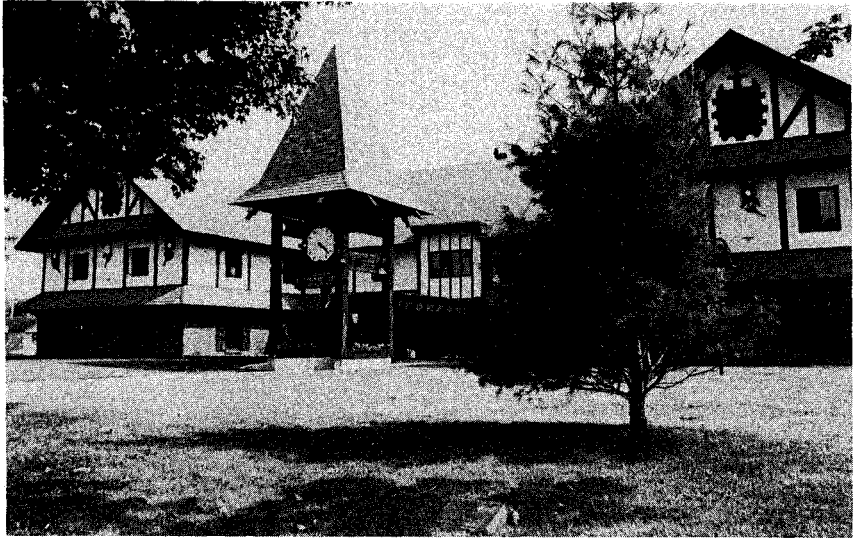
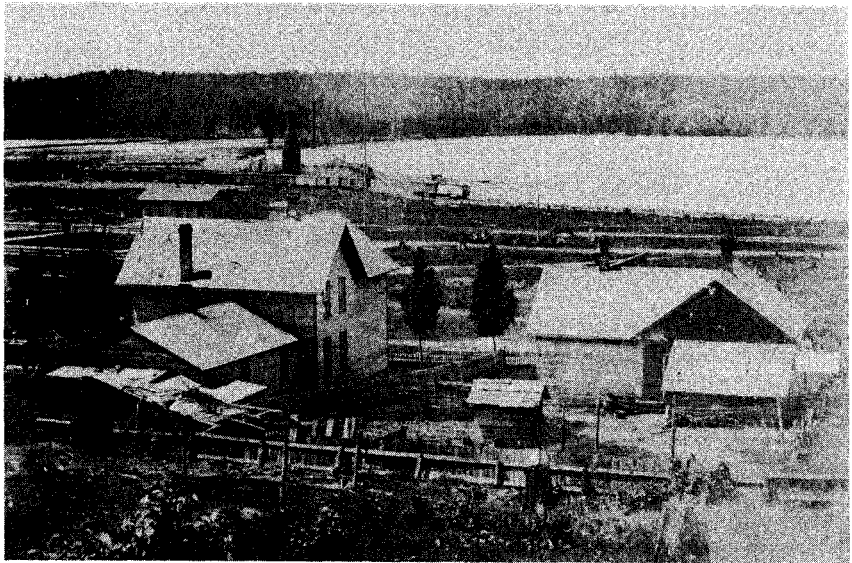


The City-County Building,  
Gaylord, 1975



THE BRODWICK, Smith and Fryer Mill at the  
end of Otsego Lake in 1890.



### Otsego Lake Village: first county seat

(Cont'd from P. 31)  
removed from the court-  
house.

A fight for the county seat developed soon after the disappearance of the records. Stories say that "gentlemen from the more populous northern townships in the county hired a number of timbermen from Petoskey to work in Livingston Township and gain a resident vote." When the seat came to the ballot, the northern part of county won and Gaylord became the permanent county seat.

With the tremendous growth the timberland was experiencing, Dr. N.R. Gilbert became the first doctor in the area. Later records indicate that Dr. Warner and Dr. Leighton moved to the area in the mid 1880's and 1890's.

The lumber mill was operated by Smith, Kelly and Dwight until 1882 when they leased it to a group of smaller businessmen. Other lumber operations in the village included David Ward Lumber Company, Dodge Shingle Company,

Hopkins and Smith, Sage and McGraw, and Thomas Tooey, Fred Smith and Blade.

In 1884 Otsego Lake had an approximate population of 800 people. When lumbering began to drop off some in the 1890's and 1900's, residents moved to other villages in search of work and by 1912, only ten families remained in the once heavily populated village.

With the severe population decrease the railroad station became a "flag stop" and only a mixed freight and passenger train passed through the area. The village deteriorated and one grocery store stood alone on the once bustling streets. Only fourteen children attended the two story school.

Not much could be said for the dying village until 1947 when the community became aware of the town's potential and took some initiative. Soon the streets were bustling again and the growth that the village once knew continued until today.



YOUNG LADIES of yester-year dressed in this manner when they worked at the Dayton Last Work Block Company, making ten-pins. The gentlemen behind them are, undoubtedly, their "over-seers." The year is probably about 1904.