

**Potatoes.** See also photo section.

**Evelyn Olson** Mikko, daughter of Alex Olson shares this in her 1980 document:  
The latter part of September was potato-picking time. We got out of school for two weeks to pick potatoes. Seems to me it was cold and rainy during this time.

Brother **Bob Olson** shares with Barb in April of 2008:

I remember most on the farm: pick rocks. We piled them on fencerows or in piles in field. We used hands and horse with wagon. For big ones we used a stone boat to roll the boulders on and drag them over.

We had potato fields. I recall busses from town with high school kids to pick the potatoes during war years. We put tags with our names on top of the bushel basket with potato to hold it in place. A horse and wagon picked up the baskets. We got paid by the number of tags. (Bushels).

**Art Olson** shares with Barb Koski in April 2008:

- Potatoes, yes. We grew about 10,000 bushels each year of Green Mountain. We helped grade them and put in 100# bags.

Don Heikkila shares with Barb Koski Winter of 2007: I worked the potato farms for Joe Lahnala, (William Lahnala's son) and Art Lindstrom. Schools would allow days off to pick spuds. There were ladies who would pick 100+ bushels in a day at 10 cents per bushel to make extra money.

L. L. Best was probably the eventual owner/operator of the potato warehouse in Ripley.

I remember in the fall packing, grading, and shipping potatoes in 15# bags and fill a semi trailer that would be shipped to the big city/Houghton . In the spring 4 or five of us kids would gather in the Lahnala farm home basement first (and a root cellar later) to "split" potatoes. This means to slice the potato into pieces so each would have an "eye". This would be called seed potato. Then 2 kids would sit on the back of a planter and spend all weekend planting the eyes.

A 1934 Gazette article states: "Want Potato Warehouse. Houghton. A farmer's co-operative non-profit corporation for the erection and management of a potato warehouse in the Portage Lake District was organized last night at the Community Building. The following Board of Directors were elected: **Alex Olson** of Oskar, Armas Perskari of Pilgrim, **William Lahnala** of Liminga, **Johns Harma** of Onnela and William Johnson of Franklin."

From the 1944 Annual Report of Agriculture Agent with MSU Extension Service:  
Local growers: **John Puuri, Wm. Lahnala and Matt Puuri** of Atlantic Mine raised Green Mountain certified seed potatoes. 14, 22, and 13 Acres respectively. New farmer, **Jacob Heikkila** of Atlantic Mine grew 15 acres of Green Mtn potatoes. Taken from Agriculture Agents reports.

1944. For the Potato Show local growers were: **John Puuri** (Atlantic Mine?) with yield of 479(bushels per acre?.. it is not noted in report), **Alex Olson/** 416.1, **Jacob Heikkila**

407.1, **Art Lindstrom** (father to Clara Swaggart, principal of EB Holman) 403, **Wm. Johnson** 374.5, **Matt Puuri** (Atlantic Mine?) 348, **Art Oinas** 340, **Waino Lahti** (Bob Lahti's father) 333, and **Henry Eilola/Oskar** with yield of 315.

Researched by Barb Koski, Osma Plat Road, Houghton MI.