

ely endurable. The first two winters were hard, but the winter of 1877-'78 was exceptionally good.

I caught a goodly supply of fish every winter, after the first, when I did not catch many. Sometimes I fished directly off-shore; sometimes at the mouth of the Red River, and occasionally up north, at Big Island. I had to be my own beast of burden to haul the catch, and this was arduous on such distances.

Towards the end of July, 1877, the cows arrived, 250 of them. They were brought from Minnesota, no trifling distance. We were required to meet the herd and to assist driving it through the woods. We had been without milk for two years and I was not loathe to help. Our journey took three days, for the road was bad. By the time we got through to Willow Point, we were considerably fatigued.

The cows were allotted at Willow Point. The men were separated into groups according to their number of children, or according to the difficulty of their circumstances, but mostly on the former basis. Then each in turn was allowed to select one cow. I was in the fourth or fifth group and when it came to our turn much more than half the herd was gone. At this point I did not like the look of things. All the cows which I had fancied and had a drop of milk in them, were gone. I was certainly feeling badly about it when I spied a broken-tailed five or seven year old, of a good average size. She was red on the flanks; had rather fine horns, and a white star on her forehead. The flaw was that she was virtually dry and gave a mere cupful on arrival at home. However, her yield increased and went up to three pints, and the good creature became one of my staunchest household pillars. She was beautiful in appearance, docile, and sagacious. We called her Búbót. (freely, Bountiful).

Late in the following month of August, Jón of Laufas loaned to me the price of a cow which I purchased from Skapti. She cost thirty dollars, but proved sterile, so we slaughtered her

and sold half the carcass to Magnús and Rósa.

Haymaking was difficult. Only small natural openings here and there in the forest were fit for cutting, and there the grass was full of sticks and other rubbish, and the ground was wet. The hay had to be carried on forks, or on barrows, carried by two persons. It was stacked in hummocks, on the spot, and then brought in during the winter. It was not possible in my case to use horses or oxen, even if I had possessed them, which I did not, but in some few places elsewhere the hayland was more accessible.

Of books, I brought only my Bible and the **Passion Hymns** from home. The first winter I was able to buy only Dr. Peturs' three books, which Sigfús bound, and the Old hymn book, and three lays. In addition, I subscribed to **Framfari** (Progress). This was all our provender for mind and spirit, but we were happier then than later, when we had acquired more.

On the twenty-first of August my Valdís went to Winnipeg for work, but her stay was short and on the twenty-eighth of September Arni Sveinsson and I left on our trip to bring her home.

The journey to the city took us a day and a night, the best time in which I ever made it. On the thirtieth, which was Sunday, we started for home. We stayed overnight at a point on the river a little below Monkman's place. The three of us slept in the boat and had a cowhide for cover. The weather had turned colder, but the wind did not blow through Arni's hide. On the following days we reached home.

During this period we had two cows, but their yield was small.

Life was different now, although we did not possess plenty. Indeed, we lacked many things. Our attempts at raising crops often failed, because of the host of destructive creatures in the woods. The potato crop was an exception. On one occasion I harvested about 150 (pailfuls?) of potatoes. I was not able to sell any of this crop, but we required a great