



Meet Alice Laura Stevenson

I lived in Adrian where my father had a lumber and coal business. I was born in 1877, the year that Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone. There were many changes and inventions during my life. Follow me through the exhibit and you will see some of them.

SCHOOL ROOM

Why did I love new schoolbooks? Do you see a reading book that looks new enough to be mine? You may pick it up and read a story.

I learned "Spencerian" handwriting. It was hard, but it looked very pretty. Would you like to try it sometime? It looks like this:

Spencerian Script

PARLOR

Our family went to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. On another trip, we traveled to California on a train. We put special things from our vacations on a whatnot in the corner. Can you find the whatnot? What do you see there? What special things have you saved from your travels? Where do you put them?

DINING ROOM

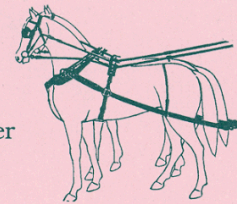
Do you like the dishes you see on the dining room table? We used our "best" dishes here. Father wanted us to eat all our meals in the dining room, but sometimes we did not want to be so formal. One Christmas night the table was covered with gifts. We ate supper in the kitchen that night.

Sometimes we played in the dining room. Mother sewed there, too.

SHED/OUT OF DOORS

Our family had help with chores. A hired man took care of our horses.

In the shed there are harnesses like those he used for the horses. What other things do you see in the shed?



BEDROOM

Do you have a quilt or a blanket on your bed? What colors do you see in the quilt on this bed?

Push the button to hear how we used to take our baths before we had a bathtub in our house.

KITCHEN

Do you eat some of the same things for breakfast that we did? Do you think it would be fun or hard work to cook in this kitchen? Why?

CONCLUSION

Father felt there was no sense in girls going to college, so I never asked him for money. I used my own savings. I rode my bike to save on street car fare. I brought my own lunch. Find where I went to college and what I did when I was grown up.

Reference: A History of the Archimedes Stevenson Family of Adrian (1952?), Alice Laura (Stevenson) Walker (unpublished manuscript). Courtesy of Lenawee County Historical Society, Adrian, MI.

"Growing Up in Michigan, 1880-1895"
Michigan Historical Museum
Michigan Historical Center
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