

*on the*

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**MAIN STR**



The hamlet of Burnt River in Somerville Township is one of many which suffered a set back with the advent of "super" highways. It was cut off and many motorists who at one time stopped at the general store, now speed by on the outskirts leaving a cloud of dust. However, the village people in the area are still well served by the Lowery store and by a good service station. The Sudaby's are gone but the names of Hodgson and Handley are quite in evidence.

Once the village had a population of 121 and the stone quarry and the Raven Lake Cement Company kept the "wheels of industry" turning and grinding. The names Hodgson and Handley appear in the historical list.

Thos. Hodgson will be remembered because of his busy association with business and politics and because of his connection with the chemical industry in Lindsay and at Donald. The development of the charcoal plants at Donald and in Lindsay figured large in the annals of employment and production. The Donald plant employed many people and a small village sprung up and a company store was busy. Carload shipments of charcoal and a bi-product chemical kept the name Hodgson in the fore. The newer mill at Lindsay at the head of St. Paul Street was a busy plant for many years. The ruins remain today as a monument to the past.

Burnt River, at one time the prettiest scenic waterway in the north and prior to the advent of summer cottages which now are lined up on both shores, this river was perhaps the most beautiful of them all with towering trees along both shores and the green branches almost forming an arch across the river. A mushroom growth of cottages has caused partial disappearance of the natural beauty.

One of the dearest old ladies still residing in Burnt River is Mrs. Robert Handley who at the age of 93 is as alert as a fawn and as spry as a cricket. Blessed with a good physique and excellent eyesight she greets all comers with a cheery smile and has no trouble as a conversationalist. "I enjoy my three meals and a late night snack. I like my radio and I prefer the game of hockey, almost more so than listening to a church service — yes, and my favorite man on the air is Gordon Sinclair who is interesting and not afraid to speak his mind. I am sick and tired of rock and roll — in fact I turn that stuff off."

Men who have done much in the past to keep Burnt River on the map have included Ex-Warden of Victoria County Jos. Handley and Ex-Warden Charles Hodgson. The latter gentleman is still a resident of Burnt River. The population has dwindled but as the 93 year old Mrs. Handley added: "Those left are still part of the 'salt of the earth'."