



BICENTENNIAL SERIES

A history of Thompson Twp. & Village of Thompson

Mrs. Hasell Osterhout

Thompson had a fine barber shop located on Main Street. Mr. Frank Gierke purchased this shop from a Mr. Carley. Deciding the barber chair was obsolete and badly worn, he decided to purchase a new one. So a sharp salesman convinced him that he should purchase a new, \$90 barber chair.

Young and eager to impress his customers, but having little capital, he went across the road to discuss the problem with J. J. Hruska, who owned a meat market. Hruska encouraged him to purchase the chair, as he would help him if needed.

Gierke's barber shop was indeed a credit to the village. He also owned the first pool table to come to Thompson. Gierke is retired now and living in Manistique.

There were several nice farms in the Thompson area. The Englebretzen barn is still standing. This farm is located outside of the village on Little Harbor Road. A man named Colby had a fur farm on U.S. 2 where he raised skunks.

Most farmers were also lumbering in the area as well as farming. There was a large

farm operating near the tracks on 149, where the indigent were housed and worked. In those days it was called the poor farm.

Thompson now has the first centennial farm in the Upper Peninsula and also has a farm on U.S. 2 which has belonged to the same family for over 100 years, the Hurch farm.

During the early years of pioneering, Thompson had a large hotel and company boarding house. The hotel, called the "Shamrock", was owned by Pete Quinlin and was located three blocks south of U.S. 2 on Little Harbor Road.

The boarding house was located on the road going to the mill, just across Thompson Creek.

The boarding house was owned by the local lumber companies and had a men's recreation room, large dining room, kitchen, butlers' pantry, manager's quarters, three transient rooms and a laundry unit on the first floor. There were 30 bed rooms on the second floor.

The dining room seated 18 or more working people, with three transient



tables, a large serving table, butlers' pantry, kitchen and laundry unit. Room and board was \$4 per week.

Meals were served country style - all you could eat. No one was allowed to talk at the tables.

Directly behind the hotel was an ice house, barn and chicken coop. Ice was cut from the lake and hauled by horse and sleigh to be packed in saw dust and fill the ice house. Local people could purchase cakes of ice. Many made homemade ice cream, especially on the fourth of July.

There was a chore boy who hauled fire wood for four large stoves, carried drinking and cooking water, fed chickens, milked the cows, shoveled snow and cleaned the men's lounge. More than 47 kerosene oil lamps were used to light the building.

