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Sauer, Thomas (1853 -)

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SAUER, THOMAS

File No. B-1151

Thomas Sauer was born March 15, 1853, in Bavaria, Germany. He was the son of Sabastien and Margaret Sauer. As a young man Thomas came to the United States in the spring of 1882. He came directly to Richmond, Stearns County, Minnesota, where his uncle, Michael Hummer lived. The first summer he worked for his uncle and received \$20.00 a month for fourteen hours a day. During the winter of 1883, Thomas worked in Albany cutting wood for John Miller. He received 85 cents a cord for cutting this wood and from this wage he had to buy his own food. This wood was used to fire the trains, and was piled along the railroad tracks.

At times, Thomas recalls, they were able to cut from three to four cords of wood from one tree.

In the spring of 1883 Thomas came to St. Cloud. He had just enough money after his winters work cutting wood to pay for his room and board and get to St. Cloud. One day, shortly after Thomas Sauer came to St. Cloud, he was watching the construction of a hotel and decided he would be able to do as good work as the carpenters who were working. So he went to Theilman's Hardware Store asked for a set of carpenter's tools and then went in search of work. Mr. John Henneman, the owner of the hotel which was being constructed, gave Thomas a job, as a carpenter, for which he received \$1.50 a day and his room and board. After the construction of the hotel was completed Thomas and Sabastien Schaefer, a contractor, built the Catholic Church at Duelm, Minnesota. After the Duelm church was finished he worked as a carpenter putting the finishing woodwork on the interior of St. Patrick's Church.

The hotel, built for Christ Arnie on the East Side of St. Cloud in the spring of 1884, furnished Thomas Sauer with carpenter work at that time. That same year he helped construct the church at Cold Spring and the steeple on the church in St. Joseph. In 1885 Thomas Sauer built the church in Meier Grove.

In 1886 Thomas Sauer started working for the Great Northern Railroad .

In 1888 Thomas Sauer was married to Caroline Wilm of Millerville, Minnesota. That year he and his bride went to Germany for a visit with his parents and friends.

In 1894 he started a lumber yard in Northtown, (now a ghost town near Paynesville.) His total investment in this business was \$1500.00. He operated this lumber yard successfully until the town was deserted for a better site nearer the railroad.

In 1891 Thomas Sauer purchased the Hilger lumber business located in Roscoe and moved his remaining stock and office equipment from Northtown . In Roscoe Thomas conducted the lumber business until his retirement. The business is now operated by his son, John.

Thomas and Caroline (Wilm) Sauer were the parents of nine children: John, Clara, Margaret, Marjorie, Conrad, Agnes, (Mrs. Mc Donald) Marie (Mrs. Koener) Sylvester, Geneva, (Mrs. Claud Fessenden) Clara, Margaret and Marjorie are deceased.

Thomas and Caroline (Wilm) Sauer are living at 216 Sixth Avenue North in St. Cloud.

Interviewed: Thomas Sauer
Date: January 21, 1937
By: Gilbert Bunt