



Memories of North Star Camp on Woman Lake

By Kathleen (Spain) Palo July 2015

Research and edited by Jeff Davis

contact jeff@davisplace.org



My grandparents, William and Florence Spain, were born in Wisconsin. Grandpa worked for the railroad in there as a brakeman until he lost his leg in an accident. My grandparents then moved to northern Minnesota in 1901.



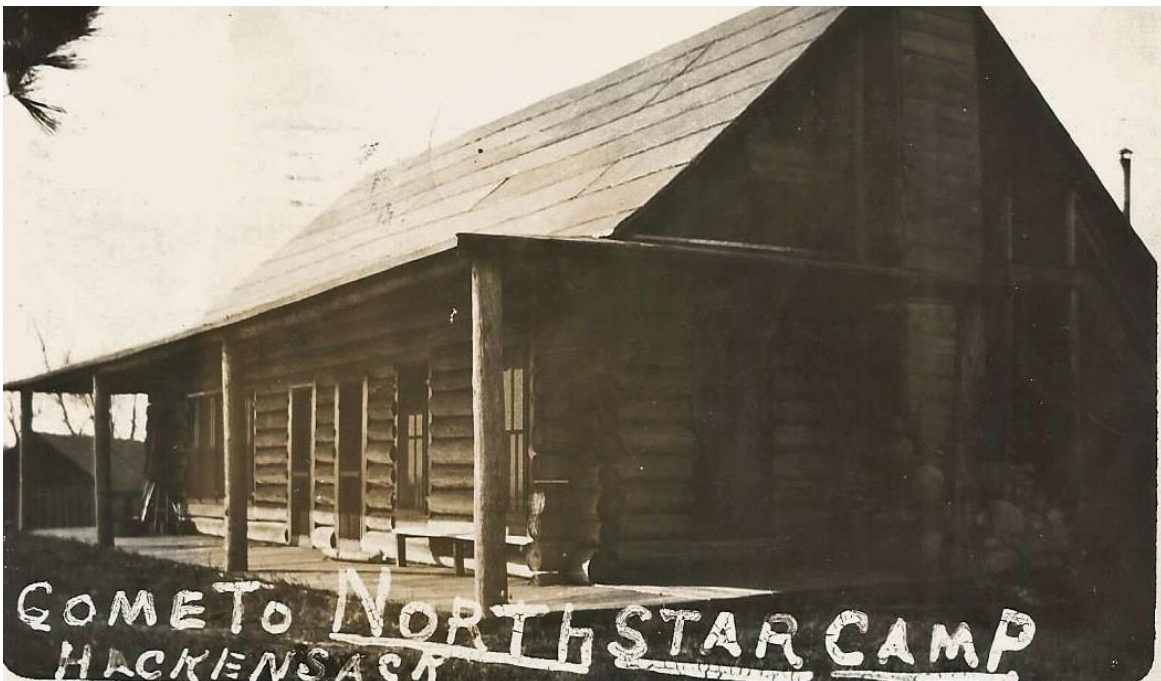
They settled in Hackensack, Minnesota where grandpa worked as a depot agent for the railroad, making just \$35 a month. He handled all the rail business both at Hackensack and at Lothrop, just to the north. Most of the freight shipped out of Hackensack was lumber, poles and ties.



Looking for additional income, grandpa built a small store in front of their Main Street dwelling (today it the oldest building in Hackensack). Since railroad regulations forbade him from owning a store, it was put in my grandma's name. The town's tough logging men didn't approve of a woman owning a business: my grandpa's motor launch, the fastest on Birch Lake, was dynamited.



In 1906, grandpa built the Hotel Endeavor which was named by my grandma based upon the slogan "We endeavor to please." Grandpa continued to work as a depot agent while grandma took charge of the hotel. The bottom floor of the hotel was occupied by retail stores. There was also a barn out back, where they kept cattle, chickens and hogs.



In 1912, my grandparents acquired North Star Camp (NSC) on Woman Lake from Eber Smith when he defaulted on a loan made to him by my grandfather. Smith was an old family friend of my grandparents.

North Star Sportsmen's Resort.

NORTH STAR SPORTSMEN'S RESORT opens for the second year June 1st 1903. This resort consists of two different camps at separate lakes. The head camp is situated on the north side of Woman Lake, 10 miles due east of Hackensack. The branch camp is situated on Rice Lake, 10 miles east of Woman Lake.

These camps are both new. The furniture, beds and bedding are all new. The boats are not only new but of the most modern, being made of sheet steel with an air chamber in each end and will never sink, break or leak.

Both camps are connected by water and in going from one camp to the other you can travel by boat with your guide.

Each camp is supplied with provisions and all accommodations necessary for as long a stay as you like. You need not give up your room at head camp while visiting the other camp. We grow our own vegetables and have our own cows and can therefore furnish fresh vegetables and milk at all times. We also propose to have on hand at all times good fresh meat.

Rice lake is noted for its muskallonge, and its rice beds abound with wild game. These camps are right in the heart of a veritable paradise for sports.

This year we have made further improvements for the accommodation of our patrons. New cabins for sleeping purposes, new boat landings, new boats and tents and camping outfits have been added also better driving facilities, such as a new stage greatly im-

proved roads and other requirements for making better time.

We are also well prepared to accommodate ladies and extend them a cordial invitation to accompany their gentlemen and spend a pleasant outing with them.

We do plain laundry work for all our guests.

Our game consists of black bass, muskallonge, wall eyed pike, Great Northern pike, pickerel and numerous other fish, also ducks, geese, partridges, deer, moose, etc. in season.

Our guides are all experienced and reliable.

As to our experience we wish to say we have spent ten years in this line of work in Wisconsin and Minnesota and are known by a large number of sports, including the early patrons of Kabekona. We devoted two years to planning and constructing these camps and feel confident we have succeeded in preparing a resort that will give the best of satisfaction. Our chief aim will be to please our patrons in every respect.

HOW TO GET THERE.—Take any line of railroad to St. Paul; Northern Pacific to Brainerd; M. & I. to Hackensack; stage from Hackensack to Woman Lake daily.

Rates per day at hotel \$2.00

Rates per day camping \$2.00

Rates per day for guides including board \$3.00

Boats free to all guests. Bait, frogs or minnows, 15 cents per dozen. Stage: \$3.00 round trip, including baggage. Train arrives at Hackensack 4:05 p. m. Stage arrives at Woman Lake in time for dinner.

Trusting you will give us a call this summer we await your further inquiries.

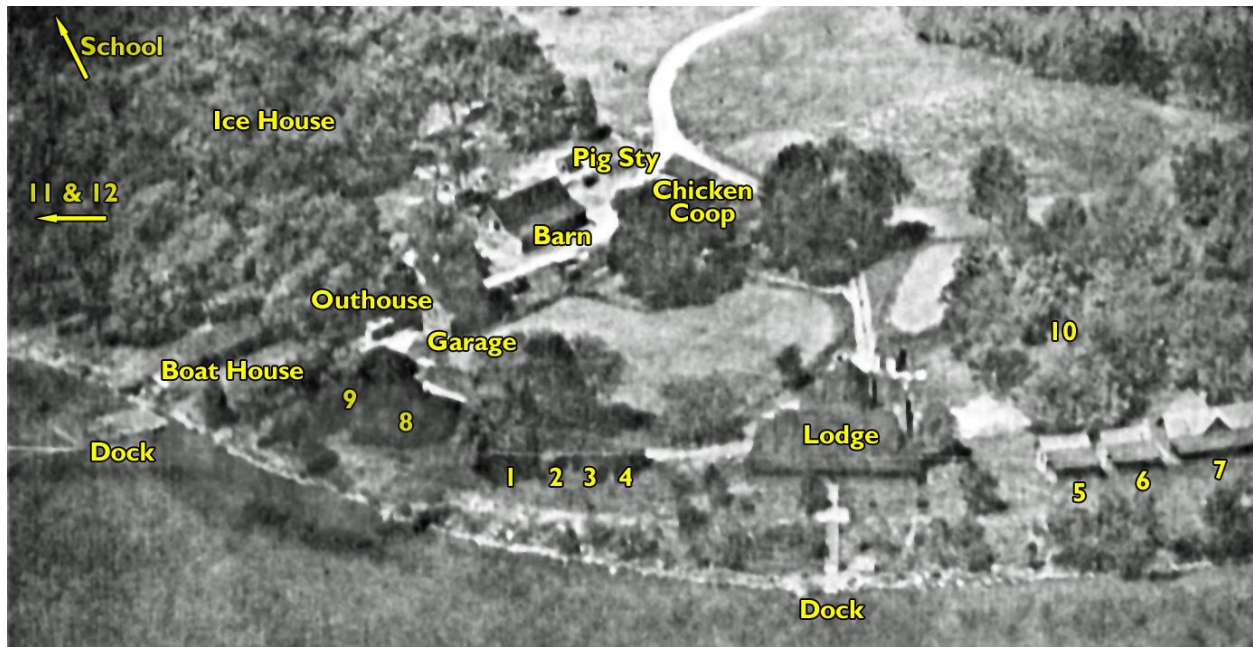
Yours Truly,

EREN SMITH.

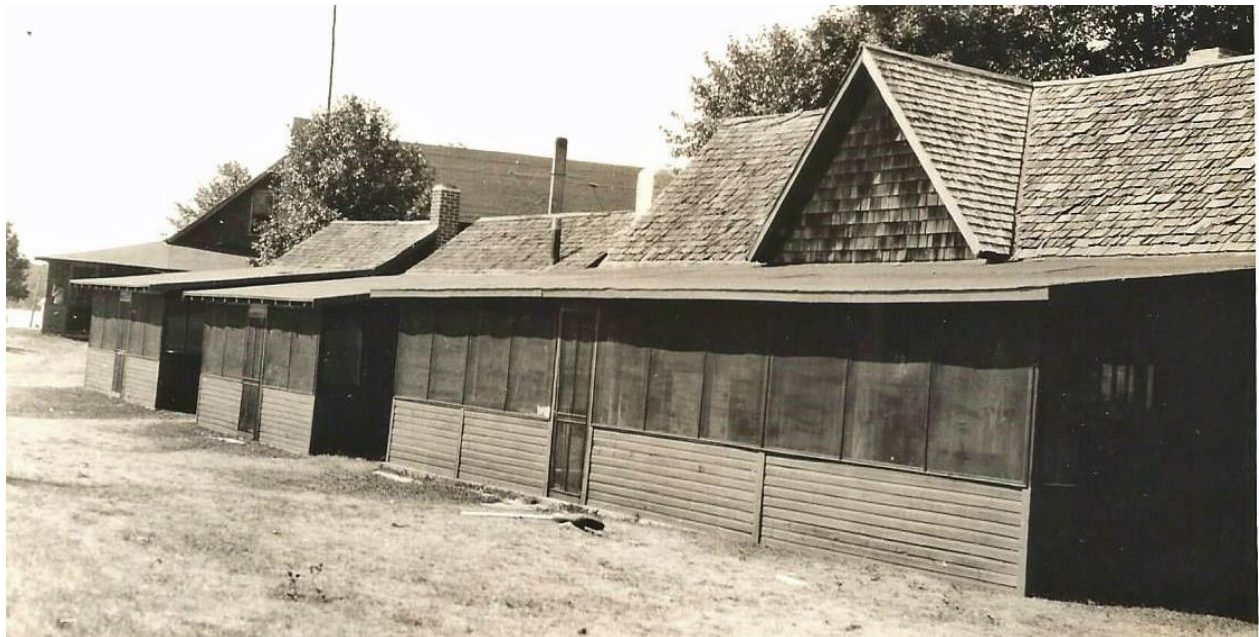
Smith operated NSC for about 10 years, advertising in local newspapers. At that time, he also operated a satellite camp on Rice Lake, about 10 miles east of NSC.

When my grandparents acquired NSC, it consisted of 7 log cabins and a log lodge. The logs for the buildings were all harvested from the property. The timbers in those days were very large; the logs across the front of the lodge were 54 feet in length with very little size difference end-to-end!

The lodge was pretty much just a shell of a building at that time. Little-by-little my grandparents expanded the main lodge, built 5 additional cabins and erected a number of other buildings.



When they finished, there were a total of 12 cabins, a barn, a garage, a pig pen, two chicken coops and an ice house. Grandpa also built the first telephone line between Woman Lake and Hackensack.



The cabins were very primitive, consisting of two rooms. The first room was the kitchen/living area with a cot and a wood burning stove. The back room had two full-sized beds, complete with a small dresser and a chamber pot. The wood and the pump were up at the main lodge. Ice was delivered to the guests on a daily basis for their icebox.



My grandparents had six children, in birth order: Margaret (not pictured above), William, Wheeler, Ella, Elsie and Helen. Margaret died at age 21, having only been married a year. She had a ruptured appendix and, my dad said, a “drunken doctor.” Grandma’s last child was stillborn and grandma had a difficult recovery.



Wheeler, Margaret, William and Ella holding Elsie



NSC was very self-sufficient. The cows provided milk and cream, as well as meat for the winter. We sold eggs and chickens too. The pigs ate the garbage and gave us pork. In the spring, we would tap the maple trees and make our own maple syrup. Grandma also took in laundry work for additional income; “by piece or by the pound” read the sign.

Before there was a power line to NSC, we had our own electrical system. The system consisted of a gas-powered engine, a generator and a series of glass batteries. Every few days, my grandfather would start the engine and let it run all day to charge the batteries.



In the fall, the men in the area worked together to bring logs out of the woods with horses and sleighs. They setup a saw rig and saw wood all day. Different types of wood were cut for different purposes.



NSC had its own dairy truck that was used to deliver milk, cream and eggs to local customers (my aunt Helen is shown in this photo).



The outhouse, sometimes called "Mrs. Jones", was always interesting. There were four holes; it was partitioned off in the middle, leaving one side for men and one side for the women. Every time I had to visit there, I would open the door wide and check it out for spiders. I wanted to know exactly where each one was before I sat down. If any moved, I was out of there!



Ice was cut from the lake in the winter and stored in the ice house. Each block was about 2 feet square, depending on how deep the ice had frozen on the lake during the winter.



The ice house was hidden in the trees so the sun wouldn't melt the ice. The ice was packed in layers with sawdust on top and in-between each block.

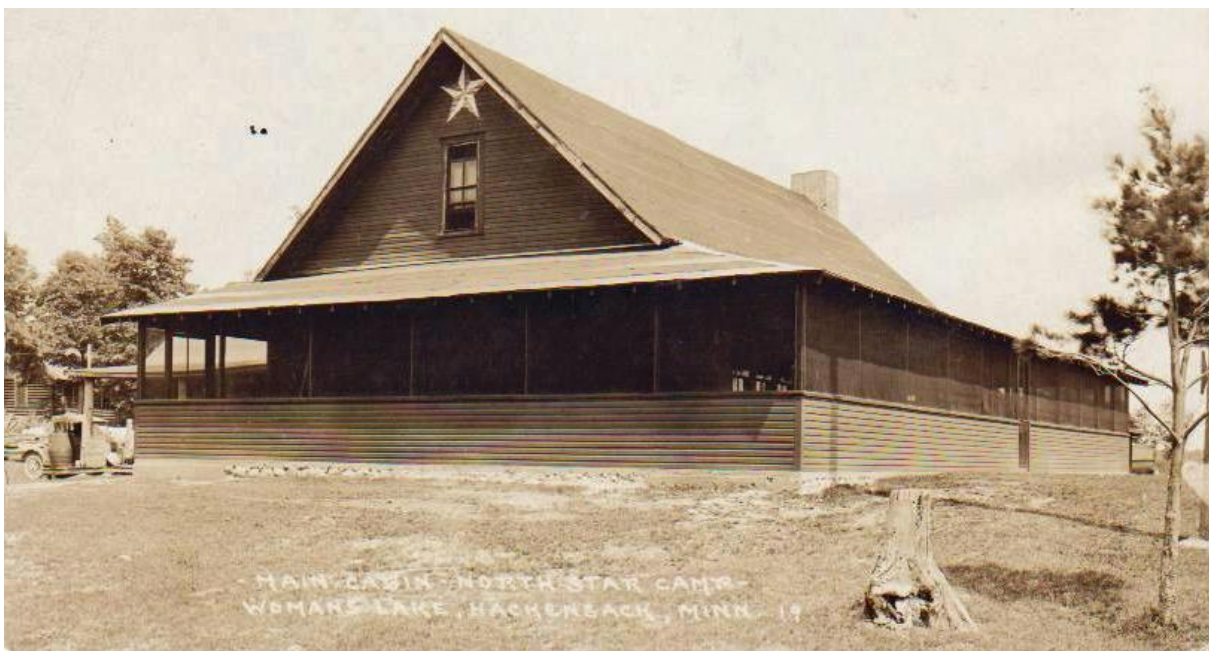
In the earliest days of NSC, guests would arrive by train in Hackensack and then be taken by horse and wagon to the camp; a three-to-four hour trip one-way!



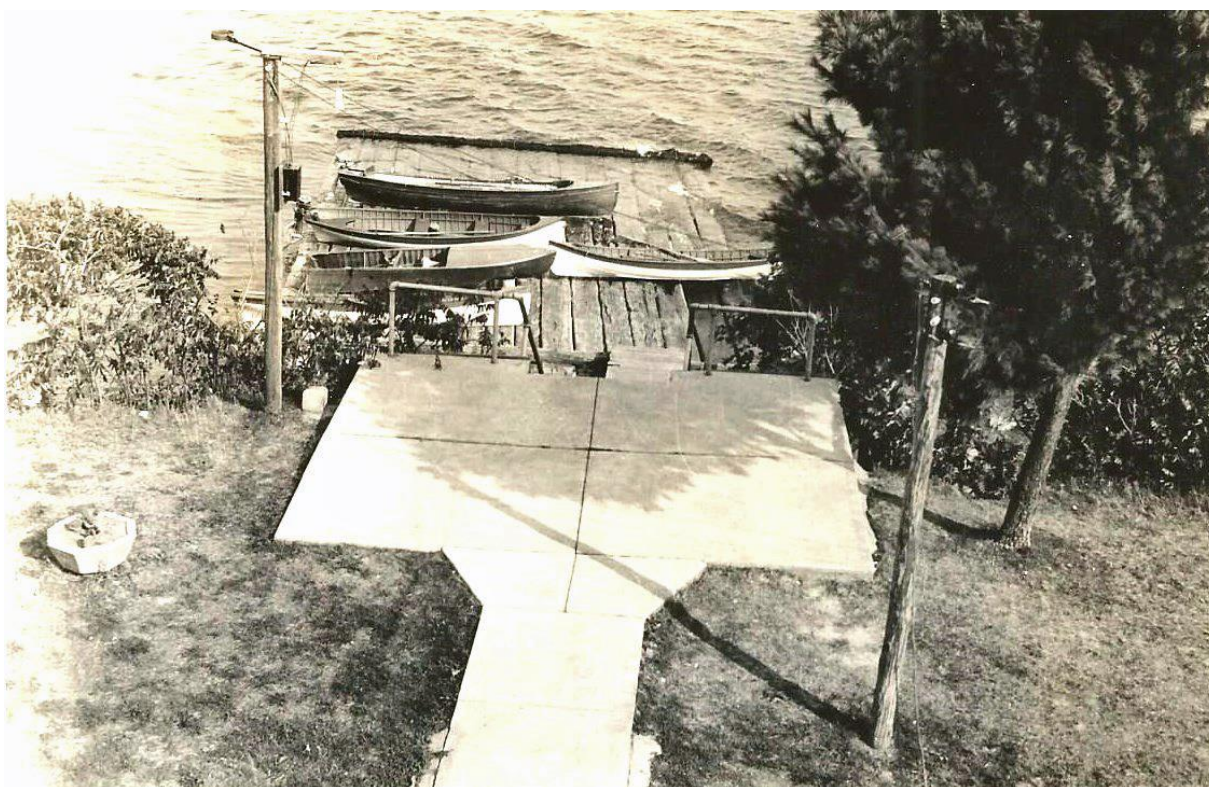
Later, the camp had its own car. William and Wheeler had to go to town to meet the midnight train to pick-up our guests, often having to make two trips for all the passengers and luggage.



The road between Hackensack and NSC was pretty rustic in the early days. The bridge between Child Lake and Woman Lakes was made of logs.



The main lodge was beautiful! A lot of effort was put into providing a place of restful comfort. The lodge sat at the highest elevation on the property and had steps right out the front door leading down to the lake.





The lodge had a fireplace room with several chairs, a pump organ and reading materials.



Guests would be served their meals in the dining room. NSC was an area landmark. In its heyday, it wasn't unusual for 200 people to be at the lodge for Sunday dinner.



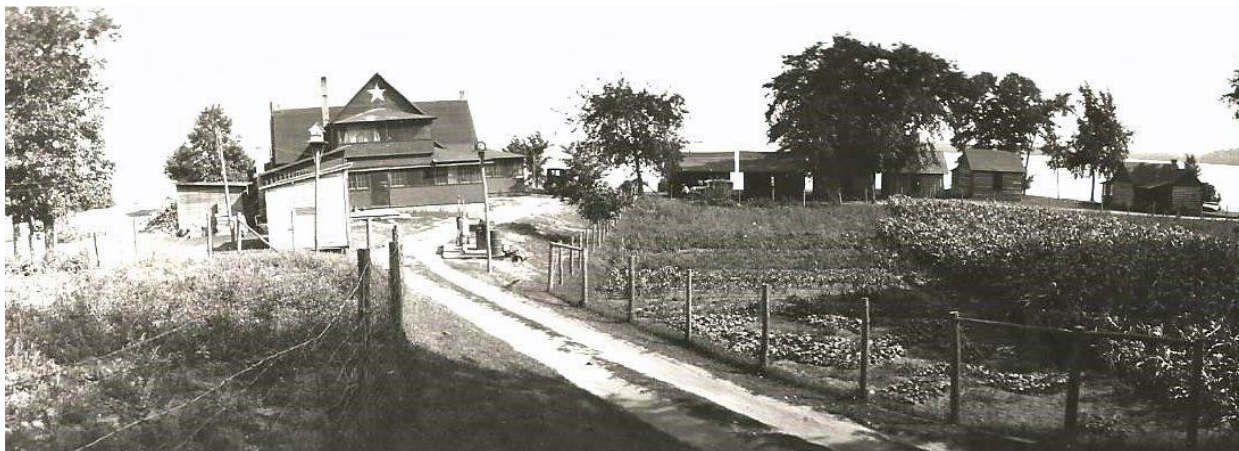


A floating dock on the south side of the camp provided dry access to the boats, even for the women in long dresses! There was also a boat launch next to the dock.



Fishing was one of the main attractions at NSC. My dad would work as a fishing guide and make a shore lunch for the fishermen.





NSC Main Entrance



Looking North toward Boathouse



Main Lodge from Lake



While most our guests came in the summer to enjoy the lake, hunting in the fall was also a popular attraction.

By the time I came along in 1942, there had already been many changes. I remember a few cows, a pig, lots of chickens and the large garden. I took part in the washing of the clothes with the old wringer washing machine. There was quite an effort to do the wash back then. Dad would pump water, filling 3 large tubs and a vat at night. Then he would get up around 5:00 a.m., go down to the laundry room, which was attached to the lodge, and get the fire in the stove going so there would be hot water in the vat to put into the washing machine. A bench was behind the machine where the three tubs of water sat. When the clothes were done washing, they would be put through the wringer and then dropped into the first tub. That's where they would receive their first rinse. The next tub was the second rinse followed by the third tub which contained bluing to make the clothes look nice and bright.



My dad was William Joseph Spain and my mother was Evelyn Marie Ralya Spain. They had four children – William Byron, Patricia Evelyn, Chares Burton and Kathleen Lu (me-the youngest).

We lived in the cabin on the hill, cabin #10. An “L” shape addition was added in the late 1920s to give room for our family of six. Even now I wonder how we all fit in. There were only two bedrooms – one for my parents and one for the kids. I remember my sister Pat saying there was a roll-away bed that they rolled into the living room for her at night. By the time I got out of the crib, my brother Byron had joined the Army. After Pat graduated, she went to Minneapolis to work.



My memories of NSC are my most treasured. I led a pretty laid-back life. The summers were filled with joy and leisure. We lived 12 miles from town, and the resort was off by itself, so other than playing with the kids that came to camp, there really weren't any other children with which to play. The water from the pump was always very cold, refreshing and without iron. It was wonderful!



Winters were pretty bleak. As a child, I was sometimes afraid during those winter months. All of the cabins were empty and the trees were empty of their leaves, so the camp looked really spooky! It got kind of lonely sometimes.



Grandma had quite a few cane poles in the porch that we used for fishing. I would dig my own worms, push the boat out into the water and toss the anchor overboard; waiting to catch some perch (I wasn't allowed to go out very far from the ages of 6 to 10 years old). When I learned how to use a motor, then I could troll for northern and walleyes.

I'm not sure when NSC stopped operating as a resort. I understand that its license was not renewed because a state inspector said the cabins didn't have supporting vertical logs and that the horizontal logs in the ground were showing signs of rot. However, a few guests continued to visit the resort in later years. There was so much up-keep with a resort that large and grandma didn't have the income to re-roof the cabins or paint the lodge. Since we lived on the property, Dad did small repairs and tried to keep heavy snowfalls from building-up on the roofs.



I attended school in Hackensack. It was a long walk in the winter to catch the bus. I could never be sure if I'd missed the bus or not and it got very cold standing there waiting. Many times I'd have to trudge back home and have Dad take me to town.

At one point, my sister Pat and her husband Harold owned the property. But several years later, Harold died of a brain tumor, so after a few years of hanging on to it, she finally sold it.



The NSC motto went as follows: "As you leave these beautiful surroundings resolve to act now and in the future in such a way that generations to follow will also have the beautiful forests and sparkling waters to enjoy throughout their lifetimes."

I am so very thankful to have been able to live at NSC and enjoyed the outdoors, the lake and the freedom they offered. NSC still holds my most cherished memories of my life!

BITS AND PIECES

My grandfather, William Spain, Sr., was born on April 14 1866, in Wisconsin. His first wife, Amaline Douglas, died in 1898. He then married Florence Ethel Wheeler in 1900. Grandma Florence was born on March 7 1881, also in Wisconsin. Grandpa died on December 22, 1931. Grandma died October 1, 1957.



My father, Bill Spain, Jr. was born July 13, 1904, the second of six children of William James Spain, Sr. and Florence Ethel Spain. He grew up at the resort.

He earned a mining engineering degree from the University of Minnesota and then moved to Butte, Montana in 1927 to work in a copper mine. He and mom returned to NSC in 1930 where he worked as a surveyor. He was appointed Woodrow Township constable and took the job very

seriously as he wore a six-shooter strapped to his hip. He ran for State Senate in 1938 and lost by 132 votes. He was the Woman Lake Association secretary for 14 years. Dad tried to join the army in WWI; his father had to go retrieve him and tell the officials he was only 13 years-old at the time! During WWII, dad served in the Sea-Bees and became a Chief Petty Officer.



My mother's father was Charles Ralya. Grandpa Ralya worked at as a guide for Kabekona Camp and would take groups all the way to Canada by canoe. My mom taught school at Webb Lake until she married my dad.



My dad and most of his siblings attended the one-room Woman Lake School for at least part of their schooling. It was located on Spain's property just west of NSC. My mother even taught school there!

My dad and his sister attended high school in Pine River; Grandma would pay for room and board for them in the winter months as travel on rural roads was very difficult.

In the early days, there was a bridge with a road between NSC and the property to the west where the school house stood. The road is now gone, but its' remains are still visible today from the air.





My dad always carried a gun. When he was a young man, he was a constable with a star badge. He had a revolver strapped to his leg and was a very good shot. He could throw a tin can up in the air and would not draw his gun until it started to fall downward; he could keep that can in the air until he ran out of bullets!

I don't remember the gun strapped to his leg, but I do remember the .45 automatic that he always had tucked in his belt. He never went anywhere without it! Even if he was just going down the hill to get water, he would take the gun with him. Since we were so isolated in our own little world, I used to wonder who or what might be out there that he needed that gun!

Mom would time her baking in the winter months so that by the time the bus dropped me off and I walked in the door, the cookies or doughnuts would be nice and hot waiting for me.

It took several trips to the woodpile to fill the wood box that sat in the kitchen next to the stove. It seemed like such a long trip, trudging through the deep snow. The woodpile was located behind cabin #5 and #6.

Sometimes on a cold winter night while lying in my bed, I could hear the train whistle in Hackensack, which was 12 miles away. Also at night, we could hear the lake moaning from the -30 to -40 degree cold. It was such a terrible sound, very sad. It was even scary to me when I was young.

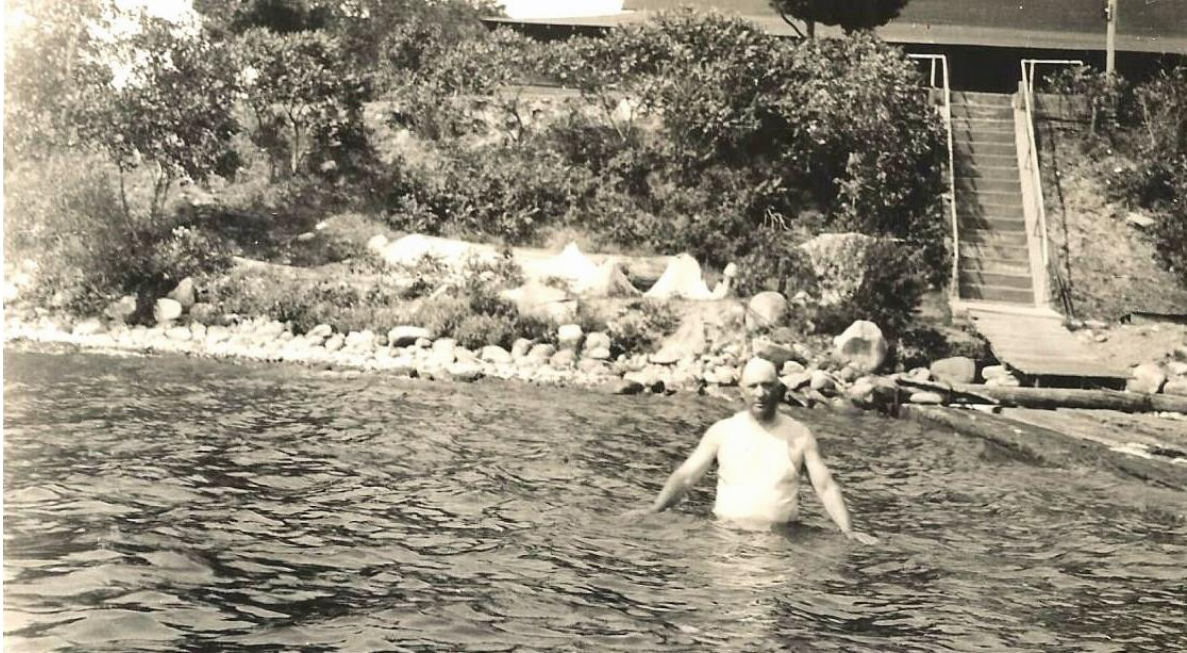




My bed was next to the wall and when the wind was from the northwest, I would feel the breeze in my face – nice and cold. I liked it. We had several heavy blankets to keep us warm. Every fall, dad would check the chinking between each log, looking for areas that needed to be filled with oakum.



During the winter, the lake would sometimes push large amounts of ice up onto the shoreline. I remember some piles being larger than me!



Summers were great! Not much to do but be lazy. Once in a while I was able to talk mom into coming down to the landing to watch me swim. It always seemed more fun and relaxing for me when mom sat on the bank and watched. It would have been nice to have someone to swim with.



Dad with his Alto Outboard Motor

My dad's sister, Ella, sold war bonds during WWII. In the early 1950's, she operated Woman Lake Tavern at the corner of County Road 5 and 11.

In May 1955, my Dad made a terrible discovery in one of the cabins. His sister Ella and her husband George had not

Man and Wife Found Dead at Summer Resort

Husband Admitted To Veterans Hospital But It Was Found He Was Not A Veteran

HACKENSACK (AP)—Deaths of a man and wife found shot at a resort on Woman Lake Tuesday night were put into Cass county records as murder and suicide.

Gerald Eveland, deputy sheriff, said George Errett, 53, had slain his wife, Ella, 47, before turning a .12 gauge shotgun on himself. The bodies were found in a cabin at North Star Camp, owned by the slain woman's mother, Mrs. Mary Spaul.

Errett was admitted to the Veterans Hospital at St. Cloud last Saturday night after he became ill while he and his wife were passing through the city. He was discharged Monday night when it was learned he was not a veteran and therefore not eligible for treatment at the hospital. Eveland said the shooting apparently came early Tuesday.

Errett and his wife only recently had returned from Excelsior Springs, Mo., where he is reported to have owned an apartment. The bodies were discovered about 8 p. m. Tuesday by Bill Spaul, Mrs. Errett's brother.

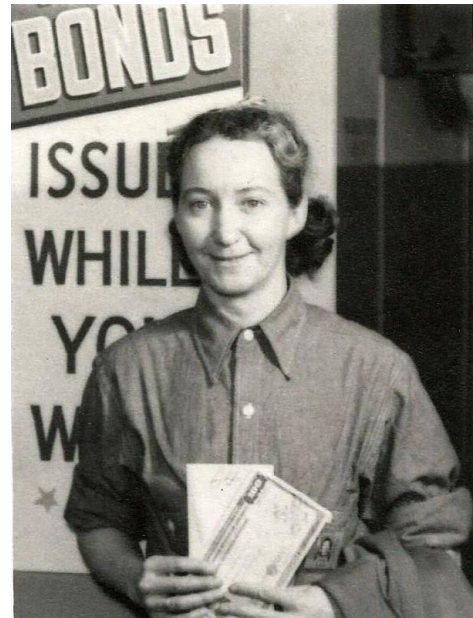
The resort, one of the oldest in Minnesota, was started in 1700 by the Spauls and Mrs. Errett was born there. Until her marriage about 18 months ago to the Missourian, she had run the Woman Lake Tavern, which was well known to tourists in the area.

been seen all day. They had arrived the day before for a visit and stayed in cabin #5. Dad decided to check on them, went to the cabin and knocked on the door. With no answer, he looked in the window and saw George's body lying on the floor. He went inside and found them both dead. George had gotten up sometime in the early hours and walked around NSC for quite a while... according to his footprints found in the sand. George had been suffering with some kind of pain that the doctors couldn't seem to find. Because of that, he had been committed to an asylum because they said it was all in his head. Ella had taken him out just the day before. He had shot Ella, wrapped her in the bed sheets and then turned the gun on himself. I became afraid to go to sleep

at night and went to sleep between my mom and dad.

They had me go to stay with a friend for 3 days while things settled down. Cabin #5 was torn down after that, removing bad memories from sight.

One summer, I was probably 15 or 16; I decided I was going to conquer my fear of the cabins at night. I decided to move into cabin #8 for the summer. Mom and Dad helped me with the move. While mom and I were making the bed, a bat decided to join us! As it flew over our heads, mom and I dove into the bed; dad eventually caught it and released it outside into the night. It was very hard to make myself stay in the cabin so far away from our house, but somehow I managed to make it there for a month.



All of my family is gone from me now, all waiting for me in heaven. Florence and William James Spain are buried in Pine River. They are found in the first part of the old part of the cemetery. My parents and two brothers are also buried there, alongside my mother's parents, brother and sister.



Today, all that remains of the original NSC property are three cabins: our family home (#10), a small cabin on the east side of the property (#8) and one of the two larger cabins that were on the southern point near the lagoon (#11). The foundations for the garage and the old school are still visible as well.

Bill Spain adds color to his pioneer's role

Oct. 29, 1980

By BILL BURNSON
Special Correspondent

You don't have to be a veteran of the Spanish-American War or over a hundred years old to be a pioneer in Cass County. The county wasn't officially organized until 1897 and the courthouse that many now consider ancient was not built until early in the 20th century. Indeed, that time is so recent that several still agile and civically active Cass County ladies who were around before the courthouse was constructed to this day are reluctant to accept the pioneer label, saying that they are far too young to be so considered.

This is not the case with William J. (Bill) Spain, a truly lifelong resident of Hackensack and Woman Lake, who began life on Hackensack's Main Street in 1904. Bill is a genuine, bonafide, 100% dyed in the wool Cass County pioneer, colorful and at all times interesting, who is in every way proud of his pioneer status and is ever willing, even happy, to regale and edify one and all with accounts of what was going on in Hackensack and Cass County way back when.

There wasn't, properly speaking, a Hackensack when Bill's father and mother reached the scene in 1901. The townsit was platted the next year and received its name from two entrepreneurs, John Curo and Bye Bartlett, who claimed that the mosquitoes here were as voracious as those in their home town, Hackensack, New Jersey.

The Brainerd and Northern Railroad was already here and W. A. (Will) Spain, incapacitated as a railroad brakeman when he lost a leg in Wisconsin, became the first station agent in 1901, a position he held until succeeded by E. O. King in 1916.

"You could hardly call it a position," says Bill Spain, who has carefully collected family and local history over the years. "Dad got just \$35 a month when he started and finally worked his way up to \$45. In addition to Hackensack he handled all the business at Lathrop north of town and a siding south of town. There was plenty of freight, the big stuff mostly being ties, poles and lumber. All the merchandise came by freight and even cream went to Duluth that way. There was no electricity and no local phone service. Telegrams were it as communication and that end of the work kept Dad hopping."

It is a historical fact that prosperity was enjoyed by only a handful of the elite on the expanding frontier at the turn of this century. With a growing family W. J. Spain, looking for added income, built a small store on the front of their Main Street dwelling. To comply with railroad regulations the store was operated by Mrs. (Florence) Spain in her own name. Trouble followed. "This was logging country," Bill says. "They had saloons but no churches. The town toughs didn't favor the idea of women in

business or men letting it happen. There was some fuss and feuding. Eventually, they burned down our barn and a few years later, when we were doing better, they dynamited Dad's pride and joy, a motor launch which was the fastest on Birch Lake.

"Rough stuff was the custom of the time. Later on, when Birch Lake folks dammed the Boy River to hold up their water levels, a bunch from Pleasant (it was Whitefish Lake when I was a boy) dynamited it. When it was rebuilt, they came back and blew it up again.

"Nobody paid much attention to hunting and fishing laws, either. The toughs and the settlers, too, mostly took just what they needed, with extra to lay by for the winter or to sell or trade if they got too hard up. The DNR hadn't been invented yet and what game warden there were just tried to keep meat hunting and netting at a reasonable level because they knew that it would be risky business and their own hides would be in danger if they made a try at strictly enforcing the law."

Many of Bill Spain's keenest recollections center on that store building where he was born and on life in those early years on Hackensack's Main Street.

"That old store building," Bill says, "is still there, and every time I see it the memories come back. Those old stores had special smells that no old-timer can ever forget. Just about everything was sold in bulk. Every time a sack or a barrel or a jar was opened a new scent or fume joined the others. Spices, apples, pickled herring or pig's feet, peanut butter, licorice or kerosene, they all played a part in changing the store aroma and we had no room deodorizers to change it. Even before there were any cars around we were selling gasoline for lanterns and gas engines. It came by rail in barrels. That was a thrilling smell, too.

"The first church in Hackensack wasn't even built until 1917, but that didn't mean that the folks who believed in religion went without. The women, then like now, were the real pillars of churchly life without churches or denominations. My mother and the other good ladies in the community, with help from their often busy spouses, held group Sunday school and church meetings in homes and business places, and I understand that Sunday school classes were held as early as 1899.

"In 1906 my mother and father built the Hotel Endeavor on Main Street just across from the depot. My mother named it that because she and dad worked so hard to build it. Garritys were operating the Lakeview Hotel at that time. Hotels were good business then. People came in by rail because there were no cars, and they couldn't leave until the next day's train. The hotels housed and fed salesmen, business people,



BILL SPAIN has had a long and colorful career. He has been a surveyor for over half a century and is Hackensack's best known pioneer. (Bill Burnson Photo)

timber men, singles and visitors. Hotels were really our first resorts, because hardly any resorts had yet been built on the lakes.

"My school life started out in a very normal way. Our old school building, which had a long and wide board walk and not much equipment, had some great good teachers who became well known later. They were Noah Sawyer, Effie Butler Starkweather, Frank Wagner and Lila Seeley Smith."

Bill Spain's lifestyle changed drastically in 1912. That was the year his parents bought North Star Camp on Woman Lake. It had been built in 1900 by the elder Spain's friend, Eber Smith, and was across the bay from Kabekona Lodge, the oldest resort in the Hackensack area.

"Those old resorts," Bill Spain remembers, "were what we'd now call self-contained. We brought our guests in from Hackensack by wagon, a three- to four-hour trip. We fed them, guided them, and catered to their every need. Our resort consisted of a large log lodge and seven log cabins, which are still standing. They were as modern as you could get in 1912, which meant that nothing about them was modern, unless you'd call good food, a beautiful lake

and surroundings modern. Dad paid about \$1200 for the resort, which was considered plenty. Lakeshore didn't sell by the foot then. Lakeshore property went by the acre, usually under a dollar an acre.

"The old Woman Lake School was on our property, so I liked that fine. The teacher I liked best was a Mr. Lauer, who hiked every day from Leech Lake to teach us. At this time there was no high school in Hackensack, so he taught me some high school subjects, too."

Bill's education continued the hard way. There was no high school in Hackensack so he went to Pine River, commuting by train and Model T, probably the first aspiring Cass County scholar so to do. There followed several years of classes at the University of Minnesota.

"I stayed at the Hotel Vendome," he says, "and studied mining, metallurgy and engineering when I wasn't working for my food and room. I ended up with Anaconda Copper out in Butte, Montana, but the call of the lake country was too strong, especially after I married my high school sweetheart, Evelyn Ralya, a Pine River girl. We had 48 wonderful years together and four fine children. I took the state engineering exam for surveyor so I could work in my

home county and be with our family.

"As I remember there were only two schools, Webb Lake and Woman Lake between Hackensack and Longville then. Evelyn taught at Webb Lake. Here's a little sidelight. When we got married she lost her job. It was common practice, and stated in most contracts of the 20s and 30s that married women could not teach. Now for a coincidence: Evelyn and the three single ladies, Beatrice (Burnson) King, Margaret (Poore) Thomas and Pearl (Williams) Tabaka, who followed her as Webb Lake teachers, all sooner or later made their homes in the Hackensack community. They were great friends and three of them were active members in the same Hackensack church."

Well over a half century has passed since Bill began surveying in Cass County. He's slowed down some, but the name of W. J. Spain and Associates is still in the local yellow pages, which is a paradox inasmuch as they didn't even have telephones around when he was a little boy.

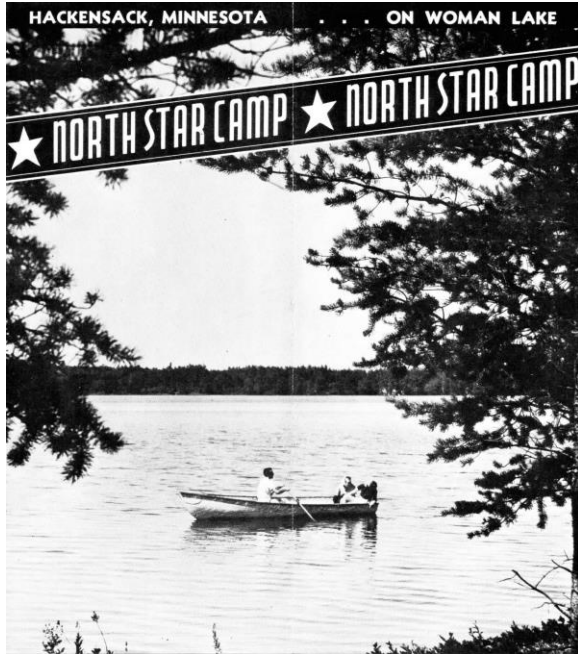
Throughout the years Bill has freely expended time and energy for the common weal. He became a perennial township constable ("wasn't much work") in 1928 and still has the badge though the office no longer exists. He worked for many years laying out and supervising area conservation dams, served as Woman Lake Association Secretary for 14 years, did a stint with the Sea Bees in World War II, proudly wears his 50 year Masonic pin, has been a lifelong advocate of pure honey as one of God's special gifts to mankind, almost made it to the Minnesota State Senate in 1938, losing by a scant 132 votes, and has served as

Sixth District VFW commander.

The words which describe Bill Spain best are kindly, gregarious and interesting. He's a veritable mine, a living lode of Cass County historical lore, and when he talks local history it's from the standpoint of human interest concerns and humor, wherein he pictures life as it really existed. His tales of surveying history and adventure in the county are legend.

"When you write this," he said, "be sure to give our North Star Camp Motto. It went like this: 'As you leave these beautiful surroundings, resolve to act now and in the future in such a way that generations to follow will also have the beautiful forests and sparkling waters to enjoy throughout their lifetimes.'"

North Star Camp Brochure, about 1940



SOME DON'TS
 Don't forget your rubber coat.
 Don't forget your old shoes.
 Don't forget that we serve no game
 out of season.
 Don't forget that we serve fish when
 you bring them in.
 Don't forget to return all fish to the
 water alive, which you cannot use.



Dedicated to those . . .
WHO LOVE TO FOLLOW THE CALL OF THE WILD

NORTH STAR CAMP was established in 1900 and has been operated under present management for the past 28 years. Located 11 miles east of Hackensack on a point on the west side of the beautiful and famous Woman Lake where there is always a cool, refreshing breeze. Woman Lake is 1300 feet above sea level nestled

among pine, birch and maple trees. You will find this lake one of the best for variety fishing and hunting and the camp the best for rest and relaxation, away from civilization, where a man and his family may go back to nature and dreams of his childhood.

ACCOMMODATIONS and FACILITIES at NORTH STAR CAMP

North Star Camp is in the heart of a veritable paradise for sport with fishing, hunting, hiking, bathing, boating, canoe trips through the chains of lakes and golf about 20 minutes drive by car.

The climate is dry and very beneficial to those troubled with hay fever. Best of pure water from driven well. Plenty of good home cooking and baking and the most wholesome food that we can procure for you. We have our own garden, therefore an abundance of fresh vegetables also our own herd of tested Guernsey cows to furnish good pure milk and cream; chickens for eggs and fry from our own flock. Store in connection with resort.

We have both housekeeping and sleeping cabins with meals at main lodge. Cabins equipped with electricity and have inner spring mattresses. A boat is furnished with every cabin. Ice free. Minnows always on hand. Elito-Evinrude Agency at North Star Camp.

Rates range, for housekeeping cabins, from \$10 to \$25 per week, depending upon size of cabin. Meals and sleeping log cabins \$5 per day and up.

Inquiries concerning rates and reservations are invited. Address:
NORTH STAR CAMP
 Mrs. W. J. Spain Hackensack, Minnesota



Main lodge as viewed from the lake.



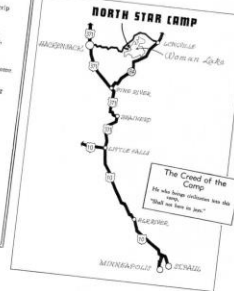
Below—Mr. A. E. Robinson of Cincinnati, a guest who has been making North Star Camp his vacation headquarters since 1907.



Be sure and bring your old clothes and make yourself at home.



WOMAN LAKE IS CALLING
 Lay aside your gun and fishing.
 Come over to the lake and catch your grip.
 For you can't catch it in fishing.
 A woman and a child.
 Come and rest your weary body.
 Where the fishing is so good.
 Try the steady work that is so good.
 Come with steady work and good.
 Come and have real joys of fishing.
 Take a fish and make your home.
 You can't make it if you fish.
 Come and have the wild birds singing.
 Fishing in the water, too.
 For the fishing is so good.
 It is calling—calling you.
 Come and bring the family with you.
 Where the fishing is so good.
 Through the pine trees of the forest.
 Gently calling you to sleep.
 Where the sky line water gleams.
 In the soft light of the moon.
 Come and breathe the fragrant air.
 Of the pine-needle forest.
 By the water's edge.
 Come on up to the lake.
 With your gun and fishing.
 For that Woman Lake is calling—
 It is calling—calling you.
 —Copyright by C. J. Byrne, St. Paul



Travel Information

The road map on this page gives best and most direct routes. If you do not care to drive, bus service to Hackensack daily to Hackensack from Minneapolis and St. Paul. We will meet you at Hackensack if you come by train or bus. Notify us of your time of arrival.

Letter from Bill Spain, Jr. to Future Wife, Evelyn Ralya in 1923

BOATS, BAIT, TACKLE
ALWAYS ON HAND

AUTO AND TEAM LIVERY
IN CONNECTION

North Star Camp
ON WOMAN LAKE

Hotel Endeavor
HACKENSACK, MINN.

General Merchandise

MRS. W. J. SPAIN, PROPRIETOR

HACKENSACK, MINN. Nov. 11 1923
ON THE MINNESOTA & INTERNATIONAL RY.

Dear Evelyn:

Hackensack, Minn.
is right, I am home
for a while. We left mysle
Friday at 9:15 A.M. and
got here at 7:00 P.M. We ate
dinner in Little Falls. Four
professors came with me.
They are all from the school
of Chemistry. We have been
hunting ducks from dawn
till dark. I got six yesterday
and seven today.
Mother sure was glad to
see me. I walked around
and came in the front
door, turned my violin up,
and started to play in
the front room. Everybody
was in the kitchen. I
played quite a while before

BOATS, BAIT, TACKLE
ALWAYS ON HAND

AUTO AND TEAM LIVERY
IN CONNECTION

North Star Camp
ON WOMAN LAKE

Hotel Endeavor
HACKENSACK, MINN.

General Merchandise

MRS. W. J. SPAIN, PROPRIETOR

HACKENSACK, MINN. _____ 192____
ON THE MINNESOTA & INTERNATIONAL RY.

mama heard me. Then she
came leaping in like a house
afire. She acted as if I was
a little baby. The first
thing she said was, "I knew
you would bring your violin
when you came home."
I sure would be at the
height of my glory if you
were here.
In regards to Hinnie kissing
you, and me not having
anything to say about as a
certain young lady said in
a recent letter, I would like
to state that it wouldn't
be what I would say that
would matter so much as what
I would do, see?
By the way have you got a huc
or two for William.

Account of Great Grandfather's Death

In July of 1869, Schuyler Gates and his wife sold their property in Kilbourn (now known as Wisconsin Dells) and with \$2,200 in cash they commenced a trip down the Wisconsin River. While camping on an island near Arena, two masked men attacked Schuyler and his wife. The attack left Gates unconscious, and as the bandits made off with their belongings and money, they also assaulted Mary Ann, and tied her to a tree. Mary Ann was able to free herself. She then got her husband into a boat and headed down the river to a nearby farm house.

He slowly healed, and was able to testify before a grand jury. The couple believed they were attacked by the locally notorious bandit Pat Wildrick and his partner Pat Welch. Wildrick was a well-known name around the area and was commonly associated with violence and crime. So it was not a surprise to anyone when the Columbia County Sheriff arrested him.

In early September of 1869, Wildrick, under arrest for the Gates attack, hired an attorney from Portage named William Henry Spain. Mr. Wildrick was freed on bail at the time, and beat up his drinking buddy, stole five dollars and again, was arrested. It was around this time when Schuyler Gates was found dead across a railroad bridge.

Feelings were already running high and only escalated when Wildrick's short tempered attorney, William Henry Spain, had a run-in with his old rival Mr. Barney Britt. Spain held a grudge against Britt since their days as soldiers in Company D, 19th Wisconsin Infantry in the Civil War. Spain pulled out a pistol, shot and killed Mr. Britt. Spain was already unpopular for associating with Wildrick. His popularity only lessened from there on out.

Seeking refuge from an angry mob, Spain turned himself in to the Portage Marshall and was then locked up. The mob soon broke down the doors, dragged Spain down Wisconsin Street to a large oak tree and hung him. The entire incident from the time Britt was shot to the time Spain was hung only lasted mere minutes.

The very next evening, about 150 men assembled outside the jail. They forcefully opened the door, tied up the sheriff, unlocked Wildrick's cell, and dragged him to a nearby tree and hung him as well.

