



BICENTENNIAL SERIES

A history of Thompson Twp. & Village of Thompson

Mrs. Hasell Osterhout

During the late 1890's Thompson had three doctors in successive years as well as a hospital and a midwife. The hospital was located in the southern part of town on Pine Street, which is now the Little Harbor Road. The three doctors were Dr. French, Dr. Foote and Dr. Heslop. Mrs. Kate Squires was the midwife.

The hospital, I am told, belonged to Dr. Heslop. In 1895 a diphtheria epidemic hit the area and the town hall was pressed into service as an isolation ward.

Medical and surgical history was made at Barques Point when a man named Archie McMillan, Toronto, Canada, stopped there while in search of timber to buy. While out in the forest, he was accidentally hit on the head by a falling limb, rendering him unconscious.

He was taken to the Farley Half Way House (a half way house was an overnight stopping place, such as Garden and Thompson in this case, where a traveler could stop to rest) by horse and cutter from where a doctor was called.

Dr. Heslop responded from Thompson. Upon seeing the injury, he decided to operate to relieve the pressure on the brain. Taking a drill from his bag and using a small hardwood block, he drilled through it to the desired depth of the skull and injury.

The doctor adjusted the drill by turning the block so there was little danger of drilling too deep. Upon completion of the

operation, Jennie Watson, a nurse from Garden, was called to care for McMillan day and night.

When his wound healed, McMillan returned to his home in Toronto. In the 1930's he returned to Manistique with his wife where he visited Wilford Farley, former owner of the half way house. He then had five sons and two daughters and was associated with a bank in Toronto.

An angel of mercy in Thompson was the midwife, Kate Squires. Anytime the call went out, day or night, Mrs. Squires would come quickly with her little black bag containing various medications. She delivered many babies in the area and otherwise attended the sick, often walking many miles in deep snow or bitter cold.

The Thompson cemetery, at M-149 and Fragale Road, was a gift to the township from a farmer who owned the land in the area. Prior to the establishment of the cemetery people buried their dead near where they had lived on their own farms or homesteads. Indians always buried their dead on a high knoll overlooking the water.

In the first cemetery six-grave lots sold for \$3. The following was taken from the early township records. "One lot was sold to Webster Erl, 20 years of age. Lot No. 20 with the stipulation that it belongs to his and his heirs for so ever long as he keeps the same for burying the dead. Dated August 22, 1887. Sexton."

Two of the first graves in the cemetery



THE FARLEY HALFWAY HOUSE at Barques Point where Dr. Heslop performed surgery on Archie McMillan of Toronto. The house was stopping point for travelers to rest midway between Garden and Thompson.

were those of young sisters, Luella and Menda Phillips, daughters of I. and I. Phillips. Luella died in July, 1884 at the age of two and Menda died in August, 1887 at the age of one year, five months.

Tom Kinnee, living in the village, made caskets and rough boxes. Many of the funerals were held in homes and embalming, if any, was by the use of formaldehyde.