



----- KIPLING PIONEER LIFE CON'T-----

When the first church was built, it was the centre of activities, it was not only used for church services, but for school as well, Mr. Thomas Kraby was the first teacher in Kipling, there were no ordained ministers either, but a few of the pioneers were strict baptists, and took turns preaching, among these were Mr. Albien Andersen, and later Mr. G.T. Johansen. Till the Rev. Gustaf Engstrom and his family came to live in the new parsonage. Then regular church services and Sunday school was held every Sunday, meetings were often held in the homes in mid week.

When two new schools were built, the children only went to school every second day, as there was only the one teacher, and one school was on each side of the lake. In later years two teachers were hired, and they went to school every day, the children had a long way to walk. Anywhere from one to five miles, they walked in summer, and skied in winter, as there were no roads plowed for many years later. The poor horses had a hard time to pull the sleighs through the snow to drive to the store for necessities, most of the children used to go to the store for a few smaller things and the mail on their way home from school, or run over during noon hour, for those who lived on the west side, usually a road of sorts was made across the lake for hauling pulp to Kirk, but this drifted in often, and it was easier to ski.

Mr. Olaf England was the first post master, and also named the post office KIPLING. Other post masters were Mr. John Whalen, then Mr. Halvorsen, and then the Johnson Bros, at the store, Rural mail delivery came in.

The first store was opened by Mrs. Kari Johnson and sons, and is still carried on by Edmund Johnson and his wife Jean, he is the third generation at the same place. The first family and second also farmed on the side. (1905)

The only sports played up here in the old days were soft ball at school, no hockey was played then, but the young people would gather at each others homes in a certain area and either play games or sing and play music, on a Sunday afternoon in summer, and in winter there were always skiing parties, and when the ice was good for skating as many as twenty five would gather on the lake and play games such as "snap the whip" tag, and a type of merry-go-round was put up in Fjelhiem's bay, also one at Halvorsen's bay and one on Marsh Lake, this was a sleigh attached to a long pole at one end while the other was attached to a post that was put down into the bottom of the lake. This was pushed at the short end, each young person took turns on the sleigh for a fast ride! If you didn't hang on good you would go sailing over the ice! But it was lots of fun. Dancing was enjoyed by some of the older teen-agers too.

And of course swimming was always enjoyed in summer by every one

Those living near the lake did their washing by the shore too, they heated the water in a boiler over an open fire, stones were placed around the fire and the boiler placed on that, the old wash board took plenty of elbow grease, but the clothes got nice and white, there being no shortage of water, some put lines up at the shore and hung the clothes there, and others carried them home to dry. Wash day was a big days work, ironing was done with "sad irons" which were heated on top of the cook stove, in hot weather that was a real hot job, the housewife usually made use of the heat by baking bread on the same day, making it a doubly long hard day.

Yeast used then was a hard round yeast cake, called Royal yeast this was soaked and set into a small batter the night before, then added to the bread mix the next day, then this in turn was left to raise over night in a warm place, to be baked next day, a very slow process, but made delicious bread.

Most women in the community were good needle workers, making lovely quilts, weaving mats, embroidering, and knitting sweaters and socks for the family, also doing their own sewing as they were able to get machines in, or afford to buy one. The girls usually wore long hand knit stockings and over stockings with "shoe packs" as a type of moccasin was called, and long underwear too, as there were no slacks worn in those days. How wonderful it was to shed all this heavy stuff in spring! And to take our shoes off and run bare foot, we only wore shoes on special occasions in summer.

Hay was first cut with a scythe by hand, then coiled and left dry, then loaded onto a wagon, and unloaded into the barn, later a big hook was stuck into the hay load, then a long rope was attached to this and up to the top of the barn and down, so as a horse could pull the load of hay up and dropped in the barn whenever you wished, by a tripping method, it took at least three to do this job, one in the mow, one to drive the horse, and one to pull the hook in the load, a slow hard job, not like today with their mowers and balers.

Before the day of binders, grain was also cut with a scythe and sheaves were made and tied by hand with a hand full of the long stalks of grain, every one helped with this, including moths and youngsters, then it was "stooked" and left to dry as now.

The first threshing mill was a big heavy affair, and there was only one in the area, so it was taken from farm to farm with all the neighboring men coming along to help with the work. This was a big job for the farmers wife to feed all these men, there was always coffee and buns or cake served about ten in the morning then dinner at twelve, then coffee and buns and cakes again at three in the afternoon, plus supper at six, it usually lasted only one day up here, but sometimes it took two, depending on how much grain the farmer had, as the threshing mills improved, this job takes less and less time.

Churning was a job that had to be done once or twice a week, if one only had a little cream, it was often put in a one or two quart jar, and just shook until butter appeared, then there was the churn that was really a type of tall crock with a "dasher" that one would work up and down till butter was made, then for a large amount of cream, there was a barrel type on a stand, that had both a foot peddle and a handle for turning the churn, the butter was washed in water till it run clear, then salted to taste, then made into pound prints and wrapped in special butter paper, to be sold, usually at Johnsons store, in return for coffee-tea-or other staples, Eggs also was sold in exchange for other groceries,

As the roads got better, and settlers had more cattle, the separator became a necessity, then they could sell their cream and keep the skimmed milk for their calves or pigs, thus having a small monthly cheque coming in, at first the cream cans were often taken by boat to a central spot and picked up by another farmer and taken to Warren or Verner to be put on the train for Sudbury or North Bay, in later years a cream truck called at each place and picked up the cans. This was followed by a period of selling whole milk, farmers having a quota to fill each day, this was also picked up by a milk truck, there are only a very few who have a dairy herd any more. Many are going in for beef cattle only, and not doing any milking, few like the chore of chasing after cows in pasture and bringing them home for milking each morning and night. Even though some were able to buy milking machines in later years, with a milk quota a farmer had to have a special milk house, and cooler for storage, a big expense.

Midsummer and Christmas were the big holidays everyone looked forward to up here, there was always a church service in the morning of June 24th, followed by a lunch served and donated by the ladies of the community, a silver collection was taken for this, in the afternoon, service was called to order again with special speakers, and choirs or solo's, this was always held in the Swedish language in those early days, as was Sunday school and every thing else then, only in school was English taught and spoken, in the later part of the afternoon games was played by everyone who felt young enough, such as "Last pair out" "The hawk and the Dove" "Drop the handkerchief" "Numbers" and others, this pleasant part of the day has been dropped some years ago, and is missed by many.

There was always a big leaf shanty built near the church where candy and soft drinks, oranges, & bananas were sold, this was the best part of the day for the children, if they didn't have money themselves, some older person was sure to treat, and many would wait hopefully nearby, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Olsen were the first to make and bring ice cream to sell there, and it didn't last long, it was a rare treat in those days, in later years ice cream was brought in from town, and everyone was able to have their fill, the church was always decorated with birch trees inside and out for this special day, an old Scandinavian custom.

In the evening these who enjoyed dancing gathered to dance the old favourites, at different places thro the years, this is mentioned in another section of this book.