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previous 32 years. Improvements to the land included the clearing and cultivating of an orchard with 29 peach and 130 apple trees for five seasons. He also stated that the land was: "fifty acres of sand bluffs and thirty acres cedar and hardwood timber and most valuable for orchard and pasture"; and that he owned horses, cattle, and farm machinery on the adjoining farm.³⁷

Also on 25 July 1908, Irwin Beck's testimony of witness for the August Beck claim was filed. In it, Irwin stated that he was 21 years old. He indicated that August Beck settled upon the adjoining land before he (Irwin) was born. Irwin Beck noted that August's family had "built wire fence around five acres of orchard cleared the five acres for orchard and made road. Value of all improvements one hundred and thirty dollars." Oswald Furst also filled out a testimony of witness. In it, he stated that he was 68 years old. His testimony supported that of Irwin Beck and added details indicating that the roads were made around the autumn of 1903, and a number of trees were cleared during that year. Rolland Shank and Thomas Thompson were also named as witnesses.³⁸

The Becks were successful farmers: August Beck was the ". . . King of South Manitou as he was always the person that was called upon should a cattle buyer or salesman come to the island, also he was the first one to get a grain cutter and binder, and instrumental in getting the threshing machine."³⁹

Around 1927 Elizabeth Beck died in an accident; her husband continued to live alone on the farm where he did all of the domestic and field chores. Shortly thereafter, his daughter Mary and her husband, Sam Morris, brought their daughter, Louise, to live on the island.⁴⁰ They stayed several years, but were frustrated by the difficulty of making a living as island farmers.⁴¹ According to Henry, after they left, August continued to run the farm until December 1941, when he left the island due to poor health. The next owner of the property was Irwin Beck, who sold it to Paul Humphreys, who eventually sold the property to William Boales, who retained the farm until selling it to the Park Service in the 1970's.⁴²

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Anderson, 98; also cited in Henry, "The August and Elizabeth Beck Farm."

⁴⁰Henry, "The August and Elizabeth Beck Farm;" the information was also confirmed by the interview with Louise Oligney.

⁴¹Louise Oligney interview.

⁴²Henry, "The August and Elizabeth Beck Farm"; and "National Park Service Land Title Transfer Map."