

Things That Go Bump In A Canadian Night

by Ronald Wolf

The Ghost With No Name

A few days ago my phone rang and a woman Doll Dickens (not real name) formally of Manitowadge, Ont. was on the receiving end. She informed me that she recently heard of my column and wanted to relay an event that was passed down for over 100 years in her family.

This story originally took place in the fall of 1908, winter 1909. The place of this particular event was at a sawmill owned by one of her ancestors William Cockerill at Crerar Lake (or as locals know it as Dark Lake) in the northwest Ontario.

The sawmill employed workers and they lived at the mill year round. Dickens lived there for year and a half but she claimed she couldn't remember since she was too young at the time, stated Dickens.

This event started one day when a man came to the sawmill and wanted directions to the forest reserve. Man was in trouble by the nearby Grandview police. The man had all the appearances of a classic hobo.

A pair of pants was hanged around his neck and it appeared that the legs were stuffed with unknown items and he had a classic hobo stick with a "red hanky which was also stuffed with something."

"Not long after that, they started hearing knocking in walls," stated Dickens.

According to the article *An Old Family Story* written by Barbara Smith (published in *Ghost Stories of Manitoba*) the knocking was not confined to any particular place- it was heard on the ceiling, walls, floor, and even in the middle of a frozen rain barrel.

"One particular cook's aide the ghost hated and she would be standing in the middle of the kitchen and all of a sudden she would have a great big chunk of hair pulled right out of her head. A big bruise appeared on

her arm where she was pinched," informed Dickens.

The workers who were witnessed to the sounds thought the person responsible to the knockings were that of the ghost of the mysterious stranger who asked directs sometimes back.

Communication was attempted to speak to the ghost by a series of knocking. The men would ask the ghost questions and the ghost would communicate to them. Two knocks for no and three knocks for yes.

Billy Angus (Dickens' grandfather) stopped by the mill one day and was welcomed to stay the night. After dinner that night Angus was told of the ghost.

According to the book, shortly afterwards, a quilt started to move about on the bed like a mink or something was under it trying to get out. When they lifted the quilt, there was nothing there.

A board similar to an Ouija board was used to finally communicate with the ghost. According to the story the ghost spelled out to them that he had been killed by a bear over by a certain tree near the mill.

After fuller investigations, the bones of a human foot and leg were found at the sight the ghost said they were to be found.

The identity of the ghost was never known, even to the time of this article.

"There are more questions than answers," stated Dickens.

Dickens also informed to me in a recent telephone interview that a big family reunion is scheduled to take place in the summer of 2011. She said some of her relatives will go back to the mill and hopefully uncover new information to the incident.

Will these imported answers be found in this dimension or the next? Only time will tell for the answers and the nameless ghost are certainly bumping around somewhere in a Canadian night.