

Menzel

The name Menzel is quite common in Germany, and almost equally well-known in Granite Falls. We have several roads bearing the name, once had a large mill with the name, and still have a small lake with the name. A Snohomish lady with an interest in the family, and a current connection to descendants of some of the original Menzels in the area, called to ask if the Museum might have some pictures of Menzels through the years. She was particularly interested in William Menzel and his descendants.

One of the payoffs of the many hours spent by student interns digitizing and describing pictures in our collection is the ability to "search" by name and/or keyword. Needless to say, entering "Menzel" and searching provided a long list of pictures to peruse. We were talking on the phone while I was describing the pictures I saw, and we ultimately got it down to a short list that the caller wanted us to print. We found a picture of William Menzel, his wife, and their first four children. sitting outdoors on their homestead (located on what is now Menzel Lake Rd., south of Granite Falls). Both William and his wife, as well as their oldest daughter Millie, were born in Germany. Their son Oscar was born in the US, in 1896, just an infant in the earliest picture.



By 1910, William was the foreman at a local mill, and their youngest son Bruno was already five years old. The 1910 US census indicates that they not only had their large family living on the homestead, but had six boarders as well, all of whom were mill workers. Millie Menzel was

by that time the cook at the mill. It's likely that some of the workers shown were also among the boarders living with the family.



The Menzels owned a 1907 REO automobile, and were posing nicely when the third photo was taken around 1912, given the apparent ages of the three boys. Oscar was the driver, with his younger brother Marx sitting in the front passenger seat. Mom and Dad were in the back, with Bruno (the youngest) sandwiched between them. The Museum has another picture with the same car being towed through a local parade by a white plow-horse . . . as a joke.

Finally, a picture from the late-20s shows some horse logging underway. If you look carefully, you can see the rails and the small wheels on the cart being used to haul some huge hunks of wood. Marx Menzel, now a grown man, is standing at the edge of the trestle. The 1920 US census showed William as a mill boss, and Marx as a "teamster" working for the mill.



It's fun to see folks grow up through pictures, and to witness the lifestyles and challenges they faced in the frontier they were settling in the early 20th century. All of this research was made possible through the countless hours of volunteer labor that has gone into digitizing and cataloging our Museum pictures!