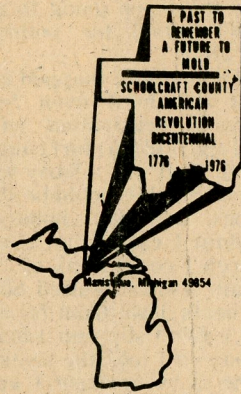


## BICENTENNIAL SERIES

# A history of Thompson Twp. & Village of Thompson

Mrs. Hasell Osterhout



### THOMPSON BIG FIRE

The site of the worst fire in Thompson history was about 1/2 mile west of the village. The fire occurred in the fall of 1909 when two men were clearing land and burning brush. A sudden blast of wind caused them to lose control of their brush fire and it spread quickly to the east, threatening the entire village.

Fearing the worst as the high wind continued to blow, the people of the village packed their belongings and placed them in front of their homes. Company teams were coming to take them to the train and boats for safekeeping.

One young lady when told to pack her possessions feared the loss of her new clothes. The lady, who still lives in Manistiquette, put on her seven new skirts and wore them. One man complained because his neighbor wouldn't carry his piano to the docks and place it on the sandsucker for safekeeping. The sandsucker was a small boat used to keep the depth of water in the harbor deep enough for boats to leave when loaded. Moving the cows, pigs, and chickens were also a problem.

The fire department from Manistiquette

was called. The truck became stuck in the sand half way to Thompson. A local young man quickly took a company team and went to the rescue.

Swede Town on Lake Michigan was directly in the path of the fire. Many of the residents took their carpets, rugs, and heavy quilts and placed them on the roofs of their homes. They formed a bucket brigade and kept everything soaked. This saved all their homes.

Only when the wind changed on the second day, did the residents get any relief from the smoke and burning embers. The wind turned at 5 p.m. and reversed its path. The village was saved. The flames had already jumped the Little Harbor Road and were 300 feet from the homes.

### THOMPSON INDIANS

One of the more prominent Indians in Thompson Township was Indian Paul and wife squaw Mary. Their last name was Ag-Wa-Na-Be. They lived on Murphy Creek. Indian Paul was a well educated Indian. Squaw Mary came to town every two weeks on the logging train to get groceries. She carried them in a backpack, and walked 1 1/2 miles to their camp from



the track. They also had two cub bears which were tame. Later, when they grew to maturity, the Department of Natural Resources required Indian Paul to release them. They had one daughter named Alice, who died when 12 years of age. They were then living on 8th Street in Manistiquette.

In these earlier years the Indians came to Manistiquette to purchase their needs. One group purchased one of the first phonographs. It was sold by the A.S. Putnam Company Drug Store. These phonographs used a cylinder type record. The Indians purchased one record at a time, sometimes making two trips a day to the drug store for records. My husband who worked at the A.S. Putnam Drugs, during his high school years, sold them their first phonograph.

### ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Pat Quinlan owned the Shamrock Hotel. The yoke made for hauling water had a two foot shoulder extension with a 1 1/2 inch band of steel on the end. The two men cutting tie cuts by broad ax were Sam and Lou Bouschor.

Captain Tighe moved from Thompson to the Bursaw Creek and built the first docks

there. Mrs. Annie Heric was the first mid-wife; Mrs. McDonald was the first millner, and Mrs. Emma Farley was the first seamstress.

There was a Thompson House cigar made by Vic and Nick Deemer. The first gas pump in Thompson was installed by Standard Oil in 1932 at James Herro's Store. W.T.S. Cornell was the County Superintendent. The Orr brothers had the first meat market. The first house built in Swede Town was Nessman's. One of the first lodges was the J.H. Allison. Tent No. 310KOTM-Knights of Thompson Macca bees.

The Salvation Army started in Dog Town across from the Fish Hatchery. The women in the organization were Mrs. Severs, Mrs. Pierce, and Mrs. James Dixon.

This completes my history of Thompson. I wish to sincerely thank everyone for all the information, pictures, and articles which have generously been given to me. I would be interested in receiving additional information on Thompson veterans.

In closing, I wish to dedicate this history of Thompson to all those people who lived and worked during those pioneer days and who so successfully shaped a future for all to enjoy.