

Several years ago a green Christmas was somewhat of a novelty. In recent years a green Christmas has not been uncommon. Years ago beautiful pure white snow covered the fields to a depth of two, three and sometimes four feet but in recent years a fall of only one foot has not been unusual. In the not too distant past thermometers descended to many degrees below freezing, as low as 15 and 29 below while in recent years some people shiver when the mercury only drops to zero. Youngsters and even grown ups are not as hardy as some years ago.

These facts were related recently by Charlie Crockford, the genial and obliging owner of the Lockview restaurant at the rear of the Royal Hotel at the corner of Kent and Lindsay Streets. He is still a young man but there were many in-

cidents which he vividly recalled when he lived with his parents in the Glen Cairn district, now in Metropolitan Toronto.

For instance the winter days of sub-zero weather when it was an every day task to walk through deep snow drifts in biting winds a distance of over two miles to the little red school house; when he wore newspapers under his coat and down the pant legs to keep from freezing and mother wrapped a huge heavy shawl around the head and home knitted mittens were heavy and warm.

“It was so cold one winter” remarked Charles “that my father, who was quite ingenious in many ways, made two protectors for the eyes out of mica glass, the kind that used to be seen in coal stove doors, the kind we once in awhile poked our fingers through,

just for fun and then received a rap over the knuckles as "bad boys".

"Father also made a contraption of the same mica glass to cover the mouth. True, we got steamed up a bit behind the goggles but these home-made goggles kept out the bitter wind".

Charlie's pater was somewhat of an inventor. To help the boys walk to school and keep from sinking to their knees another ingenious article was fashioned out of barred staves. The long hardwood peices from a barrel slightly scooped at each end, were fitted with a piece of harness, like the harness used by skiers today. A place was made in

the centre of the staves where the feet were snugly tied and buckled. A broom handle was trimmed, and a hole burnt into a small wooden block (no augur or bit being available) and the piece of broom handle tightly wedged to the block. The broom handle was used as a pole to help navigate through the deep snow.

“Sunday was not always a day of rest, the Church was a long way away and the roads were seldom cleared. In fact no one appeared to want the job of pushing through the first horse and cutter or sleigh.

Sunday morning was the time when we had to take a dip in a warm bath and the tub was a square wooden affair. I recall how the water for the bath had to be steaming hot in a large vessel on top of the kitchen stove. Sunday morning was also the only time Mother seemed to get to do the baking — and what baking! Mother was a wonderful cook and the best meal we had in the week was on Sunday noon when the big table was laden with all kinds of food especially at Christmas time”.

Charlie Crockford who is a

veteran of World War Number Two, "followed in the steps of his father who was a veteran of World War One and Crockford the son has a number of tokens of the war to remember his father by, military buttons and parts of the regalia used in World War One. His late father was laid to rest near the family home at Glen Cairn and the brass name plate which had its place on the casket was carried to France by Mrs. Crockford several years ago, taken to St. George's Church in a section of the French war zone and placed on one of the pews in this beautiful memorial edifice. A photographic copy of the wording on the brass plate was handed to each surviving member of the family.

The subject of this sketch has a number of valuable souvenirs of World War One, as well as World War Two which he has been invited to donate to various organizations, but which he does not wish to part with because of sincere sentimental reason.

Frequenters and steady patrons of the Lockview restaurant always find the young proprietor and his estimable wife

nice to talk to. The Crockfords have a cottage at Hickory Beach, Sturgeon Lake and their Winter pastime includes evenings spent with the Circle 8's Square Dancers.