

PIONEERING IN LAKEHEAD AREA

Reading like an excerpt from a turn-of-the-century novel the following article written by the late Mrs. S.E. Jones, latterly a resident of Terrace Bay, describes their life as they worked to establish a homestead. The only familiar place name Kakabeka Falls. The Jones' farmed for many years in Commee Township.

" We arrived at Hume water tank on or about November 17, 1912, to go to a shack which my husband and Mr. F. Chadwell had built. As the men had to cut the mile and a half of road or trail to the railroad track, the house was not finished. When we arrived there was no door but the doorway was cut - no windows, only half the roof was on, and the house had a dirt floor.

We stayed with the F. Chadwells for three days. This was one and a half miles from the homestead. The husband carried Hilda, 2 years old, in a packsack, I carried Gladys, 6 months old, Harry, the eldest, was 7, and Cyril, 5 came last. They were let down by the look of the house to be. There was no clearing except where the trees for the building were cut, and the brush was very thick.

We had spruce boughs for a bed the first night. There was no snow so the household effects had to be carried a half-a-mile. Mr. Chadwell hauled what he could on a stone boat, with one horse. He also loaned us a box stove which was on the first load as the nights were cold. Other goods had to be carried from Hume. At night the husband would put a blanket over the doorway until the door came. The two boys, Harry and Cyril were busy collecting wood to keep the box stove burning.

Later, the road was cut wider and also straightened and then I was able to see Tom Foreman's shack. He had a saw mill. The Langstons were living on a hill 1/2 mile from F. Chadwells. It was over a year before I visited another person.

It was June 24, 1913 when we bought some chickens, silver laced Wyandottes. A small chicken house was built. We did not keep the chickens long as it was too cold and they froze their feet.

In the spring of 1913 a boat floated down the Kam river, and washed up on the shore. The husband mended it and showed Harry and myself how to row it. Then we could cross the river and visit Mr. and Mrs. McCluskey (a section man).

There was a small store and a post office at Millar, which was nearer than Kakabeka Falls. We only had a 1/4 mile to pack groceries and such.

The next summer Harry started school. Miss Ruth Ditmars was the teacher. Harry had three miles to walk to school. Others that attended were Louisa Chadwell, Mabel Wolfe, Grace and Elsie Chadwell, Clyde Kimball, Hazel Pifer and Harry Lundstrom.

Around this time I went to an institute meeting held at Mrs. F. Chadwells. I carried the baby in a sling made from a large flour sack folded together with ends tied. This was slipped over the shoulder. The baby sat in it quite comfortably and my arms were free. One could walk with ease.

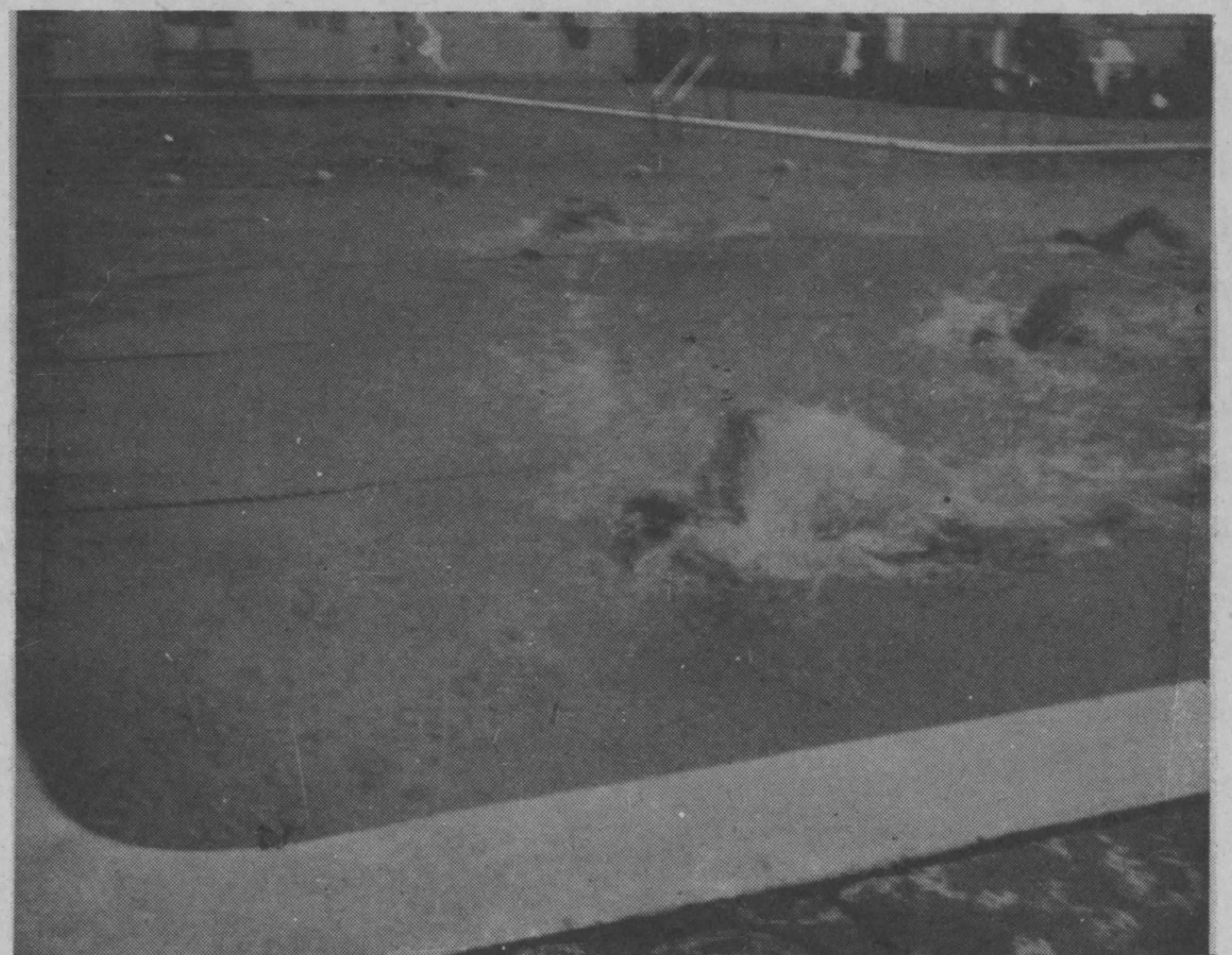
My husband framed some windows for McCluskey and was paid with a pig, which was the beginning of our farm. We cleared the land and burned the stumps. F. Chadwell ploughed some land, Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Buvrand did some labor and were paid with little pigs, when ours had her litter. Money was scarce so labour was exchanged or paid in goods.

Those were good days. We were always busy. We had lots of rabbits for winter meat. Cyril caught one in a snare, and was carrying it home in a snare, when the rabbit started to squeal. I don't know who made the most noise, Cyril or the rabbit.

A well was dug, but husband cribbed it with spruce siding so we could not use the water. Later it was dug deeper and new cribbing put in. In the meantime the water was carried from the river.

Bill was born March 21, 1914, on the farm on a stormy day.

I enjoyed going to the Women's Institute meetings held in each other's homes. It was an afternoon out, and a change for us all."



Swimmers churning up water at local Terrace Bay swim meet

Photo by D. Courtemanche