

The morning dawned clear but cold. Very early in the morning a man by the name of Burton came by hunting a stray cow and invited us to come down into the valley and make his house our home until we could get a place to live in. His house was built of oak slabs and birch bark and two rooms of about 10 by 12, but I have heard my mother say she thought it one of the happiest days of her life where there was shelter other than the wagon, a table, a fire in a stove and where we children had more liberty. We stayed there a few days while father picked out a place to build on. And he liked the valley so well he thought he would build there and so picked out an island.

We camped all summer, the wagon for our shelter, the weather coming off beautifully for the rest of the summer and fall. In the meantime, father and Mr. Burton working to get our shanty built, which was less work than building a log house, but that was not finally done until October first. The trees were cut down, cut into logs, hauled to the sawmill two miles away, sawed into slabs, hauled home by the oxen, then piled up log cabin fashion to shrink, then built into the shanty which consisted of two rooms and a small "cubby" or shelf built in the highest part of the roof. It was built of unfinished lumber, the roof made of birch and basswood bark. The door of slabs, one four-paned window, then papered inside with newspapers and brown wrapping paper; mostly wrapping paper from the store, for newspapers were very hard to find and we were very choice of one when we got one.

By the way, I went to school in Wisconsin just long enough to learn the alphabet and learned to read and spell from papers pasted on the wall of that shanty. I was then about five years old and was 11 before there was a school that I could attend.

One of our rooms was a sod floor, with a rag carpet that mother brought from her girlhood home in Vermont. Father made a bedstead of peeled poplar limbs in the sides of which he bored holes in which he laced rope back and forth to make the springs, to put a cotton cloth tick stuffed with hay, for there was no straw to be had, no grain to thresh, you see. We children had a truckle bed that ran on little wheels and in the morning was made up and put under the bed, and a valance that was around the bed was dropped and that made only one bed in the room. In the daytime, father also made one half dozen chairs out of 3 inch pieces of plank, the seat of the 3 inch and the back and rounds of lighter. He also made a table and cupboard.

Then we were nicely fixed for the winter, but yet had to build a shelter for the stock which had increased by two. The cow we brought with us came fresh in October and a heifer came to us that was a stray and we could find no owner for it and which came fresh the following spring. So father built a log barn, chinked up the cracks with clay and grass. Then we were all snug for the winter, but wood which father and Mr. Burton hauled with the oxen, a little at a time, as it was needed, cutting down trees