



Meet Delevan Brotherton

The United States purchased the territory of Alaska from Russia in 1867, the year I was born.

I lived in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. In my diary I wrote about shoveling snow and making a snow fort. I wrote about school, games, and sports.

I wrote about my girlfriends, like Minnie and Trudie. Follow me through the exhibit and I'll tell you about my life.



SCHOOL ROOM

I was born in Marquette and grew up in Escanaba. Can you find these two Upper Peninsula cities on the state map in the school?

What do you like to do for fun? My friends and I roller skated and played ball, croquet, and mumbletypeg. On a cold winter day we played tag in the school basement.

PARLOR

My father was a surveyor. I helped him by carrying equipment and drawing maps. I enjoyed reading his book about Michigan history. What things in Michigan's history do you know that were not in his 1883 book?

DINING ROOM

I did not eat at home for every meal. I went to church suppers and socials. Sometimes I stopped for ice cream and soda water at a store called "Young's." Where do you go when you don't eat at home?

SHED/OUT OF DOORS

I did lots of chores. I shoveled the sidewalk in winter and chopped wood. I helped my father clear land and worked in the garden. What garden tools do you see in the shed?

BEDROOM

What do you think I did if I "bummed all day?" Do you ever feel like doing that? What do you do?

Push the button and listen to what I wrote about school. Do you think I would have been best in my grammar class if I had "bummed all day" everyday?



KITCHEN

Why did Trudie and I have to climb in her kitchen window? Isn't it a strange way to start a date? We walked past the depot to pick flowers. Is there a depot in your town? Do trains still come there?

CONCLUSION

When I grew up, I used knowledge I learned while helping my father with his survey work. What are you now learning that might help you in a future job?

I had many girlfriends, but I married Lizzie Buckley. What did I write about her in 1884? Why did I like her? What do you like best about your friends?

REFERENCE: Diary of Delevan Brotherton. Courtesy of Delta County Historical Society, Escanaba, MI.
"Growing Up in Michigan, 1880-1895"
Michigan Historical Museum
Michigan Historical Center
Department of History, Arts and Libraries