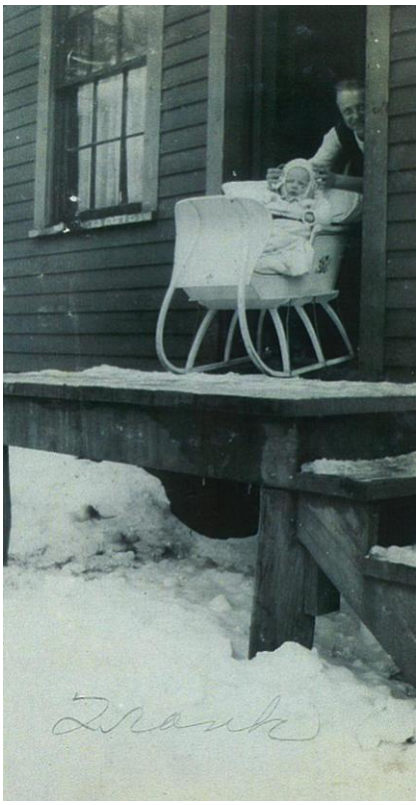
# Early Living conditions in the Copper Country.

1913 Kitchen



Push your child around in the snow with a sleigh.

Shop at  Redridge Market.

An advertisement in Finnish newspaper was “This is to announce to the public that the undersigned will bring a large number of the best milk cows to Hancock and Calumet as soon as the shipping season opens. March 29, 1879.”

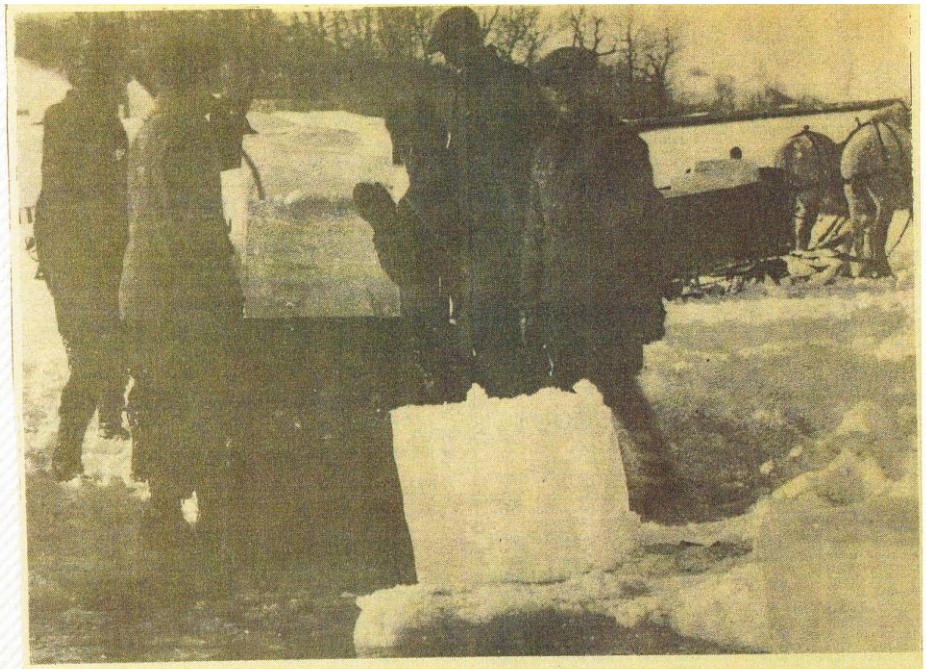

Prior to the opening of the South Entry, provisions were brought in by boats to L’anse, then with horse teams to the Copper Country. The Indians and early settlers Portaged, hence the name Portage Lake. Therefore the households needed to be self-sufficient. Most families had at least one cow. Barns were in the city alleys and cows were taken to common pastures.

L.  Bjorklund in Hancock.

When cars were beginning to be in the area, Dolores Trolin Little recalls their family did not have a vehicle yet. A bakery truck came to her home on North Superior Road to sell items. She remembers a Co- op in Hancock delivering groceries to homes in late 30's.

She recalls their home basement having a dirt floor and a hole dug to put "refrigerated" items. Her husband, Charlie Little, recalls as a kid helping to cut ice on the Hurontown dam...(the stream that runs behind Wal-Mart).. it was the drain off of #4 and 5. Meyers had the ice business.

Harvesting ice was an annual chore for farmers and ice companies. Bill Brinkman took a picture going home from Redridge School in Feb. 1924. Farmers from Liminga were cutting ice blocks on the Redridge Steel Dam. Four-foot thick blocks were cut by crosscut saw, loaded on the horse drawn sleigh and transported to sawdust -filled ice houses on the farms and company stores in Beacon Hill, Freda and Redridge. Sawdust kept the ice from melting. Ice was used to preserve dairy and fresh meat products until electric refrigeration came along. On one occasion, a team of draft horses fell into the dam, but was rescued with ropes on neck. Crystal Ice Co. in Calumet harvested ice on Seneca Lake North of Ahmeek.



Before ice cube trays

HARVESTING ice was an annual chore for farmers and ice companies in the Copper Country years ago. This scene was recorded in February 1924 by Bill Brinkman of Redridge on his way home from school. Here, farmers from Liminga cut and haul blocks of ice on the Redridge Steel Dam. On the left side of the sleigh are Pete Rautio, Jack Heikkila and John Marttila. On the right are Toivo Lindstrom, Gust Lindstrom (father) and Art Lindstrom. Four-foot thick blocks were cut by crosscut saw, loaded on the sleigh and transported to sawdust-filled ice houses on the farms and company stores in Beacon Hill-Freda and Redridge. Sawdust kept the ice from melting. Ice was used in early years to preserve dairy and fresh meat products until electric refrigeration came along. On one occasion, a team of draft horses fell into the dam, but were rescued with ropes tied around their necks. For many years the Crystal Ice Co. in Calumet harvested ice on Seneca Lake, north of Ahmeek.

The Misslitz family in Chassell had a business of ice cutting in Chassell in 1916.

Men would “chip in” on the harvest to help pay for the products in the town meat market owned by Henry and Emma Misslitz.

Ice hooks would be used to lift the ice to the flat bed sleigh or sided wagon type sleigh. There was a set of “runners” that the men would take the “cube” and place on runners to ramp it up to icehouse.

The commercial fisherman, Emil Kalliainen, on Osma Plat Rd. had an icehouse.

Bill Brinkman photo collection at MTU Archives had a photo that did not copy well of Redridge Steel Dam ice collecting. In Bill’s penmanship “ Toivo (facing camera) and Arthur Lindstrom of Liminga (right) and their dad are shown pulling sawed ice blocks from the Redridge Dam. This ice was sawed into blocks, and then hauled by sleigh and team of horses to an “Icehouse” on the farm where they lived. The ice was preserved by tons of sawdust that covered the ice clocks till used. The men on the left are neighbor farmers John Heikkila and son. Photo by Bill Brinkman in February of 1928 on the Redridge Steel Dam.

Richard Garnell shares this about refrigeration: We had a real large ice box on our farm for keeping milk, cream and butter cold. My mother, Lempi Juntunen (from now Osma Plat Road) Garnell did most of the work in making the butter-- first churning the cram and then mixing and salting it. In 1945, after we got electric power, we bought a large refrigerator and no longer needed the ice box. My gather gave the icebox to the church. When the Congregational Church was torn down (Lindrus Chev garage and now career center) we went to get their large cooking stove for the church. They loaded it in our 1947 Studebaker truck to take to the church.

Don Heikkila, growing up in Liminga in the 50’s, recalls getting the first snow scoop in the 50’s. Before that the family would pank down the snow.


TWO GENERATIONS ago this wood and coal stove was in demand. It was purchased in 1907 by the grandparents of Leona Burkman of Oskar. Later, her parents were the stove's owners and since their passing, Leona and her husband, Paul, inherited it. One of their three daughters will be the next owner. Here, Leona places a piece of wood in the firebox, still in excellent condition and in use in the winter months. Besides the Garland, the Monarch, Huron and Kalamazoo stoves were popular stoves in homes of inhabitants. (Bill Brinkman Collection)

Lee Burkman puts wood in parent's wood stove.

Early Days in Oskar. [1]

I immigrated in 1900 from Vahakyro near Vaasa Finland, near Sea of Bothnia. I was 17. I stayed and worked in boarding house near the Houghton/Hancock Bridge. Patana Hjalmer owned the house-he was my neighbor in Finland.

Then I was told "You won't find work here in Hancock. Keep going until you

[1] tape interview of Jacob/Jack Ruohonen in 1972.

come to a settlement. There you will find out if there is work or not".

This settlement (Oskar) was a split cordwood center. There was no coal. There had to be tens and tens and tens of thousands of cordwood for the mining companies. There was even a railway here. I came from the lake (Portage Lake)) to here where there was a cordwood bank. There the boxcars were loaded and then pushed to the scow. Then it was a tug, which pulled them.

First the workers came from Finland. They arranged for their families to be brought over. There were ship agents who handled the ticketing. The workers stayed a couple of years until they earned enough, and then they sent for their families with tickets to America.

When they arrived, there were log cabins (camps) all over the Portage Region. They needed to purchase nothing except a stove. They got everything.. like bunks from boards.

Mattresses were made from straw, stuffed into empty oat sacks. If one had hay, that was used, as it was softer. A bed took 4 sacks and one for a pillow.

Tables were boards.

In homes Finnish was spoken. In Oskar school a one armed teacher Mr. Sullivan taught the children English.. until they got out of school and then in the schoolyard on way home they spoke in Finnish. Even the French Bollards and German Schmidts the all spoke good Finnish. The Bollards even went to confirmation school in Finnish.. and Sunday School with us too.

We got our groceries from Hancock on the road, but in winter along the ice.

We shot deer in the forests. Rabbits were shot in winter. And partridge too. We devised a sort of system in the settlement for venison. When a deer was felled it was divided among everyone. We did not salt much.. cooked it right away. The game wardens seem to look the other way when they knew we had large families.

Most teen's entertainment was teasing the girls. Or go to dances. I read. Dances were at the Brickyard or Burkman's coal pier. Musicians were John Wickman and Tolonen. Fiddles.

World War 1. I registered 3 times. No, I did not have to go. I had too many kids and I was in too much of a hurry for more. Sam Rintala was the first to fall in battle.

Depression. 1926, 1927. We ate from the forest and grew own potatoes. You were used to it from before, so much so that you scarcely noticed it right? Yes. And government provided work for those who lived here. Gave them something to do to earn their food. They gave out those tickets (Food Stamps).

I voted for FD Roosevelt. Our straw mattresses changed then. Social Security - he brought that in., and other pensions. I drove many of the voters to the polls (Teddy Roosevelt) because this was not a township as it is now. This was part of the City of Hancock. (Hancock Township) I brought them to vote with horses. That's when Scott ran for mayor- the Scott that's connected with the hotel.. where the Hancock Hardware is now. (2010 - now Apartments)

Most children in early days only went to school for 8 grades. Well, sometimes someone would say that their kids were in the city school also .. like Burkmans.

Some Finns went back to Russia.. like musician Tolonen with his fiddles. John Wickman did not go. He'd come to a house, and start playing such a sorrowful song that soon even I'd almost begin weeping and not only the others. Then John would start

playing “Iitun Tilttir” a very merry song. .. and everyone laughed then.

Post office. Oskar Eliassen was first postmaster, then Burkmans. Pauline took care of the mail in a little out building right where Norman Ruohonen's dwelling is.

[2]My first husband was Nestor Raisanen in 1909. I had eleven children with him at home with midwife. I stayed in bed for about a week. Nestor died in 1944.

We had small-scale farming in Redridge. Every family had cows. Over all, we had over one hundred cows among the town’s people. Beacon Hill and Freda families all had their own cows. There were chickens. Women took care of the cows and did house chores while men worked.

After Nestor died in 1944, I married Jack in 1957. (Jack’s first wife was Edna Dorvinen).

Jack continues - **Socials:** Young gals would find young boys in Redridge at the Woodsman Side Hall on Saturday evenings. Then in Liminga in 1907 I went to the little hall, the Youth Society Hall, at the site where now stands a big concrete block garage. We had Basket Evenings. A small cardboard box was taken, trimmed with crepe paper, fitted with a handle and filled with a lunch and covered up. These were taken to the hall. No one knew which was whose. .. ‘though a name was concealed inside with the lunch. The young lads then bid for these, the highest bid took the basket and the buyer went to eat lunch with the girl whose name was inside.

The boys would walk the gals home as a gang of teens. From Redridge to Liminga. Once we came to the Temperance Hall in Oskar. It was very late in the evening. We called it a “Moonlight Picnic”. There were no fights, no drunks. Jack Heikkila (Liminga) set off to give us a ride with horses to this Oskar Hall.

**Keeping food cold**. We had no electricity then. Meat, when you got it, you had to cook it immediately. At least we had stone cellars. When we lived in Beacon Hill those 35 years, we had running water provided free by the company. We had a wooden tub in the basement then and we put the water running into that continuously. It was cold water. That’s where we put our milk containers and other things that should be kept cold. Then there was a stone floor there too. That sufficed to keep some things cold.

[2] Mrs. Edna Herrala Ruohonen speaks in interview.

**Laundry.** First there was a stove in which wood was burnt. Then there was a boiler into which water was poured and in which it was then heated. The water was dipped from there into wash tubs where the laundry was washed. That's how.

Junttonen on Rauhala Road

**Food Preservation:** Yes, we bottled some food. In winter meat preserved will when frozen. It first was put in a salt solution. Then put in a separate building where it was kippered or smoked. Then in January and February, when it is very cold, they put the meat on the roof. The meat had a fine steel screen around the meat so that birds or other animals could not get at it. The meat dried in the cold. That's good. The meat then was made into stew or eaten as its. Oh, it is so good. Old Heideman used to say that a Finn lifts his cow onto his roof for the winter.


Barrel of Salted Whitefish at Market.

**Berry Picking** [3]

We would also go and pick wild strawberries that were bottled for the winter. We had a race with the neighbors to see who could get the most bottled. The same with wild raspberries and blueberries. We would also pick sugarplums but you did not can them.

My sister Florence taught us a lesson that I still practice. Never put on perfume when going into the woods or fields. She had gone to pick blueberries and had put on some clover perfume. Wasn't long before the bees found her. She was screaming, waving her arms and running a mile a minute but the bees kept right with her. My father took

[3] Evelyn Olson, daughter of Alex Olson in her 1980 document.

some tree branches and chased them away.

**Midwives:3**

Mid-wives attended the births as doctors and money were scarce. When I was born mom had an unmarried girl as the midwife.

**Clothing. 3**

We all wore long-legged fleece-lined underwear in the winter. When we got a little older we would roll the leg part above the knees; it sure made a big roll and we hoped no one would see it. My mother made all our dresses and I imagine our coats too unless we got some one's had-me-downs. We borrowed summer coats from our neighbors to go to my grandmother funeral in 1920. (She would be 7 years old). I was so glad to wear the coat. It was navy blue with a red collar.

We'd wash clothes by hand on a scrub-board. The white clothes were always boiled in a big copper boiler on the stove. Sometimes it would take two days to wash the clothes. Don't know how my mother did it when we were in school. The clothes were hung outside to dry. In the winter they were hung in a room upstairs that was not used or heated. Even at that the men's long underwear were stiff as boards. Looked like people without heads or feet. Later my father bought a May tag washer that ran on gasoline. We did not have electricity yet.

We'd iron clothes with flat irons heated on top of the wood stoves. No permanent press in those days. Two would iron on the kitchen table and one on the ironing board.

The neither girls nor women ever wore slacks or jeans. What a blessing ski pants would have been in the snow. Slacks did not come out until the 1930's they were called beach pajamas, as that is where they were to be worn. The first pair I wore a neighbor man said "I hope you drown, you devil"

My father would buy a bushel of shoes that were years out of style for $1 from some store. Guess they never ran out of them. They were ladies cloth top shoes, pointed toes and high-heeled. He would chop part of the heel off. Did not matter how they fit and they were always big enough cause we wore two pairs of long home-knitted wool stockings. Don't know why but the stocking was always knitted white up to the ankles and black the rest of the way. One pair of shoes I had to wear was orange leather button shoes that my mother covered with black shoe polish. When I wore them in the snow the polish came off and they were orange and black. How I hated them. I tried to hide my feet under the school seat.

Our underwear (called bloomers) and slips were made from flour and chicken feed sacks. One time my mother made my brother Clarence aged 7, a blue suit from some old coat. She wrapped it up and put it in a mailing box and brought it to the mailbox by the road. When he came home from school she told him "go and get the box; it's your suit I ordered from Montgomery Wards". He ran and got it and was so excited opening it. When he saw it, he started crying "Again it's made from old rags and even the lining is made from scratch feed sacks" The sacks were usually dyed blue but you could never cover the big printing on them.

The bag of straw hats were brought down in the spring and painted with hat paint, most always navy blue or black. All ladies and girls wore hat to church and visiting. In the fall the hats were put back in a sack until the next spring. They must have been all out

of shape.

**Discipline.3**

If we did or didn't do something we were supposed to do; all my mother had to do was look at the 3-foot leather strap that always hung on a nail. My father used the strap for sharpening his straight edge razor. If my father was in he put us in a corner in the kitchen facing the wall with the broom in front of you for as long as he said.

The worst punishment between siblings was we had to go to the sibling and put our arms around them and say "Forgive me". This was humiliating.

His word was law.

**Haircuts. 3**

My younger sister Alice and I were the only ones in the family with short haircuts called "buster brown". They were cut straight around and bangs in the front. The older ones wore their hair in either one or two braids.

The first time my sister Florence had her hair cut (when women started bobbing their hair) she was afraid to come downstairs. I think she stayed in bed for two days. This same day one of the neighbor men came and told my father his daughter had her hair cut too. They were both wondering what the world was coming to. My father didn't know yet that his daughter us upstairs in bed with her hair cut. When she did come down she covered her head with something. Don't know what my father said when he saw her but I can just imagine the look on his face. Can't really blame him as they used to cut the women's hair when they were "diseased". I guess that must have been a sign for the men to BEWARE!

My father used to cut the boy's hair. Clipped to the scalp with some bangs in front. My mother said to leave a little so she would have something to pull. How they hated those haircuts; acted like they were going on the butcher block; but didn't dare say a word. During the wintertime they were not scalped.

**Home Heating System.**

Evelyn Olson Mikko in her 1980 document shares: The heating system was a Finland type fireplace in the living room. It was made of brick from floor to ceiling. The opening for the wood was about 20 inches high and 16 inches wide but was quite deep with a metal door.

This opening was about 2 feet from the floor.

Part of the chimney was in one of the back bedrooms and also in an upstairs bedroom.

This heated the bedrooms and one floor gate 12 x 12 in one upstairs bedroom furnished the heat for the upstairs. Also the wood burning stove in the kitchen furnished a lot of heat. No wonder we slept under two heavy quilts and most of the time with our long underwear and home knitted wool stockings. In later years a wood burning stove was put upstairs.

**Lighting.3**

All the lights in the homes were kerosene lamps and lanterns. I hated washing the lamp chimneys as they got all smoked up and it was hard to get your hand inside to clean

them.

Later we had carbide lights, which resembled electric lights. We had two tanks about the size of hot water tanks that had to be filed with carbide and small pipes leading to the rooms attached to the light fixtures. They were considered quite dangerous for explosions.

Later we went to electricity.

Brother Art Olson shares with Barb Koski in April 2008: - Carbide Lights were used before electricity. Tanks of fuel were stored in Bollard's basement. They blew up one night.

Barb heard other stories from other people about this happening and it could be heard far away.

**Meat preservation. 3**

Meat was preserved by smoking it, which was very good. Also meat was hung outdoors in the winter months high on rafters so the animals could not get at it. It hung for many months, which dried and preserved it. It wasn't very good; but it was used to make soup.

When an animal was slaughtered my mother would cook the meat and put it in bottles. The intestines were washed and filled with a blood mixture or some kind to make blood sausage; also used to make blood pancakes. I used to like them until later when frying them and saw they were all blood; haven't eaten blood sausage since then.

We bought our first refrigerator in 1940!

**Sickness and Home Remedies**

Whooping cough. 3

1918 was the year our twin brothers Walter and William were born in June. In November they were both sick with whooping cough; all I remember (she would have been 5 years old then) is something was burnt in a certain kind of lamp that was kept in the babies room. There were no shots yet for babies. The died at the same time on Thanksgiving morning. They looked like two dolls in one casket. When you were little the caskets were white and on top of the casket was a fancy metal plat 6 x 4 and was engraved "Our Darling" and when you were an adult the casket was gray and the plate had "At Rest". These plates were taken off the caskets at the cemetery ad given to the family.

Toothaches.3

They had some kind of tooth wax that you put in the cavities. For pulling baby teeth that were loose you tied a string on the tooth and the other end was tied to the doorknob of an open door. When the door was closed it yanked the tooth out.

Sore Throats.3

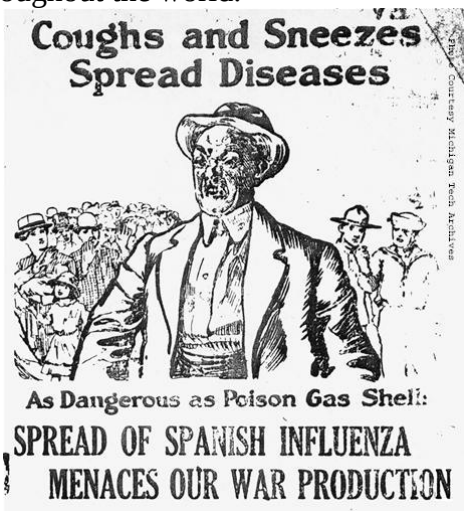
A few drops of Riga balsam were put on a cube of sugar. Also balls of camphor were worn on a sting around the neck.

Headaches. 3

Slices of raw potatoes were soaked in vinegar and put between material and held on the forehead. I don't know if that worked but we lived.

Flu Epidemic 3

Tar was kept in a can on the stove during the flu epidemic in 1918. (She was 5); we all got it anyway. The doctor used to come from Hancock with a horse and sleigh and stopped at each house. Didn't do anything but collected $10 from each house. There probably wasn't any remedy. Everyone in the family was in bed at the same time. A neighbor man used to come and milk the cows and my aunt came to tend to the sick, but then she got it too. In the US 548,542 lives were lost during the fall of 1918 and 21 million throughout the world.



Ear Aches

There was an earache wax used. One time I got an earache. They tried all the home remedies, even had a neighbor man come and blow tobacco smoke into my ears every day, as my father did not smoke. Finally had to go to a doctor and was operated for mastoids. At this same time my sister Mable in Ann Arbor had diphtheria, which is almost unheard of now.

Better blood circulation?

A neighbor lady used to come and massage my mother and used cow horns on her body to draw blood, it was called cupping. I don't know what that was supposed to remedy, probably for better blood circulation.

Pregnancy

My mother also took a few tablespoons of "beef, iron and wine" that came in a bottle during her pregnancies. The doctor told mother to drink some beer every day. Someone brought her one bottle of beer (I'm sure it wasn't my father). She and my aunt would put a tablespoon of beer in a glass of water for each day. She didn't want to get "tipsy".

Muscles

Everyone had Watkins liniment that was used for both humans and horses.

Freckles

My sister Elizabeth and I were blessed with a face full of freckles. We had heard using cow urine would fade them. We tried it for two weeks every day but didn't see any improvement. There was a Stillman's and Othine freckle cream that we tried but that didn't help either. We gave it all up and finally they disappeared on their own.

**Truck**

Evelyn Olson shares this in her 1980 document of the 1910-1920's... The truck had to be cranked to get it started. It had one seat in the front and open to the back with folding benches on each side where we would sit. A lot of the neighbors would go with us. One neighbor with a mustache and beard would sit up front with my father. He used to chew Peerless tobacco and the ones sitting in the back behind him would keep their faces turned to the back because when he would spit out his juice would fly in the back. You were lucky if you did not get brown blobs on your clothes.

Later my father bought what you called a touring car; coming home in the evening from church was mighty cold; the cars had no heaters, did have some sort of curtains but they never closed tight.

In the winter the car wheels were taken off and the car put on blocks. The roads were not kept open in the wintertime. Big roller drawn by three teams of horses would pack the snow on the roads so it would be easier for the horses to walk on the road. My father would go to Hancock and Houghton to deliver the eggs and milk with a team of

horses. He's wear a raccoon fur coat, buffalo robes and jugs of hot water to keep his feet warm. Horses always had a lot of little bells so you could hear them coming.

## Social activities.

**Going to the Movies.**
Henry Garnell, shares on his 1977 WMPL Heritage line interview: I went to the first talky pictures. They were shown in the theatre where the PIC is now. Finnish movies were more popular though. They came to the theatre about 3 times a year.

**Having Coffee Together.**
Lee Burkman recalls: to have coffee one must grind the coffee beans. I have my mom's coffee bean grinder still for an ornament.

One way. Put water in a coffeepot. Put grounds in the water and boil on wood stove over the open lid opening. (Where small pieces of wood could be inserted into stove burning part. An egg that has been broken and mixed is added to the water and the grounds go to the bottom of the pot.

Another way. Old drip pots. Grounds are in the top part that has drainage holes in bottom. This is placed over the empty coffeepot. Boiling water is poured over the grounds a bit at a time. Coffee drips out the holes.

Then there was: Perk pots. A small tube goes from bottom of the coffeepot up thru the ground basket. Grounds are put in the basket. Cold water is put in pot part. Pot is put on the stove to boil. Hot water then goes up the tube and over the grounds and back to the pot and it recycles the coffee water till the strongness is obtained.

Barb Koski adds: I recall Henry Garnell putting a sugar cube in a deep coffee saucer. Sigrid would pour boiled coffee into the saucer. Henry would sip the coffee out of the saucer. He would dip Siggies Finnish squeaky cheese into the coffee sometimes also. Lots of family children/**adults marrying neighboring** family children/adults.

| | |
|---|---|
| Yalmer Lantto | Hilda Knuuttila |
| Eino Lantto | Selma Kangas |
| Yalmer Lantto | Hilda Knuuttila |
| Evelyn Lantto | Joe Perrault |
| Impy Lantto | William Solmonson |
| Ethel Lantto | Peter Karinen |
| | |
| Franz/ Frank Koski grandparents) | Liminga gal Esther Heikkila (Oz Koski's |
| Emma Koski | Oscar Marshall |
| | |
| Ethel Hietala | Wesley Johnson |
| Sigrid Hietala | Henry Garnell |
| Frank Hietala | Mayme Patana |
| Vivian Hietala | Waino Solmonson. |
| | |
| Amanda Bollard | Anna Liisa Juntunen's husband's brother, Arnold |

Kaupilla

Florence Bollard Walt Rintala ( Ken's father)

Hanna Lempi Juntunen Alex Garnell
they have Richard Garnell whose son William marries Gail Ruohonen whose parents are locals Barb and Pete Ruohonen
they also have Edna who marries Wilbert Lampinen and live on Bay Shore.

Aleda Juntunen Ralph Emil Johnson

Alex Olson Hilda Lahnala

Tell me more....

**Prohibition in the United States**
**From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**

Detroit Michigan police inspecting equipment found in a clandestine underground brewery during the prohibition era.

In the United States, the term **Prohibition** refers to the period from 1920 to1933, during which the sale, manufacture, and transportation of alcoholic beverage for consumption were banned nationally as mandated in the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Prohibition of alcohol can also refer to the antecedent religious and political Temperance movement calling for "sumptuary law" to end or encumber alcohol use. (See local temperance societies under Church)

Following significant pressure on lawmakers as a result of the Temperance movement, the United States Senate passed the Eighteenth Amendment on December 18, 1917. The Volstead Act, the popular name for the National Prohibition Act, passed United States Congress over President of the United States Woodrow Wilson's Veto on October 28, 1919 and established the legal definition of intoxicating liquor as well as providing for enforcement of Prohibition. The 18th Amendment was certified as ratified on January 29, 1919, having been approved by 36 states, and went into effect on a Federal level on January 29, 1920. Some state legislatures had already enacted statewide prohibition prior to the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment.

As Prohibition became increasingly unpopular during the Great Depression, especially in large cities, repeal was eagerly anticipated. On March 23, 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt signed into law an amendment to the Volstead Act known as the Cullen-Harrison Act, allowing the manufacture and sale of certain kinds of alcoholic beverages. The Eighteenth Amendment was repealed with ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment to the United States Constitution, on December 5, 1933.

## Sports.

### HOCKEY in area.

A Gazette picture, 1940-41 winter, from Richard Garnell collection, says: " The Oskar Bears was a closely-knit group of young men from Oskar who were dedicated to hockey. They were led by members of the Ruohonen clan, who were dominant in winter sports.


Shown here at the Oskar rink in the winter of 1940-41 are, in front from left, Henry Kangas, Eldon Usitalo, Waino Kangas, Eppi Ruohonen, Leslie Ylitalo and Johnny Ruohonen.

In the middle row are Rudy Garnell, Clarence Olson, Pete Sandretto, John Olson, and Francis Weber.

In the back row are Yalmer Hermanson, Paul Schmidt and Yalmer Ruohonen.

They were sponsored by Three Winners store. The team's aim was to challenge all comers was disrupted by Uncle Sam who called on the boys for military service in WW2. By the time they returned, they broke up and scattered elsewhere for employment or to attend school under the Veterans Adm.

**Horseshoe team.**

Researched by Barb Koski, Osma Plat Road, Houghton MI.
Submitted in 2011 to webmaster.