

FRANK MELVILLE JOSLIN

AUGUST 1848 – OCTOBER 10, 1909

ALANSON, EMMET COUNTY, MICHIGAN

FRANK MELVILLE JOSLIN AUGUST 1848 – OCTOBER 10, 1909

Frank Melville Joslin was born on a farm in Newburg, Livonia Township, Wayne County, Mi. to Scotch-Irish parents, **Grant N. Joslin** and **Margaret Ann Armstrong Joslin**. Frank had five siblings, **Emma Louise**, **Willie Euwin**, **George W. Nettie L.** and **Lizzie**.

Frank was high spirited and talented in music and did not find farm life either interesting or worth while. His father believed the violin was a work of the devil, so Frank hid his violin in the barn and practiced there.

Frank was mentioned in his father's will.

Frank M. was a soldier in the Civil War with the Michigan Light Artillery. He was a drummer boy, being slight of build. He entered the service January 4, 1864 at Detroit for 3 years giving his age as 18. Said he was born in 1848, thus his age was only 16 years. His Commandeering officer was **Captain Charles Hine**. Frank spent his Civil War service in fort Stevens and Fort Slocum, Washington D.C. He signed with **Hine's Fourteenth Independent Light Artillery** in Detroit, Wayne County, Mich. He was discharged July 1, 1865. He received an injury during the war from {it is believed} a falling barrel of powder at Fort Snyder. He received a pension.

It is not known where he met the young lady school teacher, **Cecelia Ann Johnston**. He did send her a proposal of marriage by telegram. She accepted in the same manner. On September 17, 1872 they met at Waterliet, Berrien County, Michigan and were married by the Justice of the Peace. For a couple of years they made their home in Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. A little girl was born to them while they lived there. They named her **Caroline Maude** and called her **Carrie**. She was the "*apple of her father's eye.*"

During these years another railroad was built from Indianapolis, Indiana to Grand Rapids, Michigan and on to Petoskey, Michigan. It was called the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad. Frank left the employ of the Michigan Central lines and hired out with the GR&I. They moved to Michigan City, La Porte County, Indiana. One day he came home and told **Cecelia** that the railroad was being extended from Petoskey to Mackinaw City, Michigan and he had been asked to be the first depot agent and telegrapher in a new town north of Petoskey.

It was a big decision to make. The town had not yet been built. There was no school, church, or store. Only a few shacks and a two room log depot. They would live in one room of the depot. **Carrie** was now seven years old, and there were two little boys, **Charles** and **Frank**. It was to be a rugged pioneer life. The little community was named **Alanson**, after one of the railroad officials. There was a little Post Office located near the old stage and freight lines. A school was built near it. **Carried** walked a mile or more to school and the forests were deep and dark. Here she met some other little girls, **Lulyu Green** and **Ada Crossman**.

Frank and **Cecelia** bought some lots on the hill behind the depot and in 1883 they built a house. Two brothers, named **George** and **Charlie Ormsby**, built a mill to saw the trees into lumber to build houses and barns. A **Mr. McFarland** built a shingle mill that made shingles for the roof. Then a store and a house were built right across the street, and the Post Office was moved into the house there.



Frank Melville Joslin
Photo taken in 1906

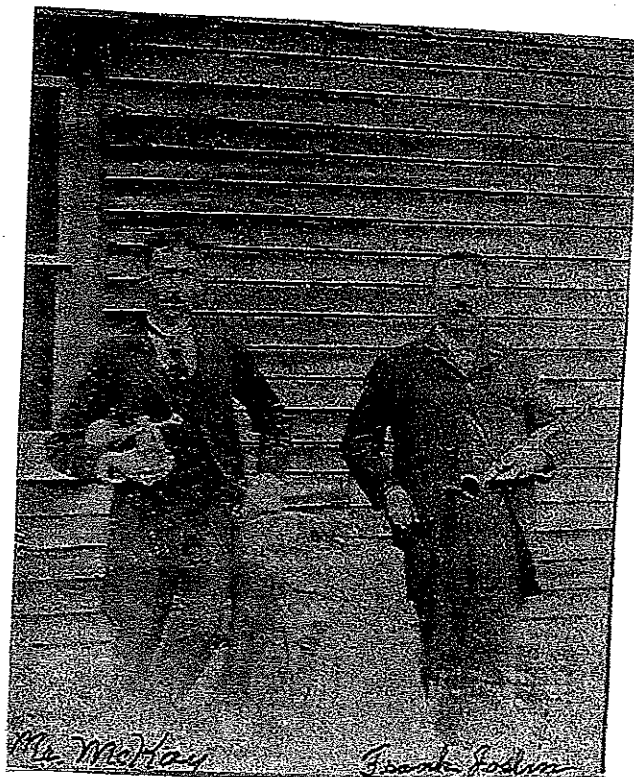
Cecelia worked hard to take care of her family. Sometimes her father would send her money and she would send away for goods to make clothes. She made beautiful white shirts for her husband and even learned to tailor the striped trousers he liked to wear. She taught her daughter to cook, bake, and sew; also to wash and iron. **Carrie** learned to iron the beautiful white shirts that her mother made for her father. **Frank M. Joslin** was fussy about his clothes. He wore white shirts tucked and starched in front; striped trousers that his wife tailored for him. His dress coat was black with modified "tails" and the daily one of blue serge, a Captains coat. He also wore a style of shoes called "gaiters." They had a smooth toe, elastic sides and a loop in the back to pull them on with. His hip had been broken and he could not stoop over to pull his shoes on.

Frank Joslin was talented in music and had the temperament of an artist. The violin and clarinet were the instruments of his choice. He gave music lessons, taught band, and organized an orchestra. He played for dances and provided musical entertainment for many social functions in the village. He taught **Carrie** how to play a melodeon and the organ. **Frank** often played for dances at some distance from home, and would take his daughter, **Carrie**, along to accompany him on a small portable organ. **Cecelia**, his wife, did not approve as **Frank** was known to imbibe too heavily at the urging of the "Boys." However **Carrie** was his first child, and little girls were very special in his eyes. He probably remembered his responsibility more than **Cecelia** realized.

FRANK MELVILLE JOSLIN
AUGUST 1848 - OCTOBER 10, 1909



The Joslin House 1942
River Road, Alanson, Michigan
{Now Banwell House}
Yolanda Banwell in Front



Mr. McKay and Frank Melville Joslin



Alanson Band
{back row left by the stairs} Andrew Peterson
{front row right, on the left of the drum}
Frank Riddle Joslin and his father Frank Melville Joslin seated next to him
{Frank M. is the father of Andrew's wife Carrie}

FRANK MELVILLE JOSLIN
AUGUST 1848 – OCTOBER 10, 1909

Frank grew tired of the railroad business, and he quit. He was Postmaster of Alanson, January 1885 through 1888. In 1887, he

bought a little tugboat, 'Ida May' and hauled logs for the mills. In 1893, he bought a larger boat, 'The Oden' and had it outfitted for a passenger and tourist boat. He had it cut in two and 20 extra feet built in. Yolanda remembers the lounge on the boat having white woodwork and red plush cushions on the benches. She also remembers the smoke stack being tipped to go under the bridge. 'The Oden' became a popular boat on the Inland Route.

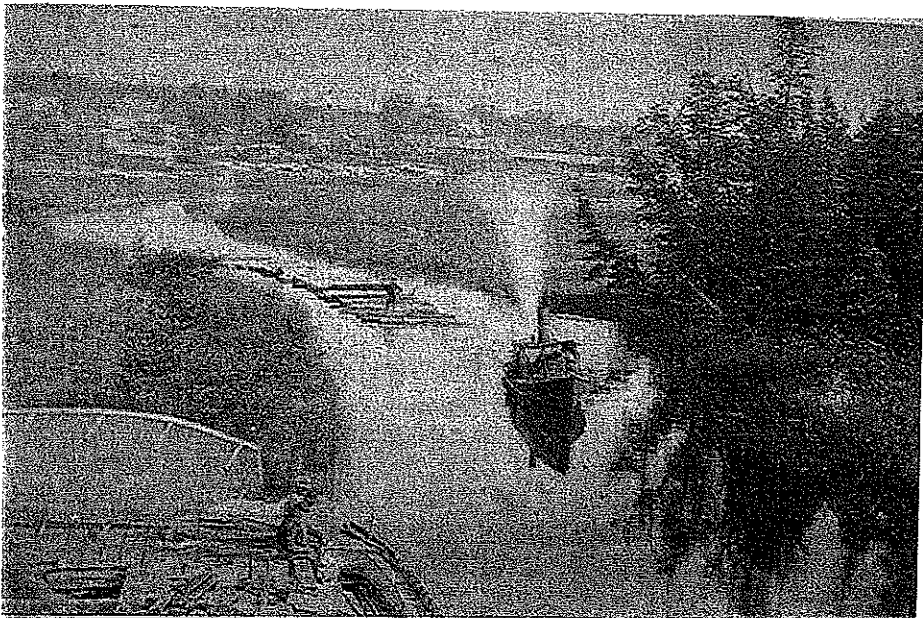
Frank sold the 'Oden' near the turn of the century and piloted the 'Top-in-a-bee' for a number of years. All these steamboats used wood for fuel. There were stations along the river where they could take on wood. Pine Point was one place. Frank Joslin was greeted as Captain Joslin and was known throughout Emmet and Cheboygan counties in Michigan, both for his music, and as pilot of the 'Oden' and 'Top-in-a-bee.' He was particularly known for his skill in piloting those boats around the "Devil's Elbow." In the fall of 1909, upon the end of the season, Frank suffered a stroke and died.

While looking through the early Littlefield Township Emmet County Michigan books, his name often appeared as Township clerk and election clerk, etc. showing that he was active in village affairs.

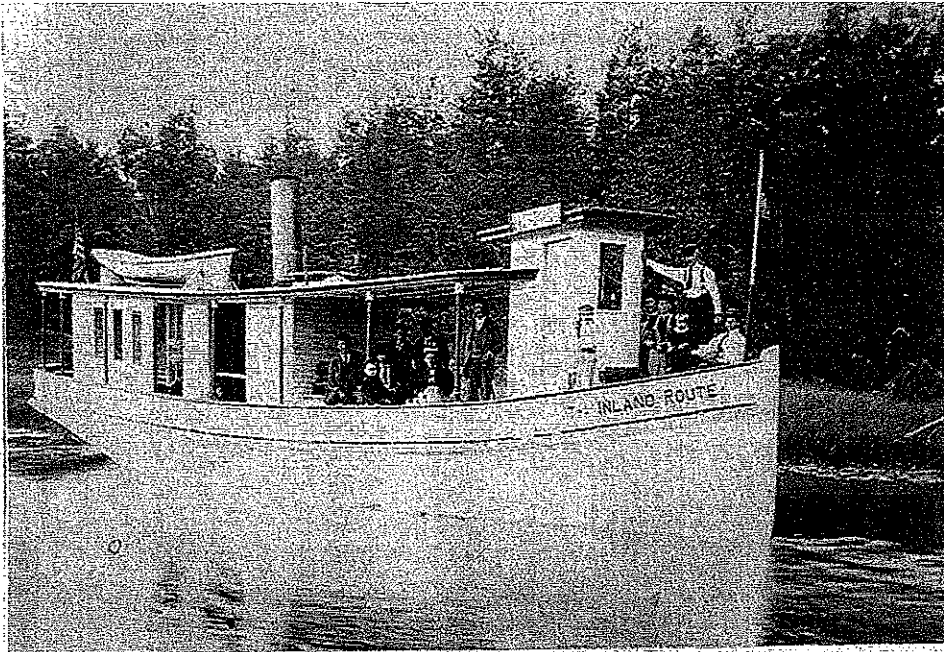
Information and pictures from Laurel Emerson,
Frank's gr-gr-gr-granddaughter.



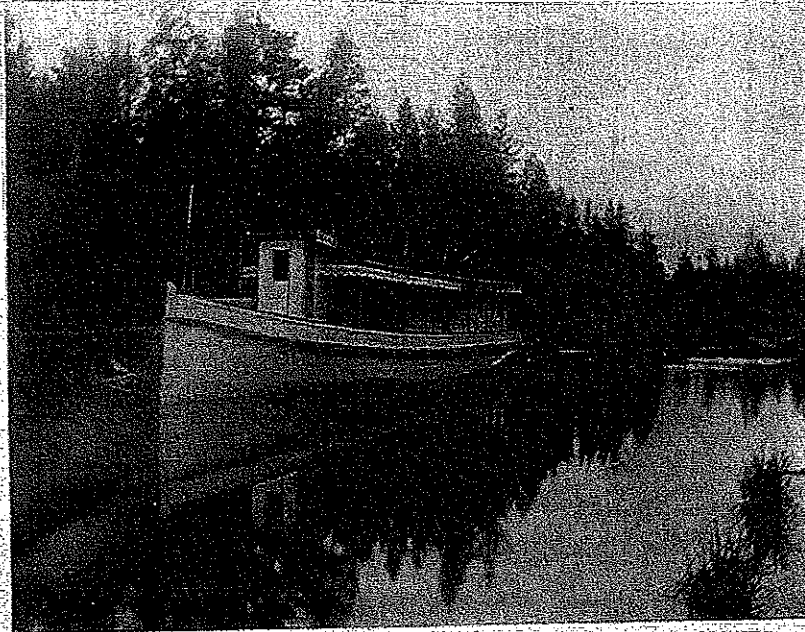
The Joslin Family
Carrie, Charles, Frank Riddle
Cecelia, Jesse, Margaret, Frank
November 9, 1891



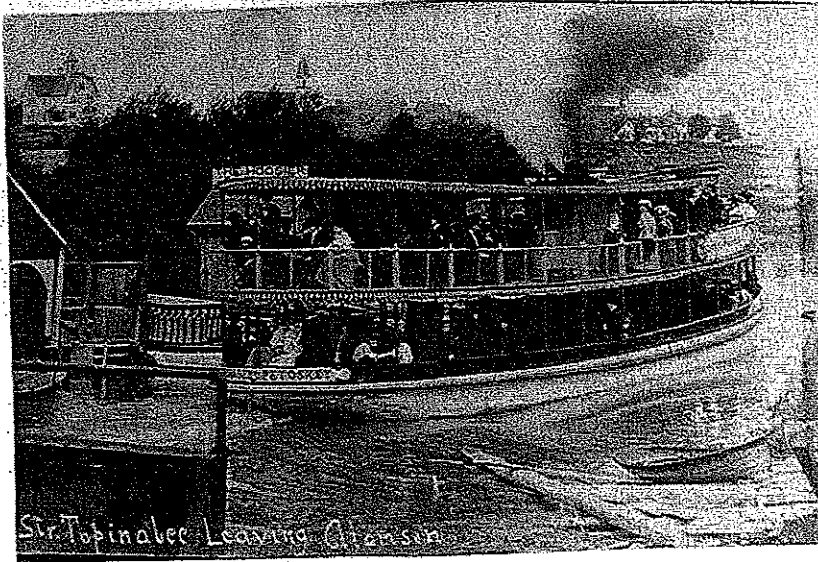
Frank Joslin's first boat, the 'Ida May'
It was a tugboat and hauled logs for the mills.



Frank Joslin's second boat, the Oden



the Oden on
Crooked River



the Topinabee
Frank Joslin's
last boat

St. Topinabee Leaving Aranson