

## The Community in 1886 - 1891

During the first 10 years of settlement the few families that were there had all that they could do to provide for themselves and begin to clear and farm on their land. When the new settlers came in 1885/6 they found a very primitive community with no school, no store, no church, no post office, and no cemetery. There were also no roads except the state road to Falmouth and the logging roads to Vogel Center and in the plains.

The school district had been organized in 1885 and school was being held in the Modders home. There were only four or five children of school age. A log school had been started but other things kept it from being completed.

There was a Christian Reformed Church in Vogel Center that some of the families attended if they didn't want to attend the Modders home meetings. A Sunday School was organized by a Presbyterian missionary, John Redpath, who had charge of the Grand Traverse area. It was conducted by Henry Spitsbergen and John W. Modders. They used the school after it was built.

No cemetery records were found for the community before 1887, however, due to sickness and the peril of childbirth, there was soon need for a cemetery. Wynant Modders donated a parcel of land on the west edge of the settlement, and a cemetery was laid out. The first interments were Tibbes followed shortly by Spitsbergens in 1887 and 1888.

Because of the need of the community and the lack of an ordained minister to assist at baptisms and funerals, some of the new Dutch population began to think about requesting the Grand River Classis for a church or mission station in Moddersville, and they wanted a Dutch Reformed Church and regular preaching services. Not all of the community agreed on this as many no longer used the Dutch language and there were several non-dutch families who would be excluded from a Dutch Church, and there were already services in the community at the Modders home that were open to all.

Had the Tibbes not come to Moddersville along with the Jenemas, Talsmas and Vanderwal, or if the missionary zeal of Henry DeBree of Vogel Center had waned a Moddersville Reformed Church history might never have been possible.