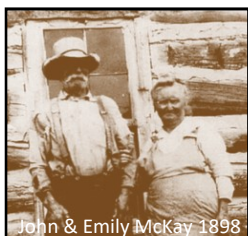


THE 1898 MCKAY CABIN



John & Emily McKay 1898

John Peter McKay (1847-1935) moved to Alpena County as a young man. He quickly established himself as a lumberman and the owner of substantial tracts of land along the Thunder Bay River.

John McKay married three times. His first wife was Barbara Kramer and they had five children, yet only Herman Isaiah survived early childhood. Barbara passed away in December of 1884.

Anna Mesorley Wyman was his second wife and they had Robert Victor and Mary Ann, both of whom survived into adulthood. Anna passed away in September of 1891.

His third wife was Emily Ann Lester, and they had Zada Gay, Elza, Earl, and Zane.

In 1898, he constructed the two-story, 828 square-foot log cabin now on exhibit at the Besser Museum. The kitchen, family room, and a bed were located on the first floor, while the upper floor was partitioned into three sleeping areas. Emily and John McKay raised their four children, and his previous three children in the cabin. To accommodate the growing family, four additions were added to each side of the cabin.

The original cabin was donated to the Besser Museum in 1971 by the Gilbert family. Zada Gay (McKay) Dann financed the movement and placement of the cabin.

