

Memories of Earl Lund

Contributed by his son Erik Lund

City corner was located at the crossroads east of the river where Irver Rajala once had a store. With all these neighbors Frank's hunting skills surely help them keep fresh meat in their homestead kitchens. By the early 1920's Frank had 77 notches of deer and 4 of moose on his rifle. The barrel was beginning to wear, so he sold it for \$10.00 to a fellow by the name of Meyers. When Frank had bought the rifle, he paid \$14.80 for it. He never said it was a new rifle at that price, and I'm guessing it was a used rifle. Frank had a used 1924 Chevrolet and received \$40.00 cash plus a Super Sporter 300 Savage. According to the 1925 Trapper's Friend catalogue a six shot 300 Savage, brand new, was \$41.95 plus mailing weight of nine pounds. I'm guessing a Super Sporter 300 Savage would have cost at least \$60.00, so Frank probably got a good deal on the trade.

One winter day Frank started out to check his trap line and fell on some ice with his 300 Savage Sporter and hit the ground hard. He wasn't too far from home when a deer jumped out of some brush standing about twenty paces standing broadside. Frank pulled up taking a shot and the deer just stood there. He took aim again firing and the deer took off disappearing into the woods. It was such a close shot, but it was a miss. Then he investigated the sights. He picked out a large tree, squeezing ever slowly and took two shots. Looking at the tree, he was surprised to see holes. Back home he set up a target and sure enough, the barrel was bent some from falling on the ice patch. The rifle was shooting six inches to the right and eight inches low. Frank set up some blocks of wood, hitting the barrel against the blocks. After several whacks against the wood blocks and some target practice, he got it sighted within one half inch.

He carried it for a while and he had an older Chevrolet car that he needed some work done on. Frank brought the car to Bill Guastafson's garage and the repair bill was \$14.00. Frank had no money and Bill had spotted the Super Sporter in the back seat of Frank's car. Bill wanted the rifle, so they called it even steven.

A few days later, Frank bought a second hand 32 special Winchester rifle and that was his rifle for the rest of his life. I personally saw it at least twice during my visits with him. It was a beautiful rifle, having a side mount saddle ring, so it was a fairly old rifle. Frank's neighbor, Dave Harrington, a highly educated man who had worked for a railroad. Dave was a fairly large man of six feet tall and had been sick for over a year before he died. His wife, Mary Elizabeth, was forever thankful to their neighbor Ivar Rajala. Every day for over a year Ivar would come over to the Harrington homestead to carry Dave from his bed to set him in his chair. Dave was bed ridden, so while Ivar took care of Dave, Mary would remake the bed. This man Ivar Rajala was a great neighbor for this deed and Mary Harrington had the highest regard for him. Often in the summer, weather permitting, Ivar would carry Dave outside putting him in a chair so he could look around. Mary's grandson Pat Harrington, who lives west of Effie, told me that Ivar Rajala was a true saint, not only to Dave, but to all his neighbors. Pat Harrington's friendly smile, his gentlemen ways and pleasant soft voice brings out his grandparent's spirits.

One of Pat's son's, Kim, was a very good childhood friend of Frank Werthner. Frank taught not only Kim how to trap, but also Pat. Frank married the widowed Mary Harrington around 1928. She had arthritis pretty bad and didn't live for too many years thereafter. Some other people who were great friends to Frank were Bill and Angie Prather. When Bill was just a young lad, Frank drove him to country school. Bill and Angie often drove to Frank's place late in his life to take him to their home for meals. Frank liked to ride with Angie to shop in town as they did often. Bill cut Frank's hair for years and I'm sure Bill claimed Frank as his grandfather. Frank's old Jeep sits today at Bill's place as good it was in the 1950's. As a young boy I still remember Frank driving that old Jeep going down highway number one to Effie. He never drove fast and everyone knew that old Jeep. Frank told me that one time while driving his Jeep towards Effie he saw a dead grouse on the river hill. He stopped to pick it up and a fellow questioned him taking the grouse. Frank explained he was going to use it for trapping bait. It seems that this man was a warden and after a short visit, Frank drove on with his find.

In September of 1928 Frank had a salt lick in his pasture. His wife Mary informed Frank that there was a large buck at the lick. Frank snuck out the door to a tree stand close to the house with his 32 Winchester. As he looked towards the salt lick, the buck was still there, which was about 250 feet away. He fired hitting the buck in the front shoulder and down went the buck. The buck got up and a shot to the head put notch number 44 on his 32. Frank said, " My 32 Special really knocked a lot of deer with real authority."

On one visit to Frank's place, he showed me his leather band headlight. It was a carbide light with thick spotting lens and another for fishing. It fit my head perfect and he gave it to me. My son Tim and I tried it one dark night and I was surprised how bright it was. I later located one of Frank's sister's boys Dan, and I sent the headlight to him in Wisconsin. Frank's sister Sophie knew Dan thought the world of Frank. I received a nice thank you letter from Dan and the headlight hangs on the wall of his house today. I'm sure he is very fond of his uncle's old carbide headlight. Frank shot over 125 deer using that headlight. It makes one wonder how many deer Frank shot during his lifetime for his neighbors. He also hunted for logging camps, but he said that was a tough job. It took a lot of deer to feed a camp crew, while one moose could get him somewhat of a break.

I had originally visited Frank Werthner to learn about my Grandfather Andrew Walter Lund who homesteaded less than a mile away in the old Birch Store place. Andrew had moved there with his family on the John Nelson homestead that had been vacated in 1923. He and his wife had one Daughter Hazel, Son's George, Jess, Frederick, Andrew Jr., and Clair moved from Gragla, Minn. My Grandfather died in 1926 and Frank hauled him with his model T to Bigfork for burial in his birthplace at Rochester. The Kids attended Horton School with the Rajalas, Patrows and the Harringtons. Mary Patrow who attended old Horton, would teach years later in the new Horton School. She was a wonderful, patient, heartwarming and a great teacher. Mary married Dutch Knotts from north of Craigville and taught her children at Horton School. She was the greatest teacher that I ever had in school and she also taught my two Sons Timothy and Erik at the Effie School. A very dedicated teacher and special Mother to her family. The Horton School was named after one Jack Horton who never taught there, but was instrumental in getting the school started.

I asked Frank if he ever trapped Elbow Lake and the answer was yes. No one ever lived there on the land until some of my relatives bought 40 acres in 1946 to build a hunting camp. The cabin was a retreat for many Lund and Randall Kids for years. Today Donna Weil and Jeff Balsey live there and being wonderful people still allow any Lund or Randall Grandkids to enjoy an afternoon on Elbow Lake.

In 1925 and 26, Frank Ray cruised the road past Elbow Lake to Deer Acres lodge, then owned by Ed Kitna and his mother-in-law. Frank built several log cabins there and said that the Mrs. first husband had died and she collected the money to buy the land and build the resort for her Son Ed. Ed got his start as he married her daughter. Hugo Kissleback was hired to cut the road out of timber as along with Pete Olson. Their pay was \$2.50 an hour for a ten-hour day. Charlie Blackmer Sr. also helped build log cabins and a black man was the cook. The black man was called Nigger Charlie, never his real full name. Frank said he was a great cook and loved to fish. The cabins were built in 70 working days and some still stand today at Deer Acres on the west side of the lake. Stories of John Dillenger have floated around through the years that he stayed there a few times. Frank said a floatplane flew in to Deer Lake on a few occasions and the road in was blocked off going in to the lodge, so maybe he did stay there, but probably not for very long, as they chased him pretty constant.

Years ago, I was walking not too far from the lodge and stumbled on to some very old whiskey bottles. One bottle was a rich brown in color with a cross on it with a deer standing on their hind legs against the cross. A wolf sits on the top of the cross with this written on the bottom of the cross, "Pro Pelle Cutem." The bottom of the bottle reads, "Exporters Hudson Bay Company Edinburgh Scotland." Also on the bottom was the following, "S 433 A U.G.B.8." Another bottle is amber green with a crown on the bottom. A man stands on both sides of the crown holding a club type instrument. Under the crown sits a bird with outstretched wings. One side of the amber 8-sided bottle has, "J. A. Gilka-Berlin." The other side has, "J. A. Gilka," written on it. Another bottle was dark green and written on the face was, "Gallo's Whiskey." On the bottom is, "No 7." I'm only guessing, but I'd bet they are very old and most likely very expensive whiskey. Maybe John Dillenger did drink a few shots of that good whiskey?

Pete Olson who worked on building the road to Deer Acres was known as Pretty Pete, He was a big handsome man, husky man, who wound up working in Colorado on the Boulder dam. About two weeks before Christmas in the early days Frank Smith from the north bay of Deer Lake wanted Frank Werthner to take him to town to get ingredients to make moonshine. Frank refused Smith, as he knew he was a heavy drinker, Smith talked Art Smock into taking him into town. Near Christmas Frank, Jess Bowerman, and Tom Bradley were staying at Sucker creek cabin when they were invited for Christmas cheer at Smith's place at his north bay cabin. Jess Bowerman and Tom Bradley went, but Frank stayed at sucker creek. After a day Bradley came back, but Jess didn't show up for nearly a week. Jess showed up, finally, very dizzy, weak and hungry. Frank and Tom made something to eat for Jess. Smith and Jess put on a boiler and drank moonshine for several days. This led up to when Frank Smith did himself in later on that you early read about him shooting himself. The deputy that was involved when Smith shot himself was named Johnson from Bigfork.

Camp #1 was above the Deer Lake creek c.c. dam and was run by Orin Patrow in 1911. This was the same camp sight used by Backus and Brooks logging company in 1910. They had 40 head of horses and they came down with Gander disease, which was very contagious. They were driven over to the large rock outcroppings to the north of the camp. One horse wandered away with a crippled foot winding up at camp five. Drank knew this horse and took out for camp five to get the horse. It was too late when he got there, as Pete Phillips had shot it and Frank wasn't too happy about that. The remaining horses of which was 39, were all shot. Jack McLeod was the boss at the Backus and Brooks camp.

While I was canoeing the Bigfork River in the 1970's, I found an old fallen in log cabin above Craigville. I was always curious about building sights, so I took a look finding some old glass cookie tin boxes in sort of the cabin's basement. I found an old wooden cedar fur stretcher board with this saying written on one side in log chalk, "Joe, come over tonight, Jack McCleod and I still have it."

Frank snared and trapped several wolves at dead horse rock after those horses were shot there in 1910.

East of Deer Lake Charlie's tavern and south about 3 miles was a Namankin logging camp run by co-owner Duncan price. Archie Shaw was a walking boss going from camp to camp with his team of horses. He had a cutter camp near this side of Deer creek. Erskine Lake was named by Tom Bradley, Frank and Jess Bowerman after Thomas Erskine who surveyed the lake. Later on Bulldog Al Hanson had a logging camp on the edge of Erskine Lake. He was from Littlefork. Bulldog Hanson had a sawmill sight on Bass Lake where the sawdust pile is today. Jerry Gilbert built the road into that sight. Pete Phillips had a sawmill sight on Sucker Lake on a high hill at the East end. George Lund had a small camp at kind of the south east end of Sucker Lake.

Jim Johnson had a garage in Craigville in 1923 and 24. He came one night to Frank's place driving his Willy Knight car. They went hunting deer that night to the farm camp near deer creek, but found no deer.

One time two strangers shot two deer across from Frank's place and dressed them out just before dark. Frank went over in the dark, taking one of them home. The next day the two men came back and accused Andrew Lund of stealing one. Charlie Erickson and Pete Damgrin had homesteads north in Bustitown on a small creek. Pete sold his place to a logging camp and Miss Burland married Alex Damgrin.

This is the beginning of a paper written by Earl Lund, always an eager ear for old trapper stories and the like. I remember going with him to "Uncle Frank's" place to listen of the old man and his stories. Dad even taped a few of their conversations. The place smelled of skunk, Frank's dog Queen was really irritable if you got too close to her tail so you always petted her head, If she turned around, YOU STOPPED PETTING!! Frank lived in what I thought was a pretty run-down old shack. It was home. He didn't have any need for fancy this or that. Heat, A roof, Water, Good enough. Frank told of coming to Effie in 1908, Maybe 06. Actually, I was writing this to tell you of the author!

Frank always had a way, I guess Dad and Frank were Brothers in different times. Generations were the only thing different between them. Dad made Frank's tombstone as a final farewell to his old pal. Dad never forgot him. Neither will I. Dad used to go "digging" at the old logging camps. I remember that being kind of tiresome at the time, I was young, I now see the treasures he looked for. History must have forgotten or just let go of. He sure did find history. Broad axes were always a good find. Stamp hammers pretty much ruled though. You found one of them and Dad just lit right up! Anyway, I could go on and on, Dad helped everyone he could. He never turned his back on people. Although I remember him letting others know if something was not fair or just. Everyone speaks of deceased people as saints, Dad was but he was human too, just like you and me. He was strong. Worked very hard, Played hard and then.... He went back to work some more!

Erik Lund