, did you take any money off this man, and she said no, except what he gave me, and she showed me the money he gave her, and I said, how much money you had. She said he had quite a bit. Well when she went out of the room for a while he must have stashed it. I said you come back here I want to talk to you. I said how much money did you have? He told me he had just cashed his check someplace down the line. Well I said come on take off your boots. There was the money down in his boots, he had over \$100 and he accused her of stealing it. I suppose he thought I was going to fork over the one hundred dollars see. That is an old racket too you know. He found the money all right though. I told this girl, we will get in trouble if he's got money; he is going to go down and complain, he said he was, and he is going to report it to the sheriff and everybody. I said we will all be in trouble then, and we don't want that. So she told him, I didn't take anything from you.

JE: Were those girls pretty honest?

PM: Ya, oh yes.

JE: I suppose they would kind of feel of what kind of purse they could charge, the highest they could get, I suppose?

PM: Well with some of those fellows you have to for maybe for five dollars or ten dollars, and they might give you twenty. If they were flushed and got their check you know, and had plenty of money on them. Lumberjacks you don't have to steal from you just ask them and they will give it to you. Ya, you don't have to steal from them. I think that is the case in most cases, people go around stealing and stuff, instead of asking somebody if they want, if I see something I want, I ask them do you want to sell that, or what. Like that lamp I got up there, I was in a place up in Wirt, and this lady is, she's got an Irish name, anyhow I saw this lamp on the back bar, and I said to her, you have electricity here, you don't need a lamp. No. Do you want to sell it? Well sure. How much do want for it? Is a dollar and a half too much. I saw the same thing in the Minneapolis paper for \$150, an antique lamp like that. That clock there I got that from that old fellow I told you was so dirty that old Pete Wiggins. That clock was on a shelf, and he had an old run down shack he lived in, and he had this clock in there, and that was the only place in town that had a telephone, it had one of those crank phones you know, and so if we got a call, he would come and notify us or we would call out somewhere, and he was supposed to be the fire warden, that is how he acquired a telephone. So I saw this clock in there several times, he had a lot of old dirty junk, and I was interested and I like clocks, and so I asked him if he would consider selling the clock, well he didn't know. He was undecided. Well I'll tell you, it is not in running order and it needs a little overhauling, in fact it needed a lot of overhauling. It was filthy dirty; you could have planted a garden on it. It had just like blisters, black blisters all over it, it had been in a fire or something, and the face and you couldn't see the numerals at all. So I offered him \$10 for it. I said you can get a case of milk for your cats, because he had a lot of cats, so he took the ten, and he had big tears in his eyes. So then the war was over, and I went to St. Paul and a couple GI's had a little jewelry store a couple of young fellas. I took the clock in there and I asked them to clean it and if they could fix it. I had washed off the top dirt off the top

before I took it with me, and they fixed it all up, and they had it in the window and they said they had to take it out, because everybody wanted the clock. They fixed it up real good and I brought it home with me and I have had it ever since. I had many opportunities to sell it down in the tavern there. One day a lady came in, she was pretty fresh and she comes in there and she wanted to see that clock. She got out of the car, didn't shut the motor off, she had a man with here and she said I want to look at that clock. I said, you can see it right over there from right where you are standing lady across the bar. She wanted me to put it up on the bar you know so she could see it better or maybe run with it maybe. You never know. No I don't move that clock at all. She got a little nasty about it, and she finally got out of there. I didn't want to sell it; I wanted to keep it for myself. It bongs on the half hour and on the hour. Ya, it is unique, you don't see every day.

JE: Well Craig is about done in, isn't it?

PM: Ya, it is a ghost town. Somebody from International Falls wrote an article on it. One time, that has been about 15 or 20 years ago somebody wrote an article about Craig in the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and called it a ghost town, which it wasn't, so I asked the people, and somebody told me about it and said it was in the St. Paul Pioneer Press paper and I used to know a lot of those fellows down there in the dispatch. I said, do you have a paper? No. I wrote in and I requested a paper to be sent to me, they wouldn't send it to me. I wrote them a letter and I told them that this is not a ghost town, and I live here and I am a hell of a long way from being a ghost, and if you don't believe me, come and see me I don't know, they may have come hunting season and they didn't identify themselves. Oh, I had a funny thing happen one time. I always like dogs, so I had a wire haired terrier dog, and there was some guy came in here and sold my dog. I don't know what happened to him, but I felt awfully bad about that, and he had a collar with his name on it. I called him Doughboy, and that was his registered name, and do you know about 2 years later a man come to my place and he ordered a drink, and he starts in talking to me, and I had remembered when he had been in there and I had no idea he had taken my dog, and do you know he confessed and told me that he stole my dog. I tell you I couldn't talk to that man after that. I just got sick for a minute. In fact he had stayed at my place at one of those Finnish baths you know and I had a cot in there, and he stayed there with his friend one night, I had 2 cots in there to sleep on and they stayed overnight, and I felt so bad I couldn't even talk to him. I couldn't look at him or anything, I felt so bad. I was really torn up over that dog being taken or ripped off the way they say it now a days. I think there was something, because he was a man of, he wasn't a common ordinary person I think he was a man of distinction in some category; I don't know what his capacity was. I think that he might have belonged to some organization or maybe it was his religion or something that made him tell him that.

JE: Maybe a guilt complex.

PM: Ya, he was real serious about it too. You know it struck me so funny, I felt so bad about that because I loved that dog so well, I dreamt one night that I had found it and I got up out of bed at two o'clock in the morning and walked all around downtown here, because I thought I would see him, but I never found him, but he had taken it. He told me also that he had run away from him. I think because he was drinking. This dog would jump in anybody's car, and go with anybody.

JE: Did you ever make any money off the girls?

PM: No, no.

JE: How about the other places?

PM: No, nobody did.

JE: So, what they made was theirs?

PM: Yes, that was theirs, ya.

JE: They were the attraction for your place?

PM: Ya, they helped stimulate business and stuff like that. Ya.

JE: How did you get the girls here?

PM: Oh, they would just come, they hear about it, and come you know, like everybody. They worked in other places and they liked me so they would come to my place and work for me. Boy those other places tried to boycott me; they tried to run me out of here and everything ya know. They were bitching about me to the sheriff, so you know what he did, he came down and raided the whole town, took everybody. He took everybody and hauled them down; they all paid their fine, including me. There were two detectives from St. Paul there, Mike McGinnis and I forget the others name, a couple of Irishmen, and they had all Irish cops at that time in St. Paul. He knew me and Mike called me aside one day, say do you need any money to pay your fine. I thought that was nice.

JE: Where did they take you, down to St. Paul?

PM: No, International Falls.

JE: International Falls, ya that's right.

PM: They hitched about me, they shut up after that. They were bitching about me, because they were jealous. Everybody's been jealous of me all my life. I don't know why, they had the same opportunity as I have.

JE: Because you hustled better.

PM: Ya, ya sure. I go after the business and I get it I know what I want. I always wanted a house and now I got one. Being in that tavern was pretty boring. You can't get any rest in a place like that, you go to bed, and they are pounding on the door and the windows at night getting you out of bed, give me a six pack or something you know. I just didn't have any rest. One time they were going to raid this town, and I was behind the bar all alone. Some guy came in he was in a hell of a hurry, he had a white shirt on, and I have never seen him before, and he came in to the

end of the counter and he motioned for me to go back with him. I said what do you want, he said let's go to bed. I said who ever gave you that idea. He said, I thought you went to bed. I did last night, but I am all awake now. You know they came in, 4 or 5 of these officers come in right behind him, and they were waiting to pinch somebody, there was this woman down at the end of the bar having a drink, but they never found anything.

JE: So they tried to pull a fast one on you?

PM: Oh, they tried to that a lot of times.

JE: Oh, I can imagine Peg that you know that the kind of business you're in you knew that when somebody came in like that they were trying to pull a fast one?

PM: You could always make them out.

JE: It was obvious. Instead of coming in and probably being dressed like a lumberjack and being with them or something like that.

PM: Ya.

JE: Did you ever get married?

PM: I was married once, 35 years ago.

JE: Oh you were?

PM: Oh yes.

JE: Was that before you came up here or what?

PM: No, no.

JE: So then you left St. Paul.

PM: That is when my mother died I came home. Oh, if my mother's was alive when I ran a place like this she would come with a club and beat me to death. You know I always had the urge to be in the woods though. I liked it, I don't know why, I have always been like that, and I want to be in the country. Oh, when I lived in the cities, all, that pollution smoke coming out of those chimneys. I would go downtown, I would be in an air conditioned place even, and I would get this breathing spell where I couldn't hardly breathe, and I Cold my doctor that I had these breathing spells and he would have to come over to where I was at the time. He would have to sit with me and watch me and everything for a couple of hours, and give me medication, and he said it was the pollution around here. So when I came home and I saw that I felt much better up here, he said it must the air and everything is different. Virginia is not far from here.

JE: Well when you were in Virginia, how old were you when you left Virginia?

PM: Well, I was a teenager, 18, 19 years old.

JE: Oh, so you must remember quite a bit about Virginia don't you?

PM: Ya. Well yes.

JE: Was that a pretty open town too?

PM: Well I did not know anything about that stuff then. I was a green horn yet. I got educated down in the big city. The hard way. I was down there when all those gangsters were there. I knew Baby Face Nelson, Alvin Karpetz, and Dillinger, Doe Barker and all those guys. They would sit right at the next table; they would even buy us drinks and send them over to our table. I remember one bootlegging joint that was opened up over night, that is what we used to do you know back then. We went to this place, we heard that they were going to sell home brew, and I think they sold moon shine first, I never ever cared for moon shine so I didn't ask for any, but I know they had home brew they would make, you know. It was something, it was couple of tables and maybe some benches and a couple of chairs and stuff. It was nothing fancy, because if they would get raided they would have to vacate rapidly sometimes. So anyway we were up in this bootlegging joint and these fellows were in the very next table, they weren't any further than you are from me, and I had a couple of other girls with me, and I remember they all had pistols, they each had two, one on each side and they were putting in the bullets, don't say nothing just look, you know, and don't look to much either. That night when I went home to my apartment the first page I turned were two of these characters in that true detective book, with a huge reward attached to it. Well I'll tell you I closed that book in a hurry, or I might not be here now. So it gave this one guys description , I remember they were all young guys, he was about 27 or 28 years old, you know, and nice looking all nice looking fellows. They were dressed nice, and in this description in the magazine it said his index finger was off at the second joint here, see. So I got nosy, next night I am going to see if he is going to be there again, I want to go and look at that finger, you know from across the table, and I had to be discrete about this, and I knew they were dangerous, but I wasn't really frightened or anything you know, well I don't scare easy anyhow. So I got a couple of girls and I said, do you want to go with me, we will go up to that place we were drinking beer at last night. I didn't tell them anything about these people. When we went there, they must have closed up or got raided or closed or something, I don't know. What is in this book, it told the description and how they were wanted, and how much of a reward was offered, and they were living in South St. Paul and somebody had noticed them going in and out of the house, and they had these violin cases, they used to have these special made guns that break down you know.

JE: Yes.

PM: It would fit in a violin case. Someone had seen them, some neighbors and notified the authorities. You know they were paying off down at the police station, they would go out on these jobs and they would check in at the police station, and pay off the chief of police, the head deputies and all that junk you know. They got their cut out of it, and they got their cut out of it and they didn't care what they did out of the city limits or in the city, just so they didn't do

anything in the city of St. Paul. They could stay there as long as they behaved themselves. One chief, his name was Brown I remember he committed suicide, because he got involve with this thing so badly.

JE: Did you ever meet these guys personally?

PM: Ya, I knew all of them, sure. They were always trying to get me to go out with them, but I knew better, I didn't want to get involved. Hello - goodbye, that is it. Talk nice to them, dance with them. There used to be a place called the Green Lantern it is right on Wabasha Street, do you know where that is?

JE: Yes.

PM: We use to go there and as you come in, it used to be a, I think it used to be a restaurant at one time, as you come in right from the door there were big long counters, and it was just a make believe counter that sold cigarettes or candy bars there was nothing really worth anything in it, it was just a stall thing, because where the performance and everything was going at full speed was in back of this counter. They had a door there and they usually had a body guard there, and he was armed and you didn't get in if you weren't the right people. They would have these big parties, a band and everything, and you would dance with these guys, and that was when you had to furnish your own liquor, I don't know if they would have whiskey, I remember I used to buy whiskey in the Walgreen drug store, and it was \$6 a pint and it was pure whiskey, and I could get all I wanted.

JE: In the Walgreen drug store?

PM: Right downtown in St. Paul, yes sir.

JE: You could get all you wanted and there were 2 or 3 drug stores where you could sit right in the booth and drink.

PM: Ya.

JE: That was prohibition too.

PM: Ya, sure. It was in the 30s. Anyhow these guys would be in there and they would be dancing with us girls and they were generous with their money, they probably knocked over some bank someplace, and they get rid of the money quickly, because they aren't going to have any use for it much in jail, and so they used to be very generous with their money, sometimes they would slip you a 20 or something in your hand if you danced with them. They were real good, buy all the drinks you wanted or I don't know how they worked it, but it seems to me they used to have to bring the liquor in, but I think they were charged for the service or something. It was home brew mostly though. Then this here liquor, they would get this boot-leg liquor, and 190 proof alcohols.

JE: Wow.

PM: We used to drink that. In them days they used to have near bear, they still have near bear, you can still buy that. They would spike that, they would pour out so much out of the can and they would fill the rest with that 190P liquor. You couldn't hardly taste it, because it is like vodka. You would keep drinking and dancing with these guys and everything. We all had a good time, they had a band there. Like I say I never associated with these fellows personally because I knew it was a dangerous thing. In fact a waitress that I knew who worked in Mother Merrills Restaurant, we always used to eat down there, and she was associating with this one man and I warned her, I said don't monkey with that man, because I said he is with that mob and I said you're going to be in a tough spot, but she wouldn't listen to me. About two months later they found her and this guy they were stripped of all their clothing in a field, I think it was in Mendota, some guy was plowing his field up in the fall of the year and he found their bodies there. She had no criminal record or police record or anything she was just a waitress. Nice looking girl.

JE: Who do you remember most, you said Baby Face Nelson. What kind of a character was this?

PM: They were all nice guys, good looking fellas.

JE: They were?

PM: Ya. This Baby Face Nelson he wasn't quite as large, he was slim and trim and nice looking. Doc Barker had a nice looking mustache, and had dark curly hair, and this Alvin Carpes was taller, he was I imagine about 6 feet tall, & slender, he was very nice looking. They were all good looking fellows. They didn't act tough or anything. They didn't threaten anybody or anything; they were just like other people. Them guys that do those things, they get up just like you do and go to work in the morning. They go out and they got some place they are going to rob. Incidentally I had a thing like that happen to me. Six or seven years ago, during spring break up in March, when the camps all break up, and this guy came and drove up in front of my place, and I thought it was a dark blue Oldsmobile car, and he had on one of these long silky rain coats, white you know, you have seen those. Well nobody around here wears anything like that, but I thought he was a kid from Bigfork that went to college or something and came down. So, he had dark glasses on, and he came in, and asked me if I had some gas. I said yes. I was suspicious of him from the very beginning. It was just a feeling, there was something wrong about him, and I went out to put the gas in, and I put \$6 worth of gas in and when I come back in he was playing with my little poodle, my little gray one, and I went out in the kitchen, and removed all my jewelry and took that all off and stashed it. Then I was talking when someone was there, but I tell you I was suspicious of this guy. I come out to the bar and he had ordered a bottle of Grain Belt and he hadn't touched it, he was just standing there, and I said you were really out of gas you had any in there at all hardly, and he said nope. He didn't say too much. I turned around, because sometimes I have change on the till, and I rang it all up at once like quarters dimes or half dollars, and when I had 4 or 5 dollars I would ring it all up. I turned around to ring this money up; he said leave that open and give me the money out of it. I turned around and he had this gun stuck in my nose, and he said give me the money out of there. I scooped up these, mostly one dollar bills, because the night before I had taken out all the big money out of there, and there was over 500 dollars and it was a good thing because he would have got a good grab. They were

going to get me the night before, but I closed up early. I had a hunch to close up. So they had been watching me all night, there was some local talent around here that was questionable too, there was one guy, he had been in Stillwater about 4 times. He doesn't live here anymore, but he was the one who instigated the whole thing, because you see these guys what they do, they meet each other in jails and prisons and they are tipped by one guy to hold up somebody, well then they get a cut out of it see if they get enough money. He didn't get too much from me so these guys didn't get anything you know. They tried to find out from me how much I gave him, and I wouldn't tell them, and I said it wasn't very much is all I said. I scooped out these one dollar bills, well I had a whole lot of silver in it, and he didn't want that, it is too bulky or something. Then he asked me to lift that ting out of there that coin thing, and the paper part. Well my till doesn't work that way, and I showed him, this doesn't come out of here you can see that, I said you have to scoop any money that is in here out of here with your hands. So, he let it go at that, and then he ordered me to lie down on the floor. You think I wasn't scared. I said I wasn't scared that often, but that was one time I was. I thought for sure he was going to blow my head off. You know, he was pointing right at my head. I lay down, I was facing the front window of the door, and he got up on my foot rail and looked down at me, and that is when I thought I was really going to get it. I said please don't shoot me, and he said I won't. He went out the door, went to Effie, and I called the filling station on the corner in Effie and said, watch for a blue Oldsmobile car, there is a man in it that held me up, and I said call me back. So he called and said he just went through town and he went toward Bigfork. So I called the Sheriff and told him about it. He had gone to Bigfork that night, it was on a Saturday and he had gone in a tone in a little liquor store and bought some fancy bottles of booze with my money and then went to some friends of mine down the scenic and was drinking there at two o'clock in the morning and this lady comes to my house or down to the tavern and called me outside and told me where he had been. He had been at her house. I know who held you up. She said on the radio on the news, I guess it was in the paper too. She said ya, he was at my place, his name is Bucky something and she said he was with his wife and then he had his brother and his wife along, there were the 4 of them. She said he had a real fancy bottle of liquor and I wanted the bottle, but he wouldn't give it to here, I suppose he didn't want his finger prints on it, you know.

JE: Sure.

PM: She said they tried to get into some other resort, I suppose they were going to hold them up but they were closed. They were going to Long Lake and they were going to some other place, but the places were all locked up already. Then he went from this area he went to Minneapolis. This guy that used to be around here, I'm pretty sure that he put him up to me, or told him about me, the one with the bird knocking his brains out, anyhow he this fellow came in, his name was Lester Sanford and he said to me if you give me \$50 bucks I'll tell you who held you up. He didn't show up for about a month around here, and I said you don't have to tell me, I know Bucky Sheffield and I said they found a stolen car in front of your apartment in Minneapolis. He wheeled out the door and he never said a word. He kind of moved to Wisconsin now, and has a little resort. He went to Seawald Creamery in Minneapolis, it is a big outfit, and he went there and he goes over to this one person, and Bucky held up this cashier or bookkeeper I don't know if it was a man or a woman, but he got about 900 dollars, and I saw that in the paper. In fact I have a friend that is with the crime bureau in St. Paul. He told me that they caught him on the freeway going into Denver or out of Denver, but he steals a car and it runs out of gas and he

steals another one, and that is how they catch him. So they caught him there and they brought him back, and you know he is a habitual criminal, I bet he is in jail right now. You know some friends of mine, oh he was good looking, about your size, dark like you and wears glasses or he had these tinted glasses and he was a good looking guy, and he talked real calm, well just like I said, those guys get up in the morning and rob people just like you go to work. You know calm, cool, and collective. Some young friends of mine were in Deer River and they met him in a liquor store and they knew what he had done to me, and this one guy didn't like him anyhow, because he had been fooling around with his wife, and he beat the hell out of him, he fractured his skull and took him back to the liquor store. He beat the hell out of him and damn near killed him. I said you should have killed him.

JE: Did you have, when you talk about girl friends down in St. Paul, were they hookers?

PM: Well one of these girls worked for Brown and Bigelow, and the other one was a waitress, I don't know what she had done on the side, I don't know, there were a lot of girls that had done that, and married women too. I imagine now there is a lot of that going on.

JE: I wonder what the Range is like with all the increased population up there.

PM: You know there is so close to a girl that charges money for that thing and one that has got her rear end hanging out of a window most of the time anybody can take a crack at her. They can have seven or eight kids like this one in this trailer house over here that is all right. Welfare, I am supporting them too, you know. They got snowmobiles they got motorcycles, and bikes and everything.

JE: Did this Craig have a mayor or a city council?

PM: No.

JE: No local government?

PM: Nope. No this is just a suburb of Minneapolis or International Falls or something, a suburb of Kootchiching County.

JE: Well what do the, how should I put this, do you have at any time Peg any repercussions because of the fact that you had call girls in the bar, and you were a bar owner?

PM: No, nope that doesn't bother me.

JE: Like when you told me, I think that was real good, lots of fun and good times. That was a way of life with me. When you go into the over 50 club now down in Bigfork do they shun you at all?

PM: No, I have lots of friends.

JE: They seem like an awfully good bunch of people?

PM: I had friends from all over and they knew all about me too. That is fine, one who knows all about you and likes you just the same.

JE: Right.

PM: That is like your wife she knows all about you, or maybe she don't. She had better.

JE: Where in Wisconsin did you live, you told me once?

In Manitowac.

PM: Do you know, it seems to me that is a town I went through once, and they had a mina bird in a cafe there, a restaurant a nice place too. There was kind of a bar and they served food there. I went in this bar and somebody whistled, I went to the ladies room, and I thought gee they are fresh around here it was in the morning you know. There was a couple of guys and a woman sitting there, and I think they had been drinking all night. I didn't say anything and I went back and sat down because I had a passenger that had been ill and wasn't able to come inside, so I went inside to get some refreshments, coffee and sandwich's. So I sat down, and it was quite a while before I realized that this bird was doing all this. He would say how are you, and finally I looked up and here was this bird and I asked the man what type of a bird that was and he said it was a mina bird. So when I got home I ordered from Spiegel a mina bird. I trained him to say hello Joe, how are you and I'm a talking bird, and he mimicked my voice, and I had more fun with that bird, that drew a lot of trade, because it was really clever, and he would talk so clear. The people would bring their kids in there, you know and they had just never seen anything like that.

PM: Well I never had either. I remember one day some people came here, and they had a whole bunch of children, and this one little girl said to me, does that bird have any little baby birds. I had to think real fast, because those kids were asking questions, I said no, because that bird has never been married yet. It can't have any babies. I got off the hook that way.

JE: Ya, you sure did. Well--

PM: Nope I got lots of friends, young people and old people and all kinds of people. Mostly young people. All my friends are young. Somebody would say, do you know this old guy, I would say I don't know any old person that is the truth. Come down there and ask me about some old people that lived around here alone. I suppose they are older and they don't go around and drink or anything. I didn't know them, you know, I don't know any old people. All my friends are young. I get along good with young people, and I understand them. You know they come in a lot of times and ask me something confidential you know something they wouldn't ask anybody else. If they wanted something squared around that they would be puzzled about. I remember one kid, he come in there and he was a nice boy too, and he never knew who his father was, so he assumed I would know, and I told him I am awful sorry, but I didn't live here when you were born. He accepted that, then he went out west and he would be working out there in the

woods and he came back and he had his wife along and he brought here in and introduced me to her and he was so nice, and he went back out and I think it was a year later one of those big trees fell on him and killed him. Ya, he was real happy with this wife and everything, and I don't know if he found out about his father or not.

JE: What would these girls do if they got pregnant would they stay here or move out or what?

PM: Which girls?

JE: These girls that you had down here at the tavern.

PM: Oh, they never got pregnant. Some of them had kids from before, you know. Some come from the cities, some come from Wisconsin, and they would come from all over. The first time I heard about this town was when I was in Gilbert. Did you see the write up in the paper last week about Gilbert in the Duluth paper. Some guy wrote some real rough stuff about Gilbert, and he said that they used to have all these houses of prostitutions there, and it is going right back to that, did you see it.

JE: Yes. Of course those kinds of Range towns are different. Well Peg, I think I am going down to Bigfork, and I have to see some more people, so I want to say it has been very much of a pleasure.

PM: Thank you very much; it has been a pleasure meeting you.

JE: We are going to type this up and we will send it back to you, and I am going to stop back in again.