

Biography of Peter J. Tang
--Oscar Tang

Peter J. Tang was born in 1875 in Sogan, Norway not far from Bergen. He came to Minnesota with his parents when he was eleven years old and settled at Lake Kormont. Here he stayed for twelve years. He went to school, and worked for the farmers around Kormont.

When he was twenty-three years of age, he came to North Dakota and secured a homestead. In the winter he returned to Lake Kormont, and stayed there over winter. In spring of the year 1899, he started out to his homestead with his team of horses, which he had bought there, and the few belongings he had. It took him five days to come from Kormont to Cooperstown. The first night he stayed at Winnipeg Junction, a small town where his parents were then living. The second night he reached Fargo. Not a car was to be seen any place in Fargo at that time. On the third night he stayed at a farmhouse and the fourth night he reached Page. On the fifth day he reached Cooperstown. Here he stayed for about a week and after securing some provisions, he started for his homestead, which was about a mile and a half west of where McHenry is now located.

Binford and McHenry were not built yet so every time he wanted provisions, he had to come to Cooperstown for the railroad did not reach farther than to Cooperstown at that time. P. K. Moe also had a homestead which was three miles east of where McHenry is now located. My father worked for P. K. Moe much of the time, for he had a better homestead. P. K. Moe soon traded his homestead for the hotel which he is now holding in Cooperstown. Tang got a job hauling tiles for the railroad to McHenry, for they had just started it now, and he was in great need of money. Most of the time he was away from his homestead working.

One day he could not get any bread, so he determined to bake it himself, for he had seen his mother bake bread. He made the dough and put it in the stove to bake, but he found that his stove was full of mice, for he had not been home for quite a while. He got rid of the mice. He baked the bread for a long time until it was burnt on the outside and almost raw inside, but it tasted good anyhow for he was very hungry.

Much of the time he did not have any coal to burn in his stove so he burned manure. At night in winter, it was so cold that he only took off his shoes. He slept with his mittens on and his earlaps down. When he woke up in the morning, he would find a big snow pile on his bed. He lived on his homestead for about three years. Then he went into partnership with P. K. Moe in the Pool Hall. Later he bought P. K. Moe's share in it, and owned it alone. This was in the year of 1902. Here he works yet.