

# Memories Of Doxsee's

Like many other communities, the Centennial spirit has sparked the residents of Doxsees to recall their past.

For that community, a senior resident, Mrs. Emily Moore, did the honors, reviewing former days in Doxsees by writing it in rhyme. She calls it "Memories of Church, Home, School and Neighborhood Activities 60 Years Ago," and it goes as follows:

"As I sit in my chair by the window, looking out across the way,

My memory takes me back to a long ago Sabbath Day.

I see the preacher in the little brick church on the corner, The choir, and seated on a round, wind-up plush stool

Miss Susan (Doxsee) by oil lamp, playing the organ.

And Miss Margaret (Musgrove) teaching a class in Sunday School.

There we learned Bible verses, hymns and sacred songs, The love of God and right from wrong.

In a spring wagon or team on a sleigh, by a lantern's light,

Whole families went to that little church to meet on a Sunday night

And under the long wooden shed, the horses stood

While we all met for worship in that little country church near "Big Swamp Wood."

In spring as I sit in class by an open window, there comes on gentle breeze

Sweet perfume of purple lilacs and blossoming apple trees.

In summer after meeting, walking with Dad and Mother after dark

We'd try to catch the fire-flies with tiny glowing spark.

In Autumn our anniversary was such a joy to me

When we gathered to give thanks to God, the church filled to capacity.

The anniversary chicken pie supper, tables laden, what a spread!

Served with every goody in the Doxsee wagon house or under the long wooden shed.

The Christmas concert, now wasn't that something?

Practising for drills, dialogues, recitations and carols to sing.

The Christmas tree trimmed with cat-stairs, candy canes and popcorn strings.

There was a young people's league. Every Wednesday that congregation met to pray,

And once a month the Women's Missionary Society, also the Ladies' Aid.

A few years ago these two groups united and a United Church Women's group was made.

Now there is talk of that Doxsee church closing, so few attend service on Sabbath Day.

Could it be in our mad rush of modern living, we have just forgot to pray?

Now I've related church activities in the days of yesteryear

Of Doxsees Church on the corner, which has reached almost 100 years.

So as I sit here dreaming, memory sets my heart aglow

For how much to God and that little brick church is the debt of life I owe.

And I cannot help but wonder what our ancestors of over years of five score

Would think of Canada's Centennial year as going down in his tory in closing that little brick church door.

As I still sit here dreaming, in the twilight's purple glow.

Down memory lane comes streaming, still other memories of long ago.

I see again the home of my childhood and a little one room country school.

Nestling there among the wildwood where we learned the golden rule.

Yes, and in that little red school-house we learned geography, history and the three R's,

Memory work, drawing, spelling, and also to parse.

At noon, the boys played baseball or hockey; girls skated or would slide.

While others on home-made sleds, down the steep hill did ride.

Then there was "keely over fox and geese" or "prisoner's goal" to play,

Marbles, hopscotch, skipping and "the old woman from Botany Bay."

In fancy I travel that woodland trail with my chums as in days of yore,

Under leaves by the fence with the zig-zag rail, pick hepaticas for teacher once more.

In winter, on ox sled, home to go, with merry shouts throughout drifting snow,

Or after a butterfly jump and run as I journey home through summer sun.

Now in lighter vein a few more lines I write in crazy rhyme

Of other every-day happenings of that long ago time.

One day Ray stood in the corner for throwing spitballs at the girls,

And I for an hour with my hands on my head, for pulling Besie's curls.

I wonder if Fred remembers that winter morning of 30 degrees below,

Around the old box stove we sat crowded on benches, a warming fingers and toes.

Our bottles of ink were frozen and drinking water in the pail,

Also the wash cloth that hung by the door on the nail.

We forgot to pull the cork, when we set the ink on the stove to thaw.

Soon there was a loud report, we all sat with open jaw.

That ink was on the ceiling and splattered on the floor.

You never saw a bunch of kids so spotted up before.

I don't know what the other girls' moms said, on arriving home after four,

But mine sure said plenty; I had on a white pinafore.

The day, for a dare, brother Will ate skunk onions. Ewart said his breath would smell like rose perfume.

That awful skunk garlic smell! Teacher sent him from the room.

And the time when I let out a yell when rising quickly to my feet

To find the boy behind me, had tied my pigtails to the seat.

Could I go back to my dear old home when hepaticas were in bloom,

Down that woodland trail once again to roam or sit in the little school room.

Or gather hickory, butternuts and beech nuts, while our voices shout with glee.

Eat maple sugar candy while making cat-stairs of colored paper to trim the Christmas tree,

In the field, eat long white ear of corn, sweet milk dripping from my chin,

Munch snow or russet apples, popcorn popped on the iron stove in Mom's longbread tin.

We went to parties, house dances, box socials too, box filled with sandwiches, cake and berry tarts.

Wedge of your best beau's favorite pie and cookies shaped like hearts.

While the boxes were being auctioned, you waited eagerly until Your best beau bid the highest; it gave you quite a thrill.

Then as you sat shyly eating together, he praised your box of cooking

Or gave your hand a tiny squeeze when the old folks were not looking.

Pot luck suppers, pie socials, quilting or corn-husking bees.

We had very little money, but still had fun, you see.

Your beau didn't have a fancy car to drive both near and far,

But his bay horse on sleigh or buggy looked just as good to me

As we drove in winter or summer, a silent picture or lantern slides to see.

And it only cost a nickle; you could hold hands those days too.

But in either buggy or cutter, now I'm telling you,

The thing that I liked best of all, there was only room for two.

Then there was the highlight, big event of the year,

When we came to Picton for the then one-day county fair.

The first thing inside the gate, you heard a barker yell

"Step right up lads and give your girls a treat,

To a loaf of bread, a pound of meat, with all the mustard you can eat."

No! we didn't have much money, but we sure had lots of fun.

Eating brown sugar taffy a man pulled on a pole;

With the bread and meat spread with mustard while standing in the sun.

We'd try eating apples hanging from a string,

A treacle roll also while it was on the swing.

While you tried this hanky panky you might get into a rather sticky mess,

So best beau would give you his white hanky to tuck in the front of your dress.

Perhaps if you were lucky trying some other thing,

You'd carry home a kewpie doll, teddy bear or signet ring,

Box of sweets, gingham dog or a tiny locket,

And a tin type picture of your beau hidden in your pocket.

There was even a merry go round for children on that big day long ago.

Propelled by men pushing and pulling a big lever to and fro.

After viewing exhibits in Crystal palace, cattle, sheep, flowers in vases,

Vegetables, poultry, pigs, grain and corn and of course the horse races,

Fruits, sewing, baking, quilts, rugs, what a display!

We'd go home tired but happy after the big day.

In memory I'm back in my dear old home and walking that woodland trail,

I wander across the hills, get a letter in the morning mail

From the country post office, Gilberts Mills.

I see again my mother's face as she smiled down at me

When in her outstretched hand I place, a letter from her home across the sea.

As I sit by my window dreaming, here I add these last two lines

In memory I've travelled over 60 years, which I've tried to tell in rhyme.