

Hastings tells Thompson tales

by Elaine Hastings

Though I enjoyed very much, hearing Mrs. Rhodes, stories of her family in their days in Thompson, having lived there 63 years of my 76 and the rest of the years in Manistique, I never heard of her family. We lived on my ancestral farm which now is 108 years old and is still owned by the family. When we left it for a easier living in one of Manistique's wonderful apartments, we sold it to one of the much younger generation of the family.

Our mother died when I was a child of eight. My father a Hursh moved us back to the family farm owned by his mother Annie Hursh MacDonald who was very aged to be raising 2 small children. She was wonderful and always had a heart full of love for her family and children, through I will admit she was very strict.

But I am not writing this to talk of my family. Our farm and the Bert Gundersons was on the edge of the Village limits, but we always consider ourselves from Thompson and still do. I now am deaf, but for many a year, I was the Thompson correspondent for the Tribune. And as I always said I was born Old. I remember many stories my Grandma use to tell me of the history of Thompson.

I remember those mentioned by Mrs. Rhodes like Mr. Severson and things told me about him. His farm joined ours which later was my uncle Charles Sample's and family. I also heard of William Tuffnell.

Memories

He was a friend of my dad Noel. I know that August Long was a war victim. I had the pleasure of knowing his brother Ed and sisters Edla and Mathilda.

I also remember other families that lived right in the Village. The Ed Fitzgures, a pillar of the community, the Wagers, the Larsons, Olsens, Squiers, Cunnings, Pierces, Charles Spindler, the village friend of all, Tuffnells, Petersons and though outside the village limits, still from Thompson, the Johnsons (Mrs. Chesborough was a Johnson girl), the Engerbresens, the Soderbecks, Carlsons, Nelsons, Stoors, Flodins, Sellmans, Williams, Andersens, Gundersons, Stanleys, Samples and my family many Hurshs and Revores. I may have missed some as I did not know all the older ones. These are ones my Grandmother told me about. Many were friends of mine. I was reminded of the Mc Critys, Wilson, Danielsons.

Now Thompson had lots of history beside the sawmill which my father and his brothers worked in. In fact I think they were the young men on the roof of the mill picture, but I am not sure. My great uncle Henry (Hank) made his home with us and was one of those lumberjacks that came to town (before my time) to celebrate weekends.

The Christmas Ship left Thompson for its last voyage. The old pine tree on the Engerbresen farm was a guide to ships coming into the Harbor. How well I remember the day it was cut down as my pa and Mr. Stanley did the job. The saw is now in the Museum by the old water tower. By some act of faith, it was the same time the song came out "They Cut Down The Old Pine Tree". Though no one knows where the lumber went, at the same time, three of the Engerbresens died. As a young teen I was very superstitious (and still am sometimes).

We had to walk to the Thompson school that still stands and we carried our lunch as we were not 2 miles from the school.

I was the last Sunday School Superintendent for the Lutheran Church in the school until the school closed when it was consolidated with Hiawatha. I was a Sunday School

teacher from age of 14 into my 50s when it was very hard for me to continue as after age of 45, I lost my hearing.

I drove the children downtown until most of our children had grown up and left for jobs in other places.

Hunting and fishing were the main sport of town with some violating too. My grandpa was drowned in the mill pond fishing with his son Will. Will was later killed near Shingleton on the Thompson railroad cars. He was coupling them and was run over. He died of loss of blood before reaching town for help. He was just 26-years-old.

My grandma raised the rest of her family on Government Help Civil War Pension as my grandfather was a veteran. Some of her family had grown up and already married. She had a family of nine children.

I remember the old hotel last run by Mrs. John Olson who also wove greens picked by local people into ropes and wreaths to be sold in Chicago. We teens make a few dollars or



This is a view of a house in the Thompson area in the days when it was a booming lumber town.

cents rather, weaving for her. What a messy job and sore fingers.

School went to the tenth grade, then to a graduate one.

I only went half way through the 9th grade due to being needed at home as you can tell by the mistakes made in this.

Back to having to graduate. The children had to find their own way to town too. So many had an old car which was packed each morning with stu-

dents. Others had to work and board in town.

By request of friends, children or grands of the older generations now passed on, I have written this. It is my plan to write a history of my family for my children.

I married a Manistique man who had to move out to the farm with me to help care for my aged relatives. Not many men would do so and I thank God daily for him and my family. We have been married 56 years but this story is not about us. I just want everyone to know, at request of friends, that there were a lot of families in Thompson, and also much more history.

Recently the Pioneer-Tribune printed a picture of the opening of the new highway. I was there. One of those cars was my Dad's. My cousin was the one who cut the ribbon be-

ing very beautiful girl. As I said, my grandmother was very strict, I was not allowed out much so I would lay on my bed when they built that highway watching cars being pulled out of the mud by my Dad or great uncle. Many objected to it being built, but not my Gram. She donated part of her land for it as she donated the creek rights for the hatchery when that was built. She was a very contentious citizen of the community.

I know I must have left out many names of people born and raised in Thompson but I mentioned all I could remember at this time. Though I married a boy many years ago from Manistique, Thompson will always be our home town, as the saying goes "You can take the boy/girl out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy/girl".



These lumberjacks used a log as a table for their lunch break in the Thompson area.

