

Chapter 6. Life in Silver Lake, Minnesota

Arriving to the Silver Lake in 1867, the Josef Kadlec family was a part of the early Westward wave of Czech immigrants to settle in this community. Fifty years later; the 1917 McLeod County History book described the community in the following way:

“The Village of Silver Lake is one of the most busy and thriving villages in this part of the estate. It is situated in the heart of one of the richest and most productive farming sections of Minnesota, in the midst of a thickly populated Bohemian and Polish settlement, and is settled by small farms of from 40 to 80 acres—conditions which have greatly promoted its advancement. Less than two hours’ ride from the markets of St. Paul and Minneapolis, with exceptional shipping and market facilities, and with almost every line of business represented, it has also a spirit of home loyalty and community of interest that has been a potent factor in its growth and development. The evidences of its prosperity are everywhere visible in the broad, graveled, and graded thoroughfares, blocks of cement walks, extensive sewer system, water works, electric lights, handsome brick business blocks, one of the finest municipal buildings and opera houses in that part of the state, a commercial club, splendid churches, both Protestant and Catholic, educational facilities, including a \$10,000 high school, and the active and progressive character of its citizens, who are working not only for their own individual prosperity, but for the betterment of the community at large.”

The following photos provide a pictorial look at life in the village of Silver Lake, Minnesota in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, as the Kadlec family would have experienced it.



Figure 6-1. Main Street, mid 1880’s, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-2. Main Street, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-3. Main Street, December 27, 1927, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-4. Main Street Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-5. St. Joseph Catholic Church, Before 1960's Renovation, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-6. St. Joseph Catholic Church Exterior, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-7. Presbyterian and St. Adalbert (Polish Catholic) Churches, Silver Lake, Minnesota.



Figure 6-8. Church of the Assumption, Built in 1873 at Bear Creek.



Figure 6-9. Jos. Philipi's Liquor Store @1889, Where Patrons Could Get a 5¢ Beer, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-10. Produce Store, Silver Lake, MN



Figure 6-11. Dudek Blacksmith Shop, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-12. "The First Creamery and Newly Built One", Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-13. Dudek Tailor Shop, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-14. Main Street Parade, July 2, 1917, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-15. Main Street Parade, July 2, 1917, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-16. Main Street Parade, July 4, 1918, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-17. Hardware Store Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-18. Hardware Store Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-19. Tavern Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-20. Tavern Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-21. Farm Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-22. Farm Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-23. Farm Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-24. Farm Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-25. Farm Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-26. Farm Scene, Silver Lake, MN.



Figure 6-27. Silver Lake Village Hall and Opera House, Constructed in 1907.



Figure 6-28. Silver Lake Village Hall and Opera House, Razed in 1960.