

Mr. K. Thompson

Mr. K. Thompson of the firm of Odegard & Thompson, dealers in general merchandise, farming implements, flour, feed and provisions, was born in 1850 in Dane Co. Wis. and there educated. He commenced business first in St James Minn. in 1871. In 1876, he married Miss Anna Odegard, a sister of his partner. He has three children - Theo G., T. A., and Grace, the first child born in Cooperstown. Mr. Thompson was formerly engaged in the sale of agricultural implements, at Brookings, where he went in 1879. He was a pioneer in that town, and was also the first to start in business in Cooperstown; beginning there January 5, 1883. They have a large and fine assortment of goods; carry a stock of \$20,000, and are one of the most enterprising firms of Big Lake County.

Bibliog: Atlas of Dakota 1884 p 242

# Knud Thompson

Knud Thompson was born Feb 2, 1850 at Christiania, Dane County, Wisconsin. He was the son of Toster Olson who was born in Norway and came to Wisconsin in 1844.

In 1866 Knud left home and went to Fillmore County, Minnesota, then in 1872 to Vermillion South Dakota. He returned to Minnesota where in Dec. 1876 he ~~married~~ married Anna Odegard\*, the twin sister of Mrs. John Sjaerson. These ladies were sisters of John T. Odegard\*. Mr. Thompson with Mr. Odegard as his partner started the first store in Coopers town.

In the late fall of 1882 Knud Thompson came to the newly platted Coopers town with his wife and two sons Theodore and "Ade". They were the first women and the first children of Coopers town. His daughter Grace, born in May 1883, was the first girl born there. Both she and Oscar, were born in the living quarters built into the back end of the store.

The following advertisement of Feb. 26, 1886 Courier, written by Mr. Thompson, is said by W. H. Carliton to be genuinely typical of his store, his personality, and his business methods:-

## Knud Thompson's "Yankee Doodle"

The Christmas frolics now are o'er

And '85 has fled, sir;

Now Coopers town has no saloons,

And Vanderbilt is dead, sir

And still the bums and dudes in town

Feel good — it makes them snicker,

To loaf around and hear the fun —

When Thompson makes a dicker.

Chorus

\* These spellings are both correct. Mr. Odegard changed the spelling of his name after he came to the United States.

# Knud Thompson

Knud Thompson was born Feb. 2, 1850 at Christiania, Dane County Wisconsin. He was the son of Tosten Olson, who was born in Norway and came to Wisconsin in 1844. In 1866 Knud went to Filmore Co., Minnesota, in 1872 to Vermillion S. Dak., then returned to Minnesota where in Dec 1876 he married Anna Odegaard the twin sister of Mrs. John Synerson. These ladies were sisters of John T. Odegaard, who with Mr. Thompson started the first store in Cooperstown.

In the late fall of 1882 Knud Thompson came to the newly platted town of Cooperstown with his wife and sons Theodore and T.A. "Ade". They were the first woman and first children of Cooperstown. His daughter Grace, <sup>in May 1883</sup> was the first girl born there. Both she and Oscar, <sup>and</sup> were born in the living quarters in the back of the store.

Mr. Thompson had an interest in several of the early business ventures of the 1880's.

The following advertisement <sup>of Feb. 26, 1886</sup> written by Mr. Thompson for his store, is said by Mr. W.H. Carleton to be genuinely typical of his store, his personality, and his business methods:

"Knud Thompson's" Yankee Doodle"

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The Christmas frolics now are o'er,  
And '85 has fled, sir;  
Now Cooperstown has no saloons,  
And Vanderbilt is dead, sir

Chorus,

~~Yankee Doodle is the tune  
Which Thompson thinks so handy  
He makes his trade, and takes his notes  
With "Yankee Doodle -- dandy!"~~

# Knud Thompson

B

## Chorus

Yankee Doodle is the tune  
Which Thompson thinks so handy  
He makes his trades, and takes his notes  
With "Yankee Doodle — dandy!"

— 2 —

And what has Knud to sell you ask;  
Why, simpleton, I answer:  
What was he not, that cuts and grinds,  
Or walks upon the land sir?  
He's sure to have a specimen  
Of each and every class, sir,  
From J. J. C. Eclipse machines  
To Balaam's speaking ass, sir.

— Chorus —

— 3 —

We'll sell you farmers what you want —  
A mower, plow, or rake, sir,  
A mule, a horse, a cow, an ox,  
And binders that won't break, sir,  
And best of all he sells them cheap  
And never minds the cash, sirs.  
We'll take your notes, and give you time,  
'Till next year's crop you thresh, sirs,

— Chorus —

— 4 —

He never cares to make a cent,  
He dickers for his health, sirs,  
For trading seems to make him fit  
Then come and make your wealth, sirs,  
He's the innocentest man in town  
You're to "take him in" sirs,  
Just trade your old truck\* for his new  
To "stick him" is no sin, sirs.

\* Meant anything that a farmer had to sell, at that time.

# Knud Thompson

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Knud Thompson liked people, and was ready with a story, especially when he could "kid" a new "greenhorn" in town.

This is one of his stories he told Dr. Rose when first he came to Cooperstown as a young dentist =

Why Pioneers grew whiskers  
They let whiskers grow every winter for protection when working outside doing chores, or hauling wood from the river. Of course they chewed tobacco and spit while they worked, when spring weather got warm they cut off their whiskers, and had smoking tobacco all summer.

KNUTE THOMPSON

*From Compendium of N.D.*

Of the sons of Norway or those of Norwegian ancestry who have come to North Dakota and taken a prominent part in its substantial development and upbuilding none is more worthy of mention than Knute Thompson, who has won success through honorable effort and who bears few of the marks and scars of the battle, for he has maintained a genial disposition and kindly spirit through all, and so honorably has his prosperity been won that the most envious cannot grudge him his success. He lives in Cooperstown but still has important farming interests in Griggs County. Mr. Thompson was born in Dane county, Wisconsin, February 2, 1850, his father, Toston Olson, a native of Norway, having settled in that state six years before, at which time he took up his abode in the town of Christiania, Dane county, where he secured land and followed farming. He lived to the advanced age of ninety years, while his wife reached the age of eighty-six. One of their sons, Ole, was born in Norway and enlisted for service in the Union army as a member of the Sixteenth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, having been in business in Decorah, Iowa, at the time of the outbreak of the Civil war. He participated in many important engagements, taking part for five days in the battle of Vicksburg, and because of the hardships and privations which he experienced while at the front his death occurred soon after the close of the war. The family numbered altogether seven children, of whom Knute was the third.

When his school days were over Knute Thompson left home, being then a youth of sixteen years. The plan was that he should attend school in Madison, Wisconsin, to supplement the knowledge that he had gained in the public schools and in Albion College, but he changed his plans and went instead to Minnesota, residing for a time in Fillmore county, after which he removed to the western part of the state. In 1872 he became a resident of Vermillion, South Dakota, and for a year engaged in clerking in a clothing store, at the end of which time he removed to Minnesota.

It was in December, 1876, that Mr. Thompson was united in marriage to Miss Anna Odegard, a native of Norway, and to them were born four children: Theodore, who is mentioned elsewhere in this work; Thor Adolph, who is now a district judge in Montana; Grace May, the wife of Ernest Seikens, a stock dealer in South St. Paul, Minnesota; and Oscar J., a lawyer at Circle, Montana, who pursued his education in the State University of North Dakota and in the University of Washington, since which time he has successfully practiced his profession.

The work of development and progress had scarcely been started when Knute Thompson became a resident of Griggs county, making his way to the present site of Cooperstown. His was the first family to locate in the town and he opened a store at the place where the firm of John Syverson & Sons is now conducting business. He successfully managed his commercial interests for a period and then sold out to Mr. Syverson. He handled various mercantile lines, including machinery, but during the later part of his residence in Griggs county he has concentrated his energies upon agricultural pursuits and is now the owner of about eighteen hundred acres of land, of which nine hundred and twenty acres is in the home place, four hundred and twenty acres in another tract and three hundred and twenty acres in a third tract.

KNUTE THOMPSON

His land is largely devoted to wheat raising. He has been a great trader and in all of his business transactions has manifested keen insight and discriminating judgement. Four four years Mr. Thompson filled the office of county treasurer but has never been ambitious to occupy positions of political preferment. He enjoys the game of business and at all times his dealings have measured up to high standards. He has been successful and he is a popular citizen, for he possesses a pleasing personality and looks upon the happy side of life, enjoying the companionship of his friends and taking into little account those things which too many people allow to block progress or mar happiness.