

Memories of Northwood Lumber Company and Farmers Yc

by Bob Johnson

This is about Johnny Johnson, the Northwood Lumber Co, hunting & fishing, and Johnny's sons David and Robert, as I, Robert (Bob), remember it; though the remembrance is undoubtedly scant, maybe flawed and/or possibly embellished somewhat as us older folks remember with fondness things of younger days. It also includes something of local ownership and the small, but also big in heart, town of Northwood and, finally, wishes and thanks.

My Dad, Johnny Johnson (Johnny and Ada), ran the Northwood Lumber Company, the Farmer's Yard, from some time in the 30s until the early 60s. It is my understanding that my Uncle Elmer, one of Dad's elder brothers, managed it from Jan. 11, 1911, according to a 1930 census, just prior to Dad; and also that near the turn of the century my grandfather, Dad's dad, Michael D. Johnson, was involved in some way with its predecessor: The Northwood Manufacturing Co. My first cousin M. Dean Thompson started with my Dad following his discharge from the Army Air Force after the War in which he piloted A20 and A26s fighter bombers. The War is really WWII but to those of our generation it is still the War. Dean ran the Yard during the final years prior to its being sold.

Now the owners are the Beversons, which fact, that of local ownership and, without animosity, not Great Plains, gladdens my heart.

Being born in '34, and my brother, David, in '38, we were depression babies, but too young to have any recollection of the hardships of those days. We did not remember any complaints even later in life; in short, life was good for both of us. In '37 our house was built at 400 N. 34th St. Forgive me for proclaiming it to be the best in Northwood.

As we grow we were expected to work at the Yard, and although I suppose we griped to ourselves now and then, we did work. I have fond memories of helping unload box cars of lumber, less fond memories of unloading cement, and really much less fond memories of the occasional, crumpled posts that



Bob Johnson shares many memories of Northwood Lumber Company in this article, he even remembers the phone number -21. Shown above is a photo of the lumber yard in October, 1939 with a full inventory of materials.

had to be unloaded. We also helped by going to Mason City Brick and Tile, Fort Dodge Reick and Tile, Mason City Millwork, and Charles City Millwork; and by making deliveries of building materials in our part of Worth County, back when Mallard was a duck and not a road. On all these trips, Dean would tell us to "take your time going but hurry back."

But it was not all work, every mid-morning we would go to the Made Rite or its predecessor (?) for a Bismarck and coffee and chat. (Nobody out here knows what a Bismarck is.)

Now when I think of phone numbers 10 digits long, 11 if you count the prefix 1, I long, in many respects at least, for the days of "21," the number for the Yard in the days of three longs and a short. But on the other hand I also remember Dad having a 1939 Fiat Map of

Worth County showing Acton owning most of the farms. Also fishing must be better these days. To wit, Dad's office had a 18 lb. 44 inch Northern he caught in Norway Lake, Minnesota, mounted above the front desk, so I was humbled when I learned from the Anchor awhile back that someone, a woman, caught one much bigger off the grade at Clear Lake.

Dad had the Boys Town portrait "He ain't heavy, father he's my brother" near the front desk, even though we are not Catholics - far from it. I have tried to carry on with his appreciation for Boys Town. Simply put, we were Lutheran. Question: "Who was the best football coach Notre Dame ever had?" Answer: "Kaute Reckus, a Lutheran born in Voss, Norway."

The photo shows pine (I suppose) 1" by 4" piled, as unloaded from box cars, prior to stacking and lathing every 10. My Dad,

Johnny, is on the right with Osh Koob B'goah overalls and tie and hat; on the left I suspect one of the men is Joe Anse. Joe later moved to Willamette, Oregon, to work in the plywood industry and I believe he had a metal. Regarding the 1" by 4" Dad used to tell of car loads of white pine saws a knot in the car load. Even those in the photo look pretty clear to me.

One time, and one time only, I leaned on the table saw, shown in front in the photo, with my hand on the guide when Dave, I am sure to speak me, turned the saw on with the result that only the skin on three of my fingers was touched. Dave and I never had a cross word; well, almost never.

Lloyd Mowers had his black smith shop at the east end of the block. Although I was not present, I heard the tale many times when someone, I

forgot who, told Dave to go to the black smith shop for a board stretcher. He did and Lloyd, playing with it, told Dave to tell them he was using it so could not let them borrow it. Of course there were howls when he returned with the ink - by the way that incident occurred well before he earned his PhD in Physics and taught at Kent State.

Dad had a gun case and shot gun shells in the office. He would tell us of either of his two Brownies, sequential Water Spaniels, being told, on leaving the office to hunt along the Shell Rock, to fetch a box of shells; they did. Both Brownies are still along side the Shell Rock, South of the dump about as far as the Pie Davis trap shoot.

Our dog Cookie, a Cocker Spaniel that became pretty good as a retriever, is buried there also. Writing this I think

of all the hunting and Dad did, and with him, simply he was able to. Li Northwood in then it brings could, ahouda thoughts to

I hope the Se can enjoy their tim Yard the way Dad few years ago I Severson gave a Northwood Lumb too shirts which I promptly relived m we advertise the ba ber yard way out h

I suppose we every carpenter part of Worth Co know I am missing but those that a immediate n include Elmer I Les Nelson, Don I Bill Elliot, Lyle Summers, Les : Gilbert Rugland Middle Beaverd.

Regarding Les: always cherish son Les Nelson told me the Yard and Dad years ago. We m when we stopped restaurant in Clac on the way to I Russell's funeral. you see this, Marge


Some who we v with, and here si know I am having those senior "t ephemerically re to as only a "me from time to time it my cousin Marilyn and cousin-in-law I Thompson in the David Jurgensen, Garder, Lefty Hind Irving Fredrickson

I wish that you/ of this generation have as good manu growing up in North or even better if i possible, 60 years the line.

To the Severson the Yard, I wish th and I look for and every issue of the A for your ad. To Anchor: thanks fo many memories as t you for us by others.

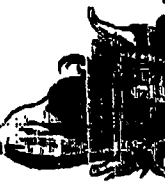
IA ETHICS AND
CAMPAIN FINANCE
DISCLOSURE
2008 AUG - 8 PM 3:00

On June 4, 2008, an advertisement advocating my election for sheriff appeared without the correct attribution statement as required by Iowa law. The advertisement should have said Paid for by David Gantz, 4435 Thrush Avenue, Northwood.



Paid for by David Gantz
4435 Thrush Avenue, Northwood, IA

Northwood-Kense Community School REGISTRATION



Thursday and Friday, August 7 and 8 have been set as days school registration. Registration and payment of fees will processed for K-6 students in the elementary media center a and registration for 7-12 students will be processed in the jun senior high school principal's office. Registration times are follows: **Thursday, August 7-1.7 p.m.**