



## BICENTENNIAL SERIES

# A history of Thompson Twp. & Village of Thompson

**Mrs. Hasell Osterhout**

Thompson lumbering brought many beautiful sail boats into the harbor; among them, the Harry Kendall and a tow barge, the Troy and barge, the John Odis and barge, the Alice, which hauled hemlock tanning bark, and the "Butcher Boy", a four-masted schooner.

Many boats were lost during heavy storms. I. Cantor, Mary Collins' boat, went down off Pillows Point near Little Harbor. The Wing and Onida sailed out of Thompson and were later lost in a gale. The Mary Ellen Cook went down near Little Harbor. Others included the Skeels and the Palo, towing a barge; the Delta, owned by the Delta Lumber Company, hauling out of Manistique; and the Elva sailed by two Norwegians, hauling slabs to Chicago.

Slabs were made up of the cuttings from logs and were cut into four feet lengths.

band was put around the ends. A hook on a rod was placed on each end to hold the pails. Wages were 75 cents per day for a ten hour day.

Another famous ship to come to Thompson was the Rouse Simmons, the Christmas tree ship.

During the early years of logging, five subsequent railroad engines were used: a 9 ton wood burning engine in 1882; an 18 ton "H.K. Porter" engine, from Philadelphia via Mackinaw City; two Baldwin engines, one 35 ton and one 24 ton; and a 45 ton Manchester Blood engine.

The train crew consisted of Engineer Frank Voisine, Night Watchman Charles Faulkner, two Brakeman, and a Conductor.

Crossing the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie line at Delta junction, the Thompson line extended 12 miles to a bank



Shorter lengths were cut into 16 inch short wood. As many as 21 teams hauled slab wood to Manistique. The price was \$1.00 per cord.

During these early sailing days, water boys were employed to haul drinking water to the boats and mill men. This job was usually given to larger boys carrying two pails of water with the help of a shoulder yoke. The yoke was made of cedar.

John Larson Sr. made a yoke for Fred Hinkson, taking a cedar block about 3½ feet long, hallowing the center to fit the shoulders and neck, then tapering the shoulder ends on both sides to extend about two inches on each end. It was then taken to the blacksmith, where a ½ inch steel

ground on the Indian River. In the early days, the soft wood came to this terminal.

In 1900, hardwood logging became prominent and the railroad extended its lines north about 20 miles, past Thunder Lake, and ending on the west side of the big Murphy. Another line crossed the Murphy and ended at the North Woods Club near Eagle Lake. Oxen skidded the hardwood logs and horses hauled loads larger than most logging trucks can haul today.

In the softwood lumbering days, the engine pulled three cars of white pine. The crew made a daily quota of pine to the mill each day. Men usually started work at 4 a.m. and often worked until midnight. Wages were \$2.10 per day.