

# Pioneer Tribune Article

## January 31, 1885

### OUR SISTER VILLAGE

A Flying Visit to Thompson and What We Saw There –  
The Mill and Lumber Industry – Great Improvements Made – Personal

Last Wednesday afternoon we paid a flying visit to Thompson, a place we had not visited for nearly a year, although six miles from our office, simply because we had no time and could rely upon the telephone to get the local news from that point. We confess to being both pleased and surprised at what we saw and heard. Since our last visit the Delta Lumber Association have made great changes in their works there. They have built a substantial pier north of the mill about one half mile, extending from the shore into the lake until it reached a depth of some 16 feet of water and thence south to connect with improvements heretofore noted; which gives the company a pond sufficient to float in safety at least 8,000,000 feet of logs. In stormy weather a vessel can come inside of this enclosure and be perfectly safe. The “burner” built last season is one of the largest of its class, and is so arranged with carriers or elevators that all the dust and waste of the mill is taken away and destroyed with little manual labor. A large building has been erected for a machine and blacksmith shop, and proves a great convenience to those having that kind of work to do, and more especially when repairs to the mill are needed. The logs are brought from the woods, and dumped into the pond spoken of. The railroad is now six miles long, substantially built; equipped with two locomotives and a sufficient number of log cars. It requires over 20,000,000 feet of timber to keep that mill running through the season. The mill is one of the best steam mills in the part of the country. The lumber is shipped to Chicago and furnishes a steady business for several vessels during the shipping season.

This extensive manufactory has caused to spring up quite a village, with a very large store and a large boarding house, ware house, livery stable, a splendid hall, a large school building, a large fish depot, many handsome dwellings and other fixings as belong to a thriving settlement, such as that has become within the past four years. At that time the town site was nothing but an unbroken forest.

Of course, to have such an enterprising village come into existence and “established” on a sound basis within so short a time a head man is needed and in this case that was found in the person of Hon. E.L. Thompson, of Detroit, who is the President. He is seconded and sustained by an Association of gentlemen that know no such thing as fail. The works here are in charge of E.T. Slayton; who is superintendent and also Supervisor of that township. As a business man he has no superior and everything in the way of management and execution is reduced to a perfect system. Mr. Lyman, another gentleman that well understands his business, has charge of the woods and general outside work, and the result is that there is no lack of logs, or the most perfect harmony among the men. In summer he has general charge of the shipping also. Now, it requires steam and the machinery kept in the best of order to make this immense plant a success. The gentleman that directs this part of the work is J.A. Robinson, an engineer of land and practical experience. He has his department well in hand and there is no lack of power to change the log “in the twinkling of an eye” into the very best of lumber. The store is managed by Joseph Mason, a gentleman in every sense of the word. The books of the whole concern are well kept by W.W. Kelley and there are no mistakes to rectify. It’s a pleasure to meet those gentlemen at any time. Strangers coming to see the wonderful developments that have taken place in this county within the past five years, have not seen them by a long ways until after that have visited Thompson.