

[Huse, George Burton]

GEORGE B. HUSE VETERAN MILL AND LUMBERMAN DIES Began on a Logging Job when 12 and Stuck to Lumber All His Life

George Burton Huse, one of the last of the old loggers, lumbermen, and millmen, for a long period of years a resident of Canton, passed away at Hepburn Hospital, Ogdensburg, Tuesday morning last, after an illness of about three weeks. On May 23 last he had celebrated his 81st birthday. He had been confined to the home on the Island for the past three or four years on account of a rheumatic condition.

Funeral services were conducted Thursday afternoon with a prayer at the house at 2 and service at the First Universalist Church, the Rev. Dr. Max Kapp of St. Lawrence University, officiating. Burial was made at Fairview Cemetery.

He was born in Colton on May 23, 1862, a son of Daniel and Artemissa Foster Huse. His father was a native of Vermont and his mother was born and brought up in Clinton County. He was one of a family of several children, [eight] sons and daughters.

His father, Daniel Huse, was a logger and lumberman in the Racket River Country. When George was twelve years old, his father, a veteran of the Civil War who had logging contracts was confined to his home with illness. George, the small boy, talked it over with his father and against the wishes of the older Huse the boy determined to do the drawing of logs his father had contracted to get out. Friendly teamsters and loggers helped the boy out. The drawing was over the wooded and country roads and the loading was done at skidways, the logs being loaded by men on the job. George used to tell of this experience when he was so small that it was hard for him to get the collars on the heavy draft horse. For a number of years he drove teams up in the Saranac River Country and recalled in after years many interesting experiences and hair-raising adventures, chased by panthers while he drew in meat and other supplies to camp, and witnessing whole families of bears in the low spruces and pines.

He used to tell of the famous Red Day of the eighties when he was teaming in Clinton County. The sun was a great red ball of fire in the heavens and the foliage and everything took on a crimson color. Scientists were unable to determine what the cause of this was and [it] was the subject of discussion for weeks. During the day many people of superstitious beliefs thought the end of the world was coming...

George Huse continued in the Racket and Saranac country until 1885 when he was employed by James Spears, then of Colton, and later of Canton and Bucks Bridge. Spears established the Bucks Bridge Lumber Co. with a mill at Bucks Bridge. George Huse was down at the Bridge for some years

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but later on came to Canton and was engaged in the mill here for Spears. When he came to the Spears industry the mills were run by river power, and then came steam power and finally electric power was installed by George Huse over on the Island in this village after he had taken over the property at the retirement of Spears in 1914.

George Huse knew more about lumber and logging, from the tree in the forest through the process of cutting, logging, skidding to the river, river driving, cutting the logs into lumber and marketing than almost any other man in the locality. The average lumberman knew one part of it but George Huse knew all of it and delighted in sitting down and talking of those years as a boy in Colton, sitting atop the mountain high load of logs. "I have always wondered that when I was a small boy I wasn't killed. I certainly would not wish to have a boy of mine or any other boy of twelve do the things I did for it was hazardous. I was lucky, the men on the logging jobs looked after me, though I did my share of drawing."

George Huse was with Spears when the Granges were running the mill on the Island. He recalled that Mrs. John D. Grange was a daughter of the Rice family and a sister of Mrs. James H. Gannon, who was also a Rice. The Rices came from Troy. The big mill, called in the eighties the new Mill of the Canton Lumber Co., was built in 1884 and 1885. This brought to Canton interesting families like the Rice families and the Gannons...

During these years after the Granges had failed Spears wanted the mill and made a deal to buy it. And the Canton Lumber Co. wanted the Grange property. There was a merry war in which big John Morrow and other millworkers and river men seized the property, barring the other interests. The matter got into the courts, and in the end Spears won out and got the property. Here James Spears was established for a number of years, probably twenty, until his retirement in 1914; and here in the mill on the Island came Wilfred Woodhead and others who came to stay in Canton...

During these years George Huse was Spears' right hand man. He was doing business all of the time. He bought a farm down the Potsdam road where his father and mother Daniel and Artemissa Huse lived. His brother, Will Huse, ran this farm for a number of years, and it is recalled that Will Huse died there forty years ago or thereabouts. Daniel Huse died in 1915 and his good wife passed in 1910.

George Huse continued the lumber and milling business for a number of years following his possession of the mill as owner. He did for a number of years custom sawing. Later on he closed the mill and continued the sale of lumber and building supplies. Last year he disposed of lumber and other building supplies on hand to William F. Anderson of Potsdam, and the business was closed on the island.

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But during nice weather George Huse sat daily on the little porch at the side of the mill house on the island. His wife had died a number of years ago and the home was looked after by Mrs. Sands, his housekeeper. George liked to have friends come along and talk of old times, for which he had a great memory. What he ever I experienced or saw he never forgot. He was a self educated man, as he left school as a small boy—he could figure and write and read well—in fact had a better education than the average high school boy.

He was interested in fraternal orders, was a 82nd degree Mason, a member of St. Lawrence Lodge, No. 111, of Canton; St. Lawrence Chapter No. 182, Knights Templar; St Lawrence Commandery, No. 128; Media Temple Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of Watertown. He was a Universalist in belief.

Mr. Huse married on June 23, 1892, Miss Martha Lillian Beswick of Morley. She was a sister of the late Pierce E. Beswick of Canton. Mrs. Huse died Dec. 12, 1928.

Mr. Huse leaves a son and daughter, C. Burton Huse of Ogdensburg, a veteran of the First World War who while in overseas service was seriously wounded. He has been for many years prominent in World War Veterans organizations. The daughter, Mrs. William (Hilda G.) Scobie of Oaklands, Calif., who [sic] came east some months ago to be with her father during his illness. There are also five grandchildren, Martha, Richard, and George, children of C. Burton Huse; and Martha, daughter of Mrs. Scobie.

There are also two sisters, Mrs. Martha Griffin of Boone, Ia., and Mrs. Ida Mosley, who resides in Canada. A sister, Mrs. William H. Pierce, resident of the West Potsdam road, died several years ago, and a brother, John Huse, is now dead about ten years. Among relatives living in the vicinity of Canton are a niece and two nephews, Mrs. Harold G. (Edna Pierce) Evans, and Roy and Artie Pierce of Madrid.

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