

Many of the first homes, in the south part of the town, were made of logs, until framed houses could be built. The ceilings in the sitting rooms and kitchens of the framed houses, were made of well matched pine boards, each of which was often two feet wide. There were long poles overhead, supported by hooks fastened to the great beams. Upon these, there were hung stockings and various other articles of dress, bunches of yarn and in the fall and winter, there were long strings of peeled and quartered apples also a goodly number of great crooked neck squashes. There were no carpets in those days, but the floors were generally kept well scoured.

In the beginning of the town, all persons at the table helped themselves from the dishes of meat, beans, pudding, bread etc. which was set in the middle of the table. There were no tumblers and all drank from one mug containing either water or cider. One of the most prominent features of house-keeping of this class seventy or more years ago was a piece of furniture called the "dressers". This consisted of a large, well finished, hard wood, open cupboard which extended from the floor to the ceiling. Upon the tiers of shelves there was a great quantity of pewter ware such as plates, mugs, tea pots, basins and great platters fifteen inches in diameter. The plates and platters were set up singly on their edges tipping backward towards the wall and the whole arrangement made a very fine appearance.

Many people in those days were fond of tea and coffee but they could not afford to purchase these luxuries for every day use. As a substitute for coffee, peas and crusts of bread roasted well and ground, was used in many families.

The sweeping of the rooms, was done at first, with brooms made of green hemlock boughs taken from the trees in the woods and pastures when wanted. The women or the larger children went "brooming" once a week, except in winter when a stock of boughs was brought to the house and often laid over the potatoes to aid in keeping them from freezing in the cellar. It required considerable ingenuity to make a good broom of this kind and tie it securely to the end of the broomstick. A parcel of boughs well trimmed and carefully placed over one another, with the sides which had been exposed to the weather as they grew on the tree, was laid upwards. Then the pile was divided into two equal parts and tied to each side of the broomstick with their inner sides facing each other. When the broom became old and worn out it was used to sweep the ashes and embers from the great oven on baking days.

Before the year 1820 the cooking in the family was done over or before the fire in the fire-place and in the oven. Beef, lamb, pork ribs and fowls were roasted before the great blazing fire or baked on the oven. If fowls or pieces of meat were to be roasted, they often were hung before the fire. The materials to be cooked were turned round and basted from time to time until they were done and fit to eat. Pots of beans, puddings etc. were cooked in the oven. Sometimes a corn or rye bannock or cakes made of flour were baked before the fire, the pan or plate in which they were placed being supported by a flatiron or a brick. Potatoes were often roasted in the fire-place in a bed of hot ashes. At length the Dutch oven was introduced. This was a shallow cast iron kettle. The articles to be baked were placed in the kettle over the fire and covered with a cast iron basin filled with live coal. The Dutch oven was followed by the tin kitchen, which was used

exclusively for roasting meat and poultry. This utensil was placed before a hot fire and the meats or poultry which were attached to a spit were turned from time to time as became necessary.

Many families fried their salt pork and meats of all kinds in a cast iron pan, a foot or more in diameter, to which was attached an iron handle five or six feet long. By the use of the long handle, the pan could be placed over or taken off the hot fire by the good house-wife without danger of being burned.

The patent fire place was next in line of progress. It consisted of a sort of cast iron fire place which was set inside the larger brick fire place close up to the back of the chimney. The top connecting the sides was in the form of an iron shelf a foot or more in width. In front of the outer edge of the shelf, and connected with it throughout its entire length, there was a perpendicular iron plate from six to eight inches in width. When there was a brisk fire the iron sides and shelf absorbed a considerable amount of heat by which the room became more comfortable than before. When cooking stoves were introduced the patent fire place went out of fashion.

I can remember of my grandmother cooking over a fire place. She had a crane to hang kettles on and a baker to bake bread. She usually had one day a week for baking in her brick oven. She would make bread, pies, roast deer meat etc. I can remember of her putting potatoes to bake in the corner of the fire place and covering them with hot coals and ashes. She always had dried apples, pumpkin and squash in the winter. My grandmother used to put down large tubs of different kinds of berries every year in molasses. They kept well and were always very good.

Seventy-five years ago, deer, moose and caribou were very plentiful. There was an abundance of fish and there were no restrictions on fish and wild game. Everybody kept sheep in those days. Every woman had a loom, spun yarn and made cloth and clothing. Flax was raised. Men raised their own tobacco and also large quantities of pop corn.

Buckwheat bread, corn bread and poor man's bread tasted very good to the hungry workmen. Often just pork scraps and boiled potatoes was a banquet. After the Civil War closed, money was not worth much and food stuff was very high. I can remember of my mother paying two dollars a gallon for molasses.

Long Ridge Gravy is still being made in a few Lincoln homes today. It is prepared by frying out salt pork, then thickening the fat with flour and seasoning it.

Although the early settlers got their living from their own surroundings, made their own clothing and household furniture and were very independent of the outside world, many of them lived to a ripe old age. It is surprising to know how many lived past eighty and how many more lived past ninety. Often they didn't know for sure just how old they really were.

Note: The following lines were written by Vesta Coffin Warren, wife of John Sidney Warren. She died in Lincoln in 1919.

ON MY SEVENTY-NINTH BIRTHDAY

My memory goes back to the days of my youth,
When young and happy and gay,
With never a thought of sorrow and care,
All sunshine and laughter and play.

With brothers and sisters dear to my heart
And parents so patient and wise,
They guided my steps in the pathway of right
With love beaming forth from their eyes.

To the forest they came to build their home,
With naught but on Nature to look,
No mansion so grand to me can compare
With that little gray house by the brook.

On the seventy-ninth page in the great "Book of Life",
I have turned down the corner today,
And I turn back the leaves to page number one,
To sunshine and laughter and play.

I read of my childhood, and tears fill my eyes,
As over the pages I look,
And think of the loved ones that have gone on before,
And the little gray house by the brook.

-Vesta Coffin Warren

STORY OF THE TENANT AND THE LANDLORD

The ordinary business man who has a piece of property to sell or rent today usually places same with a reliable real estate agency. In this way, he receives a variety of propositions and is at liberty to accept or reject as he sees fit.

This was not the custom in the day of David Lowe, an early pioneer and settler of Lincoln. After David's son moved to Kingman, David made up his mind to rent his house providing he could find a suitable tenant - or any tenant at all. So one fine morning, when the air was sweet with clover and buckwheat, David set out on foot to call at the homes of what he believed to be, the three most "Newsy" housewives in all Lincoln. He arrived at the home of the third just as dinner was being served (which was exactly as he had planned) for he knew full well it would take him a long time to hear ALL the news of the community and so he figured that he might just as well be eating a plate of "vitals" at the same time.

Before leaving his "Newsy" neighbor, David learned that Henry Dolley wished a rent in his locality. At first, he thought of going to Henry and telling him about his house but on second thought, decided that before the sun set that night Henry would have heard of his rent and would come directly to him. This, concluded David, would be the better way. It would give to him, David Lowe, a little distinction, an air of independence and even a bit of shrewdness, if he so desired to exercise same.

David was right in his calculations for sure enough just as the day was fading into night Henry Dolley, with a pocket full of money and a head full of ideas, appeared on the scene. At first David was very indifferent. He couldn't for the life of him imagi.

47
how such a story ever got started. It was not until Henry started to leave that David decided to talk business. A satisfactory transaction was soon made.

Within a few days, Henry and his family were comfortably situated in their new surroundings. Everything was going along fine UNTIL--- They looked up one day to behold David, sauntering into the yard with anything but a friendly look in his eyes. He ordered Henry to move out immediately - and for no reason whatever. Of course Henry was greatly perplexed and treated the matter more or less as a joke. David finally went away with a cloudy face.

The next Sunday, Henry hired a team and took his family into Burlington to call on friends and relatives. When they arrived home the following Monday they were very much surprised to find all their furniture and personal belongings piled up beside the road, in front of the house.

Henry jumped quickly from the wagon, hitched his horse and ran up to the front door. It was securely locked. He then tried to raise a side window but David appeared with a big club and in a harsh tone, commanded him to "keep out" Henry called his wife Mary and together they tried to push the front door in but David held it strongly on the inside. While Mary was pounding and shouting at the front door, Henry crept around to the back of the house and gained entrance through an unguarded window. Surprising David, he wrestled the club from him and then admitted Mary.

Henry chased David out of the house and down the road where he threw the club into the bushes. He told David if he came back and gave them any more trouble that next time he would use him rough.

Many people will agree that there was not as much sickness seventy years ago as there is today. The majority of diseases and ailments of today, were practically unheard of then. Maybe it was because people took better care of themselves and ate more plain, nourishing food. In those days, folks believed that food was made to save life - not to take it. Many foods and fancy dishes such as we have today are very injurious to the health.

Dr. Lindsay, was one of our old time doctors and a very good one. He doctored a good deal in the south part of the town but often the roads were unpassable. In emergencies, the women doctors of the community were very, very helpful. I don't know what we would have done without them. Aunt Becky Davis was one of them and Aunt Polly Coburn was another.

When the wife of a family was taken ill the husband would harness up the team of oxen and go to fetch a woman doctor. They could always be depended on and would leave any task, no matter how important, to come to the sick home. When the doctor woman arrived at the house, she would go up into the back chamber (often called the medicine chamber) where all the herbs etc. were kept. Here she would select the particular medicine needed for that particular case. Besides giving the medicine, she made gruel for the patient, comforted her and applied all the home remedies within her knowledge. These women doctors did not expect money for their services. Often they would accept a few vegetables if their own supply was a bit lacking.

It might be well to mention a few of the medicinal plants which thrived throughout Maine seventy years ago. Many of these plants are still growing around Lincoln today-

Some of these plants are known by several different names- They are as follows: Sarsaparilla, checkerberry, valerian or lady's slipper, sumach, yellow dock, dandelion, elecampane, pipsisewa, sorrel, motherwort, mullein, milkweed, life of man, skullcap, elder, smartweed, snakeroot, mayweed, golden rod, chickweed, plantain, gensing, bloodroot, peppermint, spearmint, catnip, willow, hardhack, witch hazel, thoroughwort, tansy, yarrow, pennyroyal, liverwort, Solomon's seal, lobelia, gold thread, purslain and rhubarb.

OLD TREATMENTS FOR DISEASES

The Thompsonian method was practiced a great deal at one time. The advocates of this method were greatly opposed to bleeding (which was so common in those days) and the use of all mineral medicines. The body of the patient was at first greatly relaxed by a very warm bath, produced by steam or hot cloths and then treated with purely vegetable medicines, among which lobelia and cayenne pepper were used the most.

The "Water Cure" was practiced about this time. This was just the opposite from the above method. Instead of subjecting the body to steam or warm vapors, the body was wrapped in a sheet wrung out from cold water and covered with dry blankets. If every thing worked well, sweating set in and the patient was soon in a high state of perspiration. This was an old fashioned treatment for consumption.

When a doctor was called to a home, seventy-five years ago in cases of serious sickness, after making a diagnosis he would proceed as follows: First he would tie a tight cloth around the arm of the patient, above the elbow, then open a vein and take out from a pint to two quarts of blood as a preliminary step. Then he

had ceased, a powerful cathartic, consisting of ten grains each of calomel and julep was given. Medicine in those times, was given in a very crude state and in quantities which, at the present time would be regarded as dangerous. They did not have sugar coated pills, elixirs and extracts put up attractively as we do. Calomel was always regarded as the most important medicine to combat diseases. Patients were forbidden water to quench their raging thirst, even when the burning fever had reached its highest point.

It is a fact, that many persons who made no complaint of being ill in any way were bled in the spring or were given large doses of physic to guard themselves from future disease.

Spotted fever is an old time disease, also lung fever (pneumonia) typhoid fever, scarlet fever and small pox. Old fashioned consumption was common. La Grippe was first heard of in the years between 1889 and 1892.
