

“MOSSBACK” WAS APPLIED TO EARLY HOMESTEADER

“Mossback,” the name adopted for beard-growers in Petoskey’s centennial observance, was originally applied to the homesteaders who hacked homes out of Northern Michigan forests.

Writing in the Independent Democrat, W. E. Hampton said:

“The opening of the Indian reservations, following on the heels of the panic of ’73, brought to this country hundreds of men who had lived in luxury but whom the exigencies of the times had driven from their homes in the hope of regaining lost fortunes.

“There were no roads, and if there had been, there were no horses and wagons to traverse them. The supplies had to be toted from the village and every Saturday, the ‘Mossbacks’ as they were then called, came to town with their flour sacks on their backs and bore back into the woods the supplies of pork and flour and potatoes to last the family until the week should roll around.

“Not one man in 50 had a team. And for the first year or two but little could be done in the way of clearing for this very reason.

“Many of the first settlers were at first well-dressed, for they had been well-to-do before their removal to the north woods. But in a few months their clothing began to show the trials of a tussle with the tangled hemlock and, as the stomach must be fed before the back is clothed, it was not long before the ‘regimentals,’ as the boys facetiously called them, began to put in an appearance on the streets.

“From using flour bags to carry home supplies, the hardy farmers began using them for clothing, and, as the tough sacking withstood the wear and tear of the rough life in the woods better than anything else, it became the regulation costume of the ‘mossbacks.’

“At first it looked somewhat queer to see a man walking down the street with the legend ‘Hannah Lay’s Best’ branded on the ampler part of his trousers, but when every other man got to wearing flour sack pants, it became a matter of course and you could tell the kind of flour a man used by the brand on his back.

“The more sensitive bought new bags for their regimentals, but it was an open question whether it was better to travel as ‘XXXSeamless’ or ‘Lily White.’”

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

ANDREW PORTER

Andrew Porter, a Pennsylvania teacher, started the community that became Petoskey when he came to the Indian community of Bear River to bring education and religion to the natives.

The Rev. Peter Dougherty, then in charge of activities at Old Mission in Grand Traverse Bay, recommended to the Presbyterian Board of Missions that a school be established on Little Traverse Bay.

Mr. Porter and his mother and his sister arrived in the bay in June 1852, aboard the vessel "Eliza Caroline." They spent their first days here at the home of Daniel Wells, leader of the Bear River Indian group. Lumber had preceded Mr. Porter and was piled on the shore.

After exploring the area carefully, Mr. Porter selected a site on a hill south of the present Porter Street as the location for his mission school. Indians moved the lumber from the beach to the site and the school was built.

For a few years the mission was supported by the Presbyterian organization but later was taken over as a government school. In 1871 support was withdrawn from both sources and the mission was discontinued. In 1875 Mr. Porter went back to Pennsylvania but he returned here to spend his last years. He died February 8, 1899.

Four children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Porter but only one, Reuben, lived to maturity. He studied dentistry and practiced in Petoskey until his death in 1926.

CITY'S ATTRACTIONS DREW MANY BUSINESSMEN

Here's what one editor had to say about Petoskey business and professional activities in 1895.

It is said that there is never a rose without a thorn, never a place so desirable that it does not have its disadvantages. This is illustrated in the case of Petoskey, the many attractions and advantages of this city proving an actual detriment in one respect.

For it is in every way such a desirable place for a home that a great many people come here and engage in business or the practice of a profession for the privilege of residing here, rather than for the money to be made.

On this account, business is really overdone and the professions are overcrowded; but the energy and activity of our businessmen largely offsets this disadvantage and as a rule they are prosperous and successful.

There are 2 banks, 5 printing offices, 5 drug stores, 3 hardwares, 3 jewelry stores and 2 book stores. Notwithstanding the fact that there are 10 doctors here, there are only two undertaking establishments; but it is hard for even 10 doctors to overcome the effects of our healthy climate.

There are 11 lawyers, but 10 churches keep the community fairly peaceable nevertheless. There are 7 places where boots and shoes are sold, 4 of them being shoe stores exclusively. There are 5 stores which handle dry goods and clothing extensively, besides one exclusive dry goods store and one exclusive clothing store.

There are four outfitters, handling furniture, crockery, etc. and a furniture store additional. There are 5 millinery establishments, 2 of them conducted in connection with dry goods stores.

The grocery business is cut up the worst, there now being 32 places where groceries are sold. There are 8 agricultural implement stores, 5 feed stores, 3 harness stores, 7 barber shops and a corresponding number of other business places.

H.O. ROSE SPARKED ACTIVITY

“Cap’n” Led Commercial Development

While Petoskey’s centennial is hinged on the arrival of Andrew Porter in 1852, the true founder of the community that is now Petoskey didn’t arrive on the scene until 20 years later.

But when Hiram O. Rose settled down in what was then known as Bear River, things began to move – and his name appears in almost every movement.

Mr. Rose wasn’t the community’s first resident. The Ingalls followed the Porters and then came the Jarmans. And the Littles arrived at the same time as Mr. Rose.

But Mr. Rose had a venture-some imagination, backed by solid business judgment. And it was he who started commerce moving in Bear River.

Born in Pekin, New York, November 27, 1830, young Hiram was brought to Michigan by his family four years later. And as soon as he arrived, the boy went to work helping his father clear the farm near Bronson.

When Hiram was 12, the father died and the boy was on his own. He worked to further his education and later became a printer. His typesetting career was interrupted when he took a night off to hear Jenny Lind sing. He went to St. Paul and finally decided to homestead a piece of property near McGregor, Iowa.

It was rough during the winter and Mr. Rose decided to return to Michigan, fully expecting to resume his farm work in the spring.

But he was bitten by the gold bug and took off for California in 1851. Amos Fox, with whom Mr. Rose was later associated in Northern Michigan, accompanied him to the gold fields. When young Rose reached California, he had \$20 in his pocket. When he and Fox decided to leave, two years later, each man had more than \$5,000. Mr. Rose returned to the Midwest, his eyes still on the Iowa farm, but this time the copper mines of the Upper Peninsula beckoned and he took the bait.

Here the weather changes the course of history. Mr. Rose started north and reached the Manitou Islands where boats stopped for a load of wood on their lake trips. A series of storms prevented his going north and after several mishaps he had a look at the area around Northport. Mr. Rose fell in love with it and bought 800 acres, planning to build a dock and sell wood to boats.

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

Two years later Mr. Fox bought a half interest and the two men expanded their commercial enterprises over a wide area. In 1861 Mr. Fox took charge of the Charlevoix interest of the firm and in 1873 Mr. Rose came to Petoskey.

Mr. Rose built the first dock and he started the first lime kiln. Archibald Buttars joined Fox & Rose and took charge of the trio's retail enterprise in Petoskey.

Mr. Rose made the original plat of the village of Petoskey in 1874 and he became the first president of the village in 1879.

Associated with the expansion of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad, he was one of the contractors, in 1872, who built the extension from Walton Junction to Traverse City.

Officials of the railroad consulted with Mr. Rose when it was known that the Petoskey area was being considered as a location for a camp ground by the Detroit and Michigan Conferences of the Methodist Church.

Mr. Rose and C. J. Pailthorp drafted a pledge agreement and began circulating it among the citizens of the community. The townspeople didn't have any money, but Rose had imagination.

He was the sparkplug that put across the deal whereby the railroad bought the site for Bay View and residents of Petoskey worked out their contributions by aiding in extending the railroad to Bay View.

So the church got its camp ground; the railroad got a lot of new business; and the community gained a neighbor that has proved invaluable both commercially and culturally.

Mr. Rose was called "Captain" by some of the railroad officials with whom he worked and the title stuck. Active to the last in the operation of business interests and civic undertakings, "Cap'n" Rose died January 7, 1911.

HAMPTON'S DESCRIPTION REPRINTED

Editor's Note:

History is best written by one who saw it happen and then had time to evaluate it. The following history of Petoskey is taken from The Independent Democrat of May 14, 1895. It was written by a trained newspaperman who lived in the area from 1878 on. C. S. Hampton, editor of The Independent Democrat, had personal acquaintance with the early settlers, the files of the early newspapers, and his own experience to call on. The article is probably the most accurate portrayal of Petoskey's early days.

Petoskey, as everybody knows, takes its name from Neyas Petosega, alias Ignatius Petoskey, commonly called Chief Petoskey, the original owner of the land upon which the city now stands. The site was known to navigators and traders as Bear River, the name of the rapid and rollicking stream that used to leap and tumble through a deep gorge shaded by lofty hemlocks and tangled cedars, falling 70 feet in a distance of half a mile.

It was upon a thickly wooded hill not far from the west bank of this stream that the first white man's house was built in 1852. Andrew Porter, missionary in the employ of the Presbyterian Board of Missions, brought the lumber upon a little vessel, and finally succeeded in getting the materials up the hill and through the unbroken forest, and put up the old mission house on the place now occupied by Alderman Jarman, of the third ward.

Here he conducted a mission until the government funds set apart for the purpose were exhausted in 1871. In 1876 Mr. Porter returned to his old home in Pennsylvania but in 1892 he came back to Petoskey to make his home with his son, Dr. Porter, and end his days where his life work was accomplished.

A Catholic mission was established at Bear River soon after Mr. Porter's school was started, the little mission church still standing on the beach near the Chicago and West Michigan railroad dock.

Hazen Ingalls, the first permanent white settler, came in May 1863 to make Bear River his home. He bought the little water mill which was built by a nephew of Mr. Porter in 1862 upon the site now occupied by Birkett Brothers' manufacturing plant (now Mitchell Dam) and purchased by H. O. Rose the same year and moved his family into a little house that stood on the river bank just where Charlevoix Avenue turns south.

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

His little trading store was the first place of business on the south side of Little Traverse Bay.

In 1873 the families of Mr. Porter and Mr. Ingalls were the only white families on this side of the bay. In anticipation of the completion of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad, the advance guard of civilization began to arrive in the summer of that year.

In June, Amos Fox and Hiram O. Rose, constituting the firm of Fox & Rose, who had long done business in Northport and Charlevoix, lightered a small stock of goods ashore at the mouth of the river and opened the first store in an Indian's log cabin. A little later the first building erected by a white man in the future metropolis of the north was put up by George I. Smith, known to pioneers as "Pa Smith." It was located near the foot of Howard Street and was called "The Union Hotel" but was only a little board shanty which was afterwards found rather too small for a wood house for an ordinary family.

In the fall of the year Fox & Rose began a store building. The rails were laid into town in October, 1873, and November 1 Dr. Little and family arrived by rail. Dr. Little raised the frame of the "Rose House" which afterward became the Occidental.

And now the history of Petoskey begins. Soon after the hotel was completed, the post office at Bear Creek was discontinued and the mail carried across the river and turned over to Dr. Little who had just received his commission as the postmaster of the new post office, "Petoskey." John I. Shaw, the Grand Rapids capitalist, and Archibald McMillan, a railroad contractor, had platted a town in 1873 but it was not recorded. The original village plat was made by H. O. Rose in 1874 and McMillan's plat was recorded later as an addition.

Trains began running regularly late in the spring and in the early summer Fox & Rose built the first dock.

D. J. Cushman came up from Otsego and built the two-story structure which has grown into the spacious Cushman House.

The first railroad agent who came in the spring of 1874 did not fill the bill and a little later a wide-awake, freckled-faced lad was sent up in his place and for a long time he did the entire business: freight, ticket and telegraphing. He is still the G. R. & I. agent at Petoskey but he has a large corps of assistants and there are neither freckles nor flies on him now. (The writer referred to M. F. Quaintance.)

Among others who settled in Petoskey in 1874 were O. D. Tracy, H. G. Wait, Charles Carmichael, Austin Bunnell, Lute C. Watson and James Buckley.

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

In beginning its 10th volume in 1881, the Petoskey Democrat gave the following picture of the county and village as they were 20 years ago.

(At the time the following was written, Rozelle Rose was publisher of the Democrat.)

“With this issue, the Democrat enters upon the tenth year of its existence. Nine years ago it was cast upon the sea of journalism; for nine years it has watched with pride the growth and the development of Emmet County and the surrounding country.

“At the time of its birth, the entire white population of the county could not exceed 150 souls within its borders. Of these about 125 were located here in this village; two families at Cross Village, one at Brutus and the balance at Little Traverse.

“Now we would be glad if we could picture to our readers the appearance of the village. Not a street graded, stumps and logs pushed aside far enough to admit a team passing along with care. Not a rod of sidewalk in the village, not a lot fenced in and nearly all the houses standing upon pegs, devoid of paint or chimneys, with the lights shining through the cracks when lamps were lighted in the evening.

“On Lake Street, the building furthest west was the one occupied by Buckley and Daggett. To the east was the one used by H. G. Wait, opposite of Smith’s barn. No building was to the east of that.

“On Mitchell Street not a building west of the railroad except a half-roof shed that stood near where the bank now stands. To the eastward one could throw a stone from the railroad almost to the furthest house or building.

“No regard was paid to street by teams or foot passengers, for all went the nearest possible way to reach the desired point. The entire village was simply a few straggling, scattered shanties, that to be dignified by the name of a village would almost be a libel upon the name.”

Since that time the growth of Petoskey has been steady and constant. There has been no fictitious boom but during the whole 20 years the onward progress of the place has never for a day been interrupted.

Petoskey is now (1895) an incorporated city of upwards of 4,000 inhabitants.

All of the principal business and residence streets have been graded and boulevarded, and good broad walks, lined with shade trees and bordered by well-kept lawns, extend to the remotest outskirts.

The water works plant is the best of any city of its size in the Union. A large and convenient building contains all the office and machinery with the superintendent's residence above.

There is a complete and perfect steam plant, including pumps that will throw a thousand gallons a minute ready for emergency and two sets of pumps driven by water power, with no extra expense except the grease for the journals, used for ordinary purposes.

There are several miles of water mains and a reservoir, which is kept constantly full on the highest point of land, 270 feet above the bay. An artesian well furnishes clear, pure water and another well can be connected in a moment if a conflagration should demand an increased supply.

A well-equipped fire department has repeatedly proved its efficiency and with the tremendous pressure and inexhaustible water supply, a sweeping fire is impossible.

All of the business portion and several of the residence streets have sewers and the sewer system has been planned so as to cover the entire city as necessity requires it.

The streets and parks are lighted with arc lights and the business places and many of the residences with incandescent electric lights. The telephone exchange is large and well-conducted and arrangements are now being made to connect Northern Michigan with the long distance exchange at Grand Rapids. In the meantime two telegraph companies afford more than usual facilities for communication.

The Grand Rapids and Indiana between Mackinaw and Richmond and the Chicago and West Michigan between Petoskey and Grand Rapids, each of which is part of the great trunk system, afford excellent facilities for transportation by rail, while the most magnificent steamers on the lakes afford daily communication both ways by water.

Work is just being begun on the new government breakwater which will increase the commercial importance of this place.

The manufacturing interests have grown to important proportions and the river banks are lined with factories where whirring wheels are driven by the harnessed

steam. The unbroken forests of 20 years ago have given way to fertile fields and well-tilled farms, which contribute largely to Petoskey's progress.

KING STRANG ONCE CONTROLLED COUNTY AREA

Emmet County, as territory of the United States, traces its origin back to the Congressional Ordinance of 1787 which set up the Northwest Territory.

The story starts far earlier as the French crown claimed the area in the 17th century. Then the British gained possession after the fall of Quebec when the French, in 1763, ceded their rights to the British crown.

The British were still in possession of much of the Northwest Territory when the ordinance of 1787 was passed. It was not until 1796 that the United States took possession of Detroit and later it returned to the hands of the British during the War of 1812.

The Michigan territory was set up in an act of Congress approved January 11, 1805. In 1836 Congress accepted the constitution and government of Michigan and the new state became a reality on January 26, 1837.

Back when General Lewis Cass was the territorial governor, he set up the County of Michilimackinac which included the northwest part of the Lower Peninsula and a large part of the Upper Peninsula.

In 1840 the northern part of the Lower Peninsula was laid off in unorganized counties, attached to the County of Michilimackinac for administrative purposes. The name Tonedagana was given to the territory which is now Emmet and Kishkonko to that which is now Charlevoix County.

In 1843 these names were changed to Emmet and Charlevoix. Robert Emmet, the Irish patriot, and Pierre Francois Xavier Charlevoix, early French explorer and missionary, were honored in the choice.

In the winter of 1853, James J. "King" Strang, the Mormon leader, was state representative and he succeeded in getting a bill through the legislature uniting Emmet and Charlevoix Counties under the name of Emmet. The act provided for holding an

election at St. James on Beaver Island. At the same time the townships of Peaine, Galilee and Charlevoix were organized.

The first two covered the Beaver Island group and Charlevoix Township included all that which is now Charlevoix County.

Charlevoix mainlanders objected to the Mormon control and obtained a legislative act in 1855 separating the mainland territory from the islands. Under that act the townships of Little Traverse, La Croix, Bear Creek and Old Fort Mackinaw were organized.

The county seat was established at Mackinaw City but county business was transacted at Little Traverse until 1867 when the county seat was moved to Charlevoix.

There was a real hassle over the moving and the county seal and other official property disappeared. Dennis T. Downing, the county clerk, was charged with embezzlement. It was all settled with the organization of Charlevoix Township in 1869 and the seat of Emmet County was returned to Little Traverse.

In 1875 the township of La Croix was changed to Cross Village. Friendship, Maple River, Bliss and Pleasant View were organized in 1876. Next year came Readmond and Littlefield. Center was set up in 1878 and Carp Lake in 1879. Egleston, now McKinley, was organized in 1884.

Thus, at the end of 1884, there were 12 townships in Emmet County.

Later changes were:

Wawatam was set up from part of Carp Lake Township; Springvale was carved out of Littlefield, which received part of Maple River; Resort was made from the west park of Bear Creek; and West Traverse was set up from the west park of Little Traverse. This gave Emmet its present 16 townships.

Petoskey became the county seat on July 10, 1902 by vote of the board of supervisors.

LIMESTONE PROVIDED ONE OF CITY'S EARLY INDUSTRIES

REPORT SUPPLY STILL SUFFICIENT FOR 75 YEARS

The lime cliffs on the south shore of Little Traverse Bay were commercially attractive to early visitors to the area and provided business enterprises which have been in continuous operation from 1874 to the present – and will probably continue for another 75 years.

H. O. Rose, leader in business and civic activities of Petoskey from the time of his arrival in 1873 until his death in 1911, was the first to take advantage of the commercial possibilities of the lime rock.

He blasted enough rocks from the cliffs to form a platform for a kiln and started making lime in 1874. The kiln was located over the cliff at the foot of Howard Street. Later larger kilns were built a half mile to the northeast.

E. R. Sly came to Petoskey in 1884 and a year later brought his young son, Homer, now vice-president of the Petoskey Portland Cement Company. Mr. Sly started operations at Bay Shore, first as the Petoskey Lime Company and later as the Bay Shore Lime Co.

About 1905 the Elf Rapids Portland Cement Company was acquired and the two properties were operated as the Elk Cement and Lime Company with Homer Sly in charge of the Elk Rapids branch of the business.

In the meantime, the Zipp Brothers, Fred, Homer, George and Arthur, were associated in a lime kiln west of Bay Shore at what was known as Superior.

About 1905 the Northern Lime Company was organized as a sales company to handle the output of the Rose, Sly and Zipp organizations. In 1912 Morgan Curtis, who had been associated with the company, took over the properties and they were operated by the Northern Lime Company. Operations were stopped in the last decade when the market for lime dwindled with the rise in popularity of cement.

In 1912 Homer Sly set up the Petoskey Crushed Stone Company at the location of the present plant of the Petoskey Portland Cement Company.

In 1917 the Petoskey Portland Cement Company was organized with V. B. Kline as president; Mr. Sly, vice-president; and John I. A. Galster, secretary-treasurer. In January 1920, J. B. John and J. C. Buckbee were added to the board.

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

In 1919 construction was started on a stone-crushing plant and dock. A two-kiln cement plant, with a capacity of 2,500 barrels a day, was begun in 1920. Operations were started with the first barrel of cement coming out on March 23, 1921.

In 1924 new construction was started to double the capacity of the plant by adding two kilns and the necessary additional buildings and equipment. At the present time the plant is turning out more than 1,600,000 barrels of cement a year.

It is estimated that the plant's quarries hold sufficient stone to keep operations going for at least another 75 years.

Originally the limestone was manufactured into lime for use in mortar. According to Mr. Sly, the stone at Petoskey and at Bay Shore was superior for that purpose. But as cement replaced lime, the emphasis switched to the manufacture of cement. Stone at the location of the present plant is better suited for cement manufacture than that found at Petoskey and Bay Shore, Mr. Sly said.

The cement company now employs about 325 persons,

PETOSKEY'S FIRST AUTOMOBILE

Dan Lovelace, leaning against the car, was the proud possessor of the first automobile in Petoskey. It was a Thomas. This picture was made in front of the machine shop operated by Philip Middleditch on State Street. At the right is W. P. Hofman, who operates the Petoskey Iron Works in the same building today. Between Mr. Middleditch and Mr. Hofman is Ollie Reed. Mr. Lovelace was one of Petoskey's original automobile mechanics and became the first service manager for the Northern Auto Company when it was organized in 1912.

PETOSKEY'S FIRST ELECTRIC PLANT

Petoskey's first electric light plant was located at the second dam on Bear River, south of Mitchell Street Bridge. It was known as the Edison Petoskey Light Company and was organized in 1887 by H.O. Rose as president and Myron H. Beals as secretary and general manager. It was later purchased by the city.

Describing the plant, the Independent Democrat said:

"The large and conveniently arranged buildings contain five large dynamos, four for the Edison incandescent lamp circuits and one for the arc lights.

"Besides the 60 horse power obtained from the water wheels, there is a 150-horsepower engine with boilers having a capacity of 300 horse power to provide for increasing requirements.

"The company furnishes very satisfactory service at lower rates than prevail in the average Michigan city, the rate being 50 cents for each 16 candle lamp. They also supply meters and furnish the current at meter rates and are rapidly extending their meter method of regulating prices."

A little arithmetic shows that the capacity of the early plant in kilowatts was 157. This compares with the capacity of the present hydro system which is 780 kilowatts. In addition, the city's diesel plant has a capacity of 3,000 kilowatts. In other words, the capacity of the municipal plant has been increased to 24 times that which it was originally – and engineers see the need for additional power within the near future.

RAIL OFFICIALS PROMISED LAND TO ASSOCIATION

Bay View, with its 400 cottages, assembly and summer university, had its source in the camp meeting movement which swept the country in the nineteenth century.

In the last half of the century it was estimated there were more than 600 camp meetings in the country and the movement to establish such an organization in Northern Michigan gained momentum.

The Rev. J. H. McCarty, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Jackson, and one of his parishioners, S. O. Knapp, were the men who laid the groundwork for Bay View.

Mr. and Mrs. Knapp spent the summer of 1874 in Petoskey, seeking a place where she might regain failing health. They discovered the woods northeast of Petoskey and spent many hours exploring them.

In September, 1875, both the Detroit and Michigan Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church named committees to act jointly in selection of grounds for an annual camp meeting.

An organization meeting was held in Jackson and the Rev. E. H. Pilcher was selected as president. On January 20, 1876, at a meeting held in Grand Rapids, the Petoskey location was formally approved, although there was considerable support for sites in Otsego Lake, Mullet Lake, Burt Lake, Cheboygan, Traverse City and Ludington.

The Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad was much interested in the project and promised to furnish the land. H. O. Rose, of Petoskey, and a representative of the railroad toured the north country in the winter of 1875-76 obtaining deeds from the Indians and others who held the title.

Mr. Rose and C. J. Pailthorp, a young Petoskey attorney, obtained pledges from Petoskey residents to pay for the land – an amount around \$3,000.

On April 13, 1876, the trustees were given a contract which provided for furnishing a warranty deed to the land on the condition that the association would within five years make improvements on the grounds to the extent of \$10,000 and would conduct a camp meeting on the grounds for at least 15 years.

The warranty deed was executed May 22, 1876, and on October 11, 1890, the company gave the association a quit claim deed, indicating the original condition had been met.

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

The first meeting held on the grounds was on May 2, 1876, when the trustees inspected the property. The first camp meeting of the Michigan Camp Ground Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as Bay View was then known, opened August 1, 1870.

On August 2 the first regular annual meeting of the association was held in the woods with members sitting on a fallen hemlock tree.

January 30, 1877, the trustees officially adopted the name Bay View and on July 29, 1898, the corporate name was changed to The Bay View Camp Ground Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church. On August 7, 1919, the present name was adopted – The Bay View Association of the Methodist Church.

The first cottages were built in Bay View in 1877 and the Bay View House was started the same year. Located where Sunset Park is now, the Bay View House, operated for many years by George W. Childs, burned in September 1929.

The Bay View Assembly and the Summer University were launched in 1886 under the direction of John M. Hall. The next year an auditorium was built and in 1888 it was enlarged to seat 2,500.

The John M. Hall Auditorium, which is still the center of Bay View programs, was dedicated on July 18, 1915. Mr. Hall, who gave the auditorium, had three years previously given the recreation building at the waterfront in Bay View.

Thomas Gordon, Jr. presented the association with the pipe organ, which was installed in the auditorium.

“REMINISCENCES OF 1873-74 IN PETOSKEY”

R.H. Little’s Story Tells of Bear Creek Before Trains Came

R. H. Little was in Petoskey from 1873 to 1876 and active in the founding of the community. Sometime after 1901 he wrote in longhand his memories, entitling the article, “Petoskey In The Making- Reminiscence of the Winter of 1873-1874.”

The manuscript has been in the possession of the Evening News and is published herewith, just as Mr. Little wrote it.

During the summer of 1873 I visited my brother, Dr. W. Little, who was then practicing medicine at Reed City. This place was about two years old and much of the town site had its original growth of forest on it and only sections of the streets here and there had the tree stumps removed.

The E. & P. M. Railway had recently been constructed to Ludington, and the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railway was pushing its way through to Little Traverse Bay and train service had been established during the year to Traverse City.

There was much rivalry between the several town developments along the line towards the north, each claiming superior advantages in the way of business prospects, but it was generally agreed that the point on Little Traverse Bay where the railway would tour would make a more desirable town site than any of those along the line.

Plan Trip North

My brother and I decided to visit this point and investigate its possibilities for business, going by water to Traverse City, and thence by boat to Charlevoix, the end of the boat line.

We took a stroll around Charlevoix which had then quite a number of buildings, the principal ones being Dick Cooper’s hotel and the Fox & Rose general store.

Here we found a barge being loaded with merchandise for a store that this firm had recently opened at Bear River. We engaged passage on it and shortly after proceeded on our way, being towed by a tug.

H. O. Rose and three other men were on the barge with us and we sat around on the barge and admired the scenery as we slowly passed along not far from shore which

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

was fringed with a dense forest. The only cleared, open space to be seen on the way was at Indian Village, an Indian settlement about half way to Bear River.

Mr. Rose gave us valuable information regarding the business outlook of the Bear River locality and told us about where the railway was expected to touch the bay.

When we came within view of the dock at Bear River, darkness set in and when we landed, there were quite a number of people on the dock, most of them being Indians.

Stay With Indians

They proceeded at once to unload the barge so that it could be taken to Charlevoix that night, and the Doctor and I were guided ashore to a small building where we engaged rooms for the night and had a lunch.

We secured very little sleep during the night owing to the noise and racket caused by drunken men and the tolling of a bell. We arose early in the morning as we were anxious to have a look at our surroundings.

Our lodging house was in a group with three others, one of them a small mission church with a bell mounted between two posts near the door.

The merchandise on the dock was being hauled to the store and we followed a wagon load of it on a trail toward the east for about half a mile and turned in at Grandfather Petoskey's residence, which was quite a large building and in which Mr. Rose had secured two rooms for his store.

Stan Carter was manager of the store and could speak the Indian language and was accustomed to trading with them.

We then proceeded along the trail toward the east and crossed over the Bear River Bridge and on up the hill to where two of Petoskey's sons resided with their families in log houses a few hundred feet apart.

They had quite a few acres cleared along the hillside, but patches of small trees had grown up here and there on it and they only cultivated a small garden patch near their dwellings. This was the eastern limit of the Bear River settlement and where Petoskey was afterwards platted.

Mr. Rose owned the land adjoining the Petoskey farm on its east side and it extended along the shore for about a mile and on the east end of this land a town site had been platted and it was surmised that the railway would have its terminus there.

We returned to the hotel for lunch, much impressed with what we had seen and the prospect of it being a good place to embark in business and decided to remain in the locality at least for a time and be on hand when the town would be located.

After spending another night at the hotel with a repetition of the noise and drunken racket of the previous night, we concluded to look for other quarters. As we could not find a desirable place, we purchased a tent and camp outfit and made our camp in a small grassy spot surrounded by a grove of maples near where the W. M. (now C & O) railway station is now located.

The trail leading up the steep hill nearby and on away around the bay was between our camp and the store.

Bear River at that time followed a little back of the shore line and discharged into the lake near our camp.

Decide To Stay

We were quite comfortable in our new abode and glad to have escaped from the noise at the hotel – but sometimes we were awakened at night by Indians yelling as they galloped past on their ponies and also by wild animals, trying to get at our food supplies.

See First Mill

It only required a few days to explore all there was of the Bear River settlement. The main part of it lay about a half mile south from the dock. Here the Ingalls family lived and had a general store. There were several boys in the family and they could speak the Indian language. They had dammed the river at this point to run a saw mill but it was then not in operation.

The road turned west at the Ingalls' place and led through between small tracts of cleared land and houses occupied by the Indians and was the most populated part of the settlement. A road branched off from this and led up the hill to the mission house and school established by Andrew Porter many years before.

Elder Porter had his residence nearby and also Mr. Germain, who was manager of the mission farm. They had quite a large acreage cleared and cultivated.

This material taken from the Petoskey News Review, July 10,11,12 (Special Supplement) 1952

We attended services at this mission several times before winter set in and it was quite a novel experience hearing a sermon delivered a few words at a time and then one of Petoskey's sons, who had attended Oberlin College, would repeat it in Indian.

The hymn books had English on one page and Indian on the opposite. The Indians sang very well and appeared very devout. As a rule they were good, law-abiding citizens and could be depended on.

Praises Elder Porter

I am not sure if they were naturally inclined this way or not, but if it were caused through the teachings of Elder Porter, he certainly accomplished a good work amongst them and left his mark.

Bear Creek had a weekly mail service and Elder Porter was the postmaster.

The workmen who were clearing the railway right-of-way were now beginning to be within walking distance and many of them walked in to obtain booze and have a spree and it was these men who had disturbed our sleep at the hotel and not our citizens.

There was considerable sickness among the construction gangs out along the line and when it became known there was a doctor in the settlement, men would walk in for treatment and the doctor often walked out to treat those unable to walk.

The trail through the forest was along the center row of grade stakes put in by the engineers and was rather rough to walk on

Doctor Orders Drugs

This business was not anticipated so the doctor ordered a stock of medicine to meet this demand and created the first drug store in town.

During this period the doctor visited his wife and baby, May, at Reed City and one day an Indian called to have four teeth in his upper jaw extracted. He had been in a fight and the teeth were quite loose. I could not make him understand that I was not the doctor and he insisted that I should pull them. Realizing that it would not do to let him go without making any attempt, I managed to extract them without much effort. I may lay claim to being the first dentist in town.

The railway engineers moved into town about this time and made their camp back on the hill above our camp. The only names of members of the staff that I can recall to memory are Warren Stenson and the brothers, John and Henry Keep.

I had been the only white person living in town when the doctor was away and this increase in population added much to our social life.

It was now along in October and the engineers had completed the railway survey and then the long-looked-for survey of the town lots began and the doctor and I purchased the first lots sold.

They were located at the corner of Lake Street and Railway Avenue (now Elk).

Plan Hotel

We planned to build a hotel on these lots and immediately set to work to procure building material before navigation for the season would close. The doctor went to Traverse City and chartered a steamer and had it loaded with building material and on coming to Little Traverse Bay, quite a storm was on and darkness had set in when they had reached the dock at Little Traverse (now Harbor Springs).

I had procured a barge from H. O. Rose and had it ready at the dock with a gang of Indians and began at once to transfer the lumber from the steamer to it as the captain wanted it all ready to tow it across to Petoskey early in the morning.

When about half the cargo was on the barge, it suddenly sank almost to the water's edge. This placed us in rather a serious predicament so we held a consultation and decided to keep piling the balance on top of the other and secured it by stringing rope back and forth over the top and having them fastened at each end of the barge.

In the morning we found the storm had increased and we were compelled to remain there all day.

The following morning we pulled out and, as we rounded the point, ran into quite a heavy sea. I was alone on the barge and it kept me busy preventing loose boards from being washed away by the action of the waves beating against the side and sometimes they would sweep over the cargo.

Lighter Lumber Ashore

As the barge drew more water than the steamer, it made slow headway and it was near noon when they came within a safe distance of the shore and cast off the tow

lines and allowed me to drift toward the shore. It soon became stranded some distance out.

By this time the storm had considerably subsided and Hibbard Ingalls had a gang on the beach with Mackinaw boats and they came out and commenced to transfer the cargo ashore and by nightfall had it all on the beach.

A tugboat came the next day from Charlevoix for the barge and returned from there with all our dimension lumber. It was a slow tedious job, hauling from the beach to building site, as only small loads could be taken up the hill. During this time the railway was being graded through the town site and track laid to the end of line just north of Division Street.

Porter Brings Family

We had built a temporary residence for the winter and the doctor went to Reed City and returned with his wife and child and also Mr. Lincoln, a carpenter whom he had engaged for the winter. His horse and household goods were shipped by train and it was the first car of freight to enter Petoskey – and the last for the season for the railway construction work was suspended until spring.

By this time Mr. Rose had his new store constructed a block south of our place and the merchandise removed to it from the Petoskey building. He had also constructed a residence toward the east of us but it was not occupied until spring.

We managed to get the foundation for the hotel in before the ground became deeply frozen and we built a shop in which to work during stormy weather.

An epidemic of spinal meningitis broke out among the Indians during the winter and several of them died. It was a difficult matter to treat the Indians as they could not fully understand the instructions given them for the care of the patient.

The doctor made several professional visits to Cross Village. These long trips were very trying on his health and were made on horseback.

Good Practice; No Pay

With all his practice there was scarcely enough money taken to pay for the medicine supplied, but he felt that it was his duty to carry on and do what he could to relieve the sick and suffering.

Our fuel supply was obtained close at hand in the woods along the hillside and we sure required a plentiful supply for our dwelling was built in such a hurry that it was none to warm and soon after we retired to bed, the rooms became about as cold as outdoors. But notwithstanding all this, we enjoyed good health.

Only five white families resided in the settlement along the whole south side of the bay.

Our dwelling was so surrounded by trees that we only had a narrow view of the distance away to the west over the bleak, dreary waste of ice and a portion of the shoreline along toward the Bear River dock.

The doctor had applied to the postal authorities for a post office to be opened at Petoskey and he was appointed postmaster. I had obtained my naturalization papers and was appointed deputy. When the papers came in March, the doctor and I drove over to Elder Porter's and returned with all the papers pertaining to the office and the mail in our overcoat pockets.

Petoskey Begins

Thus the Bear River post office went out of existence and Petoskey was ushered in. We had erected a small addition to the north end of the hotel for the post office and in it we also carried a stock of drugs and medicines.

The inhabitants of the settlement had very little ready money and business was done by barter and exchange. About the only employment to be obtained was cutting cord wood and hauling it to the dock for shipment. The labor was paid for in supplies at the store.

Towards springs Mr. Rose brought in men and teams and began the building of a dock. The time being so close at hand, they made rapid progress with the work and had it completed several weeks before the arrival of the first train.

This dock was necessary for the boat line which was to connect with the train service and make the round trip to Mackinac Island each day.

The John A. Dix, a side-wheeler, was the first boat on this service. Up until 1874 all of Emmet County was held as an Indian reservation and all those who had not already obtained their allotment of land, received it then, and the balance was thrown open for homestead entry.

Porter Elected

A municipal election was held in April. Elder Porter had been supervisor for years and he and one other man were the only white members of the council.

There were two parties in the field for election; Elder Porter and the doctor, heading each for the office of supervisor.

The election was held at the mission school house. There was no registered list of voters so the polls were open to any male person of age who desired to vote.

The tickets were all written on slips of paper and several persons were kept busy writing for those who were unable to write. Hibbard Ingalls was election manager for the doctor's party which was elected by a large majority.

Construction work on the hotel had been steadily kept up and towards the end of March was all ready for plastering.

A lime kiln was made on the side of the hill near our old camp and limestone was collected from along the stone bluff with a sleigh on the ice. Plastering sand was hauled from Little Traverse Point going on the ice. So far we had obtained our water supply by melting snow and ice, and sometimes it was carried from the stream at the end of the railway.

Well Digging Futile

We then began to dig a well and engaged Frank Petoskey to do the digging. When down 20 feet he came to stone, and there being no indication of water, work on it was suspended for the time being.

Water for plastering was obtained from the stream at the end of the line by means of railway push cars on which several barrels were placed and a horse was used as motive power.

It was a late spring and the boat that was expected to bring in food supplies was prevented by the ice which showed little indication of moving out of the bay.

The supply of provisions had become so low that the people were afraid that they might become exhausted before a new supply could come. The road to Charlevoix was impassable with the deep, soft snow.

We thought some might be obtained a Boyne Falls, and I joined a party of three men to pump the railway hand car there but, on going about two miles, we found the track covered with snow and ice.

We had been informed that they could spare some supplies at Little Traverse, but owing to the dangerous condition of the ice, it was rather risky to cross.

Bring Food Across Bay

The doctor and another man volunteered to go across and they arrived there and got what they could easily carry. On their return journey they had to follow along great cracks to find a place to jump over them.

There was an anxious crowd on the dock watching them and all felt greatly relieved when they managed to get on land without any mishaps. The provisions they secured helped to keep us going for a few days more and then the ice moved out of the bay and the supply boat came in and brought along Mr. and Mrs. Rose and daughter, Abbie.

It was such a relief for us all to see the snow and ice disappear and to get into the woods and pick the wild flowers that soon appeared. We felt the need of a change and something to amuse and entertain us after being shut out from the outer world so long.

One Sunday the Rose family and our family took the push car to the cut south of their store and coasted to the end of the track. This was repeated a couple of times and greatly enjoyed. The hotel was finished and furnished and a sign was put up calling it the Rose Hotel. We had moved into it and all were awaiting the long looked for appearance of the first train.

When it did arrive we were overcrowded with guests and it was a constant worry for weeks to find sleeping places for them all.

The trains that followed each day brought in a steady flow of tourists and others looking for business locations and other ventures.

Car loads of building materials came and houses under construction could be seen scattered all over the town site. Some were for hotel accommodations and in a few weeks' time we became relieved of our crowded condition and began to erect an addition to our hotel.

When I beheld all this building activity and compared the prices they paid for materials and the ease in which they obtained it with what ours had cost, and the hardships that we had endured in placing it on the ground, I had my doubts as to whether we had gained by pioneering.

After all there was some compensating pleasure in the thought that it was through our energy and resources that we were enabled to offer some accommodations and shelter to those who came - for otherwise they would have had to undergo some of the privations that we had experienced.

I visited my brother's widow, Mrs. T. Kirkland, in 1901 and viewed the great changes that had taken place since I had left there in 1876, but the view of the locality with its beautiful romantic setting as I first beheld it, is the one that is most vividly impressed on my mind.

There may be but few persons alive today who had lived in the Petoskey locality during the time embraced in this narrative. If there is, I trust that this will be of special interest to them and recall to memory some of the incidents stated and the names of some of those who had laid the foundation for the city of Petoskey.