



*My Point  
Of  
View*

*by  
G. C. Furst*

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by

Glenn C. Furst

## DEDICATION

I hereby dedicate this book to my mother, whose love, care, and concern for all of us was somehow able to see us through nine trouble-filled years.



## INTRODUCTION

As you read the contents of the following pages, I hope you will realize that you are reading about a way of life, rather than a chronology that specifies the exact dates of each event.

I pray also that you will take into consideration that the author, who is nearing the end of his life, is attempting to relate to you what it was like for a young boy to live at an isolated lighthouse station more than seventy years ago. A station that over a period of years, was washed into Lake Michigan. A station that no longer exists.

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## CHAPTER 1

### *A Stepfather and a New Life*

It is probably fitting and proper at this point in the story that I relate to my stepfather, and to the various ways and names our family will use in making reference to him. When our mother married our stepfather in 1917, my sister Ethel was eleven years old, Norman was nine years, and I was four years old. Ethel and Norman had many memories of our real father, and resented anyone trying to take his place. I was little, not very well I'm told, and only interested in playing with my pal Mae, mother's sewing machine, etc.

It's interesting; the various ways in which he was referred to during his lifetime by our family. Before our family was complete, there were to be six children, three Fursts, and three Hutzlers. He was called Ernest by Ethel, Norman, and our mother when talking to the Furst children, and called 'your dad' when talking to the Hutzler children. I, being small and in the middle of both groups, was very confused and never really knew how to relate, or what to call him. I did call him Dad when talking to my younger brothers and sisters sometimes. I can't ever remember calling him Dad when addressing him (I'm truly sorry for this).

It was only after he became an old man, was alone, and he would travel from one child's home to another to spend a few weeks with each one, that I began to relate to my children that this man was 'Grandpa Hutzler'. I pray he found some comfort in my children calling him Grandpa.

My stepfather, Ernest G. Hutzler, was a proud, handsome, energetic man. He loved to hunt rabbits, dance and, with a twinkle in his eyes, he loved to tease young people. Above all, he wanted to gain praise for keeping a spotless lighthouse station.

As he grew older, he began to look back at his forty-two years of faithful service. I heard him say so often "The biggest mistake I ever made in my life was when I accepted the appointment of keeper of North Manitou Lighthouse Station." As I try to recall some of the events that took place there, I heartily agree with him.

The year 1918 – My first year in school! I didn't want to go, and would rather have stayed home and played boat with mother's sewing

machine. I sat in a double seat with sister Ethel. When my class was called, Ethel would have to half drag me to the front seat, where class was held. Thank goodness the teacher was my Aunt Violet, the prettiest, sweetest person in the whole world. She understood somehow, and we worked it out okay after a while.

The year 1919 – We arrived at North Manitou Lighthouse Station on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February, 1919. It was to become my permanent address for the next nine years. I was five years old; George was four months old. My brother Norman was ten, and sister Ethel was twelve years old. Tip, our hunting dog, was about four years old. School was over for me for a couple of years.

Ethel and Norman walked the four-and-a-half-miles to school, in order to finish the school year. They would leave at daybreak, and return at nightfall. My sister Ethel, now eight-four years old, has vivid memories of the walk to and from school, and, to my surprise, remembers every pupil in school. The teacher was Carrie Firestone. There were fourteen pupils that year, namely: Fred Dustin, Stanley Palmer, Anna Halseth, Johnny Stormer, Ethel and Margaret Anderson, Hans and Gertrude Anderson, Harold Stormer, Alden Nelson, Melvin and Gertrude Firestone, and, of course, Ethel and Norman Furst.

Johnny Stormer was a good wood carver, and sometimes wood shavings would be found under his seat. Fred Dustin was the hardest one to control, and didn't seem to care if school kept or not. My sister told me that one day he got fed up with the way things were going, so he just opened a window near his seat, jumped out, and went home. His departure left everyone open-mouthed, wide-eyed, and looking at the teacher. Nothing she could do, so she ignored it. (I served with Fred in the South Manitou Coast Guard Station many years later. We both had families then. He was an excellent boat-handler. Many times, I went on rescue trips with Fred at the helm of the lifeboat. We, among others, went to war in 1941.)

I remember how concerned mother would be when Ethel and Norman were later than usual returning home from school, particularly when the driving snow storms were in progress. Under these conditions, walking on the icy beach was impossible, and they would be driven inland for the shelter of the woods. In the woods there was shelter from the wind, but the snow was deep and made walking slow and difficult. As they approached the point, they lost all protection and were at the mercy of the wind and blowing snow.

I remember how my mother would walk from one window to another as she attempted to look in the direction of the woods, only to be frustrated because the windows were so heavily covered with frost. It would be dark when, finally, we would hear the back door open, and a stomping of feet at the foot of the four or five steps leading up to the kitchen. We would open the kitchen door and look down on a couple of snow-matted creatures, as they shed their outer garments at the foot of the stairs. How cheerful our house became as mother encouraged them to remove their wet foot gear, and gather around the kitchen range. On this range would be the evening meal, simmering on the back of the stove, just waiting for their arrival. I remember how attentive I was to their tales of the trip to and fro, also what had happened in school that day. "Next year", mother told me, she hoped things would be different, as I would be older and she had to get me started in school too.

The rest of the winter was a lonely time for me. When Norman and Ethel went to school, there was no one for me to play with. One can wonder why did we go to North Manitou in the middle of the winter? The lighthouse was closed, and wouldn't be opened until the fifteenth of April. The reason was economics; there were four children to feed and clothe. If you lived in the lighthouse quarters, you were provided with fuel, oil for lamps, laundry soap, toilet tissue, and had no rent or taxes to pay. My stepfather's wage was \$105.00 a month.

Oh, how I missed my little pal, Mae. We had played together since we were babies. I missed her so very much. I still had my Foxy Grampa book we had enjoyed so much together, but it was no fun looking at it all alone. So, I would sit for hours, looking out the kitchen window, out over the ice formations, toward Pyramid Point. If I leaned over a little, I could see South Manitou lighthouse, and memories of my life on that island came back to the front of my mind. I'm sure mother could feel my loneliness. She sometimes would play little games with me, and I was always one of the first ones to be treated to the tasty little cookies coming out of that hot oven of hers.

When I tired of looking out that window, I would go in the dining room and play with mother's sewing machine. In my imagination, this was a boat engine, and by changing speeds of how fast I made it go, and by making different sounds with my mouth, I could mimic any boat I was familiar with. All the boats in those days had only one- and two-cylinder engines, so it wasn't very hard to mimic them. I remember when I was on a trip with my boat, I would properly give the passing signals, saluted other

ships and boats with three long blasts and two short ones, as was the custom in those days. I sounded the fog horn when running in the fog or in a snowstorm, finally sounding a danger signal and, with the engine going full-speed astern, I'd pile her high on the rocks. While still lying flat on my back with my arms spread wide open, I'd sound a mournful four-blast distress signal. I noticed sometimes when my stepfather and mother witnessed this scene, they would look at each other and smile.

## CHAPTER 2

### *A Lonely Boy*

My mother had a routine for each day of the week. Monday was wash day. Tuesday was the day she ironed clothes and baked bread. The combination of ironing clothes and baking bread made sense; the kitchen range had to be kept hot to heat the irons, so she might as well have bread in the oven baking. Tuesday was my favorite day because I loved fresh-baked bread, and could hardly wait until it came out of the oven. I can still smell it, and can just see the butter melting into it. My mouth waters when I think of it. I can hear my stepfather say, “Easy on the butter folks, it’s fifty-cents a pound.”, as he reached over with his table knife for a little nip of butter to put in his mouth. We always had plenty of food (but not always the right kind for growing children, as it was later determined that the lack of fresh milk, green vegetables, etc., was the cause of easily broken bones of our little sister and brother. Our little sister developed rickets).

A large portion of our food came out of tin cans. Oh, how I hated evaporated milk on my cereal! The choice was either eat it, or go hungry. We loved hot cakes with blackberries on them. We always had eggs, as my stepfather was proud of his chickens and, I too, helped him feed them and care for them. During the summer, they could run loose, and the fun part came when we decided to have one of those young roosters for a Sunday dinner. My goodness; how the sand flew as a bare-footed Glenn ran over those sand hills after a young rooster! I always thought they cheated when they used their wings. Sooner or later, I’d nail him, and I’d carry him back to a grinning stepdad. At first, we had a mixed flock of chickens, but soon we obtained eggs from our Aunt Minnie, who lived in Atwood, near Charlevoix. She had a beautiful flock of Rhode Island Reds. We developed a flock of them too.

The winter and spring of 1919 was a lonesome one for me. I no longer had my playmate, Mae Tobin, and it was so very cold outside. I would sit by the hour by the south kitchen window, close to the range, and look out that window. I knew the habits of the sea gulls and the crows, as they came to the point to fly over the ice formations looking for a fish, or a bit of food frozen in the ice. I don’t think there is any view that is any more lonely and cold-looking than a lake covered with ice.

My stepfather told us about a man that had frozen to death just a short time before our arrival at the light. How he had started to walk from the mainland to the island late in the day, and when it got dark, he became lost. It is believed that he used the small winter light in the tower as a guide until it began to snow, and he could no longer see it. He was found a short distance from the lighthouse. He had missed the lighthouse point only a little. He had wandered to the north too far. He was found huddled down behind a clump of ice.

My stepfather also told us about the scary trips the Stormers had made across the ice with teams of horses, in their efforts to supplement the hay and oats supply for the logging teams; how just the year before, in 1918, an effort was made to haul hay and supplies from Empire, and much of the hay had to be left out on the ice. The ice was too weak to support the heavy loads. Some of the horses had fallen through the ice, and had to be pulled out by their necks by the other horses. These were vivid, almost live, scary pictures, that appeared in the mind of a small boy as he looked out his North Manitou Light Station window.

As the years passed, and we continued our life at North Manitou Lighthouse Station, I was to witness the rigors and results of these hard winters on the stock, by finding their carcasses where they had fallen for the last time. I was also to see bales of hay out on the ice that could not be salvaged, because the ice had become unsafe. Sometimes these bales of hay were left on the ice by car ferries, and smaller craft too, as they attempted to relieve this dire situation by bringing the hay as close to the beach as the heavy ice would permit, in hopes that the owners could salvage it somehow. In some cases, the ice formations under the hay would break loose, and would get blown out in the lake again, and drift around as the wind directed.

The owners of logging camps had hard decisions to make. The beef they needed to feed the men came from cattle that had to have food over the winter. When the situation became desperate, the cattle they could no longer provide food for were turned loose to fend for themselves, in hopes that they would find sufficient food to tide them over the winter. Many times, this failed, and the carcasses would be found in various places in the spring, always partly eaten by foxes.

I welcomed the change when the ice began to break up, and we could see open water here and there. How the sea gulls enjoyed the opportunity to be able to catch surface minnows, or feed on a dead fish again. Occasionally, a small flock of ducks could be seen flying low over the ice,

to various patches of open water. It stayed so very cold for so long that year. As it warmed up a little, mother would bundle me up in my warmest clothes, and send me outside for a while. I had a sleigh, the old fashion kind with the curved wooden runners and thin metal on the bottom. It was so light and easy to pull, but most of the snow on the hills near the house had sand on them, so I would sometimes go over near the woods, where there was a nice hill with clean snow on it. It wasn't much fun though, all by myself. I loved the weekend when Norman and Ethel would be with me. Mostly when I was alone, I would walk around that point, and find all the fox tracks, and weasel tracks too, and tell my stepdad about how they had been hanging around our chicken coop. He would remind himself, and others, how important it was that the coop be tightly closed each night.

We were experiencing a real cold spell, with the usual blasting of a high wind. I was six. We were thankful for the shelter of a well-constructed brick house, and the plentiful supply of hard coal provided by the U.S.L.H.S. These were the kinds of days that I would sit for long hours by the kitchen window, alongside mother's kitchen range. I could feel the warmth of that hot stove mostly on one side, as I watched the antics of the sea gulls out on the point.

Sometimes I would play boat with mother's sewing machine, but I was getting a little old for that, and besides, George was creeping now and he couldn't keep his fingers out of my boat engine. So, I would return to my window by the kitchen range (stove). It was an interesting place to sit, because of all the exciting things that happened there. I remember how the top lids would glow red if the slide drafts on the side of the stove were open too far. Sometimes mother's boiling potatoes, or the tea kettle, would boil over, and a big cloud of steam would fill the kitchen. There would be a loud hissing noise as little balls of water bounced around on top of the stove, until they evaporated. Mother would hurry from the front room and come into the kitchen waving her apron up and down, while calling, "Glenn; get away from that stove!" Old Tip, our hound dog, sensing a dangerous situation, would rush out from behind that stove with his tail between his hind legs, and go stand by the back door. Just in case it became a 'get out of the house' situation, he was going to be the first one out.

Yes, sitting by the kitchen window definitely was the best seat in the house.

As spring neared, and the sun was warmer, I discovered the little southwest corner of our house was sheltered from most winds, and the sun

would warm the bricks of the house, and it was a nice place to play. I spent hours in that corner, pushing little blocks of wood that resembled boats back and forth. Without an imagination, I think I would have died many years ago. I'm sure it helped me through the long periods of isolated duty I had in the service too.

When it became still warmer, mother would dress brother George in warm clothes, and send him out to play with me. He sure messed up my boat playing at times, but at least I didn't have to talk to myself so much anymore. I could boss him around. He didn't listen to me, but I could boss him around anyway. As the years passed, he became a fine playmate. We still like to do things together. George is seventy-two now; I'm still five years older.

North Manitou Light Station probably had one of the nicest dwellings of any isolated station on the great lakes. The house was about forty feet wide, and approximately sixty to sixty-five feet long. The keeper occupied one-half of the building; the east and most desirable end. The downstairs consisted of a kitchen, dining room, and living room. The upstairs had three bedrooms. Of course, there weren't any toilets in the building. The assistants had the other half; first assistant the three rooms downstairs, and second assistant had the upstairs. The assistants were generally quite young, with young children if they had any at all. Everyone lived quite comfortably, but had to learn how to handle being lonesome so much.

One of the first letters an assistant or keeper would write upon arriving at North Manitou Light Station, was a letter to the Superintendent of Lighthouses, requesting a transfer to a shore station. The answer was always the same. It would acknowledge receipt of the letter, and state their name was placed on file, and would be given proper consideration when vacancies occurred. After a few years, most assistants resigned and moved back to the mainland to live. For keepers to get a shore station as a keeper in charge, someone had to retire or die. So, after nine trouble-filled years, my stepfather finally moved back to South Manitou Light Station when James Burdick was transferred to Muskegon.

I remember my first Easter at North Manitou Light. I was quite naïve, I guess, because I still believed in the Easter Bunny. How disappointed I was not to find a basket or nest of colored eggs in the house somewhere. My stepfather watched me for quite a while, with a smile on his face, and finally said, "Glenn, what are you looking for?" When I told

him, he said, “Probably the Easter Bunny got mixed up, because he never came here before.” And, he continued, “I saw some rabbit tracks under the clothesline early this morning. I’d follow those tracks if I were you.” So, I hurried out to the clothesline and, sure enough, there were rabbit tracks out there, and they went right over to one of the fence posts that was part of the fence that encircled all the lighthouse buildings. At the base of that post, was one of the nicest colored egg nests I’d ever seen. My day was made! I was convinced there *really was* an Easter Bunny!

Why do older brothers and sisters have topsoil everything?

## CHAPTER 3

### *Spring Arrives*

I didn't realize how beautiful the surrounding area was until spring came, and Norman and Ethel would take me on walks with them. My first trip to Mt. Baldy was a wonderful experience. The trip down the south beach was so interesting to me. The beaches in those days were full of treasures for a young boy. Saw mills were active all around Lake Michigan, and slab wood, logs, and many times very good lumber would be found. There were always the light bulbs, whiskey and wine bottles, fish corks, both wood and aluminum, pieces of shipwrecks, and sometimes rowing boats would be found that had gone adrift. Among these treasures there were always the little sandpipers in front of us, darting here and there as they hunted for food. Sea gulls were constantly overhead, making their various calls, and would dip down now and then for a crawling crayfish, or a small minnow that had washed ashore. As we came close to Donner's Point, they pointed to the little holes near the top of the high cliff that rose above us. I was told the swallows would build nests in them later in the season.

When we had walked around the point, we turned in a northerly direction, and proceeded to climb Mt. Baldy. When we reached the top, I was surprised how close everything seemed to be. South Manitou Island, Sleeping Bear, Pyramid and Cathead Points, South and North Fox Islands, all seemed such a short distance away. To the west, and just below us, was where the Stormer family lived on the Armstrong place. I didn't realize then what a close relationship I was to have with that family. To the northeast was our home – North Manitou Light Station. I wondered what mother was doing right then, and could she see me standing up here on Mt. Baldy? Below us to the southeast was an eagle's nest that was active, and would remain active for many years.

It was time to start back home I looked down on my home one last time – North Manitou Lighthouse Station – a station solidly built of brick and mortar to withstand the elements. Little did we know that station was destined to be almost completely washed into the lake within a relatively few short years.

At the weather warmed, the snow melted, and a whole new way of life was opened up for me. A few days before the fifteenth of April, the

assistants arrived to open up their quarters. Sometimes the family came with them. Many interesting things were happening. The men were busy getting water in the boilers, building fires in them in preparation of sounding the fog signal, if needed. There was also much activity in the light tower. The wintertime acetylene light had to be exchanged to the summertime red and white flashing light. Navigation was now opening up. I remember my stepfather coming to lunch and telling mother that the Manitou Shoal lightship was out there attempting to anchor themselves in the exactly right position. I ran to the window to look and there it was, a light-colored vessel with the word 'MANITOU' on the side in big black letters. Exciting things were happening. The ice was almost gone, a few commercial fish tugs, and also a few small steamers, were beginning to move in the Manitou Passage.

Although my mother had married my stepfather two years previously, this was our first experience living in a lighthouse. After my father died, my mother kept the house he had built on south Manitou, and we lived in it until we came to North Manitou.

My stepfather was desirous of winning an efficiency star for his station. That depended entirely on the evaluation the Lighthouse Inspector made on his visit each year. "First impressions are important," he said. So, we were soon to learn that from about the first of May until the inspector had made his visit, it was important for beds to be made up, dishes washed, white owls must be cleaned and stored in the outhouse. And another thing he would tell us kids, "Stop kickin' that gravel all over the sidewalks. It looks like hell. If you do get sand and gravel on 'em, get a broom and sweep it off. There's one in the fog signal, and one here in the hall." My brother Norman had a job to do every Saturday. It consisted of polishing the brass door knobs, dust pans, and the lamps. There were lots of lamps to be polished. Chimneys had to be washed too. All the furniture had to be dusted and the hardwood floors had to be cleaned and oiled regularly.

In those days there were two lighthouse tenders; one named the *Sumac*, and the other, *Hyacinth*. Both tenders delivered supplies to the light stations, and worked other aids to navigation, such a buoys, etc. The *Sumac* was the ship that was the most likely to carry the inspector; however, this knowledge was of little value to the keepers, because they looked so much alike from a little distance away. North Manitou keepers always hoped they would come from the south, and stop at South Manitou first. If this happened, they knew they would be warned several hours in advance by telephone. Of course, South Manitou keepers hoped for a reverse situation.

When brother George got a little older, and we could do more things together, we found the tender visit exciting. The ship would anchor in deep water, and run the supplies ashore with a motorboat and a small barge. The motorboat operator, Mr. McCauley, the chief engineer on the Hyacinth, liked kids, and sometimes he would let us ride in the motorboat back to the ship. He would show us around while the barge was being loaded. What a thrill for a couple of island kids! When he showed us the engine room, with all that brass work highly polished, and steam hissing about down there, I just knew my sewing machine engine was very much inadequate, and that there was so much for me to learn. Sometimes, we went by the galley, and how interesting it was to see the cook in his white clothes, and tall white hat. He also wore a happy smile as he handed us a piece of pie, cake, or a cookie.

Soon we were headed back to the shore, our little motorboat pushing the barge, heavily laden with bags of soft coal in canvas bags that had strong handles. Several men, who had loaded the coal on the barge, were now sitting on top of it. They all were wearing gloves, and had dirty faces. When the barge was securely tied to the shore, the men loaded the coal in wheelbarrows. It was then wheeled to the coal bunkers located near the west door of the fog signal. Kerosene for the summer light, acetylene for the winter light, hard coal for the house heating, tec., was all delivered by the tenders.

While the unloading of supplies was in progress, the inspector would be making his tour of the station, accompanied by the officer-in-charge of the station. The inspector's comments were discussed in detail at the evening meal. George and I also got to tell about our trip to the ship. It was really a big day for all.

With the opening of navigation, our whole world seemed to change. The weather was moderating, and we could be outside more to play. The sun warmed the sand, and we could go barefoot on nice days. This became a permanent condition a few weeks later, and continued throughout the summer. Hats, caps, and shoes just didn't fit our personalities at all. A few weeks after navigation opened, the Manitou Passage became an exciting area to watch. Everything seemed to be happening right in front of our eyes. Every type of ship or boat you can imagine used that passage. The lightship looked so close to us; in fact, the captain rowed in one day to visit us. I think his name was Johnson, a big man, powerful, and looked so impressive in his blue uniform.

The sights out in front of us, as far as you could see to the north and south of our lovely point, was a fascinating place to watch. There were so many ships and small vessels on the move, the passage was never empty. There were so many types and kind of ships. They ranged from ore and coal carriers, oil tankers, freighters, tugs with barges in tow, passenger ships, sail boats, fish tugs, to full-rigged vessels like the *Our Son*.

The horizon to the east of us was clouded with black coal smoke from the various ships. Long black columns of smoke would emerge from their stacks, it would rise vertically a short distance, and slowly bend to a horizontal position, to become part of that black cloud. It was eye-catching to watch a steam vessel, while emitting a column of black smoke, suddenly inject one or two columns of white steam into that column of smoke. And then watch the approaching vessel answer with a like number emissions of steam, in answer to properly-given passing signals. It seemed a long time for the sound to travel to where we were.

The passage was seldom quiet anymore, always the passing signals being given, and occasionally a special signal was sounded to alert the lightship that they were dropping a bundle of newspapers or magazines over the side for them to pick up. Once in a while, a ship would hold ‘fire’ and ‘abandon ship’ drills out there.

It was easy to forget the lonely wintertime. Our brother Norman was home all day now. He would help us with our play boats, make us kites, and showed us how to make darts out of wood shingles.

The migrating season was on for various birds. The little warblers, buff in color, with yellow and dark colors on them, would fly into the red and white flashing light of the tower. We would find them everywhere around the base of the tower. Most were dead, many had broken wings, or internal injuries. We would gather them, bury the dead with ceremonies, put the injured in a big cardboard box, and try to keep them warm. We would catch bugs, flies, or whatever, for them to eat. Eventually, they all died, but we tried every year.

The sandpipers and killdeers were building nests, and they had to be watched carefully so we would know where their nests were. I don’t know why it would matter. It was just something to do. I particularly remember one time that a little sandpiper had her nest in a clump of dune grass. When she was out feeding one day, I snuggled myself down in that grass with my head not more than a foot away from the nest and four eggs, and waited for her to return. It wasn’t very long before she came up her little path to her

nest. She stood a moment, just bobbing up and down, like sandpipers do, then stepped into the next, moved her toes under the eggs, and together with her long beak, she carefully moved each egg to a new position. Standing a moment in her nest, she began to slightly open her wings, and fluff herself to a larger size as she carefully lowered her body to cover those eggs.

At that moment, I was sorry I was in the position that I was, because I didn't want to disturb her, especially to the point where she would abandon her nest. She seemed to know things were not the same near her, and kept one eye steadily looking into mine, until I winked. I noticed a more alert posture of her head, so I winked again, and off she went, making the startled 'peep, peep, peep' noises sandpipers make when they have been disturbed. I waited until she was a long ways away from me, and then I carefully crawled away from the nest. I never had a desire to do anything like that again. I was happy when I later observed my little sandpiper had successfully hatched her eggs, and had moved her little brood to a new location.

My life changed in a few short weeks from a dreary 'looking out the window' existence, to getting outside and becoming a part of that picture. When the month of May arrived, we began having more sunny days. The wind was cold because of the still-cold water temperature, but in the sheltered sunny places, it was comfortable.

The keepers were very busy now, painting the roofs to the fog signal, oil house, and light tower. The sheet steel sides of the tower had to be prepared for a coat of paint. This was interesting for us kids to watch. The keepers would fasten two sets of small block and tackle near the top of the tower, and drop the loose ends over the side to the ground, where a platform with railings on it would be attached to the loose ends. The platform could now be pulled up near the tower railing, where two men would crawl over the side (this was the scary part), and get on that platform. Paint was handed to them, and from there they could lower themselves slowly down the side as they painted.

The months of May and June were called the fog months by lighthouse keepers, and rightly so, because the water was still very cold from snow and ice, and the sun was getting warmer each day. This condition created fog. I remember one spring when the fog signal never stopped sounding for more than twenty days. Even after it let up a bit, the fog would come back again when the wind shifted. The keepers had specified limits of visibility to be maintained. In the daytime, if you could see the lightship,

Donner's Point, and the village area, it was considered that vessels had enough visibility for safe navigation. At night, if you could not see the lightship or the South Manitou Light, you must start sounding.'

The long periods of continuous sounding would wear on the nerves of the families too. I think the interesting part for me was to listen to the various sounds, and try to picture what was happening out here in the fog. I would listen for the lightship and South Manitou whistles, and all the various whistles of the vessels using the Manitou Passage. There were the deep-throated whistles of the large steamers as they sounded the required three short blasts, the lighter-toned whistles of others, and the sound of a motorboat engine. They also periodically would sound three blasts on their hand-held mouth-operated horns. Occasionally, you could hear a siren and bells ringing, that indicated that there was a vessel out there towing barges. Once in a while, out of the main channel area, you could hear a ship ringing a bell rapidly every minute or so, to indicate that the captain got tired of that mess, and had pulled over to anchor and rest a while. It was fortunate that during foggy periods, there seldom was much wind blowing.

School was out. Ethel and Norman were home now, and many exciting things were taking place. Ethel was helping mother with housework, and helping here get ready for the upcoming annual inspections that we knew were coming, but never knew when. Norman helped too, but had time always to help George and me with our play boats. He made kites, and showed me how to make them too. Kites became a blessing to us. When we didn't know what to do, we would make a kite. In those days, all stores tied your purchases with string. Over every counter hung a large spool of string. Most people would remove it from purchases, and form large balls of string. That was great for kite-flying kids like us. What a wonderful place we had to test our skills.

I remember a time when I was still small, Norman and Ethel fashioned a kite of sorts, and flew it in a fresh northerly wind. It was a better than average kite, and flew higher than most. It went in the direction of Donner's Point, and very high in the sky. It became just a little speck up there. When one of the assistant keepers first saw it, he said, "Oh, my goodness, it's going up to Jesus!"

It was a fun summer for me, my brother and sister were home, and planning things to do, like walking with their friends around the island, etc. I was too young, but it was good to have them home.

## CHAPTER 4

### *Our Car, First One on North Manitou*

Mother was concerned about the coming school year, and kept repeating to my stepfather, “Ernest, Glenn is six years; I’ve got to get that kid started in school! And besides, Ethel and Norman are not going to continue walking nine miles a day.”

I’m sure this sort of nagging, and the fact that it would be just the thing to run to the village for the mail, prompted the purchase of our 1919 Model T, the very first automobile on North Manitou Island. What an exciting day it was when it arrived on the S.S. Missouri. My stepdad went alone to get it. Apparently, he caught on quickly, because he drove the thing off the dock, and as far as the road would let him. It was a magnificent machine. I remember the smell of it yet, how it glittered in the sunlight. Every part of it had that wonderful new car smell. “It’s complete with side curtains too.” Dad Hutzler proudly told us.

The problem was the road. It was so sandy from Bournique’s to the lighthouse; we got stuck all the time. The whole family would have to climb out and push, while our dad drove with his side-to-side swaying motion, as he pushed with all his might on the low-gear pedal. Thank goodness for the juniper bushes near the road. We would carry an ax and hatchet along, and cut the bushes when we got stuck. We would place them in the tracks, with the curved side up. As the car rolled over them, they pressed into the sand. After a few weeks, a reasonably hard base was formed. We finally could drive up to the edge of the woods. Later, a shelter for the car was erected there to protect it. It became a favorite place for George and me to play.

I remember how proud we were of that machine. How we would approach it as it sat glittering in the sunlight there by the edge of the woods. How I would have George by the hand, being careful not to let any of that poison ivy touch his little legs. How I would open the passenger side door and help George up on the seat. I would then go around to the driver’s side, step on the running board, and take a hold of the steering wheel and pull myself over the side. I wondered why they didn’t put a door on that side too.

Oh, how I wish all of you could have taken just one of the beautiful trips we made in that glittering wonderful-smelling machine. We were never confined to driving on the bumpy of logging roads of the island. We would head out for the smooth sandy beaches, or any place else we wanted to go. I remember some of the trips we made down the south beach, traveling at speeds you would never believe. I can see the sandpipers and sea gulls scattering in all directions as we dodged between those logs, large pieces of driftwood, and wrecked ships. We would pass under the high cliffs, where that bank swallows nested, go around Donner's Point, and head up to Mr. Baldy. We would dip down in some of the sandy blow holes that formed along the route to the top. When we reached the top, we would make a tight little circle, and head back down to the beach, where we would continue our trip around the island. George never got to drive very much, because he was too small, and couldn't reach the foot pedals and all. Besides, I was older, wasn't I?

The new car became the center of our lives that summer. We had so much work to do on the sandy roads. We would get stuck almost every time we headed out for the village, unless it had rained recently. The car became a topic of conversation much of the time. Although mother enjoyed the rides to the village in the daylight (if he would drive slow), she, like the rest of us, was scared to ride after dark. The vehicle was equipped with magneto-powered lights, the faster you drove, the brighter the lights would be. I suppose this was satisfactory on the mainland roads, where higher speeds could be maintained. It was a hair-raising situation on the island logging roads, with all the curves, bumps and trees so close.

Mother would sit up front, with her legs straight out in front, pressing the floorboards with all her might, and us kids in the back were white-knuckled and hanging on. Mother would yell, "Ernest, for god's sake slow this car down!" He would yell back, "Zella, if I go slow, the lights go out!" Somehow, we always got back. Mother would say, "I'll never go in that car again after dark!" But she did, because Ernest came up with the happy idea of hanging a kerosene lantern on the radiator cap, that helped just a little at slow speeds. A ride at night was always a hair-raising experience.

My stepdad, and my mother too, were good dancers. I remember our first Fourth of July dance in the village, that all of us attended. Mother had sent away and purchased for me a nice white sailor suit that I was wearing. I was carefully cautioned to keep it clean, as we were going to go to the village early and pick some cherries to eat. My stepfather dearly loved black

sweet cherries. We had gotten permission to go into the orchard and eat all we wanted, which, of course, we did. It was a new adventure for me, and I'm sure I ate much more than a reasonable amount. While watching the dancing, I became sick, and vomited on my new sailor suit. A lady alerted my mother to the fact, by telling her, "Zella, you have a very sick child; he is bleeding from the mouth." I spent the rest of the evening wrapped in a blanket in our new car. I don't ever remember wearing that sailor suit again. I don't think mother was able to get the cherry stain off the front of it.

As that first summer passed, and the excitement of our very first inspection by a lighthouse inspector waned, my mother began to evaluate the school situation for her children. We were still getting stuck in the sand with the car, and with the snow coming in the winter season, it was easy to conclude that it was impossible to think our car would be a solution. Plans were beginning to formulate in her mind, and finally she announced that she would try to arrange for Ethel and Norman to board with our Aunt Minnie in Atwood, a little town near Charlevoix, Michigan, during the coming school year. Glenn would have to wait another year. How hard it must have been to make decisions like this. There was not much of a choice available, and that's the way it happened. That second winter at North Manitou Light Station was not a happy time for anyone in our family.

## CHAPTER 5

### *Another Lonely Winter*

As the summer came to an end, there were hints everywhere that the season was changing. Vegetation, what little there was on the point, was maturing, and it attracted various species of nature. Vegetation consisted of dune grass, milkweeds, Canada thistles, and a few sand-cherry bushes near the woods. These few species of vegetation provided many hours of entertainment for a seven-year-old boy. In late summer, huge flocks of Monarch butterflies, yellow and black ones too, were attracted to the milkweeds and Canada thistles. I would carefully approach them from the rear as they rested on a Canada thistle or milkweed, wait until they closed their wings, and quite expertly, with my thumb and forefinger, I would hold their wings closed until they were safely stored in a glass fruit jar. A few perished, but generally I would release them later, only to catch a few more the next day. One year, the beaches on the northerly side of the point were filled with dead Monarchs that washed ashore. I can only assume they encountered winds that forced them into the water, where they perished, and were later washed up on the beach.

Goldfinches would come to these plants also. It was a beautiful sight to see clouds of butterflies and goldfinches flying from one plant to another. The goldfinches provided the music to this picture, with their happy little songs. The birds seemed to accept me as part of the scene, and a few times they even came close to becoming the main attraction in my fruit jar. Later in the season, when the temperature cooled and it was time to bundle up if you ventured outside, the point was visited by hundreds of little Juncos, that seemed to love the seed of dune grass, and I suppose the seed of the milkweed and thistle that was scattered everywhere. These events of nature very interesting to me, but I was a very lonely boy, and spent many hours on the swing on the south end of the house. I learned how to “pump” myself into a swinging motion, from both the standing and sitting positions.

On windy days, you would find me in the warm southwest corner of the house, playing with my boats. All gasoline-powered boats in those days were powered with one- or two-cylinder engines, each had its very own sounding exhaust. I could mimic every one of them. I lived in a world of imagination, and the real owners of those boats would have been horrified

if they could have seen the predicaments and situations I drove their boats into.

It wasn't so bad until after navigation closed, and the assistants, with their families, moved away for the winter. The lightship also went away to its winter mooring place. It was so quiet and lonely then. There was only a small light in the tower now, and the foghorn didn't sound anymore. It was then I found myself by the south window, sitting for hours each day. It was warm there by the side of mother's hard-coal-burning range. I could observe the preparation of food, smell it cooking, and occasionally catch a whiff of Old Tip as he lay seeping behind the stove. Out my window, I could see the gulls, crows, and, once in a while, a snowy owl would find a perch on a piece of driftwood, and wait for a deer mouse to make a foolish move.

There was never a large quantity of snow accumulated on the point. The wind would soon move the snow, and mix it with sand, then form a huge brown-colored drift somewhere. The remainder was blown into the lake. There was always a lot of bare ground. I would watch my swing being teased and tantalized by the whims of the wind. Sometimes a forceful blast of wind would make the ropes and riding board wrap around one of the poles, only to unwind when the wind lessened. Finally, the drifting sand put an end to the wind's silly game, by burying the board in the sand, and only the ropes could move a little. I had then only a few tufts of grass to watch make little semi-circles in the sand. When I moved from the window, it was generally in the direction of the sewing machine. This was the winter I perfected my boat operation techniques with the mechanism of a sewing machine. It wasn't as much fun anymore, now that brother George wanted to be part of the fun, and I had to be so careful not to hurt him. Along toward spring, I turned the machine over to him. I'm sure he had many happy hours playing boat too.

We didn't have many books around our house that held any interest for me. You see, I had not learned to read very well yet, and many words I didn't understand. Mother would help me at times, but she had lots of work to do, so I spent much of my time looking at books with pictures. We had a big book about the sinking of the Titanic, with lots of pictures. A book about trapping animals, with illustrations that were fun to look at. Best of all was a large family bible, with many pictures. I would look at those pictures for hours, and ask mother about the story. She told me why the lions did not eat Daniel up, and about the guardian angel that hovered near the little child as he chased a butterfly along the edge of a high cliff. I treasured these stories,

and they were a comfort to me; you see, I was just a little child when my father died, and it was hard for me to understand all these things.

Why did we come to this place, where it was so lonesome, and I didn't have any playmates? Why was the school so far away? Why did my mother and stepfather quarrel whenever school was mentioned? I didn't want them to quarrel over me and how I was going to get to school. It was alright, it didn't matter if I went to school or not. I didn't want my mother to cry anymore. I didn't want to be the cause of any more tears. I was lonesome, unhappy, and I was having bad dreams at night. I would dream that I was falling off the edge of a steep cliff, and would not awaken until I was a few feet from the ground. I would be frightened, and quickly look for that small flicker of flame in the little brass lamp on the dresser. I would lie there trembling – afraid to go back to sleep – I didn't want to dream anymore. I couldn't understand why my guardian angel did not watch over me, and keep me from falling. Then I would remember how mother, especially on stormy nights, would kneel by the side of the bed with us, and listen to our 'now I lay me down to sleep' prayers. That would assure me that we were a family that loved each other, and everything would be alright.

I never told mother about my dreams.

When a nice bright sunny day came, I'd get my warm clothes on, and go outside to look for tracks in the snow and sand. It was during these lonely days by myself, that I became good at identifying the tracks of birds and other creatures that walked on the snow or sand. I knew the deference between the tracks of sandpipers, crows, blackbirds, chickadees, and also knew the difference between the tracks of mice, chipmunks, squirrels, weasels, rabbits, and foxes. It probably was the interest my stepfathers had in trapping fox, that spurred my interest in looking for tracks of all the wildlife that visited lighthouse point.

I decided I would have my own trap line. I would trap deer mice. So, I took a couple of mouse traps out of the basement, and set up my own trap line out in the sand hills. When the wind had not blown for a couple of days, I noticed the mice made little trails from one hiding place to another, and seldom left these little trails. It was in these tracks that I set my traps. I used cheese or peanut butter for bait, and had great success the first few nights. I almost always had a mouse in my traps each morning. After a couple of nights of this success, I decided since they ran mostly in trails, I'd try to catch them using no bait at all. The challenge was greater now, so I would set the trap, and carefully press it into the sand, and then, ever so

gently, I'd cover it with sand. Sometimes the trap would go off, and it made sand fly up in my eyes. But I'd keep trying, and I would get it set, and it was now hidden. It was more like trapping fox.

I didn't always catch a mouse anymore, as they jumped right over my trap. When I did catch one, it could be by on the hind legs, or even just one leg. Then the hunt was on. I would follow those tracks where the mouse had dragged my trap in the sand, until I found him. Sometimes, only the trap would be hanging out of a hole in a log, and when I'd pull on the trap, I could get the mouse out. He would usually be quite lively. I would kill him with a stick and bury him. Then I would set my trap again. I noticed sometimes a fox would find my buried mouse, and dig him up. My trap line was an interest for me; I had something to think about. I'd lie in bed at night, and try to picture the activity out there in the sand hills. I had something of interest for which to get up in the morning, besides just setting by my favorite window all day.

It was during the time that I was trapping mice and life was so lonely for me, that the weather turned very cold for three days and nights. My stepfather said to my mother, "Zella, if it stays like this a little longer, the lake will freeze over." The following morning, the lake all around Lighthouse Point glistened and shimmered in the bright sunlight. It was beautiful, but still so very cold. Ernest said to my mother, "Do you know where my skates are?" The answer was 'no', and I could see the disappointment in his eyes, and I knew he had already looked in every place he could think of. But he continued, and said, "After breakfast, let's all take a walk out on the ice toward Donner's Point." Mother answered, "You won't get me out on that ice; besides, it's so smooth and slippery you will break your necks trying to walk on it." After breakfast, Dad Hutzler and I put on our warm clothes, and headed for the south beach. Mother called after us, and said, "Ernest, you better leave Glenn here with me and George. Go out there by yourself, and break you fool neck if you want to!" Her last words were, "For goodness sakes, be careful."

So, we headed for the south beach, and were soon at the edge of the ice. It was so very smooth, and frozen right up to the ice banks that had formed earlier. We looked out toward Pyramid Point and Sleeping Bear. It was such a beautiful sight. The lake reflected the sun's rays, and almost blinded us. Dad Hutzler hopped down off the ice banks and, with his sharp iron rod, tested the thickness of the ice. "It's a little more than two-and-a-half inches thick, and perfectly safe to walk on." I was scared when he reached up with two strong arms, and lowered me down to that smooth ice.

It was so slippery, and when I looked down by my feet, I could see the bottom of the lake, about three feet under me. I was afraid I'd fall, and I didn't trust the thickness of the ice either. I just kind of shuffled my feet along, like they had skis on them. My thoughts were, 'I'm walking on water, like Jesus did.' and I recalled the pictures in the big bible we had at the house, with all those colored pictures in it.

Dad Hutzler was jubilant and excited as he took my hand and the two of us proceeded out over deeper water. Never in my whole life have I ever experienced a more beautiful sight. The ice in front of us was dazzling in the sunlight. If there was the smallest crack in the ice, the sun's rays would reflect back to us a sparkling, dazzling, view of the colors in a beautiful rainbow. As we proceeded out farther and farther on the ice, I couldn't keep my eyes off the ice near my feet, as the view constantly changed down on the bottom. At first, there was just the little sand ripples formed by the various movements of the water on the bottom of the lake, but now the water was about ten to twenty feet deep, and we could see sunken logs here and there, embedded in the sand, and there also were some small stones scattered about. These stones were soon replaced by flat rocks, and occasionally our eyes would catch the movement of fish swimming away as they noticed our movements above them.

On our left side, there appeared to be a large shadow of a cloud moving across the bottom of the lake. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. We stopped a moment and watched that shadow as it moved along the bottom. All at once Dad Hutzler exclaimed in a loud voice, "Suckers! A big school of suckers! No damn wonder my nets get full of those stinkin' things!"

We continued walking toward Donner's Point, and the flat stones were suddenly replaced by huge boulders. Some of them were so large they looked like they were within a few feet of the ice. Then it happened! We were over a wrecked ship! It was lying in a tilted position, and lodged in those huge boulders. The large timbers that were the ship's ribs on the shoreward side were curved up near the surface, and the shorter ones on the seaward side were almost touching the bottom. What an awesome and fascinating sight for a small boy to witness. As we studied the remains of that ship, probably an old sailing vessel, we could see fish swimming around in there. Dad Hutzler said they were perch. I couldn't help but wonder if some people died when that ship was wrecked. Dad Hutzler said we would probably never find out. He hadn't ever heard of a ship being wrecked right there, and that maybe it was a piece of wreckage that a storm had driven up on those rocks. That eased my mind some, but I still wondered about it.

It was time to head for home, so we headed for the shore, where we could walk on the had frozen sand. It was so much easier to walk, but we no longer had those beautiful, awesome, and fascinating scenes passing under our feet.

When we got closer to home, we could see my mother standing on the clothesline hill looking for us. She had lost sight of the two little specks she had been keeping an eye on down by Donner's Point. She didn't realize we were on the beach, and walking home. How relieved she was to see us safe and sound. She embraced me, and gave me a big hug. She said to Ernest, "I've been worried sick about you two! Don't ever do anything like that again!" As we ate our noon meal, we told her about the ship, and about all the fish we had seen. She was interested, but mostly happy that we were safe and back home.

Before I went to sleep that night, I thought about our walk over the water. I thought about the fish we had seen, and the awesome appearance of those he rocks on the bottom of the lake. Most of all, I thought about the wrecked ship. Did people die when the ship got wrecked? What was the ship's name? Were there people on it when it lodged itself on those rocks? So many questions that had no answers, too many for a young boy to wonder about. I fell asleep.

In the days that followed, the wind moved the ice about, broke it up in small pieces, and piled it high in windrows. After that trip, when I'd sit by my favorite window and look out upon that dreary scene of snow, ice, flying sea gulls, and maybe a crow, I also had a picture in my mind of another world just a little lower down. A beautiful, awesome, scary, and fascinating world that held so many unanswered questions in the mind of a young boy.

My stepfather had time for recreation now that the light was closed. Earlier in the year, he sent to one of the mail order houses for a couple dozen fox traps, and he had them set out in the sand hills near the edge of the woods. Trapping fox was a new adventure for him, and as I recall, success was very limited that winter. He dearly loved to hunt rabbits, and that is the reason Old Tip came to North Manitou with us. Tip was brown in color. He didn't ever play with us kids, he just loved to chase rabbits, and lay behind the stove and make smells. He didn't beg around the table, like lots of dogs, but was always ready to eat his plate of table scraps. I, and others, remember him for his knowledge of words. Sometimes during the noontime lunch hour, Ernest would mention to mother that he was going hunting that

afternoon. It was obvious Tip knew the word ‘hunting’, as you could hear his tail start thumping the wall, floor and stove. We all knew immediately Tip thought that was a great idea. There were plenty of snowshoe rabbits (hare) along the edge of the woods, not far from the lighthouse. Dad Hutzler was nearly always successful in getting game when he hunted rabbits with Old Tip.

It was a long, long winter, but it finally came to an end, and signs of spring were a welcome sight for all of us. Mother was getting heavy with child. I didn’t know, I thought she was just getting fat, like mothers do.

## CHAPTER 6

### *Balloon Tires, Baby Sisters and Chickens*

What a happy day it was when Ethel and Norman came home on the S.S. Missouri. Our home came alive again. We all had so many stories to tell. Best of all, George and I had our play boat and kite maker back again. Norman also showed us how to make darts out of cedar shingles. We enjoyed many hours playing with the things Norman made for us. It seemed to me Norman had grown so much while he was away that winter. I envied him in so many ways, I couldn't understand why I remained so small. I didn't understand in those days that God had a pattern and plan for each one of us.

It was a happy summer for us kids. Lots of things were happening, it seemed to me. Like the Model T got a set of balloon tires, we got a new baby sister, Ethel, Norman and several others walked around the island, etc. Each of the above events can be a lengthy story by itself.

Balloon tires were an experimental venture for the auto industry in those days, but Ernest was sure that was the answer to all our problems. "We could go through sand like nothin'." he said, and besides, "The car would ride over the bumpy roads a lot smoother." Of course, we got a set of them. Balloon tires in those days did not fit the same wheels you had on your car. When the new wheels with balloon tires arrived, they were big and fat, and high like wagon wheels. When installed, the car was at least four or five inches higher. Believe me, the modern day 'High Trucks' had nothing on us. Mother had trouble getting in and out of it. It wasn't easy for Dad Hutzler to crawl over the side on the driver's side, where there was no door either, but you never heard a word of complaint from him. The end result? It took more power to get the car rolling, but it did go through sandy places better if you had a good speed up when you hit them. The speed part was not to mother's liking, but she didn't like to get out and push either. We were the center attention when we drove into the village. Dad Hutzler was proud as a peacock, and us kids thought it was great too.

Another change the balloon tires created was engine speed had to be slower in order to travel at a moderate speed. Therefore, you had to increase speed at night to have the same brightness of headlights. The choice was, run in low gear, or speed her up at night. Believe me, we didn't run in low

gear very much, those tires were just a blur most of the time. The conversation in the front seat was always loud at night, and often continued after we got home.

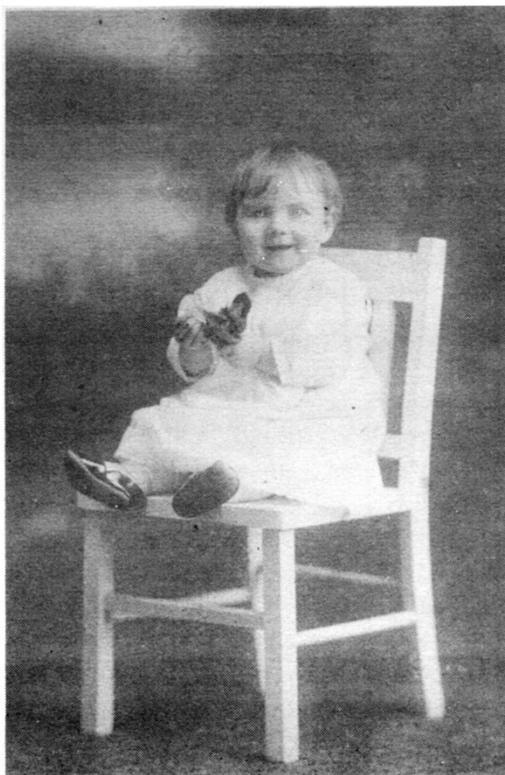
I think it was this summer that the Stormer family obtained their Model T Ford too, and we no longer were the ‘King of the Roads’, so to speak. We had to be aware that another car may be coming around the next corner. However, the unlikely thing did happen at that corner where the Bournique Road joins with the road to the Armstrong place. Joe, Henry, and Lewis Stormer were headed home, when the Hutzler vehicle came out of the Bournique Road and plowed right into the side of their new car. There was a loud crash as metal met metal, silence, and then a loud bang as a left rear tire on the Stormer vehicle blew up. We were fine in the back seat, just a little jar, that’s all. No one was hurt, but the Stormer boys were quite excited, and I never heard so much sputtering in all my life. Dad Hutzler backed our car up a little, got out, and pulled the fenders up off those balloon tires, and we were ready to continue our trip to the village. Our new balloon tires had run into the Stormer vehicle, climbed up the running board, made two big caved-in places in the side of their car, and a rear tire blew up. We left the scene early, before the sputtering turned into anger, and when we were about a half-mile down the road, Dad Hutzler looked over at mother with a big grin and said, “Zella, our new balloon tires saved us.” I’m sure he didn’t realize how so very close he was to getting a mighty *back-hander* right then.

Mother’s birthday was the tenth of July, and it was on this day that our little baby sister decided to arrive into the world. She was not expected for at least three weeks, and mother was getting ready to go the mainland when she realized the baby was definitely going to arrive early. My job was to take all the little children out in the sand hills, and keep them busy until someone called us. When we were called in, George and I had a new baby sister. Her name was Leota. (My sister Ethel can tell several humorous incidents connected with the birth of that baby girl.) I often think how different an event of this nature could be handled today.

The summer passed quickly. We had inspections, and Dad Hutzler was on the list for an efficiency star, so he was happy. Mother decided she no longer could keep me out of school, so she packed up the three of us Furst kids, and took us all to South Manitou. She opened up our house – the one our dad, Martin Furst, had built before he died – and got us settled as best she could. When we were started in school, she returned to North Manitou, and stayed with Dad Hutzler until navigation closed, then they

both came to South Manitou for the winter. Dad Hutzler had his whole flock of chickens in crates. These he later put under the house for the winter. He built nests for them out of boxes, and nailed them along the sides down there. The only light the chickens had, came through the cracks between the boards around the sides. I wonder if they ever were able to see the nests, because they just plopped their eggs in the sand.

Glenn was put in charge of the egg collecting. That job didn't have a very high priority, believe me, and I was never in any danger of losing it. However, I developed a technique that served me rather well. I would carefully open the door to let myself in, and close it carefully, so the chickens



Leota Hutzler

couldn't run out. I would then wait right there by the door until my eyes adjusted to the darkness. (Flashlights were not around then, and my folks didn't want me to take a lantern under the house.) When I could see pretty good, I would crawl on my hands and knees, and gather the eggs in a small pail or basket. In this manner, I soon developed a maze of little paths all around under the house. Along towards spring, for the lack of some nourishment in their diet, the chickens started to eat the eggs. Thereafter, every time a chicken crackled, I received an order, "Glenn, get down there and get that egg!" I had to hurry my operation to the point where I sometimes had to gather that egg with sticky fingers.

It was not a sad day for me when navigation opened, and Dad Hutzler, mother, Norman, the chickens, and me, returned to North Manitou Light Station. At least the chickens had nests, and enough light to find them. Going to school wasn't as much fun as I thought it would be anyway. Sister Ethel boarded with Aunt Lottie to continue her schooling, so she would be eligible to take the eighth-grade examination in the spring. Martha Gould was teacher that year.

An interesting event had taken place during the winter, while we were at South Manitou. A new assistant keeper had arrived with his wife, and two trunks of belongings. An Ann Arbor carferry had delivered them to the island from Menominee, Wisconsin sometime during the winter. The ship maneuvered as close to the light station as the heavy ice conditions would permit, and then unloaded them on the ice. Charles Linsmeier, concerned for his seven-month pregnant wife, Esther, had to leave her there sitting on one of the trunks, while he walked to a place where he could hire a horse-drawn rig to move his wife and belongings to the lighthouse. The carferry, in its attempt to deliver a lighthouse keeper to his duties on a lonely island, so firmly lodged itself in the ice, that it was unable to free itself for a week. I find this interesting, and certainly evidence of how much value the shipping industry placed on the operation of lighthouse stations in those days.

It had been a hard winter for the cattle and other stock on North Manitou Island. Delivery of hay had not reached the island once again. The starved and dead cattle were found in various places along the shores.

Vivian Linsmeier Langer prepared a nice article in the September 1989 issue of *The Beacon*<sup>1</sup> that tells of an adventure her folks had in the North Manitou motorboat. I faintly remember that event, and remember the concern my folks had for them. I've had many rides in that boat, some enjoyable, some were humorous, and others were downright miserable. My stepfather was an excellent boatman, and could appreciate a good boat. He didn't have too many good things to say about the North Manitou boat. "She is built like a log," he said, "and will roll your eyeteeth right out of you."

The boat was about twenty-eight feet long, cabined over, pointed at both ends, and had three large ship-like portholes on each side. We called it the *Pumpkin Seed*. The boathouse was near the woods on the north side of the point. The steel rails and carriage system was of no value at all, so the lighthouse keepers obtained two long slim trees, and flattened them on two sides. They then made some maple rollers, approximately six-inches in diameter, so the boat could be readily pulled up on the shore by using the cable winch in the boathouse. The one thing the keepers did like about the so-called 'Pumpkin Seed' was she had an eighteen-inch-wide keel, and would not tip over easily when on the rollers.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Beacon*, official publication of the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association, P.O. Box 580, Allen Park, MI 48101.

When the school year ended in the spring of 1921, and our sister Ethel had successfully passed the eighth-grade examination, she joined our family on North Manitou.

The next year-and-a-half was better for me. Our whole family was together again. Norman and Ethel were home, and stayed home all through the coming year, until the fall of 1922. No school for anybody that year. My older brother was with me, and he could teach me how to do lots of stuff. He did too. I was eight now, and George was three years old, and able to take part in some of the things we did. We made play boats, flew kites, took long walks along the beach, gathered Petoskey stones, and stones with holes in them, that we sometimes wore around our necks. We climbed Mt. Baldy, and visited the sawmill and logging area the Stormer's had on the northeast side of the island. We found out the Stormer family had two young boys about the same age as Norman and I. Their names were Harold and Ben. We were to get much better acquainted the following year – in the fall of 1922 – when we rode to school in their horse and buggy (more about that later). Meanwhile, we were having fun.

## CHAPTER 7

### *Lighthouse Problems and Norman Kills a Fox*

I think the noise and confusion of the whole family being around, bothered Dad Hutzler more than we ever knew. After all, he had watches to stand at night, the fog season was always a strain on the keepers. Dad Hutzler was a light sleeper and, when he had a midnight to 6 a.m. watch to stand, it was difficult for him to get any sleep before midnight. Our family invariably made noise that disturbed him. We tried to be quiet, but we would forget sometimes. “Them darn chimney swallows keep me awake too.” he said, “I have to get rid of them. They have little ones now, and they chirp and twitter half the night. A man can’t rest under conditions like that.”

The building had one large chimney right in the center that served all three families. The chimney had a large pan in the basement, to catch ash and soot – it was about 3’ x 3’ x 1½’ high. Dad Hutzler threw a lot of rags in there, dumped in a couple of buckets of kerosene, and threw in a match. He left the pan open a little so it could get air, and then went outside to watch the results. My goodness; what a roar that fire made as it went up the chimney. A big plume of black smoke and fire came out the top, and swirled into the sky. The parent birds were flying all around that smoke, making a terrible fuss. Every person in that house came running outside and looked up; all were sure the house was on fire. Dad Hutzler ran back down in the basement again and pushed the pan in tight to cut off the draft. The roar lessened in noise, but the chimney continued to make a “woomp, woomp, woomp” noise every time it collected enough air to ignite. Those woomps shook the whole house. Finally, it burned out, and Dad Hutzler came out of the basement, red faced, and head hanging kinda low, as he tried to face all those women who readily told him what kind of man they thought he was. His only comment was, “My god, Zella. I didn’t think it was gonna’ be that bad. I must have put a little too much oil in there!”

It was a difficult summer for Dad Hutzler, partly because the swallow incident just wouldn’t go away. Almost always, for the rest of that season, when you looked skyward, you could spot a chimney swift endeavoring to catch flying insects with its singed or badly burned wing feathers.

As I have stated earlier, Dad Hutzler, as an old man, repeated many times that when he accepted the transfer to North Manitou Lighthouse, it was the biggest mistake he ever made in his whole life. I believe him. When I think about it, I know now he found himself in a position where he couldn't help himself. He had married a woman with three children, and before he left north Manitou, he was to father three more. He was the head of a home with six children. The grammar school was four-and-a-half miles away, and it was too far for young children to walk.

He was a new Keeper, with no seniority, and he was far down on the list for a transfer to a mainland station. He even requested to be considered as an assistant keeper at a mainland station. Nothing seemed to work out for him. He was a brave man, and a good boat man. He would take a boat out in most any weather condition. He would never ask an assistant keeper to do anything that he wouldn't do himself. He was always the one to paint the top of the tower when it required painting.

During the years he served as Keeper, two trying situation happened at North Manitou Light Station. First of all, during the conversion from a winter light to a summer light, there was a fire in the tower that damaged the main lens of the light. I can only imagine how hard it was to report that damage to headquarters, and go through the investigation the followed. Before his tour of duty at that station was over, an ocean-going German freighter was to run aground right in front of the fog signal. (More about these incidents later, both incidents were investigated, and a plausible and logical excuse was found to explain them.)

My stepfather was a man that would sometimes talk out loud to himself. Believe me, many times I'd look up from my play, and see only Dad Hutzler going by when I expected to see at least two people.

The summer passed, and it was time for school once again. Mother decided the situation was just impossible, and that Norman and I must both stay out of school for another year. How hard it must have been for a mother that always wanted the best for her children to make decisions like that. Ethel stayed out of school too that winter. We stayed right there at the lighthouse, where a house, fuel, and many other supplies were furnished.

This was the best winter I ever had at that place. I didn't have to be lonely this winter. So many things were happening. During the summer, some furniture had been purchased from the Wilson Furniture Co. in Traverse City. New dining and living room sets were bought, and, best of all, we got a *Star* windup victrola and lots of records. The dance step called

the “Fox Trot” was new in those days. Ethel and Norman would practice for hours. Dad Hutzler would encourage them, and sometimes would coax mother to join in too. On special occasions, he would get out his fiddle and treat us to his version of “Turkey in the Straw” and “Irish Washer Woman”.

The winter before, while on South Manitou, Norman had traded his banjo to his cousin for a twelve-gauge shot gun, so he was able to join Ernest and Old Tip on their hunting trips. Many exciting things happened while they were hunting rabbits. Sometimes a fox would get involved, and they got to shoot at it. I would listen attentively to all their stories, and say to myself, “Someday I will be bigger; then I’ll go too.”

Trips to the village with the car, if snow permitted, were frequent now, for various reasons. Ethel and Norman had several friends their age in the village, so, of course, they liked to go. It was easier now. We had the balloon tires, and plenty of strong pushers. The Christmas season was coming on, and things were happening that George and I wondered about; like several mail order packages came home in the car, and just sorta’ disappeared when they were taken out. Our transportation by car ended abruptly when a heavy snow arrived. “It’s too much trouble now.” Dad Hutzler said. “You gotta’ fill her with water, and drain her every time you stop very long, or she will freeze up.” A pail was always in the car for this purpose – no anti-freeze in those days.

We had a couple dozen No. 2 Victor fox traps around, so Norman and Ernest each had several settings. However, their technique lacked something, because they were not very successful. They were frustrated, and disappointed too, because a good fox pelt would sell for around thirty dollars. Even the less desirable pelts were worth about ten dollars. Good money in those days. Fox pelts made up as a choker were very popular then. I remember the books they sent for that were supposed to have all the answers. I found them interesting after I learned to read better.

Christmas came; Santa visited our house, and left presents that I’m sure came out of the packages that had disappeared a few weeks before. It was fun. Dad Hutzler, in a Santa suit, delivered the presents. George and Leota believed in Santa.

Winter settled in, and we were thankful for the victrola and Carom board. We also played a card game called “Pedro”. It was similar to Euchre. The fox traps were tended regularly, and it was interesting to hear the stories about how the fox was always able somehow to get the bait, without getting caught. There were always lots of fox tracks near our chicken coop, that was

located some distance from the other buildings. Norman decided to build a bunker, I guess you would call it. It was really just a hole in the ground, with a roof covered with sand, except for a trap door, so you could get in it. It had a slot in the front edge, where you could shoot out of it. After it was built, he would put bait out in front, about thirty yards, every day. It wasn't long before the foxes began to take his bait, and he kept putting more out there. He was waiting with much anticipation, I'm sure, for that perfect time to lay in wait for them. Meanwhile, the evenings were spent perfecting his dance technique, and listening on occasion to stepdad's new Atwater-Kent radio. It was also new, and was being paid for on the installment plan. It had earphones.

Finally, the "just right" evening arrived, and he made preparations to spend some time in his fox bunker. He left the house, warmly dressed, with his shotgun, and dropped through the trap door of his bunker, to wait for Mr. Fox while it was still daylight. I wanted so badly to be with him to see the show, but was told, "I've got to keep the human scent down." I waited in the parlor, like the others, listening to music on the victrola. We were all surprised, because it was only a short time before there was a lot of banging around at the back entry, and right in the parlor came a breathless Norman with his gun in one hand, and a big fox held by his back legs in the other hand. Norman was covered with sand. He breathlessly tried to tell the story when mother yelled, "Norman, for goodness sake get that bloody thing out of here!" Norman's expression changed when he realized that the fox was still bleeding, and he was so covered with sand. He took the fox outside, and after brushing the sand off, he returned to the parlor to tell the story.

Oh, how I hung on every word he said, and had chills run up my back when he told about seeing a set of shining eyes out there in the darkness. He was sure it was the fox, and had trouble aiming his gun in the darkness at first. He said his heart was beating so hard, he thought the fox might hear it. Before he was ready to pull the trigger, another set of eyes appeared on the scene. He said, "I thought I would die, or pass out, or something, but, by golly, I got him." Norman was thirteen years old. He was big for his age.

It was a real fun winter for me. Norman and Ethel had a sleigh, and I had mine too. We would sometimes go over near the woods, where there was a nice hill with clean snow on it. This was probably my best winter ever as a kid. I know it was the best one at North Manitou Light Station.

Perhaps we can describe this as the winter that babies literally danced, because that is what really happened. Our baby sister Leota, toward the end of the winter, was pulling herself up off the floor and standing, while hanging on to things. She loved the victrola, and would kinda' bob her little butt up and down when the music played. To the amazement of all of us, one day she just let go of everything and danced herself out on the floor a couple of steps, then plunked on her butt. Undaunted, she kept trying and trying, to the joy of all of us. What a happy winter this was!

Of course, spring came, and with it came the return of the assistants, the hustle and bustle of exchanging lights in the tower, and preparing the station for inspections. George and I couldn't let this business interfere too much in our lives. We had kites to fly, sandpipers and little kids to care for, and stuff like that to do. It was nice to have Norman around to help us out if we needed help with things.

The summer passed ... fall arrived.

## CHAPTER 8

### *Keeping the Light, School Problems, and Carbuncles*

Fall 1922. Sister Ethel left to go to Ferris Institute to become a school teacher. I think she had worked in the village for resorters that summer, and had her own money for school. So much to remember, and like I told you, George and I were busy.

I don't know how the arrangements were made, but this was the first year we rode to school with Harold and Ben Stormer in the horse and buggy. What an experience this was for me! I was kinda' scared of animals, because of an experience I'd had with a buck sheep when I was small. I had not been associated with animals, except Old Tip. It was arranged that we would meet them each morning at the same time ... probably eight o'clock ... by the big maple tree in the middle of Bournique's field.

First of all, we had to decide just how the four of us were going to fit in that buggy seat. It was decided since Norman was the biggest, he would sit in the seat, and Harold, the driver, would sit on his lap. Ben was bigger than me, so I sat on his lap. Away we went, across the field, past the cemetery, and into the woods, down an old logging road. I was fascinated by "Old Del", our horse. She, I'm sure, had been a beautiful dapple gray when young, but was now mostly white, but still had some dapples here and there. We didn't go far, before she raised her tail and noisily released a gaseous odor that so engulfed us, that it made me turn my head to one side. I was right up front, you see. Harold, the driver, noticing my discomfort and expression, said, "That's nothin' fellows; she'll do worse than that before this trip is over." That incident broke the ice, so to speak, and bits of conversation began to be exchanged. We didn't go much farther when Harold shoved the reins to the horse over in front of me, and said, "Hold 'em for a minute." He proceeded to reach I his pocket and pulled out the makings to roll a cigarette. He performed his task quite efficiently, and deftly struck a match on the dashboard, lit his cigarette, and took the reins back. I decided right then and there that kids raised in a lumber camp advanced into manhood, or at least man habits, sooner than others.

We arrived at school in good time, and we all went with Harold to watch him care for Old Del. It was arranged that she would spend her days in the Paetschow barn. Del was relieved of her bit, a halter put on, given a

couple of forks of hay, and then her harness was slid off her back. Now it was time for school. I don't remember the teacher's name, but I do remember she had two daughters named Valberg, I think, and Carol. I liked them both, and I think they liked Ben and me, because a little later, when the leaves colored and then fell, we used to play in them together. I loved to play ball, and never missed a chance to play.

That fall was a new experience for me; my world was getting bigger. Riding in a buggy behind a horse for approximately eight miles each day was new, exciting, and a lesson in itself. Norman and I had new friends in that buggy; friends that had been brought up in a logging camp. They had many stories to tell; exciting stories, told in the language of a lumberjack, because that's the way they heard them.

The four of us were to develop a very close relationship in the next two years. They seemed to enjoy our stories too, told sometimes in the language of sailors, because that's the way we had heard them. Mostly, I listened though, and had to be coaxed to tell a story, particularly that first year. I was interested in our horse Old Del, and could ask a million questions about her, and was amazed at the knowledge of our friends. They lived in a world that included horses in every part of their life. They knew their likes, dislikes, habits, and how ornery they could be too, if they wanted to be. Harold said, "You can make Old Del do anything you want her to do, never any trouble from her." and he looked at me and said, "Why don't you crawl over the dash board, walk along the fill<sup>2</sup> there, and get on her back?" I couldn't believe he meant it. "Show him Ben." he said. Ben did show me, and I spent a lot of time on her back as we traveled to and from school. I love that horse.

Our school days on the island ended in November that year, when our parents decided to spend the rest of the winter in Charlevoix. We rented a house on Hulbert Street. What a sudden change in school conditions! My father's brother, Uncle David Furst, was in the Coast Guard in the Charlevoix station. I had four cousins going to school in Charlevoix. Harold, the youngest boy, was in my class. I think I was in the second grade that year.

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<sup>2</sup> Variant of *thill*: a shaft, as of a cart. Thill is defined as either of the shafts between which a single animal drawing a vehicle is placed.

When the teacher introduced me to the class, she said, "Class, we have a new boy in our class. I want you to meet him." She looked at me and said, "Your name is Glenn?"

I answered, "Ya."

She continued, "And your last name is Furst?"

My answer, "Ya."

"And you are from North Manitou Island?" she asked.

"Ya."

With a slight smile, she asked, "Are you German?"

"Ya" I said, and the whole class exploded in laughter. I wanted to crawl under my seat. Red-faced, I had to just sit there and wonder what I'd done wrong, or what was so funny. Oh, how I wished I was back on the island, where I could come home from school smelling like a horse if I wanted to. To add to my misery, my cousin Harold couldn't wait until he went home to tell his family. His older brothers, Leslie and Burton, played with that expression all winter when I was around: "Are you German?" they would ask me.

What a learning experience the rest of that winter was for me. It was a hard winter, with lots of snow. Christmas came, and I got a pair of skis. I learned to ski riding down from Hulbert Street towards Round Lake. Shortly after we arrived, Norman took a paper route for the Grand Rapids Press. It was a heavy paper back then too. It was too big a route for him to handle by himself, so I took over Antrim Street for him. It didn't take long to develop a routine. I'd leave school when it was out, go to the Charlevoix Hotel, where Gramma was cooking in the bakery, get a hug, and something she had fixed that day, and then go to the paper office and get my big bag of papers. The bag was very heavy at the start of my route. I'd deliver a couple of papers, then I'd pass the horse livery, and I always wondered about our island friends and Old Del. I would then continue down the street, careful not to throw the papers in the snow. It was a hard, snowy winter, and when I'd come past where the snow would be blowing over the hill from down by the lake, I could hardly see sometimes. The snow would be in big drifts near the end of my route. I'd have trouble making it over the drifts with my short legs. Thank goodness the bag was about empty when I'd get there.

I must tell you about a little old lady that lived by herself at the very end of the route. She was always watching for me on stormy days. When

she saw me coming, she would open the door, invite me in, snow and all, sit me down in a chair by the door where the “melting snow didn’t matter”, she said. She then would make me a cup of hot cocoa, and we would visit a little while. What an angel! I’ve forgotten that dear lady’s name.

Dad Hutzler didn’t feel very good that winter, and was complaining about a lot of stomach distress. He went to a doctor in Charlevoix, who informed him that he should have his appendix removed, or he might get in trouble with it on the island. The very thought of appendix trouble scared mother half to death, because that was the way our father, her first husband, had died.

It was arranged that his appendix be removed in the Petoskey Hospital, so he went to the hospital for a couple of weeks. That’s how long it took I those days. He recovered nicely, and so the rest of the winter passed. Dad Hutzler, as I remember, returned to North Manitou Light in April. We finished the school year, and followed him in late May.

Many things happened to me that summer, it seemed. Our family was growing up, so to speak. Sis Ethel came home a certified school teacher from Ferris Institute, Norman was fifteen years old, I was ten, George five, Leota became three years old, and brother Dale was born a few minutes before the Fourth of July. He, today, says he starts celebrating on the third of July, and has the *big bang* on the Fourth of July. What a little stinker he was to take care of. We all loved him, so I suppose we kinda’ spoiled him sometimes.

It was during this summer season that it seemed to our family that the good lord was testing us for various reasons. The islands, because of the water all around and the decaying fish on the beaches, have always had a great many house flies. This year they were especially bad. They would gather on the screen doors by the dozens, and it was impossible to keep them out of the house. Mother was frantic, and ordered several fly swatters.

Down at the fog signal building, the keepers made extra ones out of pieces of screen, and attached wooden handles. They worked almost as good as the store-bought ones. Mother would give us kids each a swatter, and put us to work. Our pay was one penny for each ten flies we killed. It was her way of getting us to pick up the dead flies. We also had to wash the marks off the wall, if we splattered them real bad. As I think about it now, it was kinda’ fun, even if we did have to wash our hands real good after the job was over.

In those days, there wasn't any spray to kill flies with, and flypaper, the sticky kind, was just beginning to come on the market. It was available in sheets about eight by twelve inches, at the Leland Mercantile. Mother ordered some. They came to sheets facing each other, and you had to carefully pull them apart, and lay them down flat on a table, or stairway, where flies gathered. Our front doorway faced toward the east, and in the morning the sun would shine in on those few steps leading up to the kitchen. Flies loved it there. It was here that mother placed a couple of sheets of flypaper. At lunch time, Dad Hutzler came from the fog signal wearing carpet slippers, and put his foot on one of those sheets of flypaper. His first expression was, "What the hell is going on here?" As he lifted his foot up, the paper came up too. He said a few more bad words, and then placed his other foot on the paper to hold it down, while he lifted his foot. The end result was a lot of bad words came flying out, and he came to the table in his stocking feet. He left both slippers in the hallway, all tangled up in the flypaper. It wasn't a pleasant meal for anyone, but we have had a lot of good laughs over it since then.

As I mentioned previously, it seemed to our family that we were being punished, or tested this summer.

Poor Norman broke out with several boils and carbuncles. I asked mother what was the difference between the two of them? She answered, "Well, you see this big one here on Normie's back? That is a carbuncle. All these smaller ones are boils."

The poor fellow was in such misery he didn't want to move unless he had to, and to make matters worse, they all came on his back, where he couldn't care for them. A couple of them were on his buttocks, and he would half-mast his trousers and back up to mother as she sat by the kitchen table with all her cotton, tape, scissors, and peroxide handy. We smaller kids would all gather around and watch the procedure, and sympathize with Norman. We were anxious for him to feel better, because he was our leader when he was home. He was the one who could make the best kites, darts, play boats, sling shots, and stuff like that.

Our mother was a pretty good doctor to have around, and seemed to know a lot about boils and carbuncles. For example, she would pinch around one of them for a bit, and then comment, "That one isn't ripe yet; you can't get much out of it." She would direct her attention to another one as she continued with, "A boil or carbuncle will never heal up until it gets ripe, and you are able to squeeze the core out of it. Then it will heal up."

Now one of them on Normie's buttocks was a large carbuncle that apparently was ripe, and as she pinched the thing, a huge ugly-looking mass popped out. Mother said, "There, by golly, the core is out of that one." She kept dabbing at the hole it left with a piece of cotton that had peroxide on it. It would sizzle and foam up as it cleaned out that hole. Finally, she said, "There Normie. We will bandage it up, and in a couple of days you will be able to sit up without a pillow under you." I looked at Norman, and I could see beads of sweat on his forehead, but I just knew he was pleased with mother's report. Mother tore off a large ball of cotton to put over the sore spot, and cut off two pieces of adhesive tape to hold it in place.

The trouble started when one end of the tape would not stick to Norman's back. Mother made a comment about government tape not being any good, and asked me to get her a box of matches. "I'll warm up this tape a little." I got the matches for her, and she lit one and held it near the end of the tape, when all of a sudden, she let out an excited yell; "Oh my god, the cotton caught on fire!" Norman, feeling the heat and flames on his bare backside, headed for the back door. Mother reached out and grabbed the burning bandage, and threw it on the floor, but Norman didn't know it, and kept running, trying to hold up his trousers ... but not too high, because he didn't want to cover up that ball of fire on his back. He hit the back screen door with a bang, and ran up over clothesline hill, the sand flying in all directions, and was headed for the south beach, before he realized that the fire was no longer on his back.

It was hard to not laugh at the incident (we have laughed a great deal about that in later years), however, at the time, we had sympathetic feelings for Normie, and kept our humor at a low key. When we asked Norman why he kept running after he could no longer feel the fire on his back, he responded, "I really thought the fire was still there, and I was outrunning the heat and flames."

We began to have some handsome young men suddenly become interested in events and things that went on around the lighthouse. They would ask for Norman, but seemed quite satisfied to stay a while and visit with my older sister.

The Angel foundation was interested in raising cattle on the island, and they just turned them loose over there. Of course, the herd consisted of some bulls, too, some of which didn't like people at all. In particular, there was one white bull that had a nasty temper. We began to hear stories about Coast Guardsmen, while on patrol, being chased up in trees, and they stayed

there until that white bull decided he had other things to do, and went away. That Coast Guard had to explain why he was late to relieve the watch in the tower, and why he had not properly punched the patrol clock. I was particularly impressed with the story of a young Coast Guardsman who was driven into the lake by that bull. He slowly proceeded as best he could in water above his waist, holding the clock and torches above his head to keep them dry, while that white bull bellowed, and pawed up the beach. I would lay awake nights, and think about that white bull, and developed a great fear for bulls.

Life at North Manitou Light that summer was just full of activity. Seems to me so many things were happening. Perhaps I had become of an age when events impressed me more, and I remember them better.

It's also possible that some of the events I mention did not happen during the season in which I tell about them. They *did* happen though, and I want to include them in this story of life at North Manitou Light Station during the late teen and the twenties.

My Uncle Ray Robinette was an energetic person, and tried his hand in several activities. He was a member of the Life Saving Service when my father was living. He quit the service, and became a mail boat carrier for a while, and did some commercial fishing on the side with his boat, named the *Violet*. The boat was named for his wife Violet, who, as you will recall, was my very first school teacher. It was this spring, I think, that he set a pound net on the north side of Dimmick's Point with much success. He would come over from South Manitou Island with Harold Tobin, his young helper, and lift that net about three days a week. Many times, he would bring us fish to eat, and have dinner with us. He was just a Jolly person. It was a joy to have him around. He caught tons of suckers, which he threw back in the lake, but also caught enough white fish to make it profitable.

It was the end of the season when the lake trout began to come to his net. I particularly remember a time he came into the Light Station to get some boards. He had so many lake trout that he had to build a box to keep them from getting entangled in the boat engine. I can still see him and Harold, in oil skins and hip boots, wading and slipping around almost waist deep in those fish. Shortly after that, Ray entered the Lighthouse Service. In fact, he became a keeper on North Manitou for a short while.

Every summer season the tenders arrived with supplies, and it was an exciting event for everyone, especially for George and me, who would almost every year get to ride in the motorboat and visit the ship. The happy

smiling cook in white clothes seemed to make better cookies each year. Maybe a couple of boys were developing tastier appetites. In any case, it was an exciting day for us.

Later in the season, Dad Hutzler excitedly told mother, and all of us, that the Sumac was bearing down on us from the north, and, “For goodness sake, get the place cleaned up.” We were caught completely by surprise. Everyone knew Capt. Hubbard would make his annual inspection of quarters. He seemed to enjoy his job, and loved to surprise people because he never spent any time in the other buildings, but hurried up to the house. Mother and Sis Ethel were frantic. The beds had not been made, and breakfast dishes were still on the table. While they were making beds, doing dishes, oiling the hardwood floors, etc., we kids were running the white owls out to the outhouse, with instructions to straighten the place up while there. What a hustle, bustle affair. Enroute to the outhouse, I could see the Sumac, coming from South Fox Island with a white bone in her mouth. She would soon slow down to drop the anchor, and Capt. Hubbard would come ashore. When I returned to the house, mother said, “Glenn, you take the kids out to play somewhere, and keep away from the house for a while.” So, Glenn and about five other kids headed for the sand hills.

Of course, I did not witness this event, because I was in the sand hills somewhere trying to be what you would call these days “a good nanny” to a bunch of little kids. However, my sister Ethel tells about how frantic mother and she were, trying to take care of the dishes, make the beds, etc. The last thing she did, as Capt. Hubbard was coming ashore, was run an oil mop over the kitchen floor. In her haste, she applied too much oil, and had no time to wipe it dry.

Mother was standing by the kitchen sink, which was equipped with a pitcher pump, when Capt. Hubbard came through the front door, followed by Dad Hutzler in full dress uniform. As the Captain came through the kitchen door, he spotted my mother across the room, and headed towards her with his right hand extended, and at the same time saying, “How do you d...” About then, his rubber heels hit that oily floor, one heel slipped forward, his other leg he shoved straight out in front of him, and when it came down, it slipped too. He came across that floor waving his arms like a young sea gull attempting its first flight, and finally grabbed on to the pump handle with his left hand to steady himself, then shook her hand, and finished with, “... Mrs. Hutzler.”

The rest of the inspection was uneventful, and I don't remember if Dad Hutzler got an efficiency star that year, or not.

Dimmick's Point was probably one of the most beautiful places I've ever lived, and I don't think anyone who ever lived there realized that fact. I'm sure I did not, and I don't remember anyone in our family ever wanting to return to Dimmick's Point because it was so beautiful there. It *was* beautiful, and it's a shame, really, that myself and others who write, or tell of any incident they have experienced in connection with Dimmick's Point, will elaborate on the difficulties, rather than its beauty.

But I do remember the gorgeous sunrises and blazing sunsets of years ago. Sometimes our family would leave the dwelling for a walk along the beach after the evening meal. How our parents would sit on a large log near the water, and wait for the sun to set. While there, my stepfather would name each passing vessel out in the channel, and explain the meaning of the whistles we heard now and then. I was always interested in the beautiful white passenger ships that passed from time to time. They seemed a little out of place in that clutter of dark-hulled vessels, belching long columns of black coal smoke. I sorta' thought of them as being guardian angels to the other vessels, and that they had a duty to be there. They all seemed so close to us. Each one, as it neared the Manitou Shoal Lightship, looked like it would run right into it. I recall the D&C passenger boats, that were somewhat faster than the others, and how their speed was amplified by the frothy water along their sides, created by the turning sidewheels. My stepfather would say, "That D&C boat will be in Detroit in just a few hours."

The *North* and *South American* were my favorite vessels. They were so beautifully white, tall, and stately-looking. Even the names were impressive.

The sun would be getting lower, and our attention would be directed in a westerly direction to watch it settle into a view that included Mr. Baldy, and the tall tree with the eagles' nest. You could see the eagles sitting along the rim of the nest, the young would be as large as the parent birds. It was a beautiful sight to watch that big blazing sun lower itself into the dense trees, setting the lightly moving leaves on fire for a fleeting moment, before disappearing from our sight. We walked in the afterglow of that sunset, toward a house we were to call our home for nine years.

I can still feel that warm sand, as it moved between the toes of my bare feet, the warmth in my heart, and the peaceful feeling that all was well in my world.

## CHAPTER 9

### *School, a White Bull, and Fishing*

The summer of 1923 passed, and the problems of how us kids were going to attend school was being raised more frequently. It seemed to me that there could never be any decision made in that regard, until the last minute. The Stormer family encouraged us to ride with their boys. We had developed the beginning of a great relationship the previous fall, when we rode with their boys for almost three months.

Our whole family was so proud of our sister Ethel, who was assigned to teach school in the Charlevoix area. Seems to me it was named the Undine school. In any case, mail order packages were arriving at our house containing mostly young ladies' clothes. Preparations were being made for a lovely young lady to depart for her first year of teaching school. How beautiful I thought she looked in her new clothes, wearing that fox fur choker around her neck. We were sad to have her go, but happy for her as we knew she wanted to be a teacher so much.

The decision was made! We would spend the winter at North Manitou Lighthouse. Norman and Glenn would ride with Harold and Ben. I was happy in one sense, but I was scared half to death of that *white bull* I'd heard so much about. To make matters worse, we were meeting the Stormer boys in the middle of a big field, where there was only one tree ... a big maple, and the lower branches were pretty high up. I wasn't sure I could climb it. Believe me, I was a young fellow that had a lot of fearful things to think about. My stepfather tried to talk me out of being so scared, by telling me there were trees all along the route where we would be walking. Brother Norman was putting on a brave front when in the presence of our folks, but I could sense that he was frightened too.

In any case, school opened as usual, and away we went down the boardwalk that led to the boathouse near the woods. We carried pencils, tablets, and syrup pails with our lunch packed inside. Lunch usually consisted of peanut butter sandwiches, a boiled egg if the chickens were laying, a little glass jar of canned fruit, and a couple of cookies. As we neared those woods that first day, I could see white bull faces behind every tree. Frankly, I was scared stiff. Norman reassured me as we went along the path just inside the woods. He had a plan for us, he said. "When we get to

the edge of the field, we will look out there and see if there are cattle in it. If there are, and the buggy is not there, we will just wait by an easy-to-climb tree. When it does show up, we will make a run for it.” Thank goodness there were not any cattle the first day, but we stayed near the woods just in case. When Old Del and the buggy drove out into that field, we strode out of those woods like a couple of fearless warriors. We assumed the same positions in the buggy as last year. Our conversation soon turned to the stories we had heard about that ugly white bull. As I recall, they had not seen this white bull either, but were sure the stories were true. However, Harold told me not to be concerned as long as we were in the buggy.

We had the same teacher, and she seemed happy to see us. I didn’t tell her about my first school day in Charlevoix. Ben and I rode on Old Del’s back a lot that fall, and once in a while, just for kicks, Harold would slap Old Del with the extra length of reins on the butt, and away we would go, down through those woods at a gallop. I was glad he didn’t do that when I was on Del’s back. I was always half scared when we would gallop Old Del, but tried not to show it. Those narrow buggy wheels would spin so fast you could hardly see the spokes; dirt and leaves would fly into the woods when we went around the curves. I was sure if a wheel ever hit a tree, it would explode into little bits.

Old Del would just ease herself up to a trot pretty soon, and before we knew it, she would be plodding down the road at her favorite pace. She knew the right pace for an old horse and four young boys better than we did. The most likely place for us to run into a large number of cattle was Bournique’s field, the field where we got into and out of the buggy each morning and night. Sure enough, it happened one morning, that field was full of cattle. They were everywhere!

School seemed so unimportant to me right then, and I would have gone back home if Norman would have let me. He kept telling me the cattle had not noticed us yet, and we would wait for the buggy right here near the woods. We kept looking for the white bull, and sure enough, he was out there, and he was so awfully close to the tree where we got into the buggy. *Oh, what a huge beast he was!* I was near a tree that I could climb easily, and I had made up my mind there would be no school for me that day! Never would I walk out into that field with that bull out there. I knew Norman was scared too; after all, he had his little brother to look after too. He did not have to be concerned about me, because I had given up any plans for school I was going home, or up that easy-to-climb tree.

Just then, Old Del, with the buggy, came plodding into the field, and we could see Harold and Ben sitting on the front edge of the seat, and Ben was pointing towards the big bull. Harold looked in our direction, then directed Old Del to head our way. Oh, how I loved those friends of ours, and Old Del! They drove right up to where we were waiting. We climbed in, and Harold headed the rig towards the tree and the big white bull. I silently questioned his judgement. However, Harold reassured us by saying, "He won't bother us as long as we stay in this buggy." When we passed by that animal, he looked up from his feeding, checked us over for a long time, and seemed to be satisfied. Believe me, you would have had to break all my fingers in order to push me out of that buggy.

The school day passed somehow. I kept thinking about the return trip, and wondered if the cattle would still be there in the field. Sure enough, they were, and the white bull was over in the corner of the field, away from where we had to get out of the buggy. Harold drove us over by the woods anyway, and I was thankful for that. As we walked home, we both kept looking over our shoulders for a charging white bull. When we got home, we had all those exciting things to tell our family, and I could see brother George open his eyes wide when we told about the bull. He was getting close to school age too.

My fear of the big white bull subsided somewhat as our plan to avoid him became better developed.

School apparently was not something I would have had to struggle with under normal conditions, but having to miss so much school because I just couldn't get to one was a problem. Changing from an island type school to a city school in mid-season, or vice versa, did put me in a position where I was always trying to catch up with certain phases of class study. Brother Norman, of course, had similar problems, as did our sister Ethel.

School for Norman and me that year went along quite smoothly. Except for our fear of the white bull the early part of the year, school was kinda' fun.

I sometimes would find myself thinking of events that had happened during the previous summer. I thought a lot about our fishing trips to the little lake, that was something special to remember.

Mother and sis Ethel would prepare a basket lunch. It wasn't difficult, because we were going to cook our fish over the fire, so all you really needed was some buttered bread, a frying pan, salt, pepper, and some

more butter to fry the fish in. If the season was right, we liked to take a watermelon along, a special treat and easy to take. No one talked about ice cold melon in those days. Fishing gear was a slim sapling, with a piece of line about eight feet long tied on the small end, a sinker, and a hook on the other end. There was always a boat or two near where we parked the car. I have no idea who owned them; it didn't seem to be anything we were concerned about anyway. We would dig some worms while the mosquitoes chewed us up. No spray in those days either. If you weren't tough enough to stand a couple of bug bites, you had better not go fishing. While we rowed out to the fishing spots, the women folks, generally one of the assistant families came along too, would build the fire to fry our fish.

Wow! What fun, just as soon as you put your line down, a fish would grab it. We caught perch, sunfish, and bass, until our worms were gone. That was all too soon, it seemed to me, and we headed back for shore with the bottom of the boat alive with splashing fish. Who cared if you got wet? It was summertime, and warm out, wasn't it? Dad Hutzler, the other assistant, and Norman cleaned the fish. I tried to do some of the scaling of them. The scales stuck on my arms and bare legs. Soon the fish were in the pan, just bubbling in that melted butter with plenty of salt and pepper on them. They smelled so good; I could hardly wait until they were ready to eat. Everyone enjoyed the fish so much, they were special, a little different than the Lake Michigan fish we usually had to eat. Then that watermelon, sliced in about one-inch slices, was a treat out of this world. The melon came from the Leland Mercantile. I don't think any melons were raised on the island, unless the Maleski families, Paul and John, raised a few for their own use.

Going up to the Paul Maleski farm was another trip us kids enjoyed. We would go there a couple of times a year with our car for vegetables to eat, if they could spare them, and for chicken feed if they had some extra; usually they had both items.

Mrs. Maleski was an excellent bread baker, and just loved to treat folks to a slice or two of her home-baked bread. We loved it, and enjoyed the way she held the loaf to slice it. She would hold the loaf in a vertical position against the upper part of her long apron with her left arm, and then with that long kitchen knife in her right hand, she sliced the bread with a sawing motion towards her upper body. We were sure she would cut herself; she never did, and the bread was delicious.

We never got to know the John Maleski family very well. I don't think he did much farming. I heard he fished gill nets quite a lot. Both the Maleski families were resisting the pressure the Angel Foundation was placing on them to sell their properties. I don't know the end result of that dispute; however, I'm sure the Paul Maleski family hung on a long time. It was a treat to drive over to their home.

Thinking about the fishing trip, and the watermelon, makes me recall other things and other people. A person that comes to mind is Tracy Grosvenor and my mother's comments about him. Everyone liked Tracy, you couldn't help but like him, he was that kind of a person. Quite frequently, we had to order groceries from the Leland Mercantile via the mail boat. Tracy was the operator. Mother was quite nervous about using the hall crank-type telephone, but she did order groceries that way. She would prepare a long list of groceries, and go to the telephone with it. She would ring Tracy's ring (there weren't many phones, so each had its own number of rings) and read each item off the list to him. He would answer, "Yup, yup, yup, yup" until the list was completed. She would come up those hall steps away from the phone saying, "I'll bet I won't get half that order. I know he didn't write it down, because he answered 'yup' too fast." We would drive to the village later in the day to pick up the groceries, and to her surprise, every item would be in that box. She would shake her head and say, "I just don't know how he does it." On occasion, if the weather was nice, he would run his boat over to the light, as a special gesture, and drop the groceries off on the lighthouse dock.

Tracy was married to Della Firestone, also an island family person, and their children have continued the mail service to the islands even until this day. Tracy took over the mail service from Johnny Paetchow, who left the business to enter the Lighthouse Service. As another point of interest, Johnny Paetchow was married to Bessie Firestone.

The fall season passed, and in November we were experiencing a little spattering of snow once in a while. In December, it was quite evident we would have a white Christmas, and the Stormer boys mentioned we would soon have to use the cutter for school. From time to time, Harold was having trouble getting cigarette rolling paper, and was using plain newspaper to roll his smokes. Newspaper sometimes would flash into a flame, and his cigarette would come apart and drop particles of burning tobacco on us in the buggy. He told us he didn't want his folks to know he was smoking, so he got his material from the woodsmen down at the bunk house. He said, "Sometimes they don't have any extra cigarette papers."

Peerless, Plow Boy, and Soldier Boy tobacco was easy to come by, so he just started to chew the stuff, like many of the men did. Chewing Peerless was like putting a bunch of dry grass in your mouth ...that's the way it looked to me. Then one day, he had what he called some plug chewing tobacco. He would cut a little piece and put it in his mouth. It had a tantalizing sweet smell, and he seemed to relish it so much. It made him spit a lot, and I noticed he seemed to take aim at little twigs or other targets in the now, and let it fly. He never missed by much.

About two weeks before Christmas, when we came home from school, I noticed George had an excited look on his face, and had something to tell me. He could hardly wait until Dad Hutzler was outside feeding his chickens, and mother was upstairs, to grab my hand and lead me over to a closet that had a lot of packages in it. In one of the boxes that he had looked into was a whickered Santa Claus face looking right up at us. George was five years old, and this was one of the most startling discoveries of his young life. He put his finger up to his lips, and we backed out of there, his eyes just sparkled.

Memories! Family memories! Some so beautiful, others so sad and heartbreaking.

Just before Christmas, we made our first trip to school in the cutter. It was so high, so narrow, and tilted so easily, I was nervous riding in it for a while. I soon got over that, and the cutter was really a lot of fun to ride in. After the snow came, Norman and I always had wet feet it seemed. We would get our feet wet walking up to Bournique's place, then they would remain wet the rest of the day. Sometimes my shoes would be so wet they would freeze stiff in real cold weather. We wore *high tops*, the top of the line in those days. In the cutter, we sat under big cow hides, and when it snowed, it would kinda' just get thicker and thicker. It was fine for Harold and Ben, who had dry feet, but my feet, and Norman's too, were always about to get frost bitten. We found relief by getting out and walking behind the cutter, or riding the back of the runners.

Ben, my friend, would always get out with me and walk. Consequently, he got his feet wet too. When Norman had to get out, Ben drove Old Del, and Harold walked with him. End result, of course, four kids with cold, wet feet. When we came home, mother would put our shoes behind the stove to dry for the next day. The leather would get so hard and stiff that they wouldn't bend at all. So, we would rub some kind of oil on them that softened them a little. We were at an age when young men,

particularly, have smelly feet. Our feet being wet so much didn't help either. Dad Hutzler would wiggle his nose around, and say "phew" when we took off our shoes. He loved to tease, and would continue with, "You know, boys, Santa is coming soon. Are you going to hang them socks up for him to put presents in? If Santa gets just one whiff of them socks, he will shoot right back up the chimney." I told him I was going to borrow one of mother's, because they were bigger.

Christmas came, and Santa too. First, we heard the bells outside and loud stomping noises. The front door flew open, and in came Santa in his red suit and long white whiskers. He made a lot of "Ho, Ho, Ho" sounds, and asked each one if they had been good or bad, before handing them a present. I noticed Leota ran over to the chair where mother was holding baby Dale. Her eyes were like saucers. George was excited too, but looked over at me a couple of times with a knowing look in his eyes. Norman and I were asked if we had been good, and received a present too. I caught a glimpse of eye glasses as Santa turned his head to our side. Santa made a couple of funny little hops as he left the room, and we could hear his "Ho, Ho, Ho" as he went out the front door. More jingle of bells, and he was gone. Silence for a moment, and then the chatter began. Dad Hutzler came back from checking the chickens, and was shocked to hear Santa had been to our house.

We settled down to a cold, cold winter routine. I'd been through it before here at this Lighthouse Station. But things were different now. I was going to school. No more just sitting by the kitchen window, watching the winds move the sand around, and sea gulls forage for food. George was going through that stage now, but he had a little sister and brother to tease, etc.

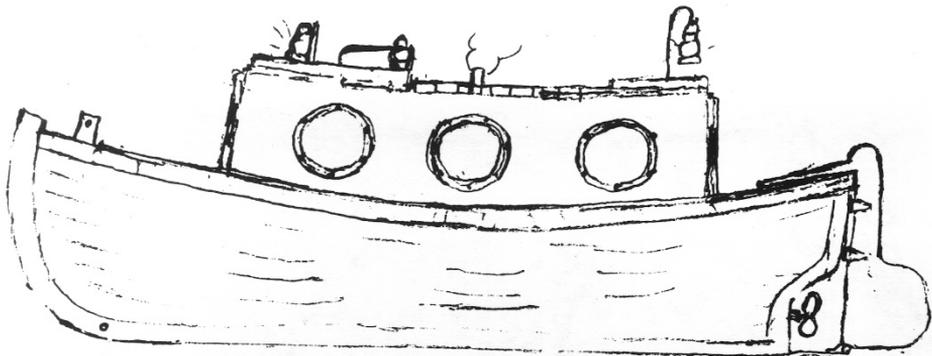
Oh, how the winds would blow across that point. One time, when Dad Hutzler came from the fog signal with a scuttle of coal in each hand, the wind whipped his glasses off, and we didn't find them for a couple of years. Broken, of course, and located in an area where we wouldn't dream they would be.

Riding in the cutter to school was getting more hectic too. The winds in open places created huge snow drifts, and we had to be careful not to tip the cutter over. Of course, it happened a couple of times. When we tipped over, each time one of the fills would pass over Old Del's back, and she would give a big jump forward. One time, when we tipped over on the left side, Ben and I fell on top of Norman and Harold, driving them deeper into

the soft snow. Old Del gave a jump forward, Harold jerked the reins and yelled at her “Whoa!” When we got untangled and came out of that snow, our stocking caps cockeyed, or missing, Harold was still holding the reins and trying to calm Old Del. He had tobacco juice and snow all over his face, and his cap was also missing. I think in the next few minutes I heard every bad word a lumberjack had ever used. It took a while to get the harness back on a very nervous horse that kept stomping around. One fill was splintered, but we could still use it. Quieting Harold down, and helping him clean himself up, was the biggest job. When things got dull riding the rest of the winter, someone would mention the tip-over incident, and we would have a big laugh.

We had more than our share of snow that winter, and it was cold, but we didn't have to worry about the white bull anymore. Someone said the cattle had moved to the west side, where their food was being supplemented with hay.





*Pumpkin Seed*



Mr. and Mrs. Peter Stormer



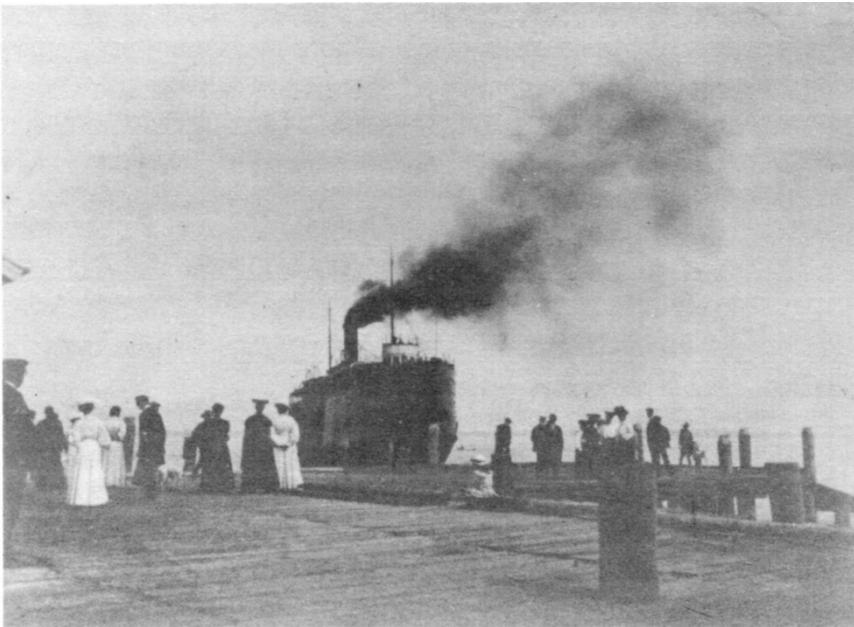
Earnest G. Hutzler at Grand Traverse L.H.S. several years after he left North Manitou



Dimmick's Point – North Manitou Lighthouse as it looked in 1919



North Manitou Lighthouse – Dad Hutzler in tower



The Manitou (or Missouri) docking at North Manitou Island



Kenneth Bird, Glenn Furst, DeVere Bird, and the Bird dog  
(Guess who has a feather in his cap)



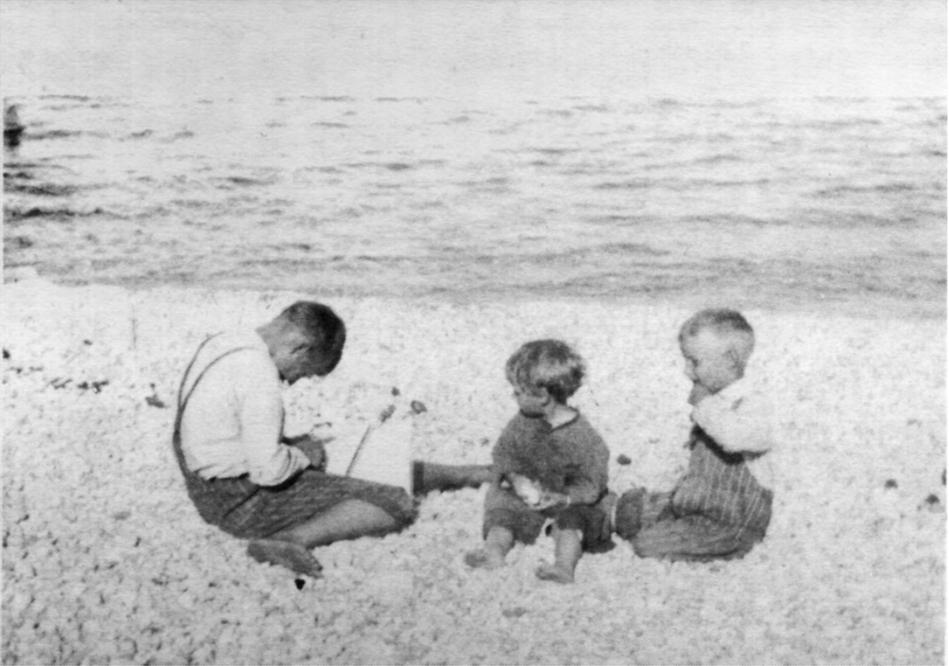
Norman Furst



Leota's third birthday. Back row: Glenn Furst, George Hutzler.  
Middle row: George Grosvenor, Fern Grosvenor, Bernice Mosier, Shirley Grosvenor, Leota Hutzler, Louise Mosier.  
Front row: Ruth Rotta



Glenn on skis – nearing the end of winter with plenty of milk



Norman, George, and Glenn

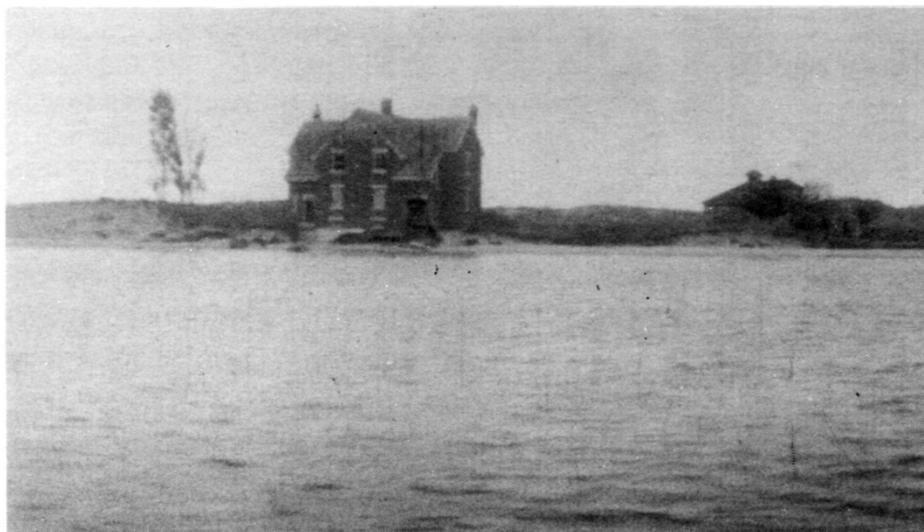


Norman and Glenn



This picture was taken a few years before the dwelling washed into the lake

- ① My bedroom ② Warm southeast corner ③ My favorite window



Maybe the next big storm?

## CHAPTER 10

### *A Weekend at Stormers*

Harold and Ben wanted us to spend a weekend with them sometime. We could leave for school from their house on Monday. It sounded like fun to Norman and me. Mother said it was okay with her. She would send extra clothes with us on Friday, and we could go home from school with them. Mrs. Stormer would pack our lunch on Monday. We liked the lunch idea, because we were always trading sandwiches anyway. Harold and Ben loved our peanut butter sandwiches, and we liked their fried egg sandwiches. We traded almost every day.

That was a wonderful experience for me. The Stormer family consisted of eight children. Harold and Ben were the youngest. Amber was the second oldest and only girl. The boys, according to age, were Pete, Joe, Henry, Lewis, Johnny, Harold and Ben. All the boys slept upstairs except Pete and Joe, who were doing men's work in the logging camps, and drawing wages. They slept in the bunk house with the other lumber jacks. I had never seen a family that had so much fun before. All the boys, I think, were "goosey", and they loved to goose each other. It would happen generally when one of them was getting a drink of water with the dipper full of water. He would let out a yell, jump right up in the air, the dipper and water would hit the ceiling, and come down with a clatter to the floor. He would then take after the guy that did it to him, who was goosey too. What a laugh! So different than lighthouse life.

Mrs. Stormer was a heavy lady, always wore an apron, was easy to smile, and loved her family. She amazed me when she joined in the fun and laughter over the water pail incident. When the fellows settled down a bit, she said, "Okay, you guys, mop up the mess, and get me another bucket of water."

It was soon time for the evening meal, and Mr. Stormer came in the house. I noticed everybody settled down, and the atmosphere in the home seemed to change. There was no question in my mind who was in charge in the household. He wore a mustache, had a deep voice, and people listened when he spoke. I could sense there was a kindness in this man, because of the manner in which he talked to Norman and me. He was considerably interested in our home life out there at the lighthouse.

We sat at a big long table, just loaded with good food. Mrs. Stormer brought in a huge bowl of steaming potatoes, large platter of beef, two big pitchers of fresh milk, and a large bowl of homemade cottage cheese. Wow! I was the littlest one at the table, but I'll bet I drank the most milk, and ate the most cottage cheese. This was food that Norman and I seldom had at home.

At bedtime, we went upstairs to one large room, no partitions, and the beams were exposed on the underside of the roof, which was the ceiling. My grandma's house in Charlevoix was like that too. There were at least eight bunks up there. Ben and I slept together, and Norman and Harold did too. We left a small lamp burning low, so the other older boys could find their way later. This was fun! Ben and I made plans for the next day, as we lay there, in that warm bed. The flannel sheets warmed our bodies, and the heavy cowhide pressed them firmly down upon us. Even my icy-cold feet got warm. We soon fell asleep.

When we awakened in the morning, the smell of coffee, bacon, hot cakes, etc., had already found its way upstairs. We didn't lay there very long before we hopped out of bed, and made our way downstairs. After washing, we made our way to the table. The food seemed to taste much better here in this farm house. I'm sure all that fresh milk had a lot to do with it.

After breakfast, we had so many things to do. Ben had plans to show me so many things: the horse barn, the cow barn, and where the pigs and chickens were kept. He took me to the blacksmith shop. That was exciting, to watch the man make horseshoes, and make other pieces of metal into whatever was required in the logging business.

The horse barn was interesting. There was a raised walkway in the middle, and you could look down on the horses from it. Most of the horses were out in the woods working, but Old Del was enjoying a day of rest. Dick, the blind horse, was there. He was a big red horse, with large hooves. He had been blind for many years, and was used sometimes if they needed him. Then there was "Shep", the pony. We could ride Shep if we wanted to.

While we were in the horse barn, we heard a loud gun go off out by the slaughter house. Ben said, "I forgot; they are butchering today." Naturally, we ran over there. I had never seen anything like this before. About four men all around that critter, working on various parts of the animal. It didn't look like it was something that I'd enjoy doing. Norman and Harold were there, and they may have helped some. Ben showed me the other cattle, and in one area, there were two large beasts that Johnny

Stormer was training to be a team of Oxen. I couldn't imagine that. They looked like bulls to me, and I didn't have any affection for bulls.

Ben then took me down to the bunkhouse, where the loggers ate their meals and lived. It was a long building, at one end was the galley. The rest of the building was lined with bunks for the loggers, with partial partitions for privacy and to hang clothes. The cook was wearing a white hat, white jacket, and an apron. He was making donuts. Ben told me, "He makes them every day." The cook, a happy-go-lucky sort of guy, insisted we sit down at the table and have some. The donuts were good, and I'm sure Ben and I looked very small sitting at that big table.

It was a learning experience for me, a different kind of life, and I liked it. We did so many exciting things that weekend. Johnny Stormer hitched up his oxen. He put me on the back of one, and had my picture taken. We slid down hills with our sleds – Norman and I had brought our sleds along. All of the older Stormer children had work to do. Amber helped her mother around the house. The boys had chores to do, and worked in the woods.

Henry, it seems, was only home for the winter while the sailing season was closed. Anyway, he loved to tease us kids. He would play various little tricks on us. He, in his travels, had some dental work done that included two fillings in the front that were gold. His smile fascinated me. I'm sure his heart wasn't in the logging business.

Ben and I were always thinking of how to get even with the rascal. We spotted a cow bell in the barn, and a plan formed in our minds. We would tie that bell under Henry's bed. Every time he moved, it would ring. We could hardly wait until nighttime to carry out our plan.

We went to bed early that night, and lay there giggling and waiting for Henry to come to bed. We didn't think about it being Saturday night, and the card game in the bunkhouse! We fell asleep, and when Ben rolled over to awaken me in the morning, there was a loud "clang, clang" clanging noise under our bed, and all the other bunks were empty.

When Henry had come up the stairs, his lamp light had lit up the bell under his bed. He carefully removed it, and tied it under our bed.

"Foiled again."

When we came downstairs, there sat Henry, with a cup of coffee, and a big grin on his face. The whole family had fun over that joke.

The weekend passed all too quickly, and we returned to the daily routine of going to school.

Dad Hutzler had several old guns in his possession, one of which was an old lever-action twenty-two caliber. Norman was allowed to use it if he provided his own shells for it.

We had been seeing several ducks along the shore as we walked the beach to avoid the deep snow. One morning, he took this twenty-two along and, after considerable sneaking along the bank, he was able to shoot at one. He killed it, but it was too far out, and we couldn't get it. He hid the gun in some bushes, and we continued on to school. That afternoon, when we returned from school, we found the duck on the beach. It was a Sawbill – a fish-eating duck – and not good to eat. The sea gulls had picked its belly open, and had eaten its innards.

The winter moved along slowly, and we boys had so much time to spend enroute and returning from school. Much of the time two boys rode in the cutter, and the other two would walk to warm their cold feet.

When we were all in the cutter, we used to fabricate stories to tell, and each one of us would have to tell a story. I always tried to have them pass over my turn, because I couldn't think of anything to tell. I didn't get away with it, and I had to think of something. I had received a *Brair' Rabbit and the Fox* book for Christmas, so I decided to tell one of those little stories. However, when I came to the point where the fox had the Brair' Rabbit cornered, and was about to enjoy a good meal, I injected the phrase "Right then, Brair' Rabbit hauled off and took a big chaw of tobacco." Everybody thought that was funny, so that became a favorite phrase in our stories the rest of the winter, whenever the hero in our story got in trouble.

One evening, Harold and I were walking behind the cutter, and Harold was chewing that plug tobacco with the sweet tantalizing smell. I asked him to cut me just a tiny piece, so I could taste it. He was only too happy to oblige. It didn't taste as good as it smelled, and we didn't walk but a few hundred feet and I was sick. I came home looking pale, and mother fussed over me. She, as always, had that fear of having a very sick child on her hands, and no way to get medical help. I was fine in the morning, so off to school we went. I never did tell her, as I remember, but I think she wondered about it.

The winter did pass, as winters do, and we began to experience spots of bare ground here and there. Harold said, "As soon as the snow melts a

little more in the woods, we will use the buggy again.” It was only a few days later that we were once again riding in the buggy. There was still considerable snow in places, but the narrow buggy wheels cut their way through it.

It was after the snow was gone that we met in the field, and a big red horse was pulling the buggy. “Where was Old Del?” “Was she sick?” The answer was ‘no’ to both questions. They needed her to help out in the logging operations. We would use Dick, the blind horse, a few days. Dick looked so different in front of our buggy. He was so tall, and he had huge hoofs. His ears were long, and kept flicking in all directions to catch the slightest sound. Harold was much more alert and attentive in the way he handled the reins. I couldn’t keep my eyes off that big red horse. How awful to be blind! I had not even wondered much about it before. Now and again, there were limbs in the road that had fallen from the trees, and Harold would say in a calm low voice “Watch it, Dick.” Dick’s ears would stick up very straight, and his front hooves would start to be raised about a foot higher than usual, until we had passed over the obstruction, and Harold would say, “Okay Dick.” He would then settle down to his regular gait.

It was only a few days until Old Del had her old job back, pulling our buggy, and I sometimes wonder if maybe she would not have just as soon pulled logs around in the woods. I have told you about making her gallop sometimes. Well, shortly before school was let out that spring, we were on our way home, and we galloped her out into Bournique’s field. The field is a rolling type field, with knolls here and there, and it was fun to go racing over them. We came to one that had a sandy face on one side, and steeper than the others. I didn’t think Harold would make Del go over that one, but he did. Wow! When we hit the top, Del was already headed down the other side, and when our buggy came to a stop for an instant, I flew off Ben’s lap, and fell between the front wheel and the buggy box. The rig went down the other side, still at a gallop, with Harold standing up, yelling “Whoa! Whoa!” and jerking on the reins to stop Old Del. I was jammed in that small area, and that spinning wheel was about to take all the skin off my right side. I had nothing to get hold of but that spinning wheel. I don’t know how I ever had the strength to do it, but I did grab a spoke in that wheel and stopped it from turning. We traveled close to a hundred feet with that wheel not turning. We finally stopped, and the others helped me out of that tight place. All of us were scared to death. Another fill was broken, I had a torn shirt and some bloody ribs, otherwise I was fine. We said we would never gallop Old Del again! But we did.

Just before school was out, we had a terrible fight. Oh, were we ever mad at each other! I don't remember what we were angry about, but in no way was I going to sit on Ben's lap, and Norman was never going to let Harold sit on his either! So, we would walk home, rather than ride in any buggy with a couple guys like they were. We were told that we had had our last ride in that buggy too.

So, down the road we go, carrying our dinner pails and gear, headed for home. About two hundred feet in front was Harold and Ben, riding with their noses right in the air, just as high and mighty as they could be. About two miles down the road, when we were at the base of that high range of hills, we heard the most weird sound coming from up near the top. I think it was probably a fox, or perhaps it was someone just trying to scare us. Norman and I just froze for an instant. Harold and Ben were standing up, yelling and waving for us to jump in, which we did. We threw our dinner pails in the back, and they made an awful clatter. We were in that buggy going as fast as Old Del ever ran. I think she was scared too. The dirt and leaves just flew into the woods on the curves. About a mile down the road, we slowed down, and you should have heard the chatter of four boys ... four boys that just loved each other. We never quarreled again.

So, after our scare and that wild ride, school for that year ended. It was a memorable year I'll never forget. We did have a small school picnic, and I will now try to name the pupils:

John, Della and Donald Kinukin  
Gladys, Margaret and Mabel Anderson  
Melvin Firestone  
Chester Maleski  
Valburg and Carol Paine  
Harold and Ben Stormer  
Norman and Glenn Furst

... and the teacher was Mrs. Belle Paine, sister to Maude, Mrs. Peter Stormer, Jr.

## CHAPTER 11

### *Lighthouse Keeping and Kids*

As each summer season rolled around, I found myself more and more being used to take care of the younger children. Not only the children of our own family, but also, I was trusted to care for the assistants' children as well. For this duty, I was given considerable praise by the assistants and their wives, but was made to understand it was expected of me by our own family. I was eleven years old in 1924. Brother George was the oldest of my group, so I made him my lieutenant, even though he was five years younger, and I might add, not too trustworthy. It was nice to have someone to share things with, particularly when things went wrong.

If the weather was good, and there were so many beautiful days each summer, it was easy to watch over the little ones if I took them to the south beach and let them play in the little ponds of warm water. Here the water was shallow, and they could wade, play with their little boats, make sand castles, and generally get soaking wet. It didn't matter if they got wet, because they only wore little sun suits, or perhaps their swim suits.

There were also many interesting things happening around the lighthouse to watch. Things the keepers were engaged in doing to get the station ready to pass inspection. Each year, the tower had to be either painted, or scrubbed, and sometimes both were necessary. This was because the fog signal boiler burned coal, and a northeasterly wind would blow that black smoke against the tower. Sometimes my stepfather would paint the very top, and that was a scary thing to watch. The flag pole also was lowered on occasion for painting and lubrication of the weather vane, and each time a new flag rope was installed. The tall smoke stacks on the fog signal were painted each year, and several times each season the brass whistles were polished. These polished whistles really were eye-catchers, as they sparkled and glistened in the sunlight. The barn was painted a bright red, trimmed in white, as were the two outhouses. The white trim on the main brick building was either scrubbed, or painted, as was needed each year. Every window was cleaned with a solution of kerosene and water, that left them with a polished appearance.

The piers, or cribs, in front of the fog signal required a lot of rebuilding every couple of years, as the northerly winds would create wave

action that washed the sand away, and battered them to the point where repair was needed. These repairs were performed by the lighthouse tenders and their men. It was an exciting event for us kids, to watch whenever the tenders had duties to perform at our station. Men working on the lighthouse tender had to be strong, burly men in order to do the work required of them. Delivering supplies to the various stations involved many different situations, and everything seemed to include just plain hard work.

As I remember, all the activities that happened during a summer season at a light station, in order to maintain the station's efficiency, and to pass the strict inspections, required, I am saddened. I am saddened because I realize that future generations will never know just how hard it was to maintain them. All work performed during the day was probably done by at least one man, who had worked six hours during the previous night sounding the fog horn,

Generally, by the middle of July, the lighthouses had been inspected, and a burden was lifted from the men and their families. People could live in a more relaxed manner. Leaves of absences, and extra time off, was arranged whenever possible, as long as efficient watches were maintained at the station. When one of the keepers went on leave, the remaining two had to stand six-hours-on and six-hours-off watches.

Whenever our family had their days off, we usually went to the Charlevoix area, where our grandma and Aunt Minnie lived. Both of them lived on farms, and this was quite an experience for us little "Sand Hill Savages". We loved the cream and milk foods, and I'm sure we made little pigs of ourselves. It was fun to see the farm animals, and to climb the fruit trees. I remember an apricot tree our Aunt Minnie had in her back yard. It seemed to have ripe fruit most every time we were there. We loved it. It is interesting to note that that tree still stands. I look for it each time we pass on the highway when we visit the cemetery in Charlevoix. (My father and mother are buried there.) After a few short days, we would return to the lighthouse, and our routine would continue.

It is true that lighthouse keepers had rather a relaxed type of life for most of the year, and had only to maintain a state of cleanliness after the spring cleanup. Nevertheless, the long night watches had to be maintained, and brass has a way of never staying polished.

I always got my old job of taking care of the little ones back. It's not always an advantage to be a little older than the others, when growing up. I remember how I would take them to the south beach, and locate shallow

ponds that formed after a strong wind. Here they could play in water safely. George and I would walk the beach nearby, looking for Petoskey stones, and stones with natural holes in them that we could put on a string, and wear around our neck. Sea gull feathers were plentiful; we put them in our hair, or in bands around our heads. Of course, the little ones wanted them too, so we helped them find feathers and stones with holes to wear around their necks too. Our appearance was not unlike that of another race that wore strings of bear teeth around their necks, and put eagle feathers on their heads.

I remember a day when I did not keep a close watch over the little ones, and how they found a tar bucket that had washed ashore. They used the tar to decorate their sand pies and themselves. I tried to wash it off them with water, and only succeeded in getting it on myself too. What a mess that was! I remembered how difficult it was for me to lead my little tribe back to their mothers. We must have looked like we had been on the warpath, and had lost the battle. I will always remember the wide-eyed look on the mothers' faces – the rapid questions that were fired in my direction, and how no one could understand how Glenn could ever let a thing like this happen. (If you are wondering about it ... no, I didn't lose my job.)

During the summer one year, my stepfather was on watch down at the fog signal, when he noticed an unusual disturbance in the water about one-and-one-half miles to the north of the station. He was unable to determine what was causing it. He was so interested in whatever it was, that he kept his binoculars close at hand for a couple of hours. He kept referring to it, and pointing it out to others with a statement like, "I'll be darned if I know what it is, but it's coming closer all the time." It was about two hours or more before he thought he had it figured out. Finally, he said, "It's an eagle, and he has been hurt and can't fly. Poor bird. I feel sorry for it. It looks like it will come on shore near the boat house." As we watched the bird get closer and closer to shore, we could see it was attached to something. Finally, it reached the shore, and we discovered it had a large lake trout locked in its talons. It had been either unable to release the fish when it discovered it was too large to fly with, or just declined to do so.

The next part I'm a little ashamed to tell you. When my stepfather discovered that the eagle had such a large trout, and it was still alive, he ran as fast as he could toward the bird and fish. He scared the eagle away, and was just able to grab hold of the fish before it could swim away. I've often thought about that event, and think it was a mean trick to pull on that poor eagle after he had worked so hard to pull that fish ashore. The fish was cut

in three equal parts, one for each assistant's family. It was more than enough to feed three families. It must have weighed at least ten pounds. I wonder if the eagle and its young were hungry that night? I sincerely hope that poor eagle did find another source of food for its little eaglets. I can only say for sure that several little sand hill savages went to bed with their little bellies bulging. (As a note of interest, the eagle did get her revenge a few years later.)

As I earlier mentioned, my stepfather was an excellent boatman, and the government boat assigned to the station receive considerable use. We called it the *Pumpkin Seed*, because, in a way, it was shaped like one. There were several like it around the District. I am sure they were built by U.S.L.H.S. personnel in the District supply and maintenance base in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They all were round bottomed, with a wide keel (18-inches), so they were easy to pull in and out of the lake on rollers. They were constructed with a large ship-size portholes, that readily opened and could be hooked back. We were thankful for that, because the only seating was inside, where that smelly engine was located. We kids almost always got seasick, even on the smooth days. In nice weather, the older children were encouraged to take over the steering wheel, while my stepfather would putter with the engine, or just sit around and visit with the ladies. In foggy weather, we kids were assigned to blow the metal fog horn every few minutes, and more often when passing through the ship channel.

During the period we lived on North Manitou, the ship traffic was heavy in the Manitou Passage. It was important that fog signals be sounded by all forms of watercraft. Frequently, small craft crossing the ship channel were involved in near misses. The task of sounding the horn was fought over the first few times, but soon it just wasn't so much fun anymore. I remember a time when I had to blow that horn so much, that by the time we docked in Leland, my lips were sore, and they stayed swollen for several days. That spoiled my visit to the mainland.

Our mother was always afraid of the water, and would sit as low in the boat as possible in rough weather, and hold the smaller children on her lap. She was scared stiff as she watched some of the things we older ones would do. I guess we are lucky to be alive, and not recorded as being lost at sea.

That boat was the most rollie boat I ever rode in. It started rolling the minute you launched it off the beach, and didn't quit until you pulled it

up on shore. My stepfather, on several occasions, said, "She rolls like hell, but she will take you through a hell of a big storm, if you handle her right."

The summer of 1924 passed, and mother once again was faced with the problem of how was Glenn going to school. My sister Ethel was assigned to teach the Undine school on the north side of Pine Lake (Lake Charlevoix), about half-way between Charlevoix and Boyne City. She settled the question by saying, "I'll take Glenn with me this year." So, off to school I went with sister ethel.

We boarded with a family named Bird. It was a wonderful family, and they had three boys; DeVere, Kenneth and Douglas. DeVere was my age, and Kenneth was about my brother George's age. This was great! We had great times together. Once again, I was where I could have all the milk I could drink, and drink it I did. I have two pictures of myself taken that year, one in the fall and another near spring. I was a slim young fellow in the fall picture, and quite pudgy in the spring. In the fall picture, I was wearing a feather in my cap, an island custom. I smiled over that, and I suppose DeVere and Kenneth thought 'this kid is kinda' nutty.'

The school was interesting to me, as about half the children were Indians. I wondered about them, but soon realized they were great playmates, and we got along just fine. In fact, a couple of the little Indian girls liked me, and kept giving me little sweet-smelling baskets they had woven for me. I kept them for years. It was a good year, and the additional tutoring of a teacher who was my sister didn't hurt either. I need that desperately; however, I never realized it.

Later that year, Mr. Bird was elected to the position of Register of Deeds in Charlevoix, and the family moved to the city. Ethel and I moved to a new boarding house, located a little nearer to the school. It was near the shore of Lake Charlevoix, but was still a farm. The people were named Howe. A real nice couple. Plenty of milk there too, but I missed DeVere and Kenneth. I had more time to myself, so I spent a lot of time on my skis. I became pretty good at it, my sister tells me. School ended in May, and back to the island I went, to take over my summer job of taking care of kids. I received the same pay as the year before.

The spring cleanup of the station was underway, and I was getting interested in men things. I found myself more interested in the operation of the steam boiler, for signal, and the mechanism of the revolving lens in the light tower. The one-cylinder Strauble engine in the Pumpkin Seed fascinated me. The 1919 Model T ... I just knew I could drive it, if they

would only let me ... needed repair now and then. Driving in the sand and having to use the low gear so much wore the fabric off the low gear. That had to be replaced now and then. I found myself following the repairman around, learning how these things were done. I was developing an interest in mechanical things, and wanted to learn.

I always have had a wild, fantastic sense of imagination, and I'm certain the characteristic became finely tuned in my childhood days because of my environment.

I was getting older now, and certain little chores were being assigned to me. I was expected to help out on wash day, and help care for the chickens too. Caring for the chickens was kind of fun, because I just loved the baby ones, but I never found much to like about washing clothes. I can relate to some humorous incidents in connection with both assignments, so it is fun to recall these things when brother George is around. He has a great memory, and had reminded me of things that I had forgotten. You see, he was my helper, and had to do what I told him – under protest, of course, most of the time.

This was 1925, and we had lived on North Manitou six years. Our car was six years old, and it was one of several vehicles on the island now. Some of the assistants had Model T cars now too. It was much easier to maintain the sandy roads, because they too had to travel them. In fact, a road was made all the way out to the lighthouse.

Dad Hutzler decided mother should have a washhouse out by the outhouses, so she wouldn't have all that mess in the house on Mondays. The assistants could use the building also during the summer months to wash their clothes. So, with the help of the assistants, a building approximately 12' x 18' was built, a little north and west of the outhouses, and all the clothes-washing gear was moved out there.

The men drove a shallow well, and installed a pitcher pump, and the ladies were in business. The kids that were big enough became a big part of that business too. Like I've said before, it's not always best to be the oldest kid around. George, being my helper, had to help me pump all that water for the tubs and washing machine. The washing machine was the push and pull type. George and I took turns, each would take over that lever for fifteen-minute periods. One would work the lever on the washer, while the other one turned the crank on the clothes wringer. Monday just wasn't a happy day out on Dimmick's Point.

Tuesday was the day mother spent by the kitchen table ironing clothes, and baking bread. She had a real nice ironing board that she liked a great deal. There was just one thing it needed – a hole in the small end so she could hang it in the stairway leading to the basement. She asked Ernest to bore a small hole in it for her. “Yeah” he said, “I’ll take it to the fog signal with me.” Somehow, he always forgot the thing, and there it was on the steps of the stairway. It was really a hazard if you had to carry anything up or down the steps. She would repeat the request, and he would answer, “I’ll take it with me when I go back after dinner.”

Months later, the ironing board was still on the steps. Finally, one foggy day, when he was not in a good mood, mother said to him, “Ernest, I’m going to ask John Hahn to bore that hold in my ironing board.”

“Like hell you are!” he said, “Give me that damn thing. I’ll take it right this minute.” And away he went with the ironing board. He returned a considerable time later with it, and he sheepishly handed it to her. In his huff, he hadn’t taken the time to select a small bit to drill the hole, but had grabbed a 2” auger. The auger made a ragged hole in the board, and split a one-inch piece out of the end of the board, which he crudely had nailed back in. Mother looked at it and said, “My god, Ernest. You have ruined my beautiful board! All I wanted was a small hole in it.” He replied, “Zella, I had no idea it was going to split like that.” As long as we lived on North Manitou Island, I think mother got angry with him every Tuesday when she got out her ironing board.

It didn’t make any difference how much work there was to do, Sunday was a day of rest. The keepers put on a white shirt and a black tie, and wore their uniform coats if the weather permitted. The families also put on their Sunday best. Everyone kind of did family things. The keeper who had the day off sometimes would take his family to the village for a ride, and to visit with some of the Coast Guard families. The other two keepers still had their watches to stand at the lighthouse.

Mother was an excellent cook, and enjoyed treating her family to some of her creations on Sunday. Our grandma had taught her well. Grandma worked for years in the kitchens of the Charlevoix Hotel, and in the summer season, did the baking at the Belvedere Hotel. Sundays on Dimmick’s Point was fine as far as I was concerned. I didn’t care too much for the Saturday night washtub deal, because I was the last one in the tub. The water was never completely changed, just a little more was added each

time to warm it up. Anyway, I was in and out of Lake Michigan so much I couldn't see any sense in me ever getting in a washtub.

Keeping my clothes clean on Sundays annoyed me too. This was a day when I didn't have to watch the little ones, because the parents were free to watch over them. It seems that someone, we don't know who, had taken a liking to my little sister Leota and Ruthie Rotta, who were five and three years old, respectively, and had handed them three little brown pennies. Now, they didn't know the value of any kind of money. They did know it took money to buy candy, so they set out down the beach, headed for the candy store in the village five miles away. No one observed their departure. One can imagine the two little toe-headed kiddies, with their three pennies, going down that beach in the hot sun. They were barefooted, and had on little sunsuits.

There was no fear in their little minds of encountering the big white bull, or anything else, except the savory taste of candy, and how good it was going to be. It must have taken them more than two hours to make the trip down there, and they went directly to the candy store. It was closed. It was total confusion for those little kids, as they sat on the store steps, hoping it would open soon.

It was Mrs. Dustin, a Coast Guard wife and a family friend, who recognized them. After questioning them, she realized what had happened, and called the lighthouse by telephone. Can you imagine the excitement that phone call created? How happy I was this was my day off duty. It was arranged that Mrs. Dustin would feed them something, and then start them back home along the beach. Meanwhile, the Rottas started down the beach to meet and help them home. As my sister Leota tells the story, Ruthie was carried on the shoulders of her father, but she, Leota, had to walk. It seems it was determined that she should have known better.

## CHAPTER 12

### *A Boat, Bees, Rotten Fish, and Bed Bugs*

This was the year George and I found our boat. It wasn't much of a boat, but it was our boat because we found it washed up on the beach. Someone inexperienced in building boats had built this thing, and it had awful lines. No sheer in the sides, and none of the design that most boat builders strive so hard to accomplish. It was about twelve feet long, the bottom boards were installed lengthwise, and had large open seams. We knew it was unsafe. It was very light in weight, and we were able to drag the thing up near clothesline hill. Here we could play in it at least, and the little kids liked to play in it too. It worked fine for quite some time, until George and I decided it would be more fun if we balanced it on a big log that was nearby. Then, as we moved about, the bow and the stern would go up and down, just like a real boat in a big sea. This was really fun, and sometimes we would let the little ones ride on the middle seat.

Then the likely thing happened one day, when George and I were riding out a big storm. Our little brother, Dale, decided he was going to get in that boat one way or another, so when the stern came down, he made a run for it, and was trying to crawl in when the transom came up and caught him under the chin, lifted him up about three feet, before he fell and plopped down in the sand. He was screaming his little head off, and George turned around and was looking down at him. I was helpless. I was afraid to get off the bow because the stern would come down on Dale's head, and drive him into the sand. I yelled for George to come to the bow and sit, so I could get out and help Dale. As soon as I could, I ran around to Dale. There he sat screaming bloody murder, with blood all over his face and little hands. I picked him up and ran over clothesline hill to the house.

Mother, having heard the ruckus, met me at the screen door. Seeing the blood coming from Dale's mouth she said, "Oh, my god. He is bleeding internally!" She soon had him under one arm over the kitchen sink, splashing water in his face and mouth. When she turned him over and examined him, she looked up at me and said, "That kid has a bole clear through his tongue! Now tell me, what in the world happened?"

I knew I was in deep trouble, but I could detect the relief in mother's voice that Dale's wounds were not any more serious. It seems that the only

two teeth Dale had at that time, the two bottom front teeth, had been driven right through his tongue.

I stuttered and stammered around, first standing on one foot and then the other, and finally ended up saying, “It was his fault! He shouldn’t have tried to get in just then!” That was the wrong thing to say. She told me in no uncertain terms whose fault it was.

She said, “Glenn, you are ten years older than that little kid, and you should be looking out for him, not doing crazy things like that!” We received orders right then and there to get that darn thing off that log and never, ever, put it back on there again. We never did either.

It was hard for me to sit at the table and have to watch mother try to feed little Dale liquids for the next ten days or so. I not only felt guilty for causing this thing to happen, but was also ashamed of the stupid explanation I had offered to clear myself.

There were only two trees out on Dimmick’s Point, and they were quite small when we moved there. They were Lombardi poplar, and there is little doubt that they were cut slips taken from the trees in the village. However, they grew very rapidly, and were approximately thirty feet high in 1925. The fox squirrels just loved the buds of those trees, and would risk their very lives, it seems, to get to them. The telephone line was the route they used to get out there. They would climb the first pole out by the edge of the woods, look things over, then climb down the side, and make a run for the next pole, and here they would repeat the procedure. I discovered that if I laid real quiet in the sand near a pole, the squirrel would eventually come down and make his run for the next pole. I also began to realize they were not able to run very fast in soft sand, so I would lay in the sand until a squirrel started his run for the next pole, and then I’d jump up and run after him. I would soon catch up to him, and with my thumb and forefinger, pick him up by the tail, that was always sticking straight up in the air. I had to be careful to hold him away from my body, as I’m sure I’d have been bitten severely. Sometimes the tip of the tail would come off, and the squirrel would run away, leaving me with only the tip in my hand. This happened more often than I’d like to admit, and soon there were several squirrels around the lighthouse with the tips of their tails missing. I decided I’d better find another form of entertainment before my mother and the other ladies around there discovered what a mean kind of fellow Glenn really was. (Now that I’ve made a confession, I feel better.)

I don't remember the exact year (1923) the Stormer family left the Armstrong place and moved their entire logging operation to the Empire area. This was where they had formerly lived, and they owned considerable property in that area. Today there is a road south of Empire named the Stormer Road. As a result of their logging operation on North Manitou Island, more sunshine could reach the ground. Blackberries flourished in these conditions and, believe me, they did too. One year mother canned eighty quarts of blackberries. The whole family was involved. Even Aunt Minnie and LaVerne came to the island by boat, a package freighter, to pick berries. The blackberry bushes grew so profusely that in areas they towered over our heads, and were loaded with berries. It was a comical sight to see how the pickers prepared themselves to ward off those painful thorns.

Picking berries was fun for a while for us kids, but we could find many other things to do out in the woods. Like climbing trees and stuff. Mother had a rule for us: "When you get your pail full of berries, then you can play." I don't know whose idea it was, but we filled our pails half full of leaves, and then picked enough berries to fill the pail. We were soon playing around. We located an old hemlock tree that had been blown over in a storm, however, it had tangled with other trees and didn't fall all the way to the ground. We walked our way up the trunk of that old tree, until we were about six feet from the ground, when I encountered a yellow jackets' nest, and was stung on the leg. I yelled, "Jump, George, jump!" I jumped, but George was scared to jump, and the bees were stinging his legs severely. My goodness! How he yelled and screamed. He was hurting so bad he was paralyzed. He did finally slide off the side, as I helped him to the ground. By this time, we were surrounded by family members, and someone said, "Put some mud or dirt on those stings." It does help relieve the pain. Mother looked at me, and I knew I was in trouble. I dreaded the discovery of leaves in the bottom of our pails when we got home. If I remember correctly, Glenn went to bed without any supper that evening. George was in a wounded state, and received pity from the family. Once again, I couldn't appreciate being the oldest one.

It was just a memory that winter, when George and I would sit down to a stack of steaming hotcakes, just smothered in these juicy canned blackberries. Blackberries supplemented our food supply, and we often had them as a dessert, or as an evening meal with hotcakes. They really helped out on the grocery bill. Even after we transferred back to South Manitou, my stepdad took a few days off, and went back to pick blackberries.

Our mother worked so hard canning berries. There was nothing easy around a lighthouse for a woman. Every move you made, it seemed, was either up or down a set of stairs. It was determined early in mother's life that she had a weak heart, and was supposed to take things easy. She passed away in 1943, while standing in front of a kitchen sink in Cathead lighthouse (Grand Traverse). She was fifty-eight years old.

When the summer was nearly over, Ernest decided to cut open the east end of the washhouse, and put our Ford in there for the winter. It was so easily done; one would wonder if it wasn't in the original plan. A little ramp was made for easy entry. When washday came around, it was easy to push the car outside, and just leave the big doors open. Everyone enjoyed the increased air circulation.

Ernest was getting more interested in trapping fox, because of the good price a fur would bring. They were very popular as chokers. The women loved them. The brighter red they were, the better. The old ones with a gray streak down their back were less valuable. So, Dad Hutzler set his traps out early that fall, and with his newly learned techniques, was able to catch five live foxes in a relatively short time. The only bad thing was he was afraid the fur was not prime, as the weather was still warm. Rather than let them go again, he decided to keep them in the barn until cold weather came. He would shoot crows and sometimes a sea gull, and throw them in there almost every day. The barn began to smell horrible, and he wondered if that smell would be gone by inspection time the next year. He was also concerned about the barn being too warm for the fur to get prime, so he built a chicken wire pen outside the house kitchen window, "so he could keep an eye on them, he said. We watched them closely all afternoon as they constantly circled that pen. They would bite the wire, and we would look where they bit it. It appeared they could not damage that wire at all. When it became daylight the next morning, three of the foxes were missing. They had bitten a small hole in the wire fence. He immediately killed the other two, and put their furs on skinning boards. As a point of interest, one of the escaped foxes was in one of his traps out by the woods, so he only lost two foxes. He killed and skinned that one too. "No more of that monkey business." he said.

One would wonder about Dad Hutzler's new-found success in trapping fox. It seems someone had told him that fox loved rotten fish. He had a small gill net; most lighthouse people did in those days. He set it early

in the season to catch fish to help feed the family. It could be handled with a rowboat, so he set it close to the fog signal so he could tend to it even when he had the watch to stand. He did catch some fish for the table, but caught lots of suckers which, in those days, were considered no good to eat. Many of these suckers he chopped up with a hatchet and stuffed the pieces in fruit jars. He then put the jars out on the fence in the sunlight. When fox trapping season rolled around, his fox bait was ready. It gagged everybody that got a smell of the stuff when he loosened the cover. Mother said, "Ernest, get rid of that sinking stuff." He replied, "Zella, that's the best damn fox bait a man can have. They come from miles around." And use it he did, with considerable success.

I had three traps I could use, and George and I used to spend a lot of time reading in a trapping book on techniques of trapping fox. Nowhere did it tell about that mixture Dad Hutzler mixed up.

I set my traps by the woods along the south beach, and used a whole sucker that had been freshly caught. I could carefully hide my trap in the sand, and lay a fish near it for bait. I would then take a piece of juniper bush, and brush out all my tracks I'd made in the sand. Everything looked great to me. I'd check them from a distance each day with no results. Then one day, one of my fish was gone, but there wasn't a track near where it had been. So, I put another fish there by my trap, and again I brushed out my tracks. My next visit revealed that my fish was gone again, and not one track near that trap. I was puzzled, but I left another fish there and went back home.

The next day, my fish was gone again, but this time a few scratch marks were in the sand. I realized then that an eagle was stealing my fish each day. The rascal probably watched me put it there. He was just getting even for the dirty trick we had pulled on him earlier in the season, when Dad Hutzler took his trout away. I buried the fish after that, but I didn't have any luck. I just couldn't bring myself to use Dad's stinking stuff, not that first year. I did another year, with fair results.

When the school season rolled around in the fall of 1925, brother George was also of an age when he should be attending school. It seemed more thought was given to arranging things so the kids could attend school. I was only twelve years old, and as I think about it now, I realize mother must have had a lot of faith in me as being able to set examples for George. She didn't have a choice really. Anyway, it was arranged for George and me to board with the Lois Mosier family in the village that fall, so we could

attend school. School was only a short walk from the village. So, mother packed our little suitcases, and the family drove us down to the Mosier home. There was much conversation between the two women, before the family drove away and left us there. The Mosier family, as I remember, had two daughters at that time. The oldest one was named Bernice. They were a nice family, and the mother, named Carrie, looked after us with considerable concern, and tried to take care of our every need. Our family came to visit us quite frequently too. We were well attended.

The Mosier family was Catholic, and while we were there two Sisters came to the island to visit. George and I never had any close relationship with Catholic Sisters before. I'm afraid we just stared at them and their attire most of the time they were there. They were lovely people.

School went along pretty good, but, of course, we were lonely and homesick, particularly at night. When we awakened in the morning, I would help George select his school clothes, and we would wash ourselves.

In November of that year, the lighthouse, as always, was converted to the acetylene light when navigation closed. Our whole family moved to Traverse City. We rented a house on the corner of Thirteenth and Union streets. At that time, there was a school, the Union Street School, on the opposite side, playground and everything. Everything was fine, except the house was full of bed bugs. We would wake up at night, turn on the light, the hang from the ceiling type, and kill bed bugs. Many had already chewed on us, so they left blood spots on the sheets. Mother was going crazy, poor soul. She would take every bed apart, and wash the sheets, wash and spray the wood and metal parts, and always a few bugs would return I don't remember too well how it was finally accomplished, but we were bug-free in the spring.

Once again, on the fifteenth of April, the navigation season opened, and so did the North Manitou Lighthouse.

We had only rented the lower floor of the Union Street house, and there was a childless couple living upstairs. It was arranged that George and I would board with them until school was out in May. With our little suitcases, we were left behind while our parents, Leota, and Dale returned to the island. Frankly, I must admit I joined brother George in shedding a few tears. It didn't seem fair that I, at twelve years, should have so much responsibility. George and I slept together, as usual, and it was good to have that togetherness, as we were both homesick and lonely.

Each Saturday afternoon, we were handed a dime each so we could go to the Lyric Theater to see the show. Tom Mix, a cowboy, and Harold Lloyd, were popular in those days. Enroute to the theater, we always passed a bakery, and the window display and the odors would make our mouths water. The cream buffs, if we had had any money, would have been our choice, but the sweet rolls looked good too. On the way home, we would look that bakery over again. The days and weeks passed slowly, and everything went along okay, until George cut his leg with his new Christmas jackknife. Somehow, he made a cut right across the shin bone. It was a deep cut, and the Thompsons, the people we boarded with, were very concerned about it, and came very near calling mother. The cut was clean, and healed good after the bleeding was stopped. He still has the scar.

I was probably in the fifth grade, and George was in the first or second grade, and he was interested in the other kids. There was a family that lived up around Fifteenth Street, and two of their children were in his class. They were always pretty dirty when they came to school. One day, they came to school with egg yolk on their faces, and it tickled George. He asked them, "What did you have for breakfast?" One of them answered, "Goose eggs." George couldn't get over that! He had never heard of anyone eating goose eggs. He told that story over and over. I don't think George realized there were any tame geese in this world. He was only familiar with the kind that flew over the islands. Goose eggs didn't sound good to him, and I didn't think I'd like them either.

Sometime after the middle of May, our folks came for us, and took us back to North Manitou. Before leaving, it was arranged with the Thompsons for the two of us to return in September.

## CHAPTER 13

### *Fun Things*

Back to Dimmick's Point we went, and for George and me it was a good feeling to be home again. A place where there was love, tenderness, and concern for each other. We examined all the familiar little sand hills, and little blow holes, and pointed out to each other the changes that had taken place while we were gone. The point where the wave action constantly made changes, even while you were watching sometimes, had taken a different shape. The beaches were loaded with treasure. We couldn't wait to look them over later, when we had a bag to carry our treasures in, but ran from one aluminum cork to another, racing to get there first. Soon, we even found a box to carry them home in. They were carefully counted, as to how many each one had gathered. You see, the fishermen were paying five cents each those days. Excited over our treasures, we returned to the house, only to have our parents remind us that the brass dustpans, door knobs, and lamps were in awful shape, and needed a lot of work in the spring. I was thirteen years old then, and more responsible for things, and it was time to give up some of the kid things. It was hard to understand, because if I was growing up, "Why do I have to always take care of all those kids?"

Thirteen years is an awkward age; that's when you are not either hay or straw, and inclined to be sassy at times. It was going to be an awful summer for me. I just knew it.

The summer months always passed by so quickly. Everyone was busy in the early months, preparing the station for inspection, and the school issue was sort of dropped for a little while. There were more frequent trips to the village as the cherries ripened down there.

Dad Hutzler loved black sweet cherries. They were his favorite fruit. We kids loved them too, and it was hard to eat a moderate amount. Quite often we would overdo it. This fact was evidenced quite frequently in the middle of the night, when the quietness was broken by the noisy removal of the cover on a white owl.

A sick child was our mother's biggest concern, and if she was called in these situations, she was right there to render assistance. Generally, the discomfort was easily disposed of, but in more severe cases, mother would

mix up her favorite remedy, which consisted of a half teaspoon of baking soda in a half glass of warm water. To this she would add a drop or two of peppermint flavoring. It didn't taste bad. She then would apply a warm loving hand to that bulging little belly, and with a circling motion, together with some loving words, a complete cure was only moments away. Mother put a lot of faith in her baking soda remedies. She always said, "That bellyache is going away – one way or the other."

The sweet cherry season and the Fourth of July arrived about the same time of year. I particularly remember one Fourth of July more vividly than any other.

It seems that when the Lighthouse Station was first built, one common well served all the families stationed there. This well was in the front yard, on the keeper's side. It was equipped with a yard pump with a curved handle, quite common to rural areas. It had a large pear-shaped cylinder, about half way up the thing. It was this pear-shaped cylinder that created considerable excitement, and conversation of the Fourth of July I'm writing about.

When the living quarters were provided with pitcher pumps and a sink, the yard well was seldom used, so the pump was disassembled, and stowed in the barn. It was this pear-shaped cylinder that gave Dad Hutzler an idea of how he could create some excitement, and have some fun on the Fourth of July.

He drilled a small hole in the side of the cylinder, and drove a plug in one end of the thing. He then put a big charge of carbide in there, and some water. He then hammered another plug in the open end, and waited until he could see a white vapor coming out that small hole in the side. He carried the smoking thing to a sand hill near the barn, and began throwing lighted matches at it. The result was even greater than he expected.

Approximately 6:00 a.m. on the Fourth of July that year, every living soul on Dimmick's Point sat straight up in bed for an instant, and then ran over to a window or down the stairs to find out what in the world had blown up – only to find Dad Hutzler coming toward the house with a big grin on his face, and a twinkle in his eye. It was a topic of conversation for a long time. It was remembered as the Fourth of July that started with a "Big Bang".

It was a beautiful season, and a lot of happy events took place. A fellow by the name of Ivan Marine came to the lighthouse to make repairs

to the fog signal boilers. He soon learned I had an interest in machinery, and would share some things with me. We all liked him. Best of all, he loved to go fishing. George and I were always ready to go with him. *If Ivan marine wanted to go fishing, we went fishing*, because Dad knew he was closely connected to the Milwaukee District office, and it was desirable to have a fellow like that like you. So, mother would pack a picnic lunch, and away the four of us would go; me and George in the back seat with the fishing poles, and worms if there were any left over from our last trip. At home, we were eating perch, bass, and bluegills most every meal, because there wasn't any ice to preserve foods.

It was great fun, and I just don't know who was watching over the little ones. George and I didn't seem to care either.

## CHAPTER 14

### *Sis Gets Married and A Changing World*

Our sister Ethel was teaching school in the Charlevoix rural area, and came home each summer to be with her family. She was a blessing to our mother, who had so much work to do in caring for her family. She was kind of like our number two mother, and if there was a cause for mother and Dad Hutzler to be away for a few days, believe me, we knew who was in charge around there. She was loving and kind as long as we were good little kids, but if we were disobedient, her school teacher training guided the action she would take.

We noticed each summer that more young men seemed to be interested in our way of life out on Dimmick's Point. They didn't seem to notice the long walk out there at all.

There was one young man in particular, who seemed more attentive than the others. He was a member of the Stormer family, and was serving in the Coast Guard on North Manitou. He was always eager to dance with our sister whenever there was a dance in the village. On his day off, which came about every eight days, he seemed to find time to spend with our sister Ethel.



Ethel Furst

I don't remember when Joseph Stormer left the Coast guard on North Manitou, but I do remember he sailed a couple of seasons on the *Marcus Roan*, a large tug that towed the *Interlaken*, a barge, heavily laden with pulpwood, gravel, and construction supplies wherever these cargoes were needed.

Sailing was seasonal, and Joe was free in the winter months. Sometimes he would hire a rig (horse and cutter) in Charlevoix, and drive out to where our sister was teaching school for a visit. It was evident that Joe was serious, and wanted to get married. Our sister Ethel loved Joe, I'm

sure, but was hesitant because Joe's employment was unsteady, uncertain, and besides, he would be away from home so much. She insisted that he get a more stable job before she could consider marriage with him. However, she accepted his diamond ring.

Joe was undaunted by these demands, and went right to work to make corrections to his way of making a living. Somehow, he was able to arrange a partnership agreement with his cousin Harold Voice, and they went into the grocery business right across the street from the Leland Mercantile. They delivered groceries too. All barriers were broken down – nothing left to do but marry the guy.

Exciting plans were being made by our sister. The wedding date was set for 16 June 1926. Joe had rented a house up on the hill in Leland. Our whole family was excited, and wanted somehow to be a part of this. We were not going to be able to attend the wedding that was taking place on the mainland, so we made plans to give our sister and exciting sendoff when Joe came to pick her up. Our mother really organized what was to take place, and encouraged us kids to find all the old shoes we could around the lighthouse buildings. The assistants' families contributed too, so we were able to gather quite a large bagful. This bag was set to one side down by the dock.

Joe came over to the island the day before, and spent the night at the lighthouse. He called by phone and hired Tracy Grosvenor and his boat *Shirley* to take them over to Leland the next day. We knew what time the boat would arrive, so we were able to organize our plan quite nicely. Mother called us kids to one side, and filled our pockets with rice to toss at the bride-and-groom-to-be as they left the house, headed for the dock. I can still see Joe in his new blue suit, and our sister in her beautiful new clothes. As they headed for the dock, all us kids, and the assistants' families too, ran alongside, throwing rice at them. There was much laughter, and the pace quickened as the bride- and groom-to-be realized what was taking place. They hurried aboard the boat, to avoid the pelting of rice. Just as the boat began to move away, George and I grabbed that bag of old shoes, and began throwing them aboard the boat. In the excitement of the boat moving out of range, one of us ... I think it was George; he says it was me ... threw an old shoe right through the front window of Tracy's boat. I'm sure Tracy was glad to get his boat out of range of those Dimmick's Point *Sand Hill Savages*. Poor Joe had to pay for the window. A man never knows what price he will pay for getting married.

The world was entering into a new era. Things were changing; the use of gasoline-powered vehicles and other machinery was making advances. Best of all, for George and me, mother got a new Maytag gasoline-powered washing machine, and a gasoline-heated flatiron. Dad Hutzler was proud as could be. “Zella,” he said, “this little flatiron will take the place of all them old irons, and best of all, you won’t have to have them hot fires in hot weather, like you did before.”

So, he showed her how to fill the little round tank in the back with gasoline, and then he said, “Now, all you got to do is take this little pump and pump her up, and light it.”

Mother was interested, but kept her distance because she was afraid of gasoline fires. She asked, “You’re sure it won’t blow up?”

“Naw,” he answered, “they couldn’t sell these things if there was any danger!” So, he turned on the fuel and then lit a match. BANG! And fire came out both sides. Everybody jumped back and stood there staring at that hissing flatiron.

Dad said, “It’s fine now. I guess I should have lit the match before I turned on the gas.” There sat the new flatiron, just making loud hissing noises, and you could see the blue fire in there that was a half-inch from the clothes to be pressed.

Mother said, “Ernest, I don’t think I’ll ever use that thing. It scares me.” She was assured, coaxed, and retold of all the advantages, but she never liked the thing, and never it very much either.

Now, the new Maytag washer was another story. It ran fine, but it was noisy and made mother nervous. First of all, the wringer that held to the rinse water tubs was in the way. So, Dad Hutzler got a hand saw and cut it off. When Mother came out to the washhouse and saw her wringer sawed off, she said, “Ernest, what in the world are you doing? You have ruined my wringer!”

“Naw, Zella. You will never need that thing again.” he answered. “You now can swing the washer wringer over the tubs.” That seemed to satisfy her after he showed her how to do it.

George and I were jubilant over that washer. That meant we wouldn’t have to push and pull on that lever all Monday morning anymore. The washer with the lever on it could stay in the corner of the washhouse, and we were glad.

I was anxious to learn all I could about the Maytag, so I could fix it if it got balky and didn't want to start. It started and ran fine, but mother never liked all that noise and smoke in the washhouse. Besides, it had all that power to do things, and little levers she didn't understand too well. It was the noise and smoke that bothered her more than anything else. She also had trouble starting it by herself. She did try sometimes, but didn't seem to push hard, or quick enough. One morning she was trying to start it, and her foot slipped off the lever, and the pedal banged up her ankle pretty badly. It hurt awful, and she limped around a couple of days. Dad Hutzler told her, "Zella, don't you try to start it anymore. Let Glenn or me do it for you." That worked out okay.

There was another thing that created a problem on wash day. Our Model T had to be pushed out of the washhouse too. It pushed easy, but it did take a couple of people to do it.

One hot summer day, mother was washing clothes, she was too warm in there with all that noise and smoke, when one of those big balloon tires on the Model T blew up. Mother screamed, threw her arms in the air, and staggered backward. A big cloud of dust rolled in the washhouse. Poor mother was sure her new Maytag washer was blown all to pieces, but when things settled down, there it was just banging away like nothing had happened. The cover was closed on the washer, so the contents were alright, but George and I had to change all the rinse water. That settled it, mother said, "We are going to sue the other washer from now on."

Dad Hutzler was perplexed over the situation. All his modern conveniences were being rejected just because they made a little noise, as he put it. "I'll think of something," he said. George and I sure hoped so, because we were going back to pushing the lever again if he didn't.

He did come up with an idea He dug a big hole outside the washhouse in the sand, and placed an old washtub upside down in there. He then took the muffler off the Maytag, and extended the exhaust pipe so it would go under that tub in the sand. He cut a hole in the bottom of the tub, and put a two-inch pipe that stuck straight up. "There," he said, "Let's give that a try." He started the machine, and it was much quieter in the washhouse.

That seemed to satisfy mother. George and I were pleased too. It was fascinating to watch the pretty blue smoke rings that came out of that two-inch pipe each time a muffled "punk, punk, punk" was heard

underground. The smoke and the gasses in the washhouse were eliminated too.

I'm not quite sure if this was the year that the Nels Nelson family came to North Manitou Lighthouse, or not. Nels was married to Gustie Johnson, daughter of Benth Johnson, and had a family about the size of ours too. Mother was pleased, as she could now share many things with her friend Gustie. Their family consisted of a boy, Melvin, about fifteen or sixteen, who did not spend much time on the island as he stayed on the mainland to go to school and work when he could. A girl my age, named Wilma, another girl Alvesta, and a boy George's age named Stanley. I think they had younger children too. (Ethel Furst Stormer note: Floyd and Lorraine.)

George and I were pleased because we had others around our age. We could play more group games, like running around the lighthouse tower at night, trying to always stay in the white beam of the light, and never let the red beam overtake us. The farther away from the tower you ran, the faster you had to go.

Stanley was George's age, and the two looked to me to sort of lead them in various ventures. We would make up a flag each year, and plant it up on Mount Baldy, and things like that. I was tremendously pleased to have the girls take over the burden of caring for the little kids.

I now was at the age Norman was when we came to North Manitou Island. I made play boats, kites, and darts for them to play with. Kites were a favorite thing to make. There was plenty of room and always a breeze, it seemed. The kerosene for the light tower and lamps was always delivered in boxes; two five-gallon square containers per box. The side boards, approximately twenty-four inches long, were easy to split, and made excellent kite sticks. Everything in those days was tied with string, so getting twine to fly kites was no problem.

One day we made a kite that flew nicely, so we tied it to a piece of board and let it go in the lake. The board it was tied to kept it flying, but yet it traveled at a rapid pace in a northerly direction. We and others watched that kite until it went out of sight in the direction of Cathead Point. That event pleased us, and George and I still mention it sometimes.

For a boy living in a lonely lighthouse that was almost surrounded by water, and stones everywhere, stones were a way of life.

My brother George and I threw tons of stones in the nine years we lived on North Manitou. We threw them in all direction. Sometimes we threw them on top of the metal roof of the oil house, and against the metal sides of the tower. The made a beautiful booming noise, and paint chips flew. That pleased us, but made the light keepers unhappy. I got my hind-end warmed up good for doing that.

When Norman went away to school, and later to find work, all the little ones looked up to me to provide the fun things to do. So, I'd get them playing with play boats in a shallow pond, or making sand castles. Then George and I could play older games nearby. One of our favorite imaginary war games was accomplished by driving a nail into a small piece of driftwood a little ways, and then wiggling the nail loose and replacing it with a sea gull feather. This made a nice sailboat and, if you sent it to sea on the lee side of the Point, it moved out to sea quite rapidly. After we let it go a fair distance from shore, the war began. We would throw stones at that enemy warship until it overturned, was de-masted, or just sailed out of range. When any of the things I mentioned happened, we would make another warship, and another sea battle began. The size of the stone we threw determined the size of the gun that was fired, and the size of the splash it made. World War I was not very far in the past, and many homes had pictures of warships with their straight bows plowing through the water at high speeds, and black smoke rolling out of all four stacks. The big splashes on all side of them were caused by enemy fire. These were the pictures that were fixed in our minds as stones were selected for throwing at the enemy ships.

Shooting enemy aircraft out of the sky was another favorite pastime. This was accomplished by making a kite, and flying it at low heights, and throwing stoned at it until it was so full of holes it could not remain aloft. In the excitement of battle, our direction of fire was faulty at times, and we were pelted by misdirected anti-aircraft fire. The wounds were never any more serious than a lump on the head that went away in a day or two. The most soothing thing you could do for it was tell that little so and so that threw the stone, that if it happened again, you would kick the sand off his backside.

The flying of homemade kites at very low levels was also another way for me to entertain the little ones. The kites we made always required long rag tails, and for long periods, the little children enjoyed trying to catch the tail as it came close to the ground.

I think George and I spent more time throwing stones than anything else we did. It was always fun to find the flat thin skippers, as we called them, and count how many times we could make them skip. The beaches had many whiskey bottles (empty) and light bulbs on them. These made exciting targets, especially the light bulbs, that made a loud noise when they were broken. We had special sand hills that were reserved for the breaking of glass things, however, we often threw them back in the lake and bombarded them with stones.

Our accuracy was greatly improved after our Model T began to have tire trouble, and we could make slingshots out of the discarded inner tubes. It's amazing how accurate a person can become if he practices a great deal, and carefully selects the stones.

We also made up the windup type slingshot (like David used to defeat Goliath). It was dangerous to be near anyone using a slingshot of that type, as the stone sometimes would come flying out of the pouch in any direction, at any time. We were cautioned not to use them, unless we were alone and away from buildings.

Fooling around with stones was such a large part of my young life that if anyone today were to accuse me of having rocks in my head, I just might agree with them.

It was about at this age, maybe a little sooner, that I was allowed to have a Benjamin air rifle. It had a pump about eighteen inches long for a barrel with the BB tube mounted on top of that pump. It was a single-shot, very powerful. The more times you pumped it, the more powerful it became. Believe me, the squirrels around the lighthouse were in trouble. I'd catch one on the ground by the building, and I'd chase it. They always would try to get in the basement windows. Well, I'd pop at them there, miss sometimes, and crack the glass. When I did kill one, I found out they were hard to clean, and I'd have hair on the meat. It just wasn't worth it, I decided, and besides, Dad Hutzler was wondering what in the dickens was cracking all those basement windows. He thought people were careless, and were letting them slam shut too hard. It was time to give up squirrel hunting. (You see, I was learning to be a little stinker, even then.)

I was always running out of BBs and mother got tired of constantly adding BBs to her grocery list that she called in to Tracy at least once a week in the summertime. She told me, "Glenn, you will just have to put your BB gun away for a while. I'm not going to order any more BBs this month."

That was quite a blow to me and George. We tried to make the few we had left last a long time by shooting at a cardboard box. We would find the BB in the box, or stuck in the cardboard. Then we would shoot it all over again. Eventually, they all were gone anyway. We then made a discovery. Telephone line wire was the same size as a BB. This was great! By using the fog signal wire cutters, we could make as many copper wire bullets as we wanted. Any length too.

George and I sometimes recall the time we spotted a squirrel near the top of that poplar tree in front of the house. We pumped that BB gun just a full of air as we could get it by using all our strength. I then dropped in a one-half inch piece of copper wire, and we were ready for business. I spotted the squirrel near the top of the tree, peaking around a limb. I took careful aim, and squeezed the trigger. The gun made more noise than usual, the wire bullet hit the squirrel under the choppers and literally lifted him into the air before he fell to the ground, dead as could be.

I don't remember whatever happened to that Benjamin air rifle, but I suppose we ruined somehow.

## CHAPTER 15

### *A Boat Trip, Outhouses, and Cream Puffs*

The arrival of the Nelson family at the lighthouse seemed to brighten our lives. Mrs. Nelson was a long-time friend of mother's, and Dad Hutzler had known Nels for many years. Our families were about the same age, so it opened the opportunity to plan many things to do together. We had little picnics together, marshmallow and wiener roasts, fishing trips to the little lake, etc. Besides, George and I had girls around that were our age, and we sort of examined ourselves, I think, and we tried as best we could to be better little Sand Hill Savages. Of course, there were the jangles between us, but nevertheless, things were better at North Manitou Lighthouse Station.

Many times, the families talked about how life had been on South Manitou. Both families had relatives on South Manitou, so they arranged to return someday when the weather was nice.

Finally, one beautiful Sunday morning, both families were loaded on the old Pumpkin Seed, and we went "punk, punk, putting" towards South Manitou. The lake was smooth, and I can't remember anyone getting seasick, but some of the children used a pail to relieve their bladders enroute. The trip took about one hour, and many of the relatives met us on the dock. We landed by the Coast Guard Station, and I noticed how nice the men looked in their white shirts, black ties, and white-topped hats. We kids were rather shy at first, but soon found things to do with the other kids. We had a big dinner at one of Dad Hutzler's sisters. I don't remember which one anymore. Gustie's dad lived there, so the Nelsons were well entertained.

After dinner, Nels and Ernest were invited to take a ride to the country with some other men. The ladies had so much to visit about – it was a wonderful day for all.

Sometime during the afternoon, the wind shifted to the northeast, and increased in a mild sort of way. It made the boat at the dock roll a little. Around five o'clock, the men returned from the country, considerably more jovial than they were when they left the point. The women noticed that both Nels and Ernest were having a little difficulty staying on the two-board walk. Gustie and mother were surprised, because neither of the men were

accustomed to drinking liquor. They knew that the farmers on south Manitou loved to get visitors intoxicated, but they had been confident their men would never fall for that kind of monkey business. They were thoroughly disgusted with them, and let them know it too.

It was time to return to North Manitou, and several relatives came down to the dock to see us off. The women were concerned about the children, and themselves too, when we were loading the rocking boat, but didn't care one bit if both the men fell in the lake. "It would do them good." they said.

After many goodbyes were exchanged, we went "punk, punk, punkin'" toward North Manitou Lighthouse on a wavy course. Everybody had to stay down in the cabin, because the boat was rolling considerably in that northeast breeze. I noticed the women occasionally pointed toward the two men who were steering the boat. I couldn't hear what they were saying, but I could guess. Nels was steering the boat, and dad had his arm around his shoulder to steady himself, and they were laughing a lot. Some of the small children were seasick.

As we came abreast Donner's Point, the engine stopped dead, and we started to drift right toward that rocky point. The women were certain this was the end of both families, as we were surely going up on the rocks. Nels and Dad Hutzler told the women to calm down, that everything would be alright. Dad said the engine had just lost her prime and got too hot. He would prime her again as soon as he tied a rope on this pail, so he could dip some water from the lake. Anyway, he said, "We will drop the anchor before we hit the rocks!"

The women didn't have any faith in their men, and kept yelling at them as they held on to the little kids. He finally got the rope tied on the bucket – the same bucket the children had used on the way over – and headed toward the back of the boat. Enroute, the bucket bumped the engine, and spilled some of the contents on that hot engine. My goodness, what a terrible odor it made. Every port hole on that boat flew open, as everyone tried to get a breath of fresh air. I, too, was beginning to think this was the end! Finally, they did get the engine primed again, and after a new spark plug was installed, we were on our way again. It was none too soon either, as we had drifted quite close to the rocks. We had a little difficulty docking at the lighthouse pier, but we did all get ashore. Some were seasick, some were still trying to get rid of that awful smell, two were tipsy, but happy. All in all, it had been a good day.

September arrived, and away we went to the Thompsons so we could start the school year. It wasn't quite so hard to see our folks drive away tins time, but it wasn't easy either. We accepted our lot as best we could, and began school. It helped to have the school yard just across the street, so we could play in the yard on swings with other kids until dark. We also had homework at times.

Halloween night arrived, and the Thompsons decided it would be best if George and I were each given a dime, and sent to the movies. This was fine with us. It was just getting dark, when we walked down Union Street, headed for the Lyric Theater. Some of the kids we knew were already ringing doorbells, and then running around the corner of the house. This was still the era when the kids just did the dirty little trick thing and ran away. None of them ever gave it a thought about hanging around for a treat. George and I just kept going on down Union Street, headed for the movie. When the movie was over, things seemed much quieter along the streets, only a few older boys still in groups here and there. We went to bed after answering a few questions about the movie.

My teacher at Union Street School was the principal of the school, and most of us were surprised when a big burly policeman filled the classroom doorway. He said to her, "May I have a few words with you, madam?" She left the room with him, and soon came back and told us that some bad thing had been done the night before, and not to worry if we had behaved ourselves. I was glad I'd gone to the movies. You can imagine my surprise when the policeman returned to the room with one of the boys I'd seen ringing doorbells the night before. He said to the boy, "Do you see any of the boys that were with you last night?"

The boy scanned the room, and pointed to about five boys. *I was one of them.* "Come with me." the policeman said, and we were taken to a room where about a dozen boys were gathered.

It seems a few outhouses had been tipped over in the neighborhood, and the same boys who had tipped them over were going to tip them back up. I think all of the boys in that room had gone to the movies too, or so they had told the policeman. So, away we went in a van-type car, to tip up outhouses. The group I was with tipped one house back up with no problem. The next one had collapsed when it went over. We all looked at it, and then back at the policeman. He said, "Well, you guys had fun pushin' it over, now put it back together again." We went to work. We pushed one wall at a time kind of in the same place it came from, and braced it with a board

until we could get another wall pushed up. And so it went, until we had all four walls standing there with a brace holding each wall up. Now the roof had to go on. It was too heavy for us to lift up. The policeman went to the back door of the house, and got an old rusty saw, a hammer, and a few nails. The toilet had a gable roof when it tipped over, but when we finished with it, it had a flat roof. The front wall, where the door was, leaned a little, and when you opened the door, it rubbed in the dirt. The flat board roof didn't have any shingles either.

The policeman went to the back door and had the lady of the house come out and look it over. I really loved that dear lady when she said, "When my husband gets home, maybe he can fix it a little better. The boys have done all they can do." We piled in the police car, and back to the school we went. We were told to go home; it was supper time. (I was glad to get away from there before the wind came up.)

The Thompsons were upset over the incident, and they did contact the police, but nothing could be done. It was over. I was not guilty, but nevertheless, I had learned a lesson. "Be careful who you are seen with, and never, never, tip over any outhouses."

George and I were given our usual dime for the Saturday afternoon movie. We noticed that the wind had a definite chill in it, as it swirled the leaves in all directions as we made our way down Union Street on that special afternoon. It was special because the good lord provided for us a special treat that afternoon. Just before we came to the bakery, where we always looked longingly through the window, George noticed the swirling leaves also had a dollar bill mixed in with them. The leaves with the dollar in them were headed for a street drain. George was just quick enough to run and grab the dollar bill, before it reached the drain. It was his dollar bill, but since I was older, I could make a few hints as to what he should do with it. The end result, two little Sand Hill Savages watched the movies with their bellies so full of cream puffs they could hardly breathe.

Our family arrived in late November, and rented a house at 227 Eleventh Street. It was a cold, cold house, and hard to heat, but we were together again and we didn't have to change schools. The winter passed slowly, all us kids were catching up, taking our turns catching the measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, etc. That is what happens when children are isolated a great deal of the time. When they are exposed, they tend to have these things close together. In those days, the doctor quarantined the house. It seemed our house had a quarantine sign most of the winter. (As a note of

interest, brother Dale didn't have the chicken pox until his own daughter have them to him when he was fifty-two years old.) When we were well enough, we could go to the movies on Saturdays.

Traverse City, like all others, was a dirty place in the winter time. Most every home had a coal-burning furnace belching black coal smoke out its chimney. A nice clean snow would fall on the ground, and just in a matter of a couple days it would be black with coal soot. (Where were our environmentalists when we really needed help?) I missed the beautiful white snow of the island. Even the sand covered snow of Dimmick's Point was better than this.

## CHAPTER 16

### *Cluck Hens, A Wheel Falls Off, and Cousins*

The winter did pass, and back to the island we went. It was good to be back with our sea gulls, sandpipers, etc. Dad Hutzler always brought back at least one-hundred-five fertile chicken eggs. That's what it took to fill his incubator. The incubator was certainly an interesting thing for us kids to watch. We asked dozens of questions about it, and could hardly wait until the day they began to hatch. Meanwhile, the little kerosene lamp had to be filled and the wick trimmed each day. Mother would open it up, and carefully turn each egg to a new position every day. Regardless of how careful she did this, every year there were a few little chicks that had defects when hatched, and had to be destroyed. This was distressing to her, and she never could quite understand what had gone wrong. I remember when I was quite small, I had secluded myself near a sandpiper's nest and watched her care for her nest of eggs; how she rolled each egg to a new position with her feet and her long beak, and finally fluffed herself to a larger size, and settled down on the eggs to keep them warm. Sandpipers always hatched healthy little ones. However, I just couldn't visualize my mother going through that procedure, especially the part where she would fluff herself to a larger size and then sit on those eggs.

In spite of the early loss of little chicks, we always raised more chickens than we could buy food for, and at an early date, we would begin to have chicken dinners. Caring for the little chicks and the cluck hens became partly my job as I was getting older and was rather handy with things. Little houses and pens had to be maintained, and they had to be carefully shut up at night, so the foxes and weasels wouldn't get them. My mother never could understand why some of the cluck hens were such wonderful caring mothers, while others couldn't care less. Some would carefully cover the little chicks, and keep them warm on wet mornings, while some would lead the chicks through the wet grass, and not seem to care at all. So, mother would take some of the chicks away from one cluck hen, and give them to another cluck hen. My, how she fussed over those mother hens and little chicks. I helped where I could, and did like the cute little things, but I can't remember losing any sleep over them.

Mother was concerned about Norman. He spent the winter going to school in Charlevoix, and now that school was over, he did not want to return to the island for the summer. He had enjoyed a wonderful relationship with his cousins Lester and LaVerne, and he wanted to stay there for the summer. Norman was big for his age, and wanted to find work. Cousin Lester was driving a team of horses on a highway project, and was able to obtain a job for Norman too.

Mother was frantic, and she, like all mothers, wanted to keep her family together as long as possible. She kept saying, “He is just too young to be doing a man’s work.” I don’t remember how it was arranged, but Norman did come home. We were happy to have him home, but as they say, ‘hindsight is always clearer than foresight.’ Norman was restless there at the lighthouse that summer. He couldn’t understand why he had not been allowed to work with his cousin Lester, as there was surely nothing for him to do at home, except kid things. That was the last summer Norman spent at home. He found jobs selling things on the mainland until 1928, when he married, and joined the Coast Guard at South Manitou Island. He served seven years in the Coast Guard. While serving at Ludington, Michigan, his health failed, and he retired.

While enroute to the village one afternoon to pick up the mail and a grocery order, an interesting thing happened to our Model T. It was a wet day. It had been raining during the morning hours, and the leaves on the ground were wet. As we were nearing the foot of the big hill, Dad Hutzler observed something moving out in front of the car. He said, “What’s that thing?” Mother answered, “It’s a wheel!” Realizing it was off our car, dad pressed the brake pedal, and the right front end of our car dipped down, and the front axle gouged in the dirt. We came to a sudden stop, tilted in a crazy position, but had an excellent view to watch that front wheel of ours go rolling down the road for quite some distance before it ran into some bushes.

Dad Hutzler was excited, and I won’t repeat the language he used to express himself. This is hard to believe, but we found all the pieces to put that wheel back on. Most pieces were in the hub cap, even the cotter pin. The car was soon jacked up, and the business of cleaning the front axle was the biggest job. Not having enough rags was a problem, but Dad Hutzler solved some of the problem – by crossing his arms every once in a while, and wiping his hands under his arm pits. This was a habit mother found distressing, but overlooked the act right then (she would remind him later).

Finally, the wheel was back on the axle, and all that had to be done was screw the nut on, and install the cotter key. Everyone was watching the repair job, and slapping mosquitoes. Mosquitoes were not any help at all. Dad kept trying to turn the nut to the right, and time after time it wouldn't catch the thread. Mother said, "Ernest, why don't you turn it the other way?"

"Zella!" he answered, "I've greased too many wagon wheels in my day to try a dumb trick like that." Finally, he said, "It's no use; the threads got damaged when the axle fell into the ground." He sat there looking at it. Mother reached down, picked up the nut, and turned it to the left, and it went right on. Dad was shocked, humiliated, and very puzzled over the whole thing. He couldn't understand how Henry Ford could make a dumb mistake like that. He said, "It's no wonder that wheel came off like it did." He talked about it for days.

It was in the middle of the 20s when my Uncle David Furst was assigned *Officer in Charge* of the North Manitou Coast Guard Station. He was my father's brother, and it gave me an opportunity to observe him and learn a little bit about how my own father would have been had he lived.

The fall I was twelve years old, we rented a house down by the North Manitou school, so George and I could go to school. My Uncle Dave and family were at the Coast Guard Station, so my cousins were attending the island school too. I don't remember if we stayed the whole year or not, or moved to Traverse City when the lighthouse closed. In any case, we had a lot of fun when we were together. My cousins were great teasers, and they just loved to pull tricks on George.

I particularly remember a time when Burton, the oldest of the three boys, walked up the big round Oak heater and grabbed the shaker handle, and gave it a couple of shakes, and at the same time dropped some coins on the floor. As he gathered the coins, he said, "Boy, I did pretty good that time." George was all eyes and ears, and asked about it, and was told that sometimes, when you shook that handle, coins came out. Uncle Dave was at his desk a few feet away, and busy with some papers, when George began to shake the dickens out of that stove. He shook harder and harder; no coins came, so he shook it again. Uncle Dave awakened to the fact that an unusual amount of shaking was going on, so he swung around in his chair and said, "What in hell are you doing? You'll have all the fire in the ash pan!"

George looked up and answered, "I'm trying to get money out of here." Uncle Dave, realizing that a trick was being played on George, joined in the laughter. It was a lively, fun-loving home.

A bit later in the year, I caught my first fox in a trap up on the hill in back of the schoolhouse. What a thrill that was for me. I didn't know how to skin it, so I took it to my Uncle Dave, and he skinned it for me. I later sold that fur to Sarah Olsen for eighteen dollars. That was more money than I'd ever had before. Mother bought clothes for me with that money.

When navigation closed that year, we packed our personal belongings, and moved to Traverse City, where we rented a house on State Street. We children enrolled in the Boardman School, located within easy walking distance.

The house on State Street was a large house, and had an apartment upstairs that was empty, so Uncle Dave and family rented it for the winter. In those days, the Coast Guard Station closed when navigation closed too. Aunt Della was delighted with the move. Uncle Dave would have preferred to stay on the island and trap fox. He was good at it, and made extra money on the furs he sold. Things were a little cramped upstairs for a family of six, but everyone managed somehow. Burton, Leslie, Harold and Dorothea could adapt easily anywhere.

The boys now had George to tease. George, at his age, loved to tell "Bear Stories" that he made up as the story progressed. The cousins just loved to play tricks on him, and George seemed to get a big kick out of it too. He had never experienced so much nonsense before.

When Easter came that year, both families colored eggs as usual. The eggs were hard-boiled, and George discovered, after he had accidentally dropped one on the stairs, that they were perfectly cracked all around if they rolled down a few steps. He just had to tell the cousins about his discovery. They came up with a plan on how to play a trick on George. They colored a raw egg, and gave it to him, and said to him, "Bet this egg won't crack so nice if you roll it down the steps." George hurried up a few steps, and give it a roll ... and it rolled off the edge of the steps and fell in a heat register. George's eyes popped open as that egg splattered through the grating and disappeared. The cousins hurried back upstairs with their hands over their mouths. It wasn't long before everyone in the house knew where that egg had gone. My goodness! What a smell! There was no way to clean that egg mess off of the register either. Both families were in an uproar. George confessed, but said it wasn't his fault. "They gave me a raw egg!"

Fortunately, heat and odors rise, and most of that awful smell went upstairs where it belonged. Poor Uncle Dave, being a homebody, and loving his easy chair and magazine, took the brunt of that joke. The cousins were

frequently reminded of their joke on George. That was one trick that backfired.

Cousin Harold was my age, and we did lots of things together. Both good and bad. We sold subscriptions to the *People's Popular Monthly*, trying to win a pony named *Prince*. That was good. We got gypped out of our pony. That was bad. We joined the boy scouts. That was good. We kept our money for Sunday School and went to the movies in the afternoon. That was really bad, and we were caught doing it too, which was good. I guess no one ever grows up who doesn't do some things they are ashamed of.

## CHAPTER 17

### *Pulpwood, Wine and Howling Like a Hound Dog*

In 1924, the *P.J. Ralph*, heavily laden with pulpwood, entered South Manitou harbor in a sinking condition. The ship's pumps were unable to control the flow of water that was entering the vessel through the seams in the ship's planking. The captain ran the ship aground in the middle of the bay. The bow was high and dry as the stern of the vessel slowly settled below the surface. All hands were saved, and there was no loss of life. Much of the Ralph's deck load floated away, only to be washed ashore along the beach.

It seems that the ship's crew was happy they were alive, and had no interest in the possessions they left behind. It was those possessions that the island people were attracted to, and spent many hours that winter on the ice over the vessel with all types of grappling devices. Prohibition had not been repealed in 1926, and it was evident that the P.J. Ralph's crew had access to a supply of Canadian whiskey while she was being loaded. It was a happy group of people that spent many hours lying on their stomachs, fishing for things through the ice that winter.

In the spring of 1927, it was determined that the hull of the P.J. Ralph, with her holds still full of pulpwood, was an obstruction to navigation. The hull was broken open with charges of dynamite that released the pulpwood. It seems there was no effort to retrieve the pulpwood, and a large portion of the floating pulpwood drifted over to North Manitou Lighthouse Point. Here it washed up on the south side of the Point.

My stepfather and Nels Nelson looked upon this pulpwood with interest, and wondered about salvage rights. Was there any value in it? They decided that if they could not sell it to someone, at least they could cut each piece in two pieces, and use it for kindling wood, to build fires in the fog signal boilers. They worked for days piling up that pulpwood. It was hard work, as each piece had been submerged underwater all winter. It wasn't long before there were several big piles of pulpwood down on the south beach. Dad Hutzler said, "That stuff is soaked with water right now, but will soon dry out in the sun with the wind passing through it." And it did too. No one seemed to have any interest in the stuff, except to say, 'Who in the world piled up all that pulpwood?'

I know they were disappointed that a buyer didn't show up, but covered their disappointment and began to saw a few pieces in two for kindling wood. This, too, was a disappointment, because they discovered the surface of the pulpwood was full of sand and small stones imbedded in it. It was impossible to keep a saw sharp. Those piles of pulpwood were still there when we left the island in 1928.

The summer seasons of 1926 and 1927 were awakening times for me. I realized there was a wild and woolly world out there somewhere that I didn't understand. "Al Capone was running the whole country." Dad Hutzler said. "All the bootleggers are getting rich." Mother resisted for a long time, but finally bobbed her hair. How different she looked! She was self-conscious about it for a long time, but admitted, "It is easier to take care of."

One Sunday afternoon, some village friends came to visit us. Dad Hutzler served them a little of his wine in the parlor. It seems George was fascinated by the little glasses on the kitchen table, and the color of the wine, and sampled a few. He later came out of the house in a wobbly condition to where I was and said, "Look out Glenn! Here comes the tower!" In a few minutes he was sick and vomiting. He felt better after that.

The wine business was on its way out around our house, and later, when it was discovered that Norman was sneaking a little drink now and then, Dad Hutzler emptied it all out on a sand hill. My goodness, what a pretty sand hill that was! It smelled good too.

During the nine years our family was stationed at North Manitou Lighthouse, I attended two school in the Charlevoix area, three school in Traverse City, and both schools on the two Manitou Islands. Many school years were broken by starting school on the island, and leaving for the mainland school when navigation closed, and then returning to the island school when navigation opened in the spring. Some years, I did not attend any school at all, other years I attended only a part of the school period. In the fall of 1927, I did not attend school at all. That fall was really a happy time for George and I. No lessons to study or anything, so we trapped fox, snared rabbits, and did other things we liked to do. That fall, since I was fourteen years old, Dad Hutzler decided I was old enough to handle a shot gun.

I was allowed to use Norman's gun, a twelve-gauge, and it kicked like a steer. One of the reasons dad wanted me to hunt with him was because Old Tip had died, and he badly needed a dog to circle the rabbits for him

when there was tracking snow on the ground. We were supposed to take turns tracking the rabbit, but it seemed to me that something always happened when his turn came up. He would start out on the track okay, but he always lost the track, or his glasses got caught in the bushes, and things like that. Anyway, I got to go hunting, and that pleased me even though it meant going through the woods howling like a hound dog a lot of the time.

In February of 1928, we received transfer orders to South Manitou Lighthouse Station. As the little gasoline powered boat, loaded high with all our household furniture, weaved its way through the ice fields on its way to South Manitou, I cannot remember anyone of our family feeling sad about leaving Dimmick's Point.

## CHAPTER 18

### *My Return to Dimmick's Point*

It was in September 1990 while Ethel, brother George, and I were staying a few days on South Manitou, that Chuck Kruch coaxed the three of us to ride over to Dimmick's Point with him. Dimmick's Point was where George and I had lived as young boys at North Manitou Lighthouse Station. This was where our little sister Leota was born, where so many events, good and bad, had taken place in our young lives. Events that actually shaped and patterned the type of men we would be when we grew up.

I was hesitant at first. I wasn't ready to have all the memories of North Manitou Light Station come tumbling back to the front of my mind. I wasn't ready for the vivid pictures that would flash before my eyes, pictures that were imprinted on the brain of a five-year-old child some seventy-one years ago. No, I wasn't at all ready for anything like that.

First of all, brother George couldn't make the trip because he said he had to go home to keep an appointment. I wonder if he realized better than I, the turmoil a short visit would create in the mind of an old man.

Four of us made the trip, Chuck Kruch, Bob Ruchhofs, Ethel and myself. Bob had his camera, and was writing a book, Chuck had his video camera and was interested in facts for the National Park Service (NPS). I had my wife of fifty-four years, and a mind full of confused, mixed-up memories.

There was a light southwest wind blowing, and I was amazed how fast we were making the trip between the islands. The NPS boat was probably cruising in excess of twenty miles per hour. Not at all like the trips I'd made years ago, as a kid, in the old "Pumpkin Seed," as we called her, that would travel about seven and one-half miles per hour if you had a tail wind, like we had today. When we passed Donner's Point, I pointed to the high cliff where we, as kids, would climb up the side to examine the bank-swallow nests. A bit farther inland, was where the eagles raised their young in a tall hemlock tree. Memories and pictures of long ago came creeping back.

As we rounded Dimmick's Point, to moor the boat on the lee side of the Point, I began to feel uneasy about the trip, and the memories I was about to experience.

When the anchor was securely set in the gravel up on the beach, it was time to disembark. The NPS boat has a square bow, about four feet high. I could see myself as a fifteen-year-old boy – my age when I left this point – taking a couple of steps, placing my hands on that bow, and vaulting easily to the beach. I tried to do this in a hesitant crawly sort of way. Well, I rolled over the thing, flopped on the beach, hit butt-first in the gravel, then rolled over on my hands and knees, so I could get to my feet. I could feel where the gravel had indented my butt. I thought to myself, 'sixty-two years does make a difference!'

I was then concerned about Ethel getting off the boat, and tried to help. She made a much more graceful landing than I did. Thinking about my return to Dimmick's Point, I concluded there was not the slightest similarity to that of General McArthur's return to the Philippines.

We walked slowly toward the only structures remaining, a part of the barn, and two outhouses.<sup>3</sup> Enroute to these structures, we slowly walked past the place where a sandpiper had unknowingly shared her secrets with me of how to properly care for a nest of sandpiper eggs.

We arrived on a little sand hill, and looked down on two outhouses; one had been for the keeper's family, the other for the assistants' families. The doors were open, or torn off, and we could see inside. How could I tell them that I could see cement sidewalks leading up to these nicely painted buildings, and inside they were spotless - that I could see a couple of white owls in each one, ready to be carried to the main building when evening came – and how careful we had to be to close the door, so the wind wouldn't unwind the whole roll of tissue? How could I tell them that, and have them believe me? Anyway, where was the washhouse that had been only a few feet from these outhouses – the washhouse where all us kids pumped water to be heated on the flattop stove – more water to fill the washtubs every Monday morning – the building where we kids had pushed the handle back and forth on the washer, until we were blue in the face? Where was that?

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<sup>3</sup> North Manitou Lighthouse Station succumbed to the elements of rising lake levels and strong northerly winds in a piecemeal fashion. The brick fog signal building washed in the lake in the 1930s, followed by the light tower in October of 1942. The brick keeper's dwelling remained standing until the early 1970s, when it too was washed into the lake.

And besides, where was the chicken coop, and Norman's fox bunker, where he had killed the fox? Yes, where were these things?

They asked me about the rubble that had been a nice red barn. I told them that one fall my stepdad trapped five live foxes, and put them in there to keep until the weather cooled so the fur would become more prime – how he decided it was too warm in there, and that he would move them to a wire pen outside, and three escaped the first night – how he had caught one back again that same night in one of his traps, so the loss was two foxes, the other three went on skinning boards that same day – it didn't matter whether the fur was prime or not. "No more of that monkey business," he said.

We slowly walked to where the house had stood. There were only a few bricks that had been the back basement wall. I raised my eyes and looked in the direction of where the flag pole, oil house, tower, fog signal, and four or five rip-rap cribs had been: *nothing!* I knew they had washed in the lake many years ago. Still, I wasn't ready for this! I looked behind me, where the clothesline had been on a hill. The hill was gone, and in its place was a deep blow hole. This couldn't be – this was where we kids played in the sand on the little hill under the clothesline. This was the little flat-topped hill where I had watched my mother hand up clothes with tears on her cheeks because discussions on how her kids were going to get to school that year weren't coming out right. I was beginning to swallow quite frequently now, and I was blinking my eyes to hold back the tears. I knew it was time to go.

We sauntered out closer to the end of the Point. Chuck pointed out a sign that stated this point was being preserved as a nesting site for the piping plover. How fitting, I thought. It certainly was not a place where people should have to raise a family, at least not during the period we lived there.

I was glad the Great Manitou had decided to make clothesline hill into a blow hole. I just pray that every little kernel of sand that was moved about to convert clothesline hill into a blow hole will be used to build a happy little hill somewhere that the piping plover will use as a nesting site for their young.'

As the National Park Service boat rounded the end of Dimmick's Point and headed back toward South Manitou Island, it seemed to me I could hear my stepfather's voice saying, "The biggest mistake I ever made in my life was when I accepted the position of keeper of North Manitou Lighthouse Station.

## *Epilogue*

The preceding autobiography of my life, from age five until I was fourteen-years old, had been lying dormant in my memories for more than seventy years. ‘Dormant memories’, because I wanted them to be. I didn’t often relate to the happy, humorous, and fun things that happened, because so closely intertwined with these things were the hurts, the fears, and the tears that were associated with these memories.

If the preceding story has damaged the image of the life of a lighthouse keeper on an island to those people who have always looked upon the life of a lighthouse keeper as being romantic, heroic, and an assignment to be desired – all I can say is ...

“I’m sorry; I only tried to tell it like it was.”

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### *My Point of View*

A memoir authored by Glenn C. Furst, originally a South Manitou Island “Coast Guard Kid”, who grew up as the stepson of the Keeper of the North Manitou Island Light Station. His book, essentially a chronicle of his youth on North Manitou, includes a variety of information about the island, some of the people who lived there, and what life on the island was like for his family, living at the Light Station on the island’s rather barren and secluded Dimmick’s Point.

The title, which at first glance might seem to promise attitudes and opinions, is probably a tongue-in-cheek play on words, arising from Charles Anderson’s *Isle of View*, which was published thirteen years earlier. The “Point” in *My Point of View* is suspected of actually referring to Dimmick’s Point.

This is one of the only two books that were ever published by former residents of North Manitou Island (the other being Rita Hadra Rusco’s *North Manitou Island – Between Sunrise and Sunset*).