

FUN TIMES IN GREEN CREEK

Green Creek, a location south of Ishpeming, has been the home of my grandma, Aline Rintamaki, for most of her life.

The school she attended when she was a little girl was a farm house that belonged to Jay Smoker, and the school room was in the living room.

"You don't see schools that look like farmhouses anymore," she related chuckling.

Later, Aline went to a school which was located in Green Creek. It was a little country school with all the grades in one room and one teacher taught all grades. This school, "Pleasant Prairie", was located where the Oja family now lives.

Mrs. Rintamaki recalled that her Fifth grade teacher was Norman Fredrickson, and her Sixth grade teacher was Rushton Strongman, her Seventh grade teacher was Russell Oles, and in Eighth grade she went to the Tilden Township School which was located on a hill by the Hankanen residence. The teacher there was Anna Lawrence. The Eighth grade teacher in Green Creek was Andrea Anderson. In ninth grade she went to Ishpeming. She stayed at her grandmother's house during the week and came home for the weekends. She doesn't remember any of the teachers because she did not even finish a year at that school.

She remembers when they used to buy flour that came in big bags, and out of those bags she made all of the kids' clothes, because they couldn't buy any material. A lot of people made their clothes from old clothes. She used to sew for the neighborhood, making jackets and coats out of the old coats the parents had and couldn't use any more. My grandmother pointed out that people were very resourceful at that time.

She recalls when a can of good-grain coffee was 35¢ a pound, eggs were 10¢ a dozen, and hamburger was 25¢ for two or three pounds.

Her brother Adolph belonged to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The Corps kept the young people occupied and earning, but they didn't get big pay. They made roads, planted trees, etc. They also had the FERA (Federal Emergency Relief Association). The FERA used to hand out rice, flour or beans to big families almost like they do now with butter and cheese. She remembers when they went to certain designated places. People were able to get a pound of butter, fruit, dried foods, or flour.

Although they lived in a rural area, her family didn't have cows, so they had to get milk from their neighbors, Otto and Andrea Anderson. Either one of the Anderson boys would bring the milk over or her son would go and get it. "It was a good thing the Anderson's had cows, because there was no milk delivery out here at the time."

Before we finished our conversation, my grandmother told me an amusing story about the neighbor's cow. She said,

"Andrea and Otto Anderson had a cow that used to go into peoples' yards as she knew how to open a gate. You had to have a gate, because there were more cows in the neighborhood than people," she chuckles. We had a wooden gate and there was a sling around the post to hold it, and that cow knew how to stick her head under that sling, lift it up, and the gate would fly open and the cow would come into our yard. Otto's chickens even used to come into our garden, and even though the garden was inside a fence, those chickens found their way up there."

"Those were the fun times just to get the monotony out."

Walking down the road and looking at all of the houses, it is difficult for me to imagine cows and chickens wandering around the neighborhood. I was grateful to my grandmother for revealing to me what the area was like during the Depression.

Several months have passed since I had this interview with my grandma. This conversation has become even more meaningful to me as my grandma passed away on March 26, 1984. However, it makes me happy because her thoughts have been recorded and preserved.

Peter Rintmaki