

## **Christmas at the Fisk House**

by Leola Fisk Todd

Grandma Julia Fisk, Aunt Addie Fisk and Uncle Ira Fisk all lived there. They raised turkeys and chickens. Uncle Ira would kill the turkey and Aunt Addie and Grandmother would dress it. It was put in a roaster and into the oven of the wood stove which is in the kitchen now.

Aunt would make pumpkin and mince pies the day before. The kitchen table would be extended out full length diagonally across the kitchen. It would be set with the good dishes for Fred and Grace Fisk, Leola and Buelah, Ray and Ruth Ingamells, their children, Isabel, Marilyn, Ray Jay, Ruth Edna, Mildred, Edith and Beverly (seven children). There were sixteen in all in the family.

We had turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, squash, cranberries, pickles, homemade bread, then our pie plate had a piece each of mince and pumpkin pie. Also, at each place was an orange to take home with us. Dinner was at noon. (The main meal was always at noon as at all farm families, the evening meal was supper.)

We only got into the parlor once a year so this was a big event. Uncle had a fire in the little parlor stove, the Christmas tree had been cut from the back of the farm and was in the far corner of the room, trimmed with popcorn strings and little ornaments. (No electric lights yet.)

Aunt would play the organ – then sleigh bells rang – aunt would stop playing the organ. Here comes Santa from the back of the house, he had a stick of gum to pass out to everyone. The younger children all believed in Santa yet, until they were probably 10 years old. Santa would pass out the gifts from the tree. There was a 10 cent gift for each person from Grandma. We also each got a popcorn ball.

Santa was dad Fred Fisk – he wore his buffalo fur coat from the days of sleighs, had mittens on his hands, a cap pulled down on his head and we had a purchased Santa face. He would shake hands with each on saying he would see us next year and disappeared through the back of the house or into what we called the woodshed. He would take off his coat and Santa face and sneak back into the parlor and the children never caught on in those days.

The Fred Fisks lived in Pontiac and had a Maxwell touring car to ride in. Once outside of Pontiac the trip was on all dirt roads, there was no M-59 at that time as it is today.

The Ingamells lived up the road on a farm on the hill between Oxbow Lake and Cranberry Lake. They came with the horse and double buggy until they got a Dodge touring car.

Everyone stayed until 4:00 and then left for home.

(WLHS December 1990 Newsletter)