The following are excerpts from the book “The Story of Ford River Township” by Jean Peterson Brayak. Thank you to the Brayak Family for allowing us to use.

**This is a story of Ford River Township.**

It includes the coming of Indians to the area back in 1780, as well as the founding of the villages of Ford River Mill and Ford River Switch, or Hyde. The Newhall and North Hyde areas are also included. It is also the story of the area in between these two villages -- the section called the Wittlock Road and the West Ford River areas. Other areas included are the South Bay Shore and the North Bay Shore, as well as the Jaeger Road location.

A sincere effort has been made to include biographical sketches of many of the early residents of this township. Sketches of all residents could not be included, as the book had to be limited as to the number of pages. A listing of family names of residents of the township has been made. If any names have been omitted, it is regretted and unintentional. A 1911 atlas of Ford River Township was used to obtain some of the names, and the memories of people have furnished other names of former residents. Any discrepancies· in spelling or dates given is also regretted.

This story of Ford River Township also includes the personal observations of some of these pioneers, as well as stories, poems and recollections.

A listing of the names of people who have furnished information for this hook is listed elsewhere, and the information is greatly appreciated. Pictures have been included, too, and a listing of the donors is also given. Many thanks are due them for the use of these photographs.

The bibliography lists the sources from which much of the material in this history was obtained. Thanks are also due them for permission to use these materials.

It is hoped that this book will prove of historical, as well as sentimental, value to the residents of Ford River Township. Jean Peterson Brayak

**JEAN PETERSON BRAYAK**

About the Author: Jean Peterson Brayak was born September 9, 1922, in Escanaba, Michigan, the daughter of C. Gust Peterson of Escanaba and the former Louise Hodgkins of Pine Ridge. She attended public schools in Escanaba, graduating from Escanaba High School in 1940. She attended Northern Michigan University in Marquette and also Cloverland Commercial College in Escanaba. She was formerly employed by the Federal Government in Washington, D.C., by the Delta Hardware Company and the Delta County Social Welfare office in Escanaba, in secretarial work. She also taught school in the Ford River school system. She was married to Thomas F. Brayak of Hyde on February 8, 1947, and has lived in Hyde for the past 25 years. The couple have four children: Thomas, Terry, Laurie, and Karen. Mrs. Brayak has been active in the P.T.A., the Ford River Cub Scouts, Camp Fire Girls and the Hyde-Ford River 4-H Club. She received a Distinguished Service award in 1972 from the Escanaba Area PTA Council.

**FORD RIVER TOWRNSHIP**

The following information was obtained and written up by Cornelia Johnson Jensen. Some of the stories were told to her by Mary Lehman Bemus.

**Chapter One**

INTO THE PAST, ALONG THE SHORE, FORD RIVER THE INDIANS

Misery Bay is the site of an early day Indian village. About the year 1780, five full-blooded Indian families from Ontario, Canada settled here. They arrived in a sailboat. They were members of the Potawatomi, Ottawa and Chippewa nations.

In that same summer, they made a return trip to Canada and enroute back they stopped at Two Rivers, Wisconsin and persuaded a group of Potawatomi there to come along to make their home at Misery Bay. This area was at that time a vast forest of untamed wilderness, and nature had furnished this lake with an abundant supply of fish; and the woods were filled with all the furred and feathered creatures of the north woods. This beautiful bay where the forest stood to the water's edge was evidently a favored spot, for here was shelter by the virgin forest from "Keeway­ 'din", the northwest winds which the Indians feared. Also, to the East, Misery Island and reef protected them from the Green Bay storms of fall and winter. The mouth of the creek afforded a safe and sheltered harbor for their boats and canoes. At a later date, the Indians named this creek "No-see-um," no doubt referring to the small gnats with the big sting which were present in the spring and early summer.

Here, too, was found the hardwood tree which the Indians could use in the building of their lodges. Any large tree from which the bark could be stripped in wide and long sheets was used for roofing and siding for the lodges. The white birch was a precious tree. Its bark was a potential supply for a roof and for a canoe; and, owing to its pliability, was made into innumerable utensils, such as baskets, pails, cups, basins, and trays. A grove of birch stood in about the same relation to an Indian village as a sawmill and tinshop did to the pioneers. The coniferous trees did not furnish suitable wood for fires, because hemlock, pine, tamarack, spruce, and cedar snap and throw sparks when burning; and, if used inside the lodges, might cause the burning of the dwelling.

The Ford River Lumber Company moved into the township in 1866. Some of these Indians found work in that sawmill and in the woods and moved to Indian Town at the edge of the Ford River. A number of Indians still lived at Misery Bay about the year 1870. Here, too, is located an old Indian burying ground and a number of graves could still be seen in 1939. The cemetery site is located on the Anderson Mill point and across from there on Highway M-35 near and under a big pine tree. This land was later known as the Norman Eddy or the S.A. Erickson farm.

In about the year 1870 and later, about a dozen graves covered with small birch bark houses were still being cared for. Indian relatives then came to hold "powwow" over their dead and placed gifts of tea and tobacco for the departed in the small structures. Here, too, at that time, another mode of burial was practiced when the Indians placed 8-foot-high poles in the ground. These poles were topped with birch bark lined scaffolds. On top of these scaffolds, wrapped in birch bark and out of reach of wild animals, they also placed some of their dead.

About the turn of the century (1900), Norman A. Eddy and family bought this land and built a home on the bank of the No-see-um Creek. One day, while plowing, he accidentally turned up three Indian skeletons with long, black hair, also pipes, beads, and other articles. He later re-buried the Indian skeletons farther back on the place.

In the early 1870's, Indian Batreau, his wife and daughter, Angeline, still lived in their big log house on the beach at Misery Bay.

White fisher families, which included the Franklin Bemus and Charlie Hare families, had built and moved into homes that were known as "fish camps." These families kept hired men helpers with the fish business. Elifelet Hall, who was a cousin of Franklin Bemus and had come from New York state, was one of these helpers. When fishing at one time got poor, Bemus and Hare named the place the name by which it is still known, "Misery Bay."

Maize (corn) throwing back and forth was customary in Indian courtships. The Indian brave and maid sometimes sat for hours throwing corn back and forth to each other. But if the girl did not throw it back, the courting was all off. (Mrs. Bemus reported seeing this custom many times.)

Thanksgiving Day in 1874 was stormy and cold with a trace of snow. In the bay there was some ice around the net stakes. David Wiltsie and his wife were operating a woods camp, cutting cedar, a short distance off M-35 on the old Buske Road. On this Thanksgiving Day, they had invited Mr. and Mrs. Bemus and Cora, age 3, to have dinner with them. They walked the two miles, pulling little Cora on a small sled.

Mrs. Wiltsie was an excellent cook and made the most wonderful bread. They had killed a deer and served roast venison, corned beef, corned pork, also pies and cakes. Seven or eight woodsmen were employed there. Some young men, one a Swede, who had for some time planned and saved to visit his mother in Sweden, were at this time fishing from Lutz Island (Misery Island). On this same Thanksgiving afternoon, this young man, Johnson, came over in his boat to Misery Bay to pick up a stove. He stayed, playing cards, until late afternoon and then started back to the island with the stove. Some distance out, the boat capsized in the storm. Elifelet Hall made haste to call Frank Bemus who came back on the run. He got the Indians to help row the boat, and they succeeded in reaching the then unconscious and nearly drowned man and brought him into Indian Batreau's house. He had been in the icy waters for three hours. They removed his wet clothing and worked on him for hours, pouring hot tea into him. They also heated lengths of boards by the fireplace and placed them around him, next to his body, to get some life into him. He finally came out of it and the first thing he said was this: "I'll never see my mother again ... "

From that time on, he was known as the "Drowned Swede."

**Chapter Two**

**EARLY DAYS ALONG THE SHORE, FORD RIVER TOWNSHIP**

Mr. Jefferson Sinclair came to Milwaukee, Wisconsin on November 15, 1845, from Bangor, Maine. From his brother-in-law, Mr. J.B. Smith, he purchased an interest in a sawmill at Flat Rock, near Escanaba, Michigan. The old water-power mill which was built on 'the Escanaba River at Flat Rock in the late 1830's is considered the first settlement in this locality, while the next settlement recorded is that of Ford River.

In 1844, Silas Billings, George Richards and David Bliss, pioneers in Delta County, erected a small sawmill a short distance up the Ford River from the present village site, utilizing the natural power furnished by the river. This pioneer mill was in use until about 1850, when it was abandoned.

On th.is date, George Legare purchased the claim and mill of Silas Billings and erected a small steam mill at the mouth of the river. In 1854, he took as partner Joseph Peacock who retained his interest for some time. This ·mill was destroyed by the spring freshets. about 1860, and Mr. Legare erected a second mill which he operated until 1866, at which date he transferred his claim and interests to Captain John D. McDonald and others who formed the Ford River Lumber Company, with main offices in Chicago. This company later constructed another mill and finally a shingle mill. The Ford River Lumber Company owned about 10,000 acres or more of dense forest lands along the stream from which the village took its name. The river itself is over a hundred miles long with a number of dams on it, one of which was at Newhall.

Trees were cut into logs in the surrounding area during the winter and hauled to the riverbanks where, in the spring, they were floated down the river to the mills. Here they were cut into lumber, ties, lathes and shingles, after which they were piled onto lumber schooners to be taken to the Chicago and Milwaukee markets. Only the softwoods were cut for the sawmills by the owners, for it was practically impossible to float the hardwoods. It is claimed that no finer pine was found in Michigan than the logs brought down on the Ford River; and, in 1864, the output of the mills was 25,000,000 feet of lumber, and, by 1890, production amounted to 50,000,000 feet.

The capacity of the docks at Ford River amounted to 16,000,000 feet. Only the best lumber went to the markets; and, to get r1d of the rest, known as "scooters," burners were erected at a cost of $5,000. Scooters and culls, which often were consumed in the burners, would today command the prices of first grade lumber.

**The foregoing information was from the papers of Ormal B. Fuller**

The Ford River was named for Thomas Ford, a governor of Illinois who in 1842-46 had explored a portion of the Upper Peninsula and had mentioned the river in his history of Illinois

At this time, the country along this shore was a primeval wilderness, and there was an abundance of beaver, otter, mink, muskrat, marten, fisher, bear and deer throughout the region; and the Indians obtained an easy living in roaming over these hunting grounds. Rivers and lakes were the chief means of communication, and Indian villages were accessible by birch canoes.

It is told that the Ford River Lumber Company in the mid-1880 's also built dams on the Bark River, one where the state road (now M-35) crossed the river and one at the Polish Settlement. They drove the river until the early 1890's when the river rights were sold to Bergman and Gasman of Bark River, who continued to drive it until about 1912 with logs and later pulpwood. This company sold their cut of logs to a Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin company. The Ford River Lumber Company owned much land along this shore and also along the Bark River. In 1882 the company operated a big camp a few hundred feet above the Bark River mouth. At this point, the river was quite narrow for the log drive, and the banks were built up with logs. At this time, much timber was wasted. Logs were condemned for just a small colored spot or streak and left in the woods to decay.

In these early days, some of the great white pine trees were also cut to be made into masts and spars for ships. They were transported to the beach, towed by ships by way of the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean and from there shipped to Liverpool, England.

There was also much activity in getting out "square pine" for the foreign market. These immense pine logs were squared either by hand or by saw. At one time, a portion of the annual cut at the Ford River Mill was confined to square pine timbers and settlers along the shore both above and below Ford River could still find perfectly preserved specimens of these timbers buried under the sands.

In the 1880's, Grant Henderson found one of these great timbers in the woods in the South Ford River area. It was 60 feet long by 3 feet square and had been left in the woods to rot. Only perfect timbers of good length would pass inspection, and logs that showed defects under the saw or broad-axe went out the chute into the bay to find resting places along the shore. Many a small home along the shore was built from cull lumber picked up on the beach.

After the State Road was opened up for use, pioneer timber jobbers and woodsmen moved into the area. Hercules Salva was one of these men. He constructed a set of buildings needed to house his family and a crew of 12 to 15 woodsmen. The camp was situated a distance of a mile or more west of the State Road on the bank of the Bark River, now County Road 535. There was a family of five girls, but no school existed. However, it is told that at least one of the girls attended an out-of town convent school.

This lumber camp was started about the year 1879 and was kept in operation the year around for some years and the cut of timber floated to the river's mouth.

Names of other early jobbers who later became farm owners were Eli P. Royce, Joseph Martin and Joe LeMay.

In the 1870's the Joe Martin family lived in a big logging camp situated on the High Landing Road, not far from the beach. It has been told that the great logs from this camp were later moved to their farm home site and used in the construction of the large story-and-a-half log house.

Eli P. Royce began cutting timber in the south Ford River area in the 1870's. It is known that at this time Joe Martin worked either with or for him.

A crew of 12 or 15 woodsmen found work the year around at this early day farm. The crew of men cut timber in the woods during the winter, and the land was cleared by them in summer, a little at a time, between the loading of the lumber schooners which anchored off High Landing.

Before long on the farm site, enough land was made ready for a patch of potatoes, some turnips and a field of grain. Farm animals were raised to provide milk, butter and meat for family use. Horses for farm work and hauling timber products were also kept.

During the spring break-ups, parts of the State Road in the low places were almost impassable; and the trips to Escanaba were made not without some difficulties.

Mary Martin, daughter of the Joseph Martins, recalled that sometimes the team of horses waded in mud and water "up to their belts," and the 16 miles 'to Escanaba took four hours one way. The woodland where the Martins lived was cleared mostly in the 1870's and was the first farm in the area. Mrs. Philomene Isabel Martin obtained the patent or deed to this homestead of three forties of land on July 28, 1884. (There were six children in the Martin family, and Mary Martin supplied this information.) The other children were John, Joe, Victoria, Rose, and Henry.

These early-day timber jobbers, Eli Royce and Joe Martin, along with their crews, cut timber far back into the woods, across and west of the winding Bark River. From this area, winter corduroy roads for hauling timber were made by placing cedar posts or poles crosswise in the track in the low, wet places. All these roads ran to the east towards the Green Bay shore. These roads were iced in winter so that big loads of cedar posts, ties and telegraph poles could be transported over them. These woodland roads, some of which were a distance of ¼ to ½ mile apart could be found for miles along this shore. And, after a century, remnants of the moss-covered corduroy trails, underlaid with cedar poles, can still be seen.

During the summer sailing season, the lumberjacks were on call to load the many lumber schooners, sometimes five and six at a time, anchored off-shore, waiting to take on cargoes for the ports of Milwaukee and Chicago. One of the schooners that called at this place for cargoes was the "Eli P. Royce" and was also owned by this man, a prominent Escanaban who in later years became Escanaba's postmaster. He was also an attorney and a surveyor.

Mary Martin was once invited aboard the "Royce" to a meal. She recalled with pleasure the bounteous dinner of good things to eat, which included "wonderful ham and fresh fruits."

At this place, "High Landing," the schooner was anchored about half a mile off-shore. The timber products were stacked on the beach; and, in the loading process, booms, floats and rafts were used. A line was fastened from ship to shore and tied to a tree. In this way, the workmen pulled the booms out to the vessel. This was extremely hard work, and it is told that the crews of men were wet like "cats" from dawn to dark. For this, they received a wage of $2.00 per day. However, Mr. Shy, husband of Mary Martin, received $5.00 per day, working on a float alongside of the ship, taking heavy, wet ties out of the water.

The Martin's farm buildings were placed on the edge of a hill which dropped abruptly about 20 feet to the level pasture land below, known as "The Flats." Fond memories of this writer cling to the spacious log house whose home it was for some years in the late 1890's. There was plenty of room for the family in the big living room and the large, comfortable kitchen, also two upstairs bedrooms and two downstairs bedrooms. A root cellar and potato cellar were built to the back of the kitchen. Shelves in a part of the cellar were used to place the pans of milk. In the kitchen, a medium-sized oak water barrel with a hinged cover held the water used in cooking and dishwashing. A water pail contained the freshly-drawn drinking water.

In the yard close to the house was the deep well with water drawn up in "The Old Oaken Bucket." There were large barns which housed a team of horses and seven or eight cows. One winter, the barn well ran dry, and it became necessary to haul water in barrels from the river a distance of 1/3 mile away.

In the fall, home raised smoked hams hung on the log wall of the kitchen. Also in the fall, farm grown and farm threshed wheat was hauled over the winter woods road to the Ruud Flour Mill in Bark River village and ground into wheat flour. (The memory of the tasty bread made from freshly grown wheat still lingers . . . )

In the spring, the orchard was in bloom, including two spreading crab apple trees, also the great lilac bush just outside the window, making the out-of-doors a lovely place.

Joe Martin also transported large amounts of timber in the 1870's to what was then known as the Scow or Sow Landing. This landing was located just to the south of what is now known as the Grant Henderson Farm. This cut of timber was also picked up by lumber schooners and shipped to the big cities on the lower lakes.

A short distance to the back of this beach is a large mud lake which is a treacherous, sinking bog. Joe Martin had repeatedly warned his children to beware of getting into this bog, as he had once seen a deer sink out of sight in the mud. It was known that humans, as well as animals, sometimes disappeared in these mud lakes. At about this time, Grant Henderson and Charles Johnson managed to save a cow that had gotten into the mud lake. When discovered, only the horns and nose were showing; but, with tamarack poles placed alongside and underneath, the cow was pulled to safety.

It is known that early-day white fishermen came to Washington Island in the year 1836. In later years when fishing there was not so good, some of the fishermen, along with their families, came to the West shore to go after the whitefish and trout.

River mouths are the sites of man's earliest habitations, and the Bark River mouth was no exception. With the lake levels four or more feet higher than at the present time, early fishermen could sail out of a Green Bay gale into the river mouth which made a snug and sheltered harbor.

In the fall of 1860, several fishermen, including Allen Bradley, came for a time to this location to fish. Later in the 1860's and 1870's, after the Civil War, a number of fishermen with their families from Washington Island and other islands came to the Bark River mouth to fish. The names of some of these people were: Cole, Williams, Mulligan, Evans, Fowler, Bradley, the Bemus family from Menominee and the Allgers from Sand Point, Escanaba. When the fishing season closed, the families with children moved back to Washington Island where the children could attend school.

The area at the river mouth and the lake front was at that time a place of beauty, as groves of great hemlocks stood almost to the water's edge. The riverbanks were high and sandy and made good building sites. Small houses or fish camps were built on both banks at the river mouth. Some were constructed of logs; others part log, part frame; and some had cedar bark roofs. There may have been a bridge that could be driven across at this time, but in the memory of this writer, a big tree made into a log was the only bridge at this place. High water in the spring periodically carried this bridge away, but each time it was replaced.

George Williams was a former Civil War artillery man, whose wife and \_daughter lived with him. The Evans family consisted of five daughters and two sons. These children had always lived close to the water and could swim like ducks. One day, one of the girls fell into the river and slipped under a large fishing boat tied at the dock. The onlookers were certain she had drowned, but she swam safely out from under the length of the boat.

In late August in the year 1870, three fishing boats came into the river mouth with every sail and the entire boat covered with swarms of dragonflies. (Note: Sometimes they are referred to as "Green Bay" flies.) The next day, the black flies, mosquitos, and gnats had just disappeared!

Mr. and Mrs. William Allger. and sons, Alpheus and Jim, were neighbors of the Franklin Bemus family in the year 1869 at the river-mouth. These families, along with others, fished along the Green Bay shores. Drownings at this time were frequent, and one Allger girl lost three husbands that way. (Their names were Moulton, Marshall and Farnsworth.)

Grandfather Allger was a veteran of the American-Mexican War which began in 1845 and came to a close February 2, 1848. The veteran lost a leg in the war and used a wooden one after that. (At the close of this war, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California were given to the United States.) The sons and daughters of the Allgers were Charlotte, Annice, William, Henry, Alpheus, Washington and James. Several of their children's graves, marked by gravestones, were located on the North Shore in Escanaba where they later settled. This family also fished at the Fishery that is now Weisserts (later Tryans) and in 1869 we find them at the mouth of the Bark River in Ford River Township.

Allen Bradley was a veteran of the Civil War; and, after the close of the War in the 1860's, he and his family settled near the mouth of the Bark River. The names of the Bradley children were: Esther, George, Huron, Eli and Calvin. They lived in a big log house on the south bank of the Bark River where the old bridge and dam crossed the river on the Old State Road. (This area is now a part of the O.B. Fuller Park.) Allen Bradley was born August 11, 1818, and came from Dunkirk, New York state, first to Washington Island and next to North Bay in Door County, Wisconsin, and thence to Ford River Township. He is the same Allen Bradley described in Hjalmar R. Holand's "Old Peninsula Days." It is stated here that "he was more than six feet tall. He measured more than four feet around the chest, had hands as broad as shovels and was obliged to wear moccasins because no shoes could be obtained that were big enough:'' The old settlers spoke of "Old Bradley, the timber chap, who lived like an Indian and could cut seven cords of body maple in a day."

In the late 1860's, Allen Bradley and his son, Huron, had charge of keeping in order a stretch of telegraph line from Green Bay to Escanaba. The Bradleys also had sail boats and did some fishing.

**Chapter Three**

**FORD RIVER**

**From "History of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan," by the**

**Western Historical Company, 1883, p. 248)**

The village of Ford River is situated near the mouth of the Ford River, from which it receives its name. The site is virtually owned by the Ford River Lumber Company, and the enterprising and busy little village that presents itself today is the outgrowth of productive industry furnished by the splendid facilities for carrying on the manufacture of pine and cedar lumber, which is owned and controlled by the proprietors of the village. This interest is the best feature of the business of the town, and the one important in wealth and magnitude.

It furnished the motive power in the industry of the place, and the medium of circulation in business life. A large portion of the people are in the employ of the lumber company, and the balance in farming and mercantile enterprises.

The buildings are nearly all frame structures, but during the past three years, the pioneer structures have been rapidly replaced by a better class of dwellings, giving the town a pleasant and desirable appearance.

In 1844, Silas Billings, George Richards and David Bliss, pioneers of Delta County, erected a small sawmill a short distance up the stream from the village, utilizing the natural power furnished by the river. This pioneer mill was in use until about the year 1850, when it was abandoned. At this date, Joseph Legare purchased the claim and mill of Mr. Billings and erected a small steam mill at the mouth of the river. In 1854, he took as a partner Mr. Joseph Peacock, who retained his interest for some time. This mill was destroyed by the spring freshets about the year 1860. Mr. Legare erected a second mill which he operated until 1866, at which date he transferred his claim and interests to Capt. McDonald, who in company with others established the Ford River Lumber Company. (Note: The first railroad was built in 1862 and the first land road in 1872 by a Judge Ingalls.)

The mill erected by Mr. Legare was torn down, and the smaller mill now owned by the company was erected a short time after the company obtained possession. The large mill was built in 1873, and the lumber interests of this region began to develop more fully. At this writing (1883) the mills are cutting about 28,000,000 feet of pine annually with their combined facilities. These mills are operated by steam and are among the largest in this section of country. They are well and favorably located in the midst of an inexhaustible supply of pine timber, bordering upon Ford River, which is of sufficient volume and force to raft logs from the pineries to the mills.

The company has also in successful operation a shingle mill, turning out about 300,000 shingles per annum.

Two large schooners, the "Ford River" and the "Resumption," owned by the company, are utilized in plying between Ford River and Chicago in the lumber trade of the concern. The remaining interests of the company consist of a large general merchandise store and a large hotel, recently erected. Educational interests are ably carried out, and the public schools are thoroughly organized and in charge of competent teachers. The village is rapidly growing and 'ere long will become one of the most important ones of the county.



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title | The Schooner RESUMPTION |
| Description | The schooner is under sail in what appears to be Little Bay de Noc, with Peninsula Point in the distance. This is a print made from a glass negative. Owned by the Ford River Lumber Company, this schooner was built in Milwaukee in 1879. She was stranded on Plum Island in Lake Michigan in November 1914 and became a total loss. |

**FORD RIVER MILL**

**This material was furnished by Phil Miron, former Supervisor of Ford River Township.**

In 1842, Thomas Ford, a former Governor of Illinois and an engineer and explorer, came to this territory to see what it had of value. On returning to his headquarters, he mentioned the river flowing in the area and evidently became a stockholder in the lumber company to be formed. Thus, the name of Ford River was given to the river and the lumber company.

J. Legare had large holdings of white pine from the present Ford River to West Branch, Michigan, as far back as 1859. The first board meeting was held at Uppertown on October 13, 1862, when the Ford River Lumber Company was formed. Legare sold his interests to Phil Auten and J. Blanchard of Chicago and John S. McDonald of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. They became co-owners of the new company, with headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. The following year, the company began to build structures for the employees and their families.

Water at first was just dipped out of the river and then the water mill was built but was short-lived, as a spring-fed well was found near where the present deep well is. This well was piped to the village about 1880. By 1887 the homes of the officers of the Ford River Lumber Company had water piped in. This spring-fed well served the public until 1949 when the water was found to be contaminated. The Michigan Department of Health condemned the well in 1948. The deep well which supplies the present water is 750 feet deep and cased all of the way down.

The first mill was built at Uppertown where most of the company offices were, but this mill was destroyed by fire. The new mill was built between the present concrete bridge on M-35 highway and where the old bridge stood. This bridge was dismantled by the Delta County Road Commission in August of 19 57 because of danger for motor vehicle traffic.

In 1873 the big pine mill was built near the mouth of the Ford River and stood there until it was dismantled about 1 ~11. Later, about 1875, a smaller mill was built and also a shingle mill. Both were shut down about 1900. The main products made by the mills were white pine lumber, railroad ties, posts and shingles.

The first millwright in the new big ·mill was J. Driscoll. The house that Hilmer Sodermark lived in right near the river and the old bridge was built for Mr. Driscoll. Other employees were John Scott as engineer, Saul Scott as filer and C.W. Bridges as fireman.

Approximately 1,000 men worked out of Ford River -- jobbing and cutting logs, log jammers or river hogs to float the logs down the river, and those people who worked in the mills, store, boarding house, restaurant, food warehouse, barns where hundreds of horses were housed, and those who had the major duties of getting ·this material to market.· The task of getting the lumber, ties, posts and shingles to market was accomplished by company schooners, as well as other schooners. The company owned three schooners: the "Resumption," captained by Capt. Simenson, the "Ford River," captained by Capt. Tony Everett and the "Cora A.," captained by Capt. M. Anderson

The vessels were loaded by men who were not company men and who did nothing but load these schooners in as fast a time as possible. Their pay was 50 cents per day (from 6 A.M. until 6:30 P.M. with 45 minutes for lunch.) Some local farmers began loading schooners for extra revenue, and the Longshoremen of Chicago heard about it and also the low pay of the loaders. They demanded that these loaders join the Union and strike for higher wages, which they did. The results were good, and the men then received 50 cents per hour as salary, which was extra good pay in the 1880's. The company also owned a tug, "Bruce," which towed the vessels and brought them to the right dock.

There were eight docks at the mouth of the Ford River then, and as many vessels as seven would be waiting in the lake to get to the docks to be loaded during the shipping season. A company schooner carried about 300,000 board feet of lumber to Chicago and returned with food and supplies. It took three weeks, round trip.

The docks held a capacity of 16,000 board feet of lumber. In 1884 the output was 25,000,000 feet of lumber. As the capacity of the mills increased, the shipments of lumber went up to 55,000,000 feet of pine lumber per season and large amounts of shingles, ties and other forest products each season. One dock extended 2¼ miles out from the shore into the bay.

These figures were found in O.B. Fuller's portfolio, 1899:

Lumber shipped out 44,000,000 feet.

Laths shipped out 7,000,000 feet.

Shingles shipped out 26,000,000 bundles.

Ties shipped out 88,000.

Posts shipped out 97,000.

Lumber was graded then, too. The lowest grade was called scoots, and this was thrown into the burners. A higher grade was called culls, and the people would buy this grade at $10.00 per 1,000 board feet. It had a few knots and splinters, but it was all white pine. The first quality lumber was knot-free.

 A black and white photo of a factory

Description automatically generated

The big boarding house had 300 rooms, a kitchen, large dining hall and one private dining room for businessmen and guests from Chicago. Meals, dances and parties were held in the large dining hall. Room rates were S3.00 per month for an average bedroom and $4.50 per month for larger ones. In the rear of the boarding house was a bunk house near the river's banks which was just for sleeping purposes. The boarding house was three stories high and was built in 1867.

No saloons were allowed on company property, but they would allow the brewery wagon to bring cases of beer and small kegs from Escanaba on Saturdays. But everybody was expected to be in good shape for work on Monday morning!

The company store originally was for groceries and meats and was also built in 1867. Food supplies had to be transported from Chicago to Ford River at first, until farms started to develop. A large department store was added on within a few years and handled practically everything: tinware, crockery, furniture, men's clothing, shoes, yard goods, groceries, and meats.

The store managers of the various departments were: H. Essington, Charles Appleton, Ole Erickson, George Session, Gust Nelson, C. Mason, John Ohrstrom, Tim Crain and Wallace Gardiner. T.V. Ward was general manager of the company store. Other clerks were Alec Campbell, Alex Johnson and Bill Chaulklin. Evelyn Campbell clerked in the dry goods department.

Mail was brought in by schooner, stage coach and covered wagons drawn by horses. Frank and Phil Beloit took care of the post office department in the store. Later officials of the post office were "Mr. Ford River," John Bartella, and Charles G. Johnson

Ford River village, as such, did not originate until 1864. Streets and street names blossomed out as the village grew. Main Street was the center of town; Kow Street went East and West; Sawdust Street went East and West and Slew Street was on the extreme west side. Then there was River Street and McDonald Street which ran about a block east of the big schoolhouse (in 1973 the site of the Ford River Bible Church and the Rev. Lowell Fox's home.) Ross Street, which was later planned by the I. Stephenson Company, was on the present River Road; and Park Avenue was also in that vicinity, according to the Delta County Atlas of 1915.

Captain John McOonald brought the superintendents from Chicago to organize the Ford River Lumber Company venture. Included with him were John D. Ross, J. Fullmer, Fred Warner, T.V. War"d, Reuben Knox, Al Hilman and J.A. McGuire.

Soon following came Ormal B. Fuller from Muskegon, Michigan, who was hired as a lumber inspector.

As there are people, there is progress. A road to Escanaba was built by sand at first, from 1864 to 1877. Then it was filled with sawdust and later with cedar bark and more sawdust. In later years, it was graveled and some of it rerouted from the lake shore to the present modern highway.

When bicycles became common, a plank walk was laid from Ford River to Escanaba. This walk was laid about 1900. Racers included: Gust Berglund, Nels 0. Green, Fred Harris, Charles Strom, Billy Wickert, F.W. Aronson, John Jackson, Andrew Stephenson, Albert Gaufin, Ed Smith, Perry Lucas, Pat Gannon, and Harry Thompson. Some of the other early enthusiasts included Martin Anderson, Axel Anderson, A.O. Villemure, and John Jackson. John Hughes, Edward F. Bolger and P.A. Aronson were among the champion racers. Matt Ryan and Sam Spargo served as time-keepers. (Ed Bolger made a record run of 47 minutes to Ford River and back. This record was later broken by P.A. Aronson who accomplished the feat in only 42 minutes.)

As for recreational activities, there were many picnics in the summer months. There was also a brass band and community song-fests.

The Skandia Hall was built in 1901. The Ford River Lumber Company donated the materials, and the men and boys built it. This hall was behind the big schoolhouse. It had a nice stage for plays, two dressing rooms, a dance hall and a kitchen. This hall had one of the finest maple dance floors in the area. Square dances, waltzes, schottisches and polkas were very popular.

Fishing and boating were always enjoyed, too; and swimming was always fun at the Mill Pond. This pond served as the ice-rink for skating in the winter.

Electricity finally came into the area about 1900. First the company properties were wired, replacing the kerosene lamps. The electricity went off at 11 o'clock at night.

The first burial ground was in the village area, while Uppertown was the industrial part of the area. When the first mill was placed in the village area, the bodies were removed to the cemetery across the river. which many people called the "Indian Cemetery." This was not really an Indian cemetery, however. The Indian settlement was ·where Julius Flath later had his farm. People from the Bark River and Harris areas were also buried here, as it was the only burial ground in the area at that time. In 1922, the South Ford River and West Ford River cemeteries were plotted out.

Phil Miron further relates: "My first experience in Ford River was about 1920 when I came fishing with my Uncle Fred. We took the horse and buggy and came down. As kids, Ten Mile Creek was our fishing hole because it was in Section 1. My mother, Louise DeLaire, went to school at the Temple School and was born and raised in that area. (The old farm is now owned by Frank Hahn.) My grandfather was Azarie Meloche. My grandmother was Caroline Sayen. My father was Arthur Miron. I had one sister, Celeste, and one brother, John.

(Author's note: Other supervisors who have served Ford River Township, besides Phil Miron, include the following, beginning in 1887: Thomas V. Ward, Ormal B. Fuller, John McGuire, Andrew Englund, Henry Daniels, Henry A. Kasten, Joseph Rademacher, Sr., Jerry Fenlon, Chester Peak and Jerome Stannard.)

A building with trees in front of it

Description automatically generated

A group of people standing in a field

Description automatically generated

**LIFE IN A LUMBER CAMP**

**This information is from "The Milwaukee Journal" and is told by Elmer Fazen, a former cook at the so-called "Finn" camp on the Ford River. Although he was not located at Ford River Mill, his story is typical of life in a lumber camp of that era and is therefore included in this history.**

"On September 8, 1905, my father and brother, Rufus, and I left Milwaukee to go "up north," as it was called, to Escanaba, Michigan, on a boat. The old "City of Chicago" was a side paddle wheeler which hauled freight and carried some passengers. It left at 4 P.M. and took two nights and two days to get there.

Logs cut in the winter were hauled to the bank of the river and rolled into it in the spring. Sometimes they would get jammed into a big pile and the men would have to break up the jam and get the logs started downstream. It was something to see how the men would ride the logs and jump from log to log like squirrels. They really were men!

I got a job as "cookie" in the kitchen. My brother went to work in the woods. There was one head cook, one second cook and one "cookie." I had to get up at 4 A.M. seven days a week to start the wood stoves. The kitchen would be cold and water would be frozen in barrels, so I would get the first fire going in a hurry.

At 4:30 I would call the other two men and things would get going~· We would get our work done about 8:30 P.M. and by then we were ready to go back to bed. We would get off about 2½ hours in the afternoon. I would take a walk if it was not too stormy.

We had a pie, cookies and doughnuts every meal and you could eat all you wanted. For breakfast, we had pancakes, pork sausages, cheese, oatmeal, fried potatoes, baked beans, pot roast, beef gravy, coffee, bread, oleo (no butter), prunes, applesauce and jelly syrup. So you see, you could eat all you wanted to. Dinner and supper were the same, only there were no pancakes or pork sausages but plenty of beef.

The men sure did put it away. They were not allowed to talk at the tables or in the dining room, except to ask to pass food or like that. The reason no talking was allowed was that i~ took too long to eat and to stop arguments.

There was a store where the men could get a few things. The kind of tobacco they used mostly in the camp wa~ Eight Brothers, Standard, Peerless and Plow Boy. There was some called F .O.B., Bull Durham and Duke's Mixture. There weren't many cigarettes, only "roll your own." But there were the old clay and corncob pipes, Copenhagen Snuff or horseshoe plug.

Now, about what they called a "day." You got to work at daylight and got back to camp after dark. That was in the winter and six days a week. Wages were about a $1 a day and board and a place to sleep.

You had to roll in by 8 P.M. and be up by 4:30 A.M. to 5 A.M. Saturday night you could stay up till midnight, if you wanted. Men played cards, talked over old times, and most always there was someone who could play some kind of music and sing a little."

**The following information about Ford River was prepared by John J. Bartella on May 31, 1972, and delivered in a speech to the Kiwanis Club of Escanaba**

**Chapter Four**

**FORD RIVER MILL**

"Once a thriving lumber community, or typical sawmill town of about 800 inhabitants, Ford River is now only a ghost town of resorters and a few permanent residents. The community is about 100 years old, or so I am told by some of the earlier settlers. Its only industry consisted of the three sawmills operated by the Ford River Lumber Company -- the Large Pine Mill, the Little Mill and the Shingle Mill. The capacity of these mills ran into millions of feet of lumber, shingles and ties. White pine and cedar were only used until the supply of pine was exhausted. In later years, other soft woods, such as hemlock, spruce and basswood were substituted. Before shipping the lumber, stock was stored on seven docks at the mouth of the river.

The important buildings in the town were the Store and Office Building, the Boarding House, Sleeping House, Community Privy, Town Hall, Company Barns, the Schoolhouse and the non-denominational Church. Today, almost all of these old buildings are non-existent; and the buildings in the village are the permanent homes or summer cottages of the offspring of the second and third generations.

Ford River was exclusively a sawmill town, and almost all nationalities of people were represented in the community. Many of the jobs around the mills necessitated skilled workmen who had to be proficient in their duties or else were quickly fired. During the winters, the company kept a skeleton crew at the mill making repairs, and the balance of the men who had families in the town would go up into the woods and would not return until spring. Seldom would any of the men get home for the holidays or see their families for several months. The company advanced food supplies and clothing during the winter and would settle up with the employee in the spring. Rarely did he ever have anything coming! The mill operated at capacity from the early part of April through October, or when the supply of logs was depleted.

Logs were floated down the Ford River and its branches for several miles to the mills. As they approached the now Old Bridge, or sorting gap, they were sorted and directed to the various slips which took them to one of the three mills. The men who did the sorting while a flood was on had their hands foll and were often confronted with problems that necessitated brute strength and quick thinking.

The company owned and operated three large three-masted schooners to take their products to the Chicago market. However, I have counted as high as 35 boats at the docks on one day, from a one-sticker to a barge. A large steam tug was used to direct, or escort, the sailing vessels to the docks when they appeared near the harbor. Large scows were also used to load the tow barges which would anchor outside the approach to the docks because of low water. Scows loaded with cedar lumber and shingles were often towed to Escanaba by the tug "WaWa." Booms of logs were also brought in from other communities along the bay shore where there were extensive logging operations.

The boats were loaded by union men, members of the International Longshoremen. They demanded 50 cents an hour and wouldn't work for a cent less. Consequently, they were the lowest earning group in the community, as their season lasted about six months and they would only be called when a boat was expected. The bigger and huskier men would usually be chosen and the others would go back home and wait for another boat.

Social life in the community was very simple and consisted of groups of each nationality getting together on a Saturday night for a song fest, with beer and lunch being the principal attractions. There were no saloons permitted in the town until the later years, and beer was brought in by distributors from Escanaba. Ponys, or a case of 12 quarts, sold for $1.00. It was characteristic of the Finnish people to mix a few ounces of Hoffman drops, which were available at the company store, into a pail of water. These drops were really potent and were often called "Knockout drops" - and they were just that!

Men worked ten hours a day, and the prevailing wages were the customary low scale of the average lumber camp. Families were never out of debt, as we used coupon books which were redeemable for groceries or merchandise. Wood and rent were furnished at a nominal cost.

The company operated a stage to Escanaba which was used to carry the mail and also as a means of transportation. People who couldn't afford to hire a horse and buggy for $1.50 rode on the stage for S.50. Large sums of money for the payroll in the spring of the year were also transported by stage. The driver, Jim McGuire, was never held up and never carried a gun in 25 years of driving.

A small spri.ng a half mile from town has been the only water supply the community has had since the first settlers arrived. It is still flowing today and has been piped to all the homes and cottages in the town proper. Water is available at a high cost, which provides a source of income for the town.

During the years of operation of the mills, possibly millions of dollars worth of slabs and edgings were burned as refuse. In later years, some of this was ground up for fuel. Dimension lumber was unheard of at the time, and only a few hundred loads of the slabs were used by local families. A machine called "The Hog" ground the slabs into fuel for the steam ovens.

In the earlier years, the company cut only pine and cedar from their immense timber holdings. As this supply diminished, they started cutting their other softwoods. Finally, only one mill was operated, as the cost of bringing the logs to the mill was greater than the price received for the finished product. It was costing the company $16.40 a thousand feet to deliver the logs to the mill, and they only received $12.45 a thousand feet on the docks for the delivered lumber. Hardwood could not be floated and was never cut.

During the last few years when the company was owned and operated by the I. Stephenson Company trustees, it became apparent that, since the firm was losing money, operations would be suspended. In 1911, a transfer was made of the remaining holdings of the Ford River Lumber Company, consisting chiefly of 9500 acres of virgin hardwood. The transfer price was $750,000. Senator Isaac Stephenson, the principal owner of the company, received $400,000 as his share of the deal. Incidentally, this timber stumpage was carried on the books of the company at that time for about 50 cents a thousand and today would sell for $10.00 a thousand.

The company suspended operations and closed the office in the fall of 1912. By that time, most of the sawmill employees had migrated to Wells and Nahma. After disposing of the store stock to Coplan and Goldblatt of Escanaba, and the sawmill to some wrecking company, the store building and remaining company buildings were sold to William 0. Peterson, who conducted a store and tearoom for several years. The large boarding house and several of the better residences were sold to individuals who wrecked them. All pine lumber was used and the houses had been very substantially built."

(The following notes were taken from John J. Bartella's brochure regarding Ford River):

"History goes back to 1845 and the river was named Ford River after a man by the name of Thomas Ford.

The first water powered mill was built on the river in Uppertown 1½ miles from the present town of Ford River. Few houses were built there. On the West side of the river at that location was built the Uppertown Cemetery, later used by several people that had died at Ford River. (It was more convenient and less expensive than if buried in Escanaba.) No embalming in those days.

In 1856 the Mill burned and later was bought and in 1857 moved to the mouth of the river and was operated by steam, and-that company built two more mills. In 1867-75, the new owners owned the three mills. This was also the period when the seven docks were built. The company also owned three three-masted vessels that had a capacity of 300,000 board feet, which was sold to a buyer in Chicago and delivered. One of the companies was the Edward Hines Lumber Company. The company also manufactured railroad ties, laths and shingles.

Estimated population was in the neighborhood of 900 residents, many of the mill employees from among the farmers who had settled in the township. The company also owned and built all the houses, barns, store and offices, boarding house, sleeping house, town hall, the town band and town out-houses, school building and community church.

The company in its operations had 50 work horses and several cows, as milk wasn't available at the store, other than Carnation brand.

South of the town on Lake Shore Route 35 was an Indian settlement. They were employed by the Longshoremen's Union to load our boats at a rate of 50 cents an hour.

The town had no tavern until about the year the mill was shut down. The company did not allow it in the town in prior years.

Meats, groceries, drugs, dry goods, including shoes were available at the store. Little cash was used in purchasing, as coupon books were used. The only money available was from the boarders most families had for that purpose. The Boarding House had accommodations for about 7 5 persons, besides the Sleeping House which could house another 50 persons and was used only for sleeping. The town had no doctor, and the fee from Escanaba was $10.00, so most of us were brought into the world by a midwife by the name of Mrs. Anderson who charged only $2.00.

Sure, we had a post office in the store building, and you are now listening to the former postmaster. (He served in this capacity from 1907-1912.)

Nationalities included Swedish, Polish, Finnish, Norwegian, Irish, Indian, French and German.

Social life included the Skandia Hall and dancing at the Saturday night parties, shindigs, basket socials, the Kickapoo Indian Medicine Show, baseball, picnics, New Year's Day, ice cream and pop on Sundays, Stock companies and its bicycle sidewalk from Escanaba.

Ford River was noted for its two millionaires: George Ohrstrom and Ernest Krause." (Ohrstrom reportedly held stock in the Empire State Building in New York City. Ernest Krause gained his wealth in the steel industry in West Virginia, as related elsewhere in this history.)

On July 24, 1927, a huge "Homecoming" celebration was held at Ford River. The family names of the following persons were listed as attending that event: Airds, Albrights, Allards, Ahlquists, Ambeaus, Ammunds, Ammundsons, Andersons, Anthonys, Ayottes, Balems, Barkells, Barrens, Bartellas, Bedards, Beitzers, Bergeons, Berodts, Berthaumes, Birlots, Blakes, Blanchettes, Boices, Booth, Bourdeaus, Bowers, Bowmans, Boumstons, Brays, Brogians, Bucklunds, Bunns, Burges, Burkes, Cutlers, Calments, Campbells, Carlsons, Caseys, Caskulettes, Cass, Couillards, Cayens, Charlebois, Charleronds, Christophersons, Charbonneaus, Chauppers, Chaulklins, Clermonts, Clements, Collins, Cooks, Coopers, Connellys, Connells, Corianders, Cormiers, Cross, Cyrs, Dauseys, DeLarriers, DeMoss, Desmonds, Dittrichs, Dubois, Dupuis, Earles, Eatons, Ekstroms, Englunds, Ericksons, Pillions, Fishers, Fontaines, Fourniers, Fish, Franckes, Fredericksons, Frehers, Fullers, Gaffneys, Gagnons, Gardners, Gareons, Garrys, Gastras, Gaufins, Giesbers, Glavins, Godins, Goldbergs, Goodchilds, Goulets, Greens, Greenhoots, Gundersons, Gunkels, Halls, Hagblooms,

Hambeaus, Hamiltons, Harris, Hawkmans, Hendricksons, Henrys, Henzes, Hogans, Hokensons, Holmes, Huycks, Irvings, Jaegers, Jeppesens, Johnsons, Kempes, Kirbys, Krists, Kochs, Kremers, Kurths, LaBelles, LaChances, LaFountains, LaPlants, La Violettes, Lantz, Lancours, Lanchettes, Larsons, LaBranches, Leggs, LeFebres, LeMires, Lewis, Leisners, Lillquists, Lindstroms, Londervilles, Lofquists, Lundeens, Lundstroms, Lussiers, Madsons, Mallochs, Martins, McDonalds, McGoldens, McGuires, Meloches, Meyers, Micks, Michauds, Millers, Mobergs, Moes, Molsters, Moreaus, Mortinsons, Motts, Murphys, Nadeaus, Nelsons, Neitzals, Nerbonnes, Nordquists, Nortons, Nylunds, O'Neils, Olsons, Palmers, Papineaus, Parents, Pearsons, Peltiers, Pepins, Perrys, Petersons, Phelps, Poraths, Posenkes, Primeaus, Provosts, Quists, Ranvilles, Rasmussens, Reisbergs, Robergs, Romaines, Rowes, Ruests, Ruehls, Russells, Ryans, Sandburgs, Sardills, Sathers, Savoys, Scheriffs, Scotts, Sedenquists, Sheldons, Smiths, Snyders, Snoigals, Sobergs, Sodermarks, Spanglers, St. Aubins, St. Antoines, Stenholes, Stephehsons, Sundelius, Sundmarks, Sundquists, Swansons, Thompsons, Todds, Tossents, Trotters, Turners, Turnquists, Utic, Valentines, Van Blois, Vaughans, Weisserts, Wellmans, Wentworths, Wickholms, Wicklunds, Williams and Youngs.

It was noted that 553 people attended this homecoming, according to papers of John Bartella.

The following year, another homecoming was planned. These people served on this committee: John J. Bartella, Charles Fournier, William Anderson, Oscar Peterson, Charles G. Johnson, C.W. Malloch, Joe Turner, Bernard Micks, Otto Scheriff and William 0. Peterson.

The letter of invitation included this information: "Elaborate plans are being made for your entertainment. The activities begin with an Old Timers' Shindig and Dance on Saturday night. Sunday's program will consist of speeches by several former residents, motor boat racing, world's champion log rolling contest, band concerts, aeroplane stunts, dancing, fireworks and various other contests and games. Music will be furnished during the day by the Escanaba Municipal Boys' Band and the Escanaba Ladies' Band .... It may be true that the old town is gone, but many happy memories still linger there."

Ford River Pioneers Day, sponsored by the Delta County Historical Society, was held July 10, 1949. The program was as follows: an explanation of the Delta County Historical Society and its purpose by Frank A. Bender, Jr., President; a reading of a paper on the history of the Ford River community by Mrs. Paul (Marie Jaeger) Rademacher; memories of Ford River by Harold Fuller of Lansing (assistant field supervisor of the Michigan Department of Revenue); and community singing of old-time songs, led by Sam Ham.

In 1953, there was another Ford River Homecoming and Fishing Festival, sponsored by the Ford River Lions Club. This homecoming featured fishing contests, outboard motor boat races, a Ford River 4-H Club softball game, a talent show with the Barbershoppers from Escanaba and guest singers, a Ford River rapids race, a concert by the German Band, an accordion solo by Sharon Collins, stories by Bill Weissert, stories of baseball in old Ford River by Julius "Ching" Flath, log birling by the Olson brothers, and surf board exhibitions and a shindig on the grounds. John J. Bartella was Master of Ceremonies, introduced by King Lion, Phil Miron. Guest speaker was Tom Beaton.

The following information is from the "Escanaba Daily Press," the edition of October 23, 1945, in a column by Clint Dunathan entitled "Ford River Days." The story is by Joseph Russell: "There were only two houses between Ford River and Escanaba. They were the Fred Weissert house at Breezy Point and the Crawford house at Portage Point. There was a sand road to Escanaba and the company ran a stage to Escanaba daily. Joe Russell, Phil Ballard and Hattie Harris drove fast horses. T. V. Ward was superintendent; Ole Nelson, walking boss; Bill Turner, woods superintendent; Phil Ballard, postmaster; Alex Campbell, Gus Nelson, Wallace Gardner, John Londerville, clerks; Joe Mueller, butcher; Jim McGuire, stage driver; Tom Gardner, barn boss; John Hall, barber; John Bergeon, blacksmith; John Jule and John Johnson, watchmen. John McGuire was mill boss; John Swanson, engineer; Peter Londerville, second engineer; John Micks, band sawyer; William Todd, carriage setter; William Bray, carriage rider; and Arthur Lavake, edgerman."

**Chapter 5**

**ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS**

The first club in the Ford River area was the Skandia Club, founded in 1888 and ended in 1 911. This was a social club, and members played cards and held dances at the Skandia Hall.

The Pine Forest Club was organized in April of 1947. Charter members of this club are as follows: C. Arthur Anderson, Victor Anderson, Arvid Arntzen, Clifford Beaudin, Kryn Bloom, Francis Brown, Leslie Buckley, Victor Camp, Fred Carlson, Reuben Carlson, John Foss, Al Gustafson, Anthony Holmes, Kenneth Lewis, Worthley Magnuson, Ray McDonough, Lee McMillan, Phil Miron, Albin Olson, Arthur Olson, Edwin Olson, Paul Paulson, Albin Pearson, John Pearson, Walter Pearson, Earl Peterson, Fred Peterson, George Peterson, John G. Peterson, Victor Peterson, Art Westby and Bill Winkler. This club is also a social club.

The Ford River Lions Club was founded in 1952. Charter members are: Arvid Arntzen, Walter Arntzen, Eugene Beaudoin, Christian Bodjanac, Fred W. Carlson, Everett R. Cole, Everett W. Dahlvik, Chester Peak, Herbert E. Flath, John Flath, Ernest Fournier, Richard Freeman, Victor C. Friedgen, Robert B. Glidden, E. L. Goodman, Robert B. Hawes, Dale Johnson, Emerson B. Kidd, Lawrence J. Kidd, Donald Kline, Claude A. Leclerc, Ray S. LeDuc, Conrad P. Lemmer, Joe Larmay, George McGuan, Richard L. Meissner, Phil A. Miron, Alonzo R. Mohr, Michael Nelson, Ralph Nordquist, Hilding Olson, Earl Petersen, Dalip Rehnquist, Robert F. Schmit, Roy W. Schmit, W. J. Schmit, August Schultz, Bruce Scoggins, Gilbert Siivola, Hank Spieth, Gordon Topel, Earl Tryan and Joe Wisneski.

Past presidents of the Lions Club include Christopher Bodjanac, Robert Crawford, Marshall Dupuie, Robert Ferguson, Robert Hawes, Everett Dahlvik, Richard Meissner, Lawrence Kidd, Claude Leclerc, Dale Kivi, Phil Miron, Robert Glidden, Ralph Nordquist, Donald Kline, Joseph Rademacher, John Pendergraft, William Spieth, Jerome Stannard, Lee Wiles and Michael Thomas.

The primary interest of the Lions Club is the Sight·and Blind Fund. As of 1973, members were interested in working on a project to secure eye transplant facilities at St. Francis Hospital in Escanaba. The Lions Club also sponsored many community projects and services, such as recreational programs, including softball, volleyball, Little League and Bahe Ruth League.

**HISTORY OF 4-H IN FORD RIVER TOWNSHIP**

**This history was written by Mrs. Tom Brayak in 1971**

Ford River is the only township in Delta County that has had a 4-H club continuously in existence since it first began. Looking back at the past, there was a 4-H club formed at the Kasten School at Ford River Switch, now known as Hyde, in 1928, under the direction of the teacher, Julia Van Enkevort Paquette. She taught the girls sewing and canning. Some of the girls in that first club were: Dorothy Matthews, Marianne Matthews, Ann Chernick, Beatrice and Edna Kasten, Alice and Bernice Green, Helen Johnson, Mary, Josephine and Vonda Zagkowski, Catherine Pinozek, Lucille and Eileen Kositzke, Kathleen, Elaine and Jeanette Bruyere, and Alice and Mabel Pepin

Then, in the early 1940's, Eric Werner, the teacher, taught woodworking as a 4-H project to both the girls and boys; and the girls also learned embroidering. The following item appeared in the "Escanaba Daily Press": "The organization of 4-H sewing and handicraft clubs in the Kasten, Porath and Temple Schools has been completed. The sewing club named the following officer: Leona Patrick - President, Rosella Dumas - Vice President, Lucille Lehmann - Secretary and Doris Balm - Treasurer. Those in the first year group include Jeanette Chernick, Juanita Dumas, Marilyn Fenlon, Ella Mae Porath, Patsy Temple and Darlene McDonald. The second year girls are Gloria Oakman, Gladys Patrick, and the girls named as officers. Miss Mary Cavadeas, teacher at the Temple School, and Mrs. Hilding Olson are supervising. The club will be known as the "Junior Girls' Club."

"The handicraft club formed by the boys will be called "The Boys at Work" and is headed by the following: Gerald Kositzke - President, Robert Dumas - Vice President, Nicholas Brayak -Secretary, and Roger Dittrich - Treasurer. Club members will be under the supervision of Paul Vardigan of the Temple School and Eric Werner ofthe Kasten School. Boys include Wesley Chernick, Russell Bolm, Emmett Crepeau, Billy Porath, Harold Tultz, Eddie Green, Robert Dumas, Lawrence Makosky and Francis Dittrich."

The girls from the Kasten School held a box social to raise money to buy a second-hand treadle sewing machine, which was kept at the Kasten School.

One year previous to this time, in 1939, a 4-H club was formed at the Temple School and was known as the "Stitch-Stitch-Stitch" Club. Their very first project was to stitch towels. The following year, when they joined forces with the Kasten and Porath Schools, a hayride was held. The Big Day of the year was in the spring when Achievement Day was held at the old Escanaba Senior High School on eighth avenue south, and the girls modeled the dresses they had made during the year; and the boys displayed their woodworking projects.

Other leaders in the mid-1940's were Leonard Kositzke, woodworking, and Mrs. Richard Donahue, sewing. (Hyde and Pine Ridge area children.)

In 1922, Daisy Temple (Blake) said that when she attended the Temple School, the teacher, Elsie Severinsen (Nygaard) taught sewing to her and Bertha Olson.

Walter Johnson was the leader of the "Putt-Putt Tractor Club" at the Kasten School in 1947-48. He also instructed the boys in electrical work and handicraft, and there were 20 boys in his club from Hyde and Pine Ridge. Officers were: Irving Matthews - President, Robert Ostrum - Vice President, and James Johnson - Secretary, Treasurer.

Walter's mother, Mrs. Louis (Rose) Johnson, also led a sewing club from 1948-50. Members were: Norma Kositzke, Nora, Myrna and Jean Ebbesen, Virginia Hahn, Roberta Porath, Blanche Johnson, Hazel Scoggins, Betty and Barbara Borden. Mrs. Johnson returned to being a leader from 1963-69, when her daughter, Eileen, was in the club. (She also assisted until 1971.)

The "Dahlke Twins," Delores and Donna, led the sewing club for a year, from 1953-54. Then, about 1958, the Hyde and Ford River 4-H clubs merged.

At the Porath School, Otto Dittrich was the earliest known leader, about 1932. He was the handicraft leader for the boys, and they made sanding blocks, door-stops and bird houses. Boys belonging to this first club were: John, Tom and Steve Brayak, Harold, James, Louis, Emil and John McMahon, Clarence and Ronald Dittrich, Rudy and Leonard Porath, George Cholger, Archie and Walter Denoo, and Ormal and Lawrence Posenke. Girls in the sewing club, under the leadership of the teacher, Alta Trombley (Cass) included: Katie Brayak, Edna Dittrich, Doris LeBresh, Mildred and Lucille Denoo, Esther Posenke and Luella and Thelma Kositzke.

One time, during the winter, the boys' leader had sent for some tools and paint from Sears.· When the box was brought to the school, the boys were so excited about the nice tools that they forgot all about the paint in the box and threw the whole carton into the box stove. There were three explosions! The door of the stove blew open and splattered paint all over the floor! (That's what you might call "painting the town red ..." ).

Another school in Ford River Township, the Enshaw School on the Jaeger Road, had a 4-H club back about 1932, organized by the teacher, Idelle Holland (Groos). Girls in that club were Ida Ettenhoffer, Margaret King, Doris Larson, Beatrice DeGrand and Marian Hubert. It was purely a sewing club.

At the West Ford River School, sometimes called the Whitlock School, the teacher, Jeanne Huss (Simmons), taught woodworking to her pupils in the 1930's.

Ford River Mill School also had a 4-H club. It is believed to have been begun about 1949 by Mr. and Mrs. Everette Dahlvik, who continued as leaders until 1960. The meetings were held at the Dahlvik home and also once a month in the basement of the Mill School. Mrs. Sue Dahlvik instructed the girls in knitting, sewing and canning; and Mr. Dahlvik instructed the boys in woodworking and conservation. It was during this time that the 4-H members compiled a cookbook, made up of favorite recipes from residents of Ford River Township. It was printed in 1956.

Other leaders in the 1950's were Mrs. Dalip Rehnquist, Mrs. Ralph Nordquist, and Mrs. Dorothy Olson, assisted by Mrs. KriJ,t Oshe and Mrs. Bob Schmit. Junior leaders were Diane and Marlene Dahlvik, Darlene and Emelia Rehnquist and Donna Erickson. Projects were sewing, outdoor cooking and personal appearance. Other club members at that time were: Marilyn Nordquist, Billy Erickson, Marvin Carlson, Joan and Karen Johnson, Allen Erickson, Gary, Bob and Len Dahlvik. Carol Carlson later joined the club, also.

A separate 4-H club on the Jaeger Road was formed by Mrs. Emil Erickson in 1956-62. She was assisted by Mrs. John Dupont. Girls included Carol Erickson, Pat Wellman, Diane Potts, Janice Johnston, Barbara Noyes, Bonnie Hay, Bonnie La Valley, Molly Peltier, Elinor Chenier, Joanne Derouin and Patty and Christine Dupont. Mrs. Phil Van Elsacker was an assistant leader in 195 9-60.

Mrs. Nels (Marge) Ebbesen became the girls' sewing leader when all the Ford River Township 4-H clubs merged in 1958. She led the club from 1958-62. Some of the girls in the club at that time were: Mary Zappia, Carol Carlson, Diane Dahlke, Carolyn Neumann, Linda and Donna Bittner, Alice Krause, Kay and Karen Klein, Susan Hawes and Bonnie Hay.

In 1969., Mrs. Clarence Dittrich joined Mrs. Ebbesen as a leader and, when Mrs. Ebbesen retired in 1962, Mrs. Dittrich led the club until 1969. She was·the sewing and gardening leader and also conducted a social dancing class for boys and girls at the Ford River Town Hall. The club was first called the "Thimble Thelmas." Linda Bittner of Hyde was selected as the 4-H queen of Delta County at the Achievement Day in April of 1962.

In 1963, the club name was changed to "Hyde Kings and Queens," since boys now belonged to the club, too. The first boys to join the club were Bruce Stenberg, Tom Brayak, Jr., Ralph Krause, Jr., Jim Dugener, Terry Bittner, Eddie McMahon, Larry Malmstead, Tom Porath, Gary Brayak, Chester Salmon, Norman Dittrich, Terry Bra yak and John Stenberg.

Boys' leaders were: JohnPendergraft, ClarenceDittdch, Dayton (Bud) Dittrich, Walter Mokszycke, Ernest Klein and Ronald Dittrich. These last two leaders were assisted by Gary Brayak, junior leader.

The first 4-H chorus was organized in 1964-65 by Mrs. Tom Brayak, who directed the chorus, and Mrs. Elmer (Helen) Stenberg, who was the accompanist. There were several members from the Pine Ridge area in this group, also. The chorus members attended Camp Shaw at Chatham the following summer: and seven members were selected to go to Lansing. They were: Susan McMahon, Beverly Dittrich, Donna Bittner, CherylCholger, Yvonne Valiquette,Bruce Stenberg and Tom Brayak,Jr. Here they sang with the 200 voice all-state chorus. They also performed at various functions and presented a program of Christmas carols over a local radio station in 1965.

Other leaders include Mrs. Harry Nelson, Mrs. James Johnson, Mrs. Louis Johnson, Mrs. Reinhold Bittner, Mrs. Pat Henderson, Mrs. Don Erickson, Mrs. Tom Brayak, Mrs. Earl Porath, Leroy Scheeneman, Mrs. Dale Kivi, Miss Sandra Johnson, Walter Johnson, Mrs. John Hudson, Joe Hudson, Mrs. James Lofquist, Mrs. Harley Wunder, Harley Wunder, Mrs. Mary Wellman, and Mrs. Arlene Boye.

Over the years, the Ford River 4-H Club has had many members win awards in modeling, garment construction, crafts and in talent competition.

County agents have been Ben Patterson, 1920-21, Joe Turner, 1922-34, E. A. Wenner, 1934-47, Joe Heirman from 1947-1973 and the present agent, Don Pellegrini. Ingrid Tervonen also gave much assistance to the 4-H program for many years, as home extension agent.

4-H agents include the following: Ben Westrate, 1945-46, Mel Nyquist, 1947-52, Fred Bernhart, 1952-63, Larry Bradford, 1963-67, Art Vasold, 1967-68, Max Collins, 1968, David Van Zon, 1968-69, Don Brown, 1969-71, and Mrs. Helen Walker, 4-H Program Assistant from 1971 to the present (1973).

The Cub Scout program was begun in Ford River in 1958 and was known as Pack 430. First den mothers were Mrs. Harry Nelson, Mrs. Tom Brayak and Mrs. Elmer Stenberg. First Cub Scouts were: Tommy Brayak, Tony Fudala, Wally Beauchamp, Bruce Stenberg, Jerry Picard, Bob Nelson, Tommy and Donny Ruleau and Ormal LeBay. The first Cubmaster was Walter Mokszycke, assisted by Bob Shiner.

Other early den mothers and assistants were Alice Mokszycke, Maxine Salmon, Frances Flodin, Theresa Krause, Rose Johnson, Irene Chernick, Geraldine Derusha, Mae Carlson, Marion Peltier and Linna Dupont.

A charter was secured in 1960, and charter members were: Gary Brayak, Terry Brayak, Alex Chenier, Jr., Norman Dittrich, Robert Ebbesen, Ralph Krause, Jr., Allen Mokszycke, John Stenberg, Terry Bittner, Ricky Freeman, Ronald Fox, William Shiner, Steve Opalewski, Bruce Ventura, Robert Peterson, Randy Flodin, Phil Van Elsacker, Richard Carlson, Mike Dupont, Chester, Rick and Dan Salmon and Phil Johnson.

In 1946 a Boy Scout troop was formed, with Phil Miron as the leader. Members included Jim Lofquist, Barry Beaudry, Bill Weissert, Jr., Elmer Weissert, Clifford Larson, Bob Flath and Jack Flath

An Explorer Scout unit was formed in 1960, also under the leadership of Phil Miron. Scouts included: Wally Fox, Dennis Erickson, Ronnie Fox, Chuck Miron, Tom Brayak, Jr., Doug Hawes, Kenny Flath and Bruce Stenberg.

A Girl Scout troop was formed in 1961, led by Mrs. Dan (Gert) Wellman, Mrs. Orville Hakes and Mrs. Lawrence Beauchamp. Their meetings were held at the Lions Club in Ford River. Charter members included: Jeanne Dittrich, Laurie Brayak, Carol Fox, Marcia Nordquist, Patti Beauchamp, Danelle Wellman, Rosemary Hakes, Laurie LaCarte, Laurie Hay, Linda Shilney, Linda Freeman, and Penny Schroeder.

A Campfire Girls unit was formed in 1969 under the leadership of Mrs. Tom Brayak. Mrs. Walter Moniowczak was the leader of-the Bluebirds, the younger girls in the group. She was assisted by Mrs. Richard Eagle, Mrs. Robert Beaudoin and Mrs. Donald Fehrenbach. The unit met twice monthly at the Ford River Town Hall.

The Bluebirds included these girls: Marilyn Bittner, Connie Moniowczak, Yvette Eagle, Tami Lynaugh, Sandy Akerly, Tina Stier, Mary Rouse, Lynn Allsworth, Theresa Beaudoin, Lynn Fehrenbach, Doreen Brunette, Brenda Rowell, Cathy Judson, Karen Kivi, Brenda Brunette and Connie Daignault.

The Campfire Girls included the following girls: Barbara Bittner, Karen Brayak, Christine Porath, Christine Kleiman, Sandra Moniowczak, Sandy Allsworth, Debbie Daignault, Dana Gagnon, Debra Van Elsacker, Jeanne Cretens, Sandy Johnson, Teri Miller, Sue Rouse, Cindy Wellman, Dawn Brunette, Peggy Ailsworth, Gina Hanson and Bonnie Johnivan. (The listing of names for these clubs is incomplete, as no records were kept.)

**BALL TEAMS**

Earliest known members of a baseball team at Ford River Mill were the following persons: Gordon Campbell, Alex Johnson, a Smith boy, John and Frank Bartella, Willie Peterson, Tom Peterson, Will and Jack LaFountain, W. Bedard, Albert Anderson, Nels Jeppesen, Charles G. Johnson, Willie Anderson, Tim Anderson, Nels Henrickson, Jack Erickson and Mungo LaFave. Other players include Harold and Ralph Fuller, Nels Jeppesen, Charles and Ernest Fournier.

There were baseball teams in later years, too. The list as follows is incomplete, as it is by memory only of some of the members of the teams: In the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's these men: Nick Walch, Julius "Ching" Flath, Joe Rademacher, Sr., Harlan Peterson, John Flath, Arbell "Toodles" Flath, Ralph Flath, Warren Lofquist, Earl Flath, Bill Flath, Bert Olson and Emil Scheeneman. Some of these men also played for the Escanaba baseball teams, and there were also some Escanaba players on the Ford River team. The Flaths were all baseball players, including Wally Flath, who has played baseball for many years. He was on the Ford River Wolves team, along with John Goulet, Ross Dewar, Roy Lavalley, Louis Brown, Art and Elmer DeGrand, Joe Rademacher, Jr. and Glen Peterson. This was in the late 1940's. Wally Flath also played with the Bark River and Escanaba teams, both hardball and soft ball. He was in the semi-pro league and went to Pierre, South Dakota, for the finals.

Ford River had two men who played in the minor leagues - Joe Rademacher, Jr. and Allen Erickson. Joe played in the minors for six years. He was also on the Ford River team and played with the Escanaba Bears. He was manager of the Bark River baseball club for ten years.

Allen played with the San Francisco Giants from 1962-66.

There were also Little League and Babe Ruth Leagues in the Ford River area. In the early 1940's, a softball team was organized at Hy.de, sponsored at various times by the local tavern owners, such as Larmay's, Ev's Bar and Phil and Ev's.

The first team was called "lverson's Post-Handlers." The following men played on the Hyde softball teams at various times during the 1940's and 1950's: Earl Iverson, Ernest Klein, Earl Porath, Bill Porath, Sr., John, Tom, Steve and Nick Brayak, Einie and Gil Bittner, Ronald, Harold and Bill Severinsen, Ronald Sedenquist, Ross Dewar, Wally Flath, John Goulet, Gerald Kositzke, Joe Rademacher, Fred Lancour, Rev. A..Schab ow, Emil Scheenem\_an, Kenny and Mickey Olson. Scorekeepers were Clarence Dittrich and Millie Severinsen.

A girls' softball team was organized in the 1960's. Members from Ford River included: Judy Erickson, Clarice Nordquist, Janet Rademacher, Marcia Nordquist, Sue Erickson, Pat Wellman, Judy Sundberg and, later, Denise Porath and Debbie Bergerson. Other girls, not from Ford River, who were on the team as of 1973 include: Connie Verhamme, Joyce Bastien, Betty Bolm, Mary Shea, Marge Sauve and Candy Swetkis.

For some years, the girls' team was sponsored by Lombardi's Bar of Ford River. Theywerecitychampsin1968-70-71 and '72 and the U.P. champs in 1970-71. They also took the Iron Mountain League championship in 1971. In 1972, Denise Porath and Candy Swetkis were selected to play with the Chassell team in the Class D state championships at Coldwater, Michigan; and this team won the championship.

**Chapter Six**

**FORD RIVER TOWN HALL RAZING**

**From "Escanaba Daily Press," October 18, 1963**

Ford River Township has a new township hall and it's going to raze the old town hall. The old township hall started out as a saloon on a different location on a hill some distance from its present site. Then the Ford River Grange acquired it and enlarged it and in 1938 the Township of Ford River acquired it, and the town board has met there since, and township voters go there to cast their ballots and to hear about the problems of the township, water utility and the exposure of pioneer graves by erosion caused by the Ford River, and other problems.

In its first location, the old building back on the hill had a store front with central door and flanking windows. After it was moved, a le-an-to addition was built on its right side; and that's the way it is today.

The whole community of Ford River seems to insist that Al Capone ran an alky plant on the top floor of the building during Prohibition. You can find people who'll tell you how many bags of sugar went to the place every week and how much alcohol came out to be shipped "to the syndicate" in Chicago.

A watch set up at the suspected distillery resulted in the interception of a truck one night; but when it was examined, it was revealed that the illicit load was not booze, but black bass netted from Indian Lake and being transferred there. But whether or not Al Capone or some other Prohibition era moon-maker operated in the old hall, there can be no question that it was the scene of the community's most spectacular killing.

The saloon at the time, 1909, was operated by a Captain Hansen, whose first name not even John Bartella can remember; and Bartella knows Ford River history forward and backward and sideways. He worked for many years for the Ford River Lumber Company, and so did his father before him. It was the disinclination of this company to help make its workers drunk - because they needed so little urging - that barred saloons from the village and caused the town tavern to be up the river a half mile.

Captain Hansen, who also had a farm on the Bay Shore Road, employed as bartenders Fred Frederickson, who wore a 19 inch collar and was known as "The Terrible Dane," and a second worthy named Billy Lind. These two barkeeps were the good guys of the fatal drama. The bad guys were the Gravelle Brothers of Indiantown, a settlement one mile south of Ford River on the shore of Green Bay.

There were at least three Gravelle Brothers, but only two figured in the great fight, Dick and Alex. A third brother, Billy, escaped from an officer by leaping from the washroom of a moving train enroute to Marquette, but he wasn't around for the historic occasion. The Gravelles were longshoremen, a special class of milltown laborers who loaded lumber vessels.

When the inevitable fight started, Frederickson and Dick Gravelle fought their way out of the barroom into a back room of the building, and Lind pulled a revolver and threatened Alex Gravelle with it. Gravelle reached across the bar to wrench it from Lind, and he pulled the trigger. The shot took Gravelle in full face, and he stumbled into a doorway and collapsed.

Lind went into the back room and ordered Dick Gravelle, on the floor with Frederickson, to quit. When he didn't, Lind shot him in the head. When young John Bartella got word in the Ford River Lumber Company office that there had been a shooting at the saloon, he called Dr. Hugh B. Reynolds, the company doctor, and told him that he was needed. (Dr. Reynolds, he said, wanted to know who was going to pay for the call, but Bartella couldn't be sure, on such short notice ... )

When Bartella arrived on the scene, Alex Gravelle was still in the doorway, dying. Dick Gravelle was on a chair in the next room, bleeding profusely. Alex Gravelle died within a half hour of the shooting, and Dick Gravelle within a year, his mind impaired. Lind, a year later, took his own life by hanging himself from a tree in an orchard.

The old hall doesn't suggest its lurid past today. It's weathered and sagging, so that the chimney looks as though it had been assembled inside and thrust up through the roof.

(Note: The new building is a Timber Homes one. The building committee, as signified on a plaque inside the hall, consisted of the following men: Reinhold Bittner, Tom Brayak, Bernard Brodersen, John Pendergraft, Joe Rademacher, Jr., Mike Rettman and Jerome Stannard.) The new Town Hall has dressed cedar walls, inside and out, and a floor of hardwood. An addition provides kitchen and bathroom facilities and a library of about 1,000 books, the librarian being Mrs. Walter (Alice Dahl) Mokszycke. The hall is used for many community activities, such as 4-H meetings, showers, parties and wedding receptions, as well as the regular township board meetings.

**Chapter Seven**

**SCHOOLS**

According to Phil Miron, the very first school in Ford River Mill was built along the river and contained one room. There were only seven pupils who attended that school. Among them were Aurean Driscoll, Alex Campbell, Christina Christofferson and John Olson. Later, a larger school was built in the pine grove (now Dalip Rehnquist's property) and school was conducted five days a week. On Sunday, it was used as a church.

Cornelia Johnson Jensen, who supplied the following information, attended ~he Ford River Mill School from 1895-97. This school was built in 1888 on an acre of land donated to the township by Isaac Stephenson.

At that time, the teacher for grades 1-3 was Georgianna Helps; who later married John Mcinnis. The teacher for grades 4-6 was John Foster. Some of the children who attended school at the Mill at that time included: Pearl and Joe Turner, John, Frank and Augusta Bartell~, Gil Mittlestedt, Russell and Maude Jennings, Lulu Corbin, Ida Cornell, Beda and Andrew Christofferson, Hazel Utic, Nels and Thyra Jeppesen, and the Fourniers: Ephraim, Edith, Eva, Charlie, Ernest, Roy and May. Mrs. Jensen also recalled Hedvig Peterson, Albertina .Carlson, Harold and Ralph Fuller, Florence and Cora Marks, Iona Barclay, Stacey Campbell and the Lokke children: Mary, Eliza and Laura.

Other early teachers at the Mill school were: Miss Mulcahey, Miss Sigmiller, Miss Smith, Miss Dunsmore and Miss Harkins.

After 1897, the Johnson family moved from the Mill area down ~long the Bay Shore; and then Cornelia attended the Bay Shore School. Then school was held during the three months. of summer. Here her teachers were Elizabeth Crawford, Maude Holmes and Delia (Tillie) Muth. Some of the students at this school through the intervening years have included the Wellmans: Etta, William, Edward, Simeon, Joe, Phil and Theodore; the Ekstroms: Carl, Edna, August, Frank, Ethel.Ernestand Roland; also Mary and Charlie Buske and Rose and George Miller.

There were also the Halvor Larson children: Martha, Elmer, Vera, Lawrence, Clifford, Marie, Anna, Viola and Dorothy; the John Stawicki children: Bertha, Martha, Stella, Luoise,Johnand August;the Alvin Eddy children: Atwood, Margaret, Clarence, Ellillias, Maude, Norman and Emeline; the Fudalas: Catherine, Joe, Frank, Merrill, Walter, Loretta and August; the Alfred Nelson children: Frank, Esther, Herman, Earl, Nellie, Harry and Harold; and the Charles Beach children: Bill, Eva, Isadore, Robert and Harzen. There were also Esther and Kate Seymour, the Mike Baker children: Delia, Edward; Henry and Clara; the John Nelson children: Thorvald, Mabel, Arthur, Alvin and Elmer; and the Captain Peter Hansen children: Birtram and Max. Another family was the Morton Petersen children: Bertha, Thora, Ralph, Peter and Earl; and the Joe Martin children: Joe, Mary, Victoria, Rose, Aggie and Henry.

**The following information about the Ford River Township schools was from old record books, now a part of the Escanaba Area school system.**

The first record book available for the schools in Ford River Township was for the year commencing September 5, 19-05 and ending April 20, 1906. The teacher was Mayme Leehey of the Porath School. She had 4 5 students in grades kindergarten through sixth, which included: 1 - primer student (age 8); 6 - first graders (ages 8-12); 10 - second graders (ages 8-14) ; 6 - third graders ( ages 9-12); 3 - fourth graders ( ages 12-14); 2 - fifth graders (ages 12 and 13); and 1 - sixth grader (aged 14).

Students were graded by percentages then, such as 75%, which would be equivalent to "C" work. Morning classes included Opening, Numbers (arithmetic), Chart class (kindergarten), Reading and Geography. Afternoon classes included Opening, Writing, Spelling, Chart class, Reading, Language, Physiology, Geography, History and Language.

The reason for the disparity in ages in the various grades was du,e to the fact that many of the students could not speak or understand English very well, as their parents' so-called "Old Country" language was spoken in the homes.

The students in 1905 were from these families: Posenkes, Raymonds, Krauses, Derouins, Muthers, Poraths, Fish, Neumanns, Cooneys, Wagners, Bittner·s, Baronowskis, Scheels and Johnsons.

Adele A. Wasner was the next teacher for a term commencing September 4, 1906 and ending May 24, 1907. She had 32 students. Her salary was S,45.00 per month.

In 1910, the teacher was Linnea Johnson (Mrs. Emil Dittrich~) She had 37 students from the kindergarten through eighth grade. Her students included the Posenkes, Johnsons, Collins, Lensners, Baronowskis, Derouins, Bittners, Fenlons, Poraths, Scheenemans and Forgettes. In this record book, the following advertisement appears: "After the day's nervous wear, teachers should have on !land a selection of refreshing, interesting books to read -- something both restful and helpful. Such a book is the "J;fockeye Hawkeye Schoolmaster." It is a charming story, of which the hero is a school teacher . . . " (One wonders, how many teachers would look for diversion to tales of other teachers' problems after the day's work was over.)

Some of the excuses for absences included: rain, silofilling, picking potatoes, no overshoes, water across road, distance to walk too far for bad weather, as well as the usual cases of colds and sore throats. The attendance of many stu.lents was marked "irregular."

At the back of this record book was a page for the signature of "visitors" to the classroom. Some visitors who signed this registry included: C. Woolpert, Commissioner, George Jensen, President of the Ford River School Board, Andrew Iverson, Under-Sheriff, and Perry Matthews, School Officer. (The school kids were on their best behavior when these visitors came! )

Other teachers at the Porath School from 1913-20 were Martha Larsen, Agnes Sivertsen, Adella Weissert, Helen Bogren and Helene Sedenquist. Teachers in the 1920's and '30's included Julia VanEnkevort, Alice Van Enkevort, Alta Trombley, Alice Jaeger, Rose Kasten and Margaret Malloy. Later teachers were Dorothy Skopp, Mary Cavadeas and Mrs. Howard Johnson.

Students were from these families: McMahons, Dittrichs, Cholgers, Brayaks, Poraths, Krauses, McGinnis',Posenkes,Denoos, Simons, Muthers, LeBreshes, Bittners, Kositzkes, Dahls, Clarks and Neumanns.

At the Ford River Switch (Kasten) School in 1921, Marguerite Jaeger was the teacher; and the following families were represented: Fishers, Dubords, Gauthiers, Kastens, Pepins, Matthews, Mainlands, Kositzkys, Hansens and Chagnons. Other teachers in the '20's at this school were Mrs. Roy Richards, Helene Sedenquist and Julia VanEnkevort. Other families who attended· this school in the '30's were the Nantells, Wagners, Geises, Dittrichs, Greens, Johnsons, Hess', Hendricksons and Verrons, also the Blakes, Billys and Dumas'.

In the late 1920's at the Temple School, these families were enrolled: Bittners, Olsens, Iversons, Derouins, Temples, Picards, Wittes, Hellmans, Poraths, Richers, Harings, Carlsons and Patricks. Teachers included Elsie Severinsen, Rose Kasten and Leona Erickson.

At the Enshaw School in the early 1930's, Idelle. Holland was the teacher. Families represented were the Dewars, Ettenhoffers, Jaegers, Larsons, Holzgrebes, La Valleys, Noyes and Tryans.

West Ford River School was taught by Jeanne Huss in the early 1930's, and families there included the Carlsons, Englunds, Hiders, Johnsons, Krauses, Londos, Wittlocks and Wunders.

At the Bay Shore School in the mid-1930's, Ruth Schow was the teacher. Families attending school there then were the Fudalas, Kocszlas, Nelsons, Stawickis and Wellmans.

The following records are from books of the Ford River Township School Board:

In minutes of the Ford River Township School Board in 1921, George Jensen was the President of the Board and appointed William Weissert, William Temple and Andrew Englund to the Election Board. Secretary of the School Board at that time was John G. Gauthier.

These are the minutes as recorded in the secretary's book on Juiy 28, 1924: "A regular school meeting was held for the purpose of appointing five trustees. William J. Temple was appointed President; Perry Matthews was appointed Secretary; Fred A. Weissert was appointed Treasurer. It was moved and supported that the price of wood for this term will be as follows: Hardwood, maple and yellow birch $8.00 per cord; white birch - $7.00 and softwood - $6.00 per cord." Signed by Frank Posenke, Clerk.

Other minutes of July 27, 1925: "Mr. John B. Peterson was selected to take the place formerly held by Trustee Emil Carlson. It was moved and seconded that the Board take the Wells Township children who want to come to the Kasten School in 1925-26 at S20.00 each and that the Township Board be asked $5500 for maintaining the schools for the year."

Early teachers in the township included Dagney Petersen, Dorothy Weissert, Helene Sedenquist, Mrs. Ray Richards, Leah Rader and Mary Cavadeas, according to school records.

Teachers in the district in 1925 were: Everal Short, Elsie Severinsen, Rose Kasten, Julia Van Enkevort, Ethel Ekstrom,.Florence Lesway, Bernice Jaeger, Ruth Sundquist, Alice Van Enkevort, Loretta McCarthy, Ed!1a Johnson, J. Maigatter, Helen Tyrrell, Arel Beck, Idelle Holland, Sigrid Ranta, Ruth Temple, Alta Trombly, Frances Mineau, Margaret Malloy, Leone Trottier, Gerald Hendrickson and Lillie ' ' Engstrom.

Minutes of the School Board on May 17, 1926: "It ~as moved by Mr. John Peterson, seconded by Mr. Weissert, that the Board pay S2.00 for pulling out the census enumerator's oar which was stuck in the middle of the road. It was also moved that Mr. C. Beach be empowered to go ahead and apply whatever roofing he thinks . best to out-buildings at District No. 3 school."

And now, the minutes as recorded on June 11, 1928: "It was moved by Henry Kasten, seconded by William Van Enkevort, that the members of the school board fuc their own salaries. It was moved by Perry Matthews, seconded by John Peterson, that new teachers be paid S85 per month, with a promise of S5.00 extra for each month taught, if at the end of the school year, the teacher proves satisfactory." An annual school election was held that year, and August Ekstrom, C.H. Beach and Alfred Nelson were elected.

In 1929, the total salaries of the seven teachers in the township was $5,895.00. A new school was constructed at a cost of $4,128.67. Members of the Township Board that year were: Henry Kasten, Superintendent, William A. Peterson and August Ekstrom, Justices of the Peace, and John Terens, Clerk.

The following article concerning the schools in Ford River Township is from "The Escanaba Daily Press" of February 4, 1957:

"The history of the school system in Ford River Township closely parallels the history of the community, from the one school in the 1800's to service the closely knit community of the families employed by the mills in the town, through the decentralization of the schools caused by the scattered population, to the present recentralization made possible because ofimproved transportation.

With the depletion of the forests around Newhall and Pine Ridge and the subsequent closing of the mills in 1911, the population in the town declined. Many people moved to other lumbering areas, but some stayed in the vicinity to engage in fishing or farming.

The town was divided into East and West Ford River, South Ford River and Ford River Switch, or Hyde. This scat.tering of the population made it necessary for the township to build a number of small rural schools. Between 1 911 and 1941, Ford River Township supported eight schools. With better roads and motor transportation, the number was cut to three-in 1942.

The Temple, Enshaw (or Jaeger) and-Porath Schools were converted into homes.

The Wittlock School was torn down, and the West Ford River School was sold and moved to a different location for use as a parochial school. The remaining three schools - Ford River Mill, Kasten and Bay Shore, remained in operation until replaced by the new central school.

The Kasten School was built in 1917 at. Hyde because the location was such that it was the \_only place that could serve children on the north side of the township.

The Ford River Mill School was built in 1890 by the Ford River Lumber Company and survived all the changes because of its central location.

The Bay Shore School was built in 1920 and replaced a· school that had been burned on the same location."

All the schools in Ford River Township were consolidated in 1957, and a large new school was built, midway between Ford River Mill and Hyde. It was named the Ford River School. School board members then were Everette Dahlvik, President; Robert Hawes, Secretary; Arthur Nelson, Treasurer; and Hilding Olson and Norman Dahlke, Trustees. Teachers at the new school were: John Holochwost, Mts. Tom Brayak, Mrs. Harry Nelson, Mrs. Elvira Miiler, Mrs. Marion Sullivan and Mrs. Ruth Carlson. Olsen and Flath were the general contractors, and the presentation~ of the building at the open house on February· 10, 1947 was given by Norman Arntzen. The Bark River - Harris Band provided the musical part of the program, and the invocation was given by a local pastor, Rev. Lowell Fox. (The first principal of the new school was John Holochwost, followed by Richard Shilney, Sam Oslund and Terry Hampton.)

When the schools operated individually, there were P.T.A.'s organized to help bridge the gap between the parents and the teachers. At the time of the consolidation of all the schools in Ford River Townsh1.p, the first P.T.A. meeting was held on March 20, 1957, and the following officers were elected: Mrs. Tom Brayak, President; Clarence Dittrich, Vice President; Mrs. Edward Monahan, Secretary and Mrs. Philip Van Elsacker, Treasurer.

A group of children posing for a photo

Description automatically generated A group of children posing for a photo

Description automatically generated

 A black and white photo of a church

Description automatically generated

A group of people carrying trees

Description automatically generated A long shot of a building

Description automatically generated

A group of people standing in the snow

Description automatically generated

**Chapter Eight**

**CHURCHES OF FORD RIVER TOWNSHIP**

**The following history of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church at Hyde was written by**

**Pastor A.l. Engel for the 35th anniversary of the church on June 30, 1935**

**Before the Founding of St. Paul's**

"In 1835, 100 years ago, when the state of Michigan was admitted to the Union, the site of Ford River village, the territory now known as Delta County, in fact, the whole Upper Peninsula, was a dense wilderness. At that time, the large forests abounding with deer, bear and other wild game, and the bays and their tributary streams filled with whitefish and trout, were places that only the Indians had learned to love. Strolling bands of Indians were accustomed to taking long journeys through these parts, either for wild game or for the purpose of measuring their skill in battle with other tribes.

According to historic records, the earliest white men who dared to explore this territory enough to settle within the present limits of Delta County, came about 183 5. A short time afterward, the first sawmill was erected on the Flat Rock River. Soon settlers reached the banks of the Ford River. In 1845, the first sawmill was built one mile above the mouth of the Ford River. Later, a steam mill was erected on the same spot but was moved to the mill-site of the Ford River Lumber Company in 1857, the same year in which Frank Porath, Sr., one of the founders of Lutheranism in this vicinity, was born in Pommern, Germany.

'Though these first mills erected near the mouth of Ford River were insignificant compared to the great mills that followed shortly after, they represented the beginning of an industry that for a time surpassed all else in importance. The slow but steady growth of the lumber industry brought more eager timber cruisers and landlookers through these parts and caused the Ford River Lumber Company to be established in 1866. Then the lumber interests in this region began to develop more fully. Larger and more favorably located mills run by steam were erected in the midst of dense pine and cedar forests which the pioneers believed were inexhaustible. The Ford River Lumber Company was largely responsible for the gradual development of this community, for through its steady and substantial growth, it provided employment for hundreds of men. People came to work in the mills from all parts of the country and settled here, so that in a few years Ford River became a busy little town. For a time, the mills employed 300 men seven months in the year, while 800 men were kept in the logging camps all winter.

Life in the camps in the old days presents a colorful picture. Here men toiled from dawn till dark, measuring their accomplishments not by an eight-hour yardstick but by the sweat of their brow. The only encouragement to break the monotony was keen competition and the evenings which were enlived with cards, storytelling and dancing. Here were the "shanty boys" with mackinaws of most flashy hues, heavy spiked boots and chopped-off trousers. The cook and the cooking, the river-driving, with sufficient volume and force to raft logs from the pineries to the mills; each of these and many other branches of pioneer days will long be remembered by all those who began working at Ford River under the most primitive circumstances.

Into this promising community came Lutherans, direct from Germany, to work. The first came as early as 1880, three years before the first railroad entered the county. In the fall of that year, one of the company's vessels utilized in plying lumber between Ford River and Chicago, returned with two passengers on board in the persons of Frank Porath, Sr. and Charles Buske. By means of a Chicago employment bureau, they were directed to Ford River. After working for the company awhile, they induced their friends and relatives to follow them to this country. In some cases, they paid their transportation. August Porath was the first to follow their call into this backwoods country, arriving the following year, 1881. After the beginning was made, more and more families were induced to emigrate, coming from Pommern, Saxony, West Preussen, and Thettringer, Germany.

The following are some of the first Lutherans to settle in this vicinity: 1880: Frank Porath, Sr., Charles Buske, Michael Leisner; 1881: August Porath, Mrs. John Posenke; 1882: Karl August Dittrich; 1883: Karl August Dittrich family; 1884: Karl Scheeneman, Sr., William Buske, Sr., August Buske and family; 1889: Carl F. Scheel and family; 1891: Julius Kositzke, John Bittner, Karl Baranowski; 1893: Paul Zimmerman, Karl Adolf Neumann and family. The names of Arno Wagner, John Kositzke, Heinrich Kasbohm, John Strohbach and August Giese are also on record.

The influx of German Lutheran settlers to this region during the first 12 years of settlement (1881-1893) soon brought missionaries into this section of the Upper Peninsula to look after the spiritual welfare of these early pioneers. The first Lutheran missionary to Ford River appears to have been a certain Rev. Guotzlaff or a Rev. Meyer of the Missouri Synod, who came to do mission work among the Indians and no doubt were only here for a short while.

In 1882 (according to an excerpt from an article by Pastor A.F. Daehler printed in "Salem's Messenger" of Escanaba, August, 1925), the Rev. G. Thiele was sent into the U.P. of Michigan by the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin to make investigation as to the manner in which the spiritual wants of the Lutherans of German extraction in that section might be supp lied. The result of this exploration was the stationing of the Rev. Herman Manhardt at Escanaba who, during the course of his stay, preached at 17 different places in the U.P. Pastor Manhardt included Ford River Mill as his regular preaching station, where he soon gathered several Lutheran families together for worship in private homes and later on, in the Ford River public school building.

In 1885, Pastor Manhardt followed a call to Caledonia, Wisconsin and Pastor Ziebell was installed to be his successor. It appears that at this time Ford River Mill and Stambaugh were the organized stations of the mission parish for definite and regular service. For that reason, it was there that Rev. Ziebell was officially introduced. He, too, resided at Escanaba. In 1889, the same year in which the German Lutherans at Escanaba were organized into a congregation, Pastor Ziebell was called out of the field; and Pastor H.L. Heidelberger was commissioned by Synod to become his successor. Under his pastorate, the first German Lutheran Church was erected at Escanaba.

On July 6, 1890, Rev. H.C. Zarwell became pastor of the little flock at Ford River Mill. He served for about one year. From 1892 to 1895, Rev. H. Rien continued the work. During the latter part of 1895, Pastor P. Korn took charge of the parish. For a time, he rented a house about two miles south of the village of Hyde, near the Otto (now Clarence) Dittrich farm. Not all of the Lutherans who landed at Ford River remained to work in the sawmills. Some soon settled on tracts of lan~ ~nd began farming. There were enough Lutheran families living together to establish a second preaching station near Hyde, which was done by Pastor Korn. He instructed a class in confirmation in 1897. Several seminary students, including Emil Dornfeld and G. Haase, supplied for a time in 1898, after Rev. Korn left.

**After the Founding of St. Paul's**

L. Kaspar was ordained in 1899 and on July 9th of that year was stationed at Escanaba. From there, he served the preaching stations at Ford River Mill and Hyde. At that time, Ford River Township was rapidly going over to farming. The settlers were hampered by the slowness of clearing land for farming. It proved to be different from lumbering and the first few years of their existence were. full of hardships. Some settlers stayed; others moved on. Land companies purchased large holdings of timber lands for the purpose of using the wood in making charcoal. This soon turned the village of Hyde into a busy logging headquarters and for a time an important shipping point for the Northwestern railroad.

Among the settlers at Hyde were Lutherans of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Some of them came from Ford River; others emigrated directly from Germany. For a time, their only place of worship was a school building. In order to carry out the work of the church more satisfactorily, and successfully, some of these families decided to build their own place of worship. When Pastor Kaspar was sent to serve these families, he assisted them in organizing St. Paul's congregation. This event dates from May 27, 1900, when it was formally organized as a mission congregation of the Wisconsin Synod. Seven families combined their efforts and put up a nice, neat looking frame church by volunteer labor on a plot of ground given for this purpose by Frank Porath, Sr. Paul Zimmerman built the pulpit, the altar and the baptismal font. Arno Wagner made the first benches.

The seven charter members were: Frank Porath, Sr., born November 22, 1857, in Pommern, Germany; August Porath, born May 29, 1860, in Pommern, Germany; Julius Kositzke, born January 8, 1860 in West Preussen, Germany; Karl Baranowski, born July 27, 1860 in West Preussen, Germany; Carl F. Scheel, born June 30, 1858 in Pommern, Germany; and Arno Wagner.

The next pastor was called from Daggett, Michigan, in the person of L. A. Witte. He served St. Paul's from 1909-1913. He also resided at Escanaba, from there going to Kendall, Wisconsin.

It seems that the preaching station at Ford River was discontinued about this time. The remaining Lutheran families were added to the congregation at Hyde. This was largely due to the great changes that had taken place at the Ford River mills. After the lumber companies had sent their ax-men into the forests for a number of years, they soon brought a virtual end to the pine cutting. The playing out of the lumber and the closing of the sawmills in 1912 banished the fond hopes of the residents and founders of the village, and the inhabitants were reduced as rapidly as they had arrived. Although the sawmills are now gone for a number of years, they are not forgotten. The music of the whistle of the mills as they sent forth their 300 men "to work," and their more welcome mid-day and evening closing signals, will never be forgotten by all those who saw the mills in action.

Otto Hohenstein became the next pastor. He served this congregation from Escanaba in the German language from 1913-1920. At that time, he followed a call to Glendale, Arizona. During his pastorate, the organization of Salem Evangelical Lutheran congregation at Escanaba took place. For all these years, St. Paul's had been affiliated with the Escanaba parish. However, a change in parish boundaries was desired. Therefore, Salem congregation called their own pastor in the person of A. F. Daehler, who was installed in 1920. It was considered advisable to connect St. Paul's with the Powers, Hermansville and Wilson parishes. A call was sent to W. Gutzke to serve these four congregations. Until he arrived, all services at St. Paul's were conducted in the German language. However, since immigration of Germans had ceased almost entirely and the new generation being almost unable to understand the German language, the religious instruction was now given through the medium of the English language. Pastor Gutzke accepted another charge in 1925 in Marshfield, Wisconsin.

A. A. Gentz was the next pastor to serve St. Paul's. During his pastorate, the Ladies Aid Society was organized. He supplied the pulpit for four years, going to Marinette, Wisconsin, in 1930.

St. Paul's sixth pastor was H. A. Kahrs. He was installed by Rev. Daehler in October 1930. He worked "with a will" so that regular divine services for every Sunday were established and the weekly envelope system was introduced. During his pastorate, the congregation moved its location for worship. After services had been conducted in the old building for 32 years, a new location was desired. Not only was the roof of the old church beyond repair, but the road leading to the church was often blocked during the winter months. For this reason, services were discontinued on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1932.

The congregation then set up a new place of worship which was centrally located in the village of Hyde. Here they took possession of a former dance hall and rebuilt it into a roomy church. By December 11, the new church was finished for dedication. Two former pastors preached for the occasion. Pastor L. Kaspar preached a German sermon in the morning. In the afternoon, Pastor Gentz preached an English sermon.

Armin L. Engel was installed on October 22, 1933, by Pastor H. A. Kahrs, with Pastors Theophill Hoffmann of Gladstone and William Lutz of Escanaba assisting.

This concludes Rev. Engel's history of St. Paul's. The following information was obtained from church registry books:

Rev. Engel served until 1937, when Rev. L. G. Lehmann came to St. Paul's Church. His pastorate continued from 1938-42, followed by ~- A. Schabow from 1943-51, Walter L. Henning from 1952-56, J. E. Hanson from 1957-60, and the present pastor, Rev. Philip Kuckhahn who has served the church from 1961 to the present year of 1973.

The first registered communicants at the church include the following people: Emil Porath, Wilhelm Krause, Carl and Julie Baranowski, Emil Baranowski, John and Pauline Bittner, Gustav Bittner, Carl and Emilie (Posenke) Porath, Anna, Rosa and Sophie Posenke, Steve Posenke, Frank Porath, Willie Porath, Carl and Ottilie (Bittner) Scheeneman, Arva Wagner, Anna Krause, Frederic Krause, Carl Scheel, Auguste and Minna Scheel, Meta Porath, Ewald and Sophie (Porath) Leisner, Lena Krause, Heinried Kasbohm, Freda Bittner, Anna, Max and Paul Neumann, Otto, Herman, Charlie, Dittrich.

**FORD RIVER COMMUNITY CHAPEL**

**This information was obtained and written up by Rev. Lowell Fox of Ford River Mill**

The first church was established in 1883 and was used by both Catholics and Protestants. The Protestant minister who served the area was a Rev. Theodore A. Majerus from Escanaba, who also served churches at Centerville, Maple Ridge, Perkins, and Days River, according to the "History of the U.P. of Michigan," 1883.

Now begins Rev. Fox's account:

The first missionary of the American Sunday School Union to minister in this area was missionary James Stanaway, who lived in Negaunee. There are no available records of his work, but several of the old timers have reported knowing him. He would come walking through the area once a month and hold services in the various sawmill locations and lumber camps. This was before 1922 when David Cathcart was sent to the Escanaba area from a location in Illinois.

Missionary Cathcart took up residence in Escanaba and ministered to young people from time to time here in the Ford River area. Mr. Cathcart was a tea drinking Scotsman and many people in the area still remember him.

In 1942 the American Sunday School Union sent Rev. David L. Carlson to take the place of the retired missionary Cathcart. It was under the ministry of David Carlson that a regular organized religious work was established in 1945, in the Ford River School house. This was a Sunday School work with local supervision. Some of the people who were teachers of the first Sunday School were Miss Beatrice Carlson, Miss Nancy Peterson, Miss Shirley Fournier and Mrs. Earl Peterson.

In 1946, Rev. Carlson was given an assignment as District Superintendent and was replaced by Rev. Gerald W. Bowen. The Sunday School continued to operate every Sunday morning and more help was added. In 1948, several new teachers started helping. Some of them are Mrs. Dalip Rehnquist, Mrs. Krist Oshe, Miss Lois Sodermark and Miss Beverly Peterson.

In 1952, missionary Gerald Bowen accepted a pastor's call to Rapid River and Rev. Donald S. Summers took his place. Rev. Summers lived in the Cornell area and supervised the Sunday School work from there. Mrs. Carl Carlson started to help in the teaching duties also. From 1953-56, the records are not complete as Mr. Summers resigned as a missionary of the American Sunday School Union and there was no missionary service in this area. During this time, Mrs. Krist Oshe, Mrs. Carl Carlson and Beverly Peterson kept the Sunday School going and perhaps are responsible for the American Sunday School Union's placing another missionary in this area.

In late 1956, the present missionary, Lowell M. Fox, was sent to this area from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and took up residence at Ford River. Just at that time, the schools were consolidated and the school house at Ford River was purchased by the missionary for Sunday School and youth work. A short time elapsed before completion of the transaction, and the Sunday School met in the Lions Club until all the details were completed. At that time, the teachers were Mrs. Krist Oshe, Mrs. Henning Johnson, Miss Darlene Rehnquist and Miss Karen Johnson. In 19 59 Mrs. Fred Khollman and Mrs. Elmer Larson were added to the teaching staff. Others serving as teachers or helpers were Sharon Erickson, Luella Larson and Meldonna Oshe in 1961; Nada Fox, Judy Erickson, Peggy Wellman and Wallace Fox in 1965; Mrs. Gerald Rouse in 1970, Mrs. Gilbert LaBay, Maxine Wellman, Marilyn Halstead and Carol Fox in 1972.

In the year of 1972, local interest had increased; and adult participation was so good that Missionary Lowell Fox felt the need to organize a non-denominational community church and build a new chapel. With the aid of Nels Watz, arrangements were made for timber; and logs were cut by Gilbert LaBay, Fred Khollman, Fred Brunette, Lowell Fox, Nels Watz and Jerry Peterson. The logs were hauled to the Hudson's sawmill and sawed in evening hours by John Hudson and interested men of the area.

The purchase of the land had not been completed as of March 1973. However, negotiations are being conducted with Mrs. Viau to purchase a location on the Wunder property just south of Ford River. If a location is purchased, the plans are to build a chapel in the summer of 1973. The church will be known as the Ford River Community Chapel.

Wallace Fox, a student at the Moody Bible Institute, has been serving as student pastor and youth leader. Carol Fox and Marilyn Halstead supervise the Junior church.

**Chapter 9**

**LUMBERING**

**From "History of Lumbering in Delta County," by Carl J. Sawyer, May 31, 1949.**

**Excerpts from Chapter Six**

The Ford River Company also owned lands on the Bark River. A Mr. Wilson put in dams on the Bark River. The logs from this river were towed to the mill at Ford River. After the company was through on this river, the dams were kept in repair and lumbering was carried on by Ed Bergman and John Gasman for a number of years.

There never was a rail connection at Ford River. Their products were all shipped out by boat. Mr. T. V. Ward was superintendent, succeeded by John McGuire. Mr. McGregor was woods superintendent, followed by several, among them William Turner.

Mr. John Alger was their cruiser, followed by Mr. Golden and others. Among the camp foremen were William Turner, Thomas Beaton, Malcolm McRae, (Haywire) Louis Booth, Ben Baker, William Bakerl Peter Golden, Jack Foster, Jack Henderson, Mr. Sears, Mr. Gamelin and Joseph Boileau. Mr. Boileau was in charge of the rear crew on the drive. A Mr. John McGinnis was in charge of the drive. I have heard he followed the drive in a dug-out canoe. Mr. Louis Booth later became woods superintendent for the Escanaba Woodenware Company. Mr. Turner became superintendent for the National Pole Company. Mr. Henderson held the same position with Mann Brothers.

Among the mill superintendents was a Mr. Warner, who left Ford River to become interested with a Mr. Booth in the mill which they built at Hunters Point, across the bay from Gladstone. Mr. Roy Knox, Ben Ross, Ole Nelson and Al Hallman were also mill superintendents.

There were other companies logging on the Ford River, namely Mann Brothers of Two Rivers, Wisconsin; Flanagan and Nelligan, who took out logs for Mr. Joseph Fordney of Saginaw, Michigan, in 1888 and 1889. There was a log storage west of the mouth of the river and not far from the pavement on M-3S, where these logs were stored until they had enough for a tow. Much of this towing was done by the tug "Torrent," owned by George Nau of the Nau Towing Company, who later towed pulpwood to Green Bay from all over the north shore of Lake Michigan and the Soo River.

There were several dams on the Ford and its branches: Newhall, where the National Pole Company had a cedar yard; the big dam near Woodlawn now called the Finn Dam; one at Alfred and several above that. Also one on the Six Mile Creek, some on the Ten Mile, on the North Branch and the West Branch.

Mr. George McGuire, who came here about 1890, worked for Billy Turner on the West Branch and later became a filer at the mills at Ford River.

Stack and Atkinson had. a mill on the West Branch just east of Helps on the Felch Railroad. This burned down and was never rebuilt. They had a mill at Metropolitan, and when the Helps mill burned, they hauled the logs by train from the West Branch mill to Metropolitan to be sawed.

Further excerpts from "History of Lumbering in Delta County," by Carl J. Sawyer. Chapter 12: Methods Used in Lumbering:

Early day lumbering was quite a chore, consisting first of locating a stand of good quality pine adjacent to a river large enough to float the logs. This was done by what we call cruisers. Then someone, usually called "walking boss" decided on the proper place or places to build dams to store water to flush the rapids or shallow places in the river. Such dams were closed to some extent in the fall, especially where there was an outlet to a lake to build up a head or reserve of water for the drive in the spring. Next a tote or supply road was cut to the site of the camp, and camps were built. The size of the camp depended on the amount of timber to be logged off. The walls of the camps were made of logs, were chinked up first with pieces of timber, then calked with moss out of the woods. The roof was sometimes made of shingles that were made at the site by using a frog to split out shingles from straight grained cedar or pine.

There was usually a men's camp, cook camp, blacksmith shop, a barn and supply shed all built the same way. Also a van or store. These camps were heated by barrel stoves that used 2x4 wood. The men's camp often had two of these. The beds or bunks, as they were called, were made of poles cut near the camp. Sometimes they had hay on which to sleep. The bunks were usually two-deckers, sometimes three, and in front of each bunk was a wooden bench, often called a "deacon's seat." There was a sky-light on the roof, which could be used to let in fresh air, often much needed.

After the camps were finished, the cutting usually started about October, as the growing season is then over and the logs would not stain. The camp foreman decided where the log roads would be made, taking advantage of the low, flat country to eliminate hills and grades. After the roads had been put in, the cutting started. This was done by two men with a 5½ foot or 6 foot saw (sometimes a three man crew, one of which was a good axe man, called "faller," whose 30b was to direct the felling trim and bark mark to eliminate breakage). When possible, the large trees were fallen into another tree, such as hemlock or birch, to cushion the fall. These were then cut up into logs, anywhere from 12 feet to 16 feet, with some as long as 20 feet.

Next the skidding crews went to work. A crew was a team of oxen or horses, a teamster, and in large timber, one man to chain. The logs were dragged out to the skidway on the logging road where they were piled, or decked up, sometimes 12 to 14 logs high; and the skidways as long as 75 feet. The very large logs, too heavy were tossed for a distance from the butt end, rolled onto a dray or travois, which made them slip much easier.

There was a crew at the skidway to deck the logs which consisted of a man with a team, called cross haul team, one can’t hook man sending up the logs to be piled or decked, and one man on top to place the logs. Before the invention of the modern Arsenault Jammer, all logs were decked and loaded with a single chain called a "parbuckle" or "decking line," which was 3/16 fine steel chain

After the weather turned cold, the roads were gone over with oxen or horses to tramp the snow down into the water so the bottom would freeze. As soon as the road would hold up the tank, they started to put water on the road to build it up. These tanks or sprinklers were a large box affair on a set of sleighs with a tongue in each end so it need not be turned around. It had an opening amidship on each side. They carried a set of skids and a barrel with a chain or rope to haul the barrel up the skids and dump it into the tank, out of what were called "sprinkler holes" that had been dug out alongside the main road in low spots; or water was taken out of creeks or lakes. The tank was run night and day until the road was a solid bed of ice, sometimes as much as 12 inches thick. A piece of equipment, known as a "rutter," was continuously run over this to cut two trenches or ruts just the width of the two runners on the sleighs they were to use.

When the sleigh haul started, all the good teamsters went on it. Sometimes they used four horses. The lead team on one day became the last team on the next day. The sleigh loading crew consisted of a cross haul team and teamster. One man placed the decking line around the log, a cant hook man sending up and a man on top placing the logs. The top man also directed the ground crew as to the size of the log to fit in. The man sending up held the end back so that when the log arrived on top, it was level with the load. This meant considerable skill and experience. These cant hook men were paid more than any other type except the camp foreman and blacksmith.

When the logs were being delivered on or in a river, they were sometimes decked again, if on land, or were rolled out onto the ice. Sometimes the logs practically filled the river in skidways where landing space was scarce. The unloading crew, sometimes the loading crew, did considerable work while it was still dark and torches were used to enable them to see.

Each camp had a small store of clothing, tobacco, matches, etc. which was looked after by a clerk who did other work, in as much as the supply stock or "Wanigan" was open only in the evening when the men were in camp.

In most cases, the men did their own laundry on Sunday. A large kettle was furnished for them. They boiled their underwear to get rid of "traveling dandruff." They were not rubbed out too much. There was no opportunity to bathe unless one wanted to try cutting a hole in the ice, which I never saw done for that purpose. In later years, some families moved in near the camps, living in small log homes; and the women of these families sometimes did the washing for such of the men who enjoyed clean clothes.

Each camp of any size had a cook, cookee and chore boy, who was also the barn boss that looked after the horses. The barn boss had to know something about veterinarian work, as doctors were just not available.

The log cutters were called "sawyers," train cutters and road cutters called "swampers." There were several men called "road monkeys" that kept the roads in shape and put sand in the ruts on the downward side of hills to keep the sleighs from running over the teams.

Large camps had one log scaler whose job was to measure the small end of each log and make a record of the number of feet in each. He had a helper who was often -called the clerk. Someone had the job of stamping each end of each log with a log mark of the company owning them.

When the hauling was done, the camps broke up and the crew went to town where they were paid off. Sometimes in cash, sometimes with checks and sometimes with what was called "White Horses," which was an order payable at some future time.

A group of horses on a dock

Description automatically generated

A group of people on a boat

Description automatically generated

**Chapter Fourteen**

**THE FOUNDING OF HYDE**

Hyde is a little village located between Escanaba and Bark River, on Highways US 2 & 41. It was formerly called Ford River Switch, because the trains "switched" there. The village was an outgrowth of the closing of the mills at Ford River. Men were forced to seek other employment, and many became farmers and settled in this area. The exact derivation of the name "Hyde" is uncertain. Some say it was named after an early visitor to this area. Most of the old-timers say they do not really know how the village got its name. According to Arol Beck, however, the village was named after a man named Welcome Hyde. This man once owned considerable property near this area. This information is not given in the book "Michigan Place Names" by Walter Romig of Grosse Pointe, Michigan. About Hyde it says only this: "Hyde, Delta County: Alexander Morin became the first postmaster of this hamlet, seven miles west of Escanaba, on December 13, 1890; but the office was closed in 1913." (Blinn; PO Archives.) (Incidentally, the first postmaster at Ford River Village was George Ligare, in 1860. That office was closed in 1914.) The story of Hyde includes part of Wells Township, as well as Ford River Township as the road north of the village is the dividing line between the two townships. The residents on the east side belong to Wells Township, and the residents on the west side to Ford River Township. Some years ago, part of Bark River Township was also included in Ford River Township.

The main buildings at Hyde were the Store and the Tavern. The first store owner was a Mr. Forgette, who also ran the Post Office. There was no post office in Pine Ridge, so residents there came to Hyde to get their mail and also to buy their groceries at the store. Herman Dittrich later ran the store which was also a "tea room" where ice cream and pop were sold. Then John Gauthier purchased it and made it into a "general" store. Practically everything was sold here, including clothing, groceries, grain, feed, a little of this and a lot of that. The store was the hub of the little community, and farmers and farmers' wives would gather there to talk and get the news of the village. In the winter, the men would sit around the old, pot-bellied stove and swap tales and perhaps eat soda crackers and dill pickles from the barrels nearby. There was also a back room where the men could play Pool.

Frank Gauthier's clerk was a young man named Frank Blake. He worked for Gauthier for a number of years and bought the store in 1947. Frank married Ina Falser of Calumet, Michigan in 1919. They had two children - Lois and Lenore.

The Joseph Dubords ·purchased the store in 1970 and made it into an antique shop. Carl Friets later operated it as a second-hand store for a time. The J&R Freight Sales also occupied the building for a short while. As of 1973, the building is being made into apartments by A&M Builders.

The Tavern was also \_a gathering place for the men of the community. Tavern owners were: Mr. Symons, Mr. Strickler, John Posenke, Pete Blake, Bernard McGovern, Charles Briere, Julius Courville, Joe Larmay, the Blubaughs and Phil and Evelyn Norman.

The Blacksmith Shop was an essential business in the early days of Hyde. The shop was located north of the C&NW Railroad tracks and was first run by a Mr. Slias and later by Henry Kasten. Emil McMahon, Sr. also operated a blacksmith shop located at his home south of Hyde. The ringing of the ~anvil and the sparks from the forge were familiar sights, here, calling to mind the old poem that many a youngster memorized in school in those bygone days, "The Village Blacksmith."

There was always a sawmill at Hyde, too,' as far back as the late 1800's and early 1900 's. First it was run by Neumanns, then by the Dittrich brothers, and then by Bernard Brodersen. It is still running.

An old caboose served as the depot at Hyde for many years. The train to and from Escanaba would pick up passengers at Hyde. The Greyhound bus, in later years, would also stop at the store at Hyde to pick up or discharge passengers.

There was also a garage at Hyde. Ewald Leisner and Robert Giese opened a garage business there in 1919. Frank Posenke also worked there on bicycles. The garage is still run, but now it is owned by a son, Clarence Leisner, who has managed it since 1946.

The little village of Hyde also had a hotel in the "old days." Charlie Walker later lived there, and he conducted an implement business.

Hyde also had a cheese factory for some years. Richard Porath was the cheesemaker.

The land presently known as the Highland Golf Club was originally owned by Max Rudiger and later by a Mr. McGraw. Dr. Cotton from Escanaba then bought' it. It was later sold and made into a golf course.

The Potato Warehouse was started as a W.P.A. project in the Depression year of 1932, under Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration. The warehouse was sold to these farmers: Lawrence and Ed Fenlon, Henry Kasten, William Van Enkevort, Alex Charon, Clarence Sundquist and August Severinsen. It was used as a storage place for potatoes for many years. Finally falling into disuse, it was dismantled in early 1973.

Most recently established business at Hyde is Snowden Mobile Homes. ,

Years ago, between Hyde and Bark River was a village called Narenta. There was a depot there and other buildings. The train from Felch came in there. In Narenta there is now the Russell Roadside Park. (The other park in the township is Fuller Park on M-35.)

A black and white photo of a building

Description automatically generated A house in the distance

Description automatically generated

GAUTHIERS STORE 1913

A person standing next to a car in a garage

Description automatically generated