

Otsego towns that faded out of existence

We don't know who wrote it, but it could be the "theme song" for all of those eerie, not-quite-real ghost towns of early days.

"Ghost Riders lean - into a cowboy's lonely dream. Ghost ships go by - only to a sailor's eye.

Ghost writers delve into the private lives of someone else.

But Ghost Towns just lie, - dreaming, forgotten 'till The Curious passer-by reshapes their past

And suddenly, they come to be a part of Michigan's history."

The sights and sounds of a long-gone, funny little town, criss-crossed by corduroy roads, full of weary, hard-working lumber-jacks, who looked forward to a glass of beer, a hot-bath if they were lucky, and the noisy camaraderie of other guys who were in the same boat. It must have been an ex-

citing time in this north country.

Tar-paper shacks, bitterly cold winters, births, deaths, illness, gay happiness, racous pay days, the visiting preachers - all the things that are a part of living where things are "just beginning."

Here and there little towns popped up. They lived for a day or a week, or maybe months, and while they lived, they were 'home' to a lot of people.

The Bradford Lake settlement (1876) moved to Waters in 1885. Southeast of Gaylord was Arthurville, 1898. Nearby was Klingensmith, 1885, and discontinued in 1900. Brown's Corner, 1879, near Vanderbilt, discontinued in 1882. Mellens (Old Bagley) 1880, discontinued in 1883. Cregoville was on the map about 1905-1912, but had no post office.

Cornwall on the Pigeon

River was east of Vanderbilt in about 1905. Whitmarsh was located on the Sturgeon River, and Berryville is now a part of the land owned by Mr. Grant. At one time it was a thriving lumbering town. John G. Berry, for whom Berryville was named, was in partnership with Barney Gagnier about 1878. They had a saw and a grist mill.

Much of the surrounding area was homesteaded by Civil War veterans. Berry operated a store; there was a resident doctor and a blacksmith, and Joe Thiebolt, a carpenter, did most of the building. The first Masonic Lodge of Otsego County was organized at Berryville.

Hallock was organized about 1906. During its best years there were three stores, a chemical plant and a saw mill located there. Shacks were constructed for about a dozen

families, and since there was no school the children attended nearby Porcupine School.

Logan was a settlement between Gaylord and Vanderbilt. A Pennsylvania company, Rogers and Allison, built a sawmill and some railroad, and later the Yuill Brothers bought the mill and extended the railroad.

About twenty families lived in Logan and there was a company store for their convenience. The school was located on the south side of an east-west road. The road was also the boundary line of the school district. Youngsters who lived on the north side of the road had to walk several miles to another school!

Sparr cannot be considered a true ghost town as there is still a store, and people are still living there. At one time there was a

post-office, meat market, blacksmith shop and a school which served as a church on Sundays. The road was lined on each side with tar-paper shacks.

New Toledo was one mile south and seven miles east of Gaylord. When the post office was established, the name was changed to Quick. This mill town was born of the mighty lumbering era. The general store at Quick was built in 1900 by Quick Brothers, Anson and Jim. It soon became the major point of interest, serving as it did the lumberjacks, shingle weavers and rural folks for miles around.

Never too busy for visiting and fun-making, the Quicks were genial hosts to many a party for both old and young. A sleigh ride to their camp home was the high-light of winter's social season.

The Quick brothers, their wives and children constituted one the county's outstanding families. Adrian and his wife once owned Oak Grove Resort, and their daughter, Hazel Quick, who still lives in the family home near Oak Grove, was the first woman to complete the engineering course at the University of Michigan. For a number of years she was a member of the City Planning Commission in Detroit. It is fitting that this little Ghost Town should help present residents to perpetuate the memory of the Quick family of Otsego County.

The Badger Lumber Company, Salling, Hansen and Batchellor Company were some of those who had lumbering operations in the Quick area. The general store was built by the Quick brothers in about 1900.

Religious services were held at the Schreur Camps with Elder Dirk and Allen Schreur in charge, and school was held six months of the year in a school house near Gregoville.

Salling was located opposite the WahWahSoo entrance north of the Alba Road. A sawmill for white pine stood where Geiglers Cottages were later built. Eventually, the saw-dust pile washed into the north end of Otsego Lake which accounts for the spongy, black bottom of the lake. Timber cutting must have ceased rather quickly, as the three mills were moved to other locations and Salling, like so many other settlements, ceased to be.

Some of the other ghost-towns included: Bradford Lake Settlement, 1876; Artherville, 1898; Klingensmith, 1885; Hetherton, 1885; Browns Dale, 1879; Mellens, 1880; New Toledo; Gregoville, early 1900's; Finnegans Corners, 1902; Hallock; 1914; Cornwall, 1905; Vienna, one of the oldest settlements existing in the area; Whitmarsh, on the Sturgeon River.

The first loggers in the county were found on Farm Lake which was later called Tecon.



SUPERVISORS at the Poor Farm in Otsego County are pictured here in 1914.

How it all began for Otsego County

(Cont'd from P. 14) the Hiltons, the Marshalls, the Greens, the Sextons, the Campbells, the Osborns, the Wrights, the Cullitons, H. Lunden, the Merricks, and the many other people in both town and country who lived and helped exploit the county and its possibilities in years gone by.

They yet live in our memory and are cherished for the old associations and comradeships of other days. Speaking about early settlers reminds me — Lumberman Louie Jensen was a native of Denmark, and came over to the U.S. in the early seventies, settling at Manistee, where he first worked in the lumberwoods for Salling-Hanson Co., driving an ox team.

When that firm removed to Grayling in the spring of 1878, he came with them,

and for a number of years was employed as bookkeeper for them. He was frugal and economical, saved up his money, and from time to time invested in wild timberlands, that could then be bought for from \$5 to \$10 per acre, according to location, from the government. In 1889 he severed his connections with that firm and branched out in the lumbering business on his own hook, locating at Bagley, where he erected a saw and planning mill, which he operated for many years, and when he quit and dismantled his mills and removed to Ewing in the upper peninsula, he was reputed to be worth a half a million dollars. The fine property just south of town now owned by the Gaylord Golf Club, was the private home of Mr. Jensen for a number of years, and was

built for him by carpenter J. Frederickson.

Chester C. Mitchell, one of Gaylord's first merchants, and the county's first sheriff, came to Otsego Lake village in 1873, and when the county seat was established in 1878, he removed to Gaylord with his family. His first store was built on E. Street, opposite the Statesman Studio, on property now owned by Jack Rolinske, and White Fillmore was his head clerk. Fire destroyed the store and he rebuilt on Main Street where Harry Butcher is now located. Mr. Mitchell was a carpenter by trade and resided in Ingham county before coming north, and when the first old Capitol was built in Lansing he was employed in its construction.

And, by-the-way, both Hon. Harry Whiteley and

his brother, were born in the village of Gaylord many years ago, their father, Henry Whiteley, being county clerk. Harry got into politics about a dozen years ago, and was elected to the state legislature from Dowagiac, Cass county, where he is now engaged in the publishing business. His brother Harold also entered the newspaper field, and is now publishing a paper at Rogers City, Presque Isle county.

Both John Harrington and Clerk Brown, carpenters by trade, have resided in Gaylord many years, and a goodly number of the homes in Gaylord and surrounding county were built by them, as likewise many of the farm barns, and some of the business blocks in the city.

The R.L. Evans family came to Gaylord in 1901 from Dayton, Ohio, where Lem was employed by the Dayton Last Block Works, and ever since his removal to Gaylord, Mr. Evans has been the efficient dry-kilnman for that firm, and has sorted and handled millions of the Blocks.

Bill Churchill was Gaylord's first blacksmith and when John M. Brodie came to town in 1881, he worked for Mr. Churchill, who was quite a character and much given to profanity, in fact it was said he could swear by note. The old black-smith shop used to stand where now the city auditorium is located.

FOR MANY YEARS Joe Wilds also ran a blacksmith shop on the west side of the track, for in

those days hundreds of horses were employed in the various lumber camps of the county, and many shops of that kind had to be supported. Joe was also a noted deer hunter, and whenever he could get an audience, and that was often, he would go into minute details of his prodigious exploits and explain just how it was done with neatness and dispatch, and motion it all out with his hands to better emphasize his wonderful prodigies in that line.

For upwards of half a century the well-known lumbering firm of Yuill Bros., of Vanderbilt, have been dominant factors in that line of industry, and for many years operated a mill at Logan, where millions of feet of timber was sawed into lumber and shipped outside.