

8 Nov. 2015

TO: Readers of Chippewa Lake newsletter and, possibly some relatives

Having read the article about the Hedeem family (“the catnap”) I thought I would add some information I have.

My grandfather, John Erickson, and Erick Erickson (Hedeem) Sr. were brothers -- Erick Mattson being their father (Erick’s sons, hence Erickson). I’ve wondered why two brothers would have different last names (Erickson, Hedeem), but the explanation given certainly is reasonable.

Erick Hedeem Jr. is therefore a first cousin to my dad and his brothers and sisters. Erick Hedeem Jr.’s children (Willie, Albert, Edward and others) are 2nd cousins to my dad. What label I should put on myself (3rd cousin?) I’ll leave up to you readers.

John Erickson, wife Anna Greta and 16 week old son, John, came to Douglas County about April 1870 along with the Erick Norin (pronounced Noreen) family. (As an interesting aside, John Erickson was married to Erick Norin’s sister and Erick Norin was married to John Erickson’s sister). They all came from the Grenarda, Sweden area.

As I was told, John Erickson picked out a piece of land using a map at the court-house and subsequently homesteaded a quarter section on Lake Chippewa. I am the present owner which means that the farm has been in the Erickson family for 145 years.

Also as I was told, they lived in a hillside dugout for a time while, presumeably, building a log house. That house stood until the early 1930’s.

The property was heavily wooded. ("The only way to see the sky was to look straight up" was a quote I heard). Removing the trees for cropland was not done with bulldozers and chain saws.

This area was Indian territory at one time, and I understand that when John Erickson arrived the Indians had left the area, but the poles of their tepees were still present.

John and Anna Greta had three children -- John, Ericka and Ludvig. John died in 1957 at age 88, but the other two died in their late teens or early twenties. Anna Greta died in 1877.

In 1896 John Erickson married by grandmother, Aasta Evju (Aasta pronounced Osta) and their children were Alma, Margaret, Erick, Ludvig, Halver, Ericka and Carl. Carl was the youngest and was my father. When my dad was born, his dad was 67. Makes me believe that I'm lucky to be here.

My uncles, Erick, Ludvig and Halver, kept in contact with Albert and Willie over the years and I remember them quite well.

Hopefully this has added something to the history of Lake Chippewa and the area.

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