

DEFIED MOTOR AGE TO STICK TO HIS ANVIL

Henry Hoth, Wilmette Blacksmith for Half Century, Retires at Call of Death

Friends who came into his life half a century ago and friends of later years, numbering more than three hundred, attended the funeral of Henry Hoth last Saturday morning to pay final tribute to a pioneer of Wilmette who had passed on. Mr. Hoth died last Thursday and with his passing there is written into the story of Wilmette another interesting chapter. He was the village blacksmith fifty years ago and today his shop still stands at 1823 Wilmette avenue and there his two sons, Charles and William, will continue where their father left off.

At the funeral there were men whom Henry Hoth had known for more than half a century, few to be sure—and among the pallbearers were gray-haired friends who could tell the story of the village blacksmith far better than this writer. Requiem high mass was said at St. Joseph's church on the Ridge and burial was in St. Joseph's cemetery.

Mr. Hoth survived his wife by two years.

Born in Niles Center

Henry Hoth was born in Niles Center and had he lived until next August 1, would have been 67 years old. His birthplace was a little log cabin on ground which now is property of the Glenview Golf club. His father, Adam Hoth, who had come from Germany, had settled in Niles Center a few years before Henry was born, a period in which the Indians were roaming this section. Adam Hoth had bought a farm, but had found farming not prosperous, so opened a blacksmith shop. He shod his first horse in 1866.

Henry Hoth was one of a family of thirteen children. In the early years of his life Henry found that being the son of a farmer in the unsettled Niles Center section of the north shore wasn't play. There was work to be done on the farm and it was up to the children to do it while their father was working at his horseshoeing trade. So Henry did his bit. One of the chores was digging potatoes. From sunrise to sunset he was in the potato patch and when his day's work was finished father Hoth did a little digging. He dug down in a pocket and paid the kids ten cents for their day's work.

Fifteen Miles to School

As potato digging came during the school vacation period it kept Henry out of mischief. Schooling was gained under difficulties in those days for the nearest school was in Algonquin and it was necessary to hike fifteen miles. But Henry and two other boys of Niles Center didn't seem to mind the long hike. Sometimes they attended night school, too, at Algonquin when they had moonlit jaunts.

In 1877 his father packed up bag and baggage and that included his horseshoeing tools and located in Gross Point. He bought a forty-six acre farm on what is now Wilmette avenue just to the east of the Ridge and running a considerable distance to the south. That ground is no longer Gross Point. It wasn't Gross Point before the recent annexation of the western territory by Wilmette, for in those days it was a "No Man's Land." Oddly enough the territory on the west side of the present Wilmette avenue was the property of the village of Wilmette.

Henry used to tell of how his father had got the forty-six acres from the government for a pittance, and how later when he sought to sell it the Indians tried to block the sale, claiming the land. That, however, was

settled to the satisfaction of the litigants and Hoth received \$4,200 for it. The Indians were civilized at that time, he said, and were not hard to deal with.

Pastured Cows at Lake Front

The new farm meant more work for Henry and the other children and also meant a continuation of the difficulties under which Henry was gaining an education. Sometimes he hiked to Algonquin and at other times made a shorter hike to a school in Evanston. There was still that potato digging job to be taken care of and also the cows had to be taken to water and pasture. Down Wilmette avenue (the Wilmette avenue of today) he drove the cows through the woods and as far as the lake where the cows drank, and near which they pastured.

But still Henry had time for something else and he worked in the blacksmith shop which his father had built on the same spot where a larger shop

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