BECKONING HILLS

A saga of Men and Women

The pioneers who braved
the unknown,

To make the Turtle
Mountains and area.

A land of wealth and promise

To generations yet unborn

Compiled by special committee in conjunction with Boissevain's 75th Jubilee

An Anniversary Tribute

Those gallant folk who blazed for us the trails of long ago,
And left a wondrous heritage — this verdant land we know
We honour them alike today, the living and the dead,
Our thoughts are turned to older times and olden ways instead.

Revealed again in memory's light the early days appear —
The long long treks by oxen team that brought the settlers here —
We see their humble shanty homes of virgin prairie sod
Erected on the open plain where once the buffalo trod.

We sense again the loneliness — the unremitting toil
That gain for them a livelihood from virgin prairie soil,
How little could they realize the progress of the plough
When first their oven broke the fields that tractors conquer now.

They never dreamed of comforts such as we enjoy today,
The endless tasks they had to do were done the hardest way;
And yet they stayed and persevered and held their purpose true,
They started schools and churches where they raised their families, too.

This favored part of Canada — this region that we love —
Was founded on integrity, and faith in God above,
And may we ever keep it thus — through all the changing years
A fine and fitting tribute to our worthy pioneers.

1953. Frances L. M. Code

Dedication

To the rapidly thinning ranks of the pioneers, and to the memory of those who have finished their course, who in faith ventured into an unknown land and tamed a wilderness, who shared their limited resources with their less fortunate neighbours, who remained steadfast in the midst of trials and adversities and laid the cornerstones of our present prosperity, who grimly carried on when their sons answered the call to arms . . . to these brave men and women who had as their only stay a firm faith in God, this book is humbly dedicated.

Acknowledgement

In editing a book of the nature of "Beckoning Hills," a seemingly endless number of people must be appealed to, or interviewed; old records must be delved into in order to gather together the information and detail necessary for an accurate report of happenings and locations of the past.

Memory is fickle, and some of the incidents contained herein were written only recently from memory by older folk. Every effort has been made by the committee to verify or cross-compare such detail wherever possible. If, however, some of our readers are of a different opinion, or consider a statement to be contrary to fact we hope they will take this into consideration.

We, the undersigned, wish to thank very sincerely all those who in any way helped us in this historical project. We hope that through the reading of its pages, the children of to-day and of the future will grow in appreciation of the heroic living which made this legendary corner of Manitoba a spot to cherish, and help them to carry on the tradition of their forbears with courage and pride.

Mrs. C. C. Musgrove
Miss Jane Wilson
Mrs. Una Gillespie
Mr. C. Y. Mackenzie
Mr. A. E. Henderson
Mr. Wm. Moncur
Miss Winnifred Stevenson

Preface

The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Town of Boissevain and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the settlement of the surrounding area, comes at a time when the district is enjoying a standard of living far beyond the dreams of the pioneers.

The pages of this book, compiled from information gathered by a committee of the district from pioneers, their families and other authentic sources, are dedicated to the memory of the men and women who left their homes in other parts of Canada or in lands beyond the seas, to make new homes in this district, and who by their courage and fortitude, and without the conveniences which we now enjoy, laid the foundations of a better way of life.

May we who are entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining this progress, keep faith with the pioneers and in turn pass on to those who come after us, a district as united and progressive as has been transmitted to us, and may each year be a milestone to continued progress.

R. A. Patterson, Reeve
Rural Municipality of Morton

E. I. Dow, Mayor
Town of Boissevain

Pioneer Days

I am not the man I used to be
And never was perhaps,
But I've ridden the western prairies
And worn the western chaps.

Midst sun and rain for little gain,
But years of life and fun,
I know the grip of the long stock whip,
And I know the crack of a gun.

I've bedded down in the prairie wool,
I've slept in a foot of snow,
Just wrapped in a blanket or buffalo robe,
Old Western men will know.

I'm sitting before the fire tonight,
Dreaming of long ago.
I see the prairie's endless sweep,
I hear the hiss of the snow.

But still I love those good old days
When the blood was hot in my veins
I gave not a damn for the drifting snow,
And less for the driving rains.

When twenty miles was nothing much,
Not even a two hour ride.
With a willing bronk between your legs
And an old pal by your side.

Wm. Cumpstone Jr.

Unable to attain any schooling during his younger days, Wm. Cumpton was self educated and wrote many poems on pioneer life.

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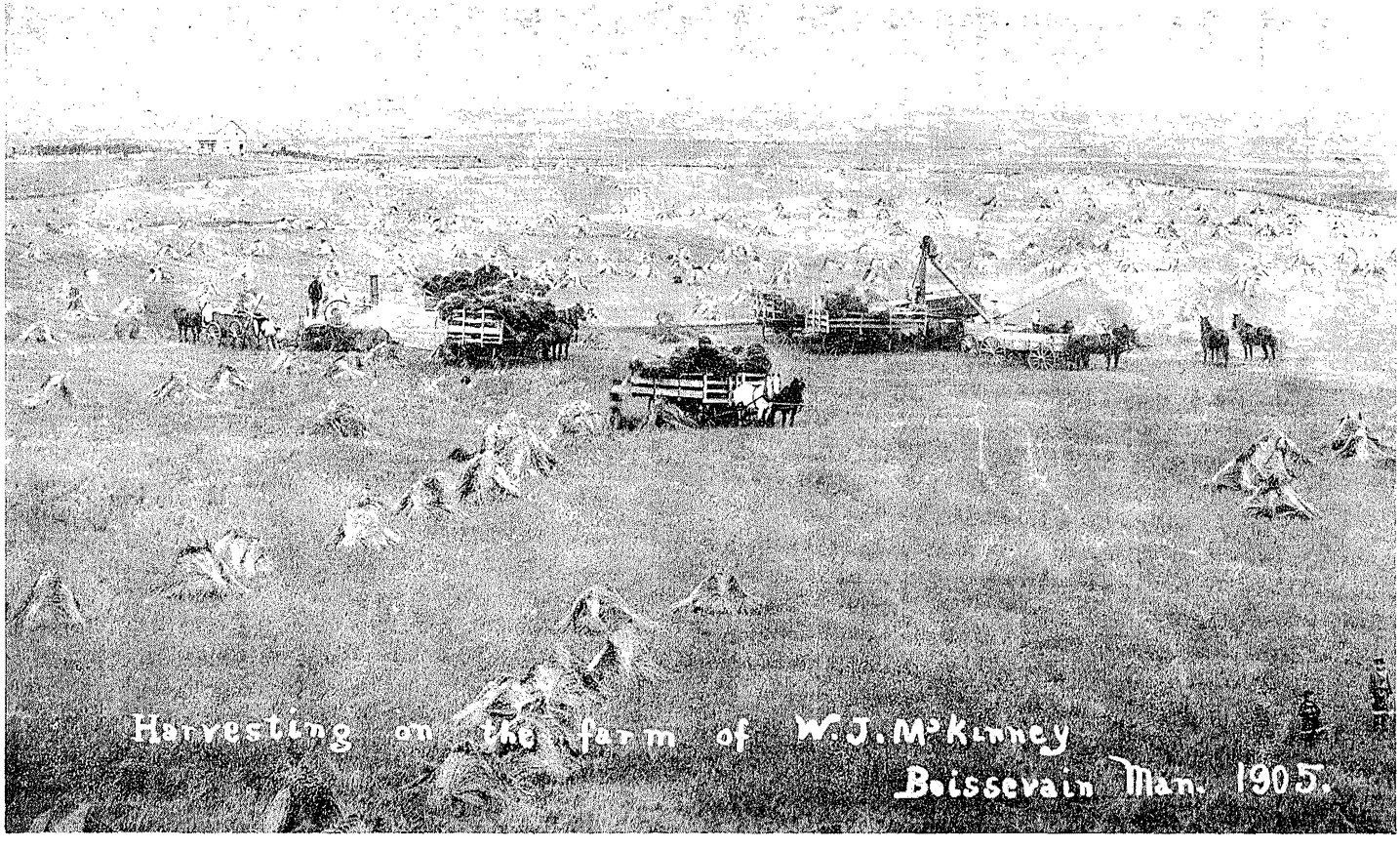

Harvesting on the farm of W. J. McKinney
Boissevain Man. 1905.

CHAPTER ONE

THE GEOGRAPHY OF OUR DISTRICT

TOPOGRAPHY

The last glaciation, known as the Keewatin Ice Sheet, came into being some forty-thousand years ago and centred west of the Hudson Bay, covering much of the north central party of North America. It receded from our area twenty-thousand years later, creating, as it melted, the topography of our area, as we know it today.

Observing this country from the Souris River to the north, we see a broad undulating plain extending to the horizon. This is drained, in most cases, by shallow creeks that deepen quickly as they near the river. At a point approximately four miles north of Minto, on a line west-southwest of Elgin, the Turtle Mountains come into view. They were poetically called "The Blue Jewel of the Plain" by La Verendrye, who first sighted their beauty in 1738. They are the second highest range in Manitoba, reaching a height of two thousand four hundred and fifty feet at the Turtle Head, the west end of the range. From here, one can view the panorama of the plains to the north, and, nestled just beyond the foothills Whitewater Lake can be seen.

This is all that remains of ancient Lake Souris, being fed by creeks flowing down the northern slopes. Waters of the north-eastern slopes flow north and east, eventually emptying into the Pembina River.

In this area we find several moraines and, running north-westerly to the Primrose District, northwest of Boissevain, traces of glacier drift can be located, containing deposits of petrified wood, agate and some fossil.

To view one of the most beautiful valleys in our area we must skirt the rim of Lang's Valley, which was created when the Souris River, unable to flow north at this point due to the receding ice field, cut a course southeasterly to Pelican Lake, then to Rock Lake and on down the Pembina River.

On the west end of Turtle Mountain, Turtle Head Creek, also known as Newcomb's Valley, in pioneer days, is one of the loveliest valleys in this area. It is well treed, with a fast moving stream, fed by lakes in the Turtle Head region.

The entire mountain range is studded with beautiful lakes which will become popular with campers when all-weather roads are built to them.

Southwest from the Wakopa district, on the eastern side, rises the Turtle's Back, a hill which is sparsely wooded but much loftier than the surrounding hills. This was the first part to be sighted by the early settlers travelling west on the old Commission Trail. Early in 1800, on his return trip from visiting the Mandan Indians in what is now North Dakota, Alexander Henry rested his party on this vantage point.

To obtain the best view of these mountains, one should travel to the north shore of Whitewater Lake. The forested hills, beyond the blue waters of this lake, are awe-inspiring, especially when the range is lifted even higher by one of the frequent mirages to be seen in this locality. Under these same conditions, the Blue Hills of Souris, beyond Lang's Valley, may be seen from the Turtle's Head area, a distance of over fifty miles.

NATURAL BEAUTY

When early settlement approached our area, the pioneers inherited a region richly endowed with natural beauty. The Turtle Mountains were covered with heavy timber, as were the banks of the Souris River. Wild fruit was to be found in all parts of the region, while native flowers grew in abundance everywhere.

Fire destroyed practically the entire original stand of timber on the mountain in 1896. The plow, and overgrazing of pasture land has left little of the prairie flora. The crocus, tiger lily, primrose and lady slipper have, in most cases, disappeared entirely from some districts. Strawberries that grew in profusion the length and breadth of our region, reddening the rims of vehicle wheels that passed over the prairie land, can only be found in local areas, principally in and near the Turtle Mountains. Other flowers, and native grasses too, have suffered likewise.

The breaking of the prairie and the bulldozing of bushland to make way for cultivation, have decreased the small bird population to only a fraction of the original number. Our upland game has suffered likewise, but overgunning is the main reason for the disappearance of the square and pin tail grouse which were once so plentiful across our area. When springtime comes around the drumming of these birds is greatly missed by those who love nature. Pin tail, mallard, canvas-back and smaller ducks are still fairly numerous, but the wild goose, whose numbers would cover whole sections of land while feeding during the spring migration, are today seldom seen in flocks exceeding forty birds.

In 1926, when the main flock left Whitewater Lake on its journey to the Hudson Bay area, it took thirty-six minutes to pass over a given point northeast of the Lake. At times the flight was thin and scattered, then the heavens would seem to be full of both

wavees and greys. In 1928, the flight lasted 42 minutes, and in thirty-five, 28 minutes. In 1945, the flight had passed over and was fading into the horizon towards Lang's Valley in 16 minutes, while last year a seemingly disorganized flock, very thinly scattered, passed over in one and one quarter minutes.

It is not the loss of habitat that has reduced the numbers of these birds to this point; it is simply senseless hunting and lack of foresight by those in authority. A few more seasons of hunting will practically exterminate these monarchs from the central migratory route, in which Whitewater Lake is located. Too late, sportsmen and naturalists alike will realize the fact that a small percentage of the population in our time has repeated the folly of earlier generations, who exterminated the vast quantity of passenger pigeons. Closely following this was the extermination of the heath-hen and the whooping crane, until only twenty-seven birds remain.

There are still sufficient geese left to make a fairly quick comeback. Several successive closed seasons would greatly help to bring back the big flocks we knew a decade past, and we would again be able to see those long V's fading into the evening twilight, as they wing their way to rest on Whitewater Lake. If steps aren't taken immediately to conserve what is left, then the responsibility for their disappearance rests squarely on the shoulders of hunters who fail to observe sportsmanship, and upon those in authority today.

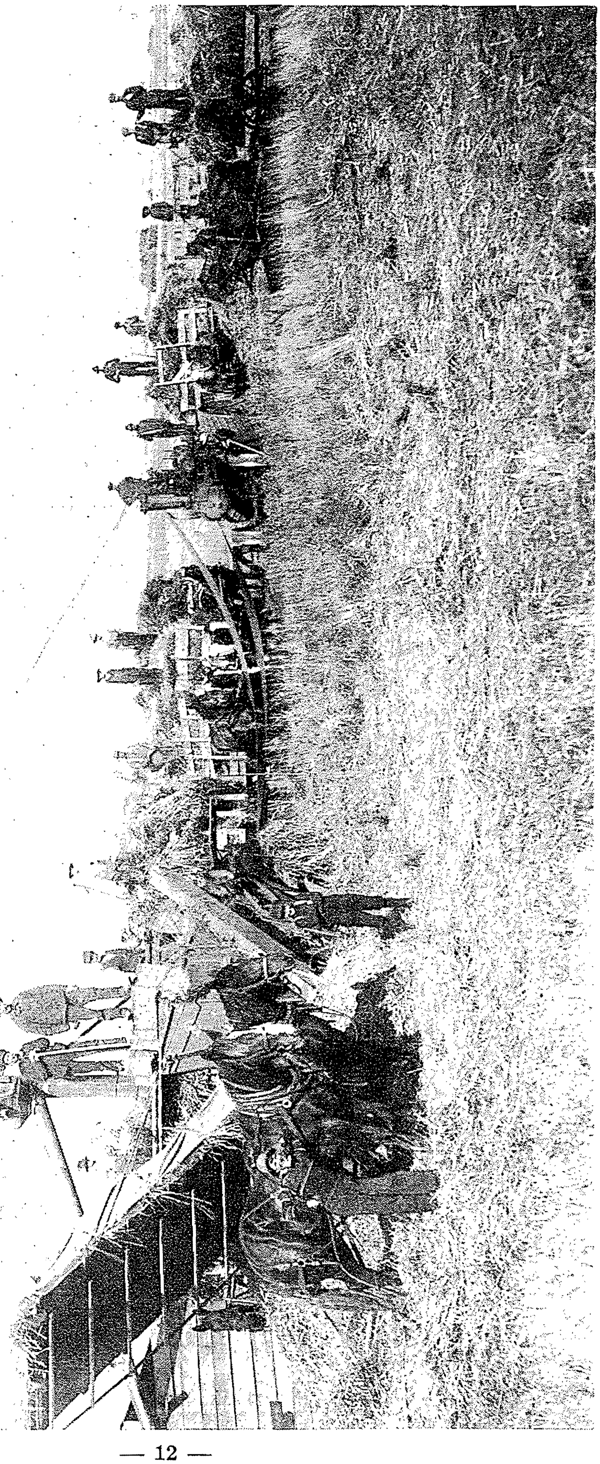
More sanctuaries are needed to conserve our waterfowl; and small areas comprising three to four acres, with suitable habitat on each farm, would greatly help to bring back our upland game. The co-operation of every wildlife and naturalist society, as well as of our governments, is needed to restore that which is so much a part of our heritage

NATURE OF SOIL

What would the earth be like if there were no soil. Without soil there would be no life, for all living forms, man or beast, depend on the plants of field and forest for subsistence, and the growth of plants in turn depends on the productivity of the soil and climate.

The vital importance of soils is obvious if it is remembered that a nation cannot obtain support in a desert, that rock without soil is barren waste, and that the earth below the soil is as lifeless as the moon. A nation derives from the soil and the land not only material, but mental and spiritual values, and hence a nation must be vitally concerned with the wise utilization of its soils and maintaining the strength, courage and resourcefulness and well being of its rural people in an undespoiled countryside.

The ownership of land is a privilege, but it is also a responsibility. Soil fertility in the case of the prairie soils (which we inherited but did not create) is the result of the interaction of soil,



climate and vegetation over thousands of years under a scheme of conservation controlled by nature. This free gift of natural fertility, together with the vision and energy of the pioneer, made the development of western Canada possible.

The sons and grandsons of the pioneers however now hold, not the original virgin lands, but arable fields modified by culture. In the Boissevain district we have three distinct types of soil. Immediately surrounding Whitewater Lake is an area of soils developed on lacustrine deposits which vary in texture from fine loam to clay predominating. These are fairly fertile soils and well suited to the growing of cereal grains. In very wet or dry seasons they are very difficult to work. They have good water retention capacity. In wet years when drainage is a problem they may become slightly alkaline in nature. In general their value for agricultural production depends upon the degree of freedom from alkali salts.

The largest portion of the district is in what is called the Waskada Till Plain Area, extending from the Turtle Mountains on the south and surrounding the Whitewater soils. This area may be divided into three sections: (a) Gently rolling in the southern portion, (b) the smooth, more or less level area in the central portion, (c) the undulating section in the northern portion. These soils vary in texture from a loam to a clay loam depending on topography.

The Waskada Till Area constitutes an open plain and was developed under grass vegetation. The land is practically all arable except for the ravines, water runways, and depressed areas. It has been largely broken up and is used extensively for the production of cereal grains. These soils are naturally high in fertility. The main soil problems are periodic climatic drought, loss of water by run-off and soil drifting. Periodic retirement of a portion of the acreage to grass mixtures are needed to control soil drifting and maintain fertility.

The third type of soil found in the district is in the Turtle Mountain area. Here we have soils developed under tree growth rather than grassland vegetation. They are designated as grey wooded soils and vary from a loam to clay loam in texture. In these soils the top soil is much shallower than in soils developed under grasses. Due to the fact that the topography of this area is very rough and hilly, general agricultural development has not been as great as on the open plains area. A small acreage only has been broken and put under cultivation. The natural fertility is high but land use is limited. This area is suited primarily to mixed farming, where a high portion of the cultivated land should be seeded to grasses and legumes. Their main problem is erosion. Farmers in the

Fred McKinney Threshing Outfit, 1906 — Photo courtesey Mrs. Ina McKinney

area must adhere to a strict conservation program to maintain soil fertility.

From the early 1880's to the present day, agricultural development has made great advances. From the yoke of oxen we have advanced to the horse; the steam engine; the gas powered engine; to the diesel engine. What lies to the future no one knows. The land is something we must hold in trust, for not only does the present generation depend for its support on the soils and the natural resources of the land, but coming generations must be sustained from the same source. Each land owner (by actions, not by words) must answer the question "Is the fertility of the soils to be exploited by 'wasters' or conserved by 'good husbandmen'?"

MINERAL DEPOSITS

Until recently when oil was discovered in the Whitewater area and later north of the lake in what is known as the Regent field, our wealth of known minerals was very limited. South of Boissevain in the Cherry Creek area sandstone was quarried for many years from the ancient bed of a range of hills which were pushed back during the last glaciation. Several local buildings still testify to its beauty and durability. Coal was discovered on both the eastern and western slopes of the mountain. Mines were operated in the Goodlands area during the "Dusty Thirties" with a good quality of soft coal being mined. Hard coal has been located through oil and deep-water well drilling in several districts, but in most cases the seams are beyond the hundred foot mark. Good quality brick clay is known to exist in the Whitewater and Ninga districts, while some porcelain clay deposits are located north of the Turtle Mountains, the quantity and quality have not as yet been determined.

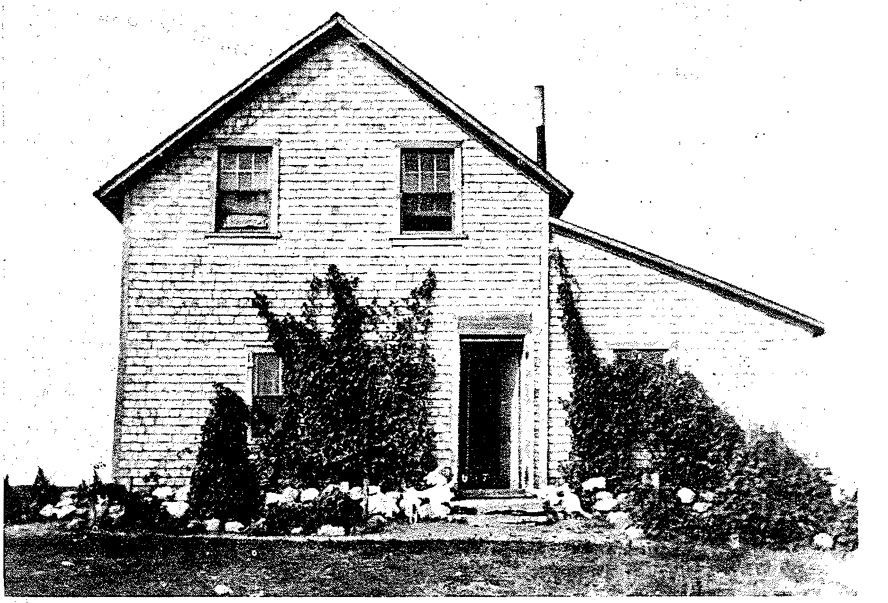
PRECIPITATION

In the periods of drought that our area has experienced in recorded time possibly the most devastating was the one known as the "Dusty Thirties." In many areas where the soils were of lighter nature, much of the top soil was lost; heavier soil districts suffered also but to a lesser degree. It had taken nature some 15,000 years to accumulate the rich loam the pioneers first turned with the walking plow. In dust clouds that darkened the sun for several days on end, much of this priceless soil blew off our plains area. In 1934 many lakes and stream in the Turtle Mountains dried up and the lakebed of Whitewater Lake became part of the baked plains surrounding the region and was referred to at that time as part of the Great Plains Desert, where practically nothing grew. According to Indian legend this lake had been dry for a time during the early fur trade period. The buffalo ate the grass so short that high winds lifted dust clouds off the plains. In the late eighties the lake was reduced to a few shallow sloughs exposing a trail that ran north-

westerly from Strathallan school site to the island near the north shore. This was probably used by early fur traders operating from forts near Lauder to the Turtle Mountain area.

Prior to 1934, following the drought of the late eighties, the lake was dry in 1913 and again in 1924. During the thirties, the annual precipitation was half the normal rainfall, which is approximately twenty inches for our prairie area. During this period the value of the Forestry Reserve was fully appreciated. As there was not any money to obtain coal, most people returned to the pioneer way of winter heating and hundreds of loads of wood were cut yearly from the hills. The stand was not as heavy as originally, but the new growth of thirty odd years' standing made excellent fuel. From the meadows and sloughs, valuable hay was cut and large areas were fenced to pasture stock from dried out districts.

In 1895 the area had been surveyed and the timber resources were estimated at 150,000 cords per annum. It was created a timber reserve that same year and in 1906 it became a forest reserve. In recent years the presence of beavers has raised the water level of the entire forest area, thus lessening the danger of fire destruction such as the Turtle Mountains experienced in 1896. The reserve comprises 109¼ sections of lands, twenty miles long at the International Boundary, tapering to fourteen miles at the north and six sections deep.



One of the early houses of All Saints District — the Sankey home. Photo courtesy H. Sankey, Kirkland Lake, Ontario.

CHAPTER TWO

EARLIEST INHABITANTS

FUR TRADE SURVEY

In searching for information concerning early life on our continent, some interesting facts have been unearthed during recent times. One in particular is the evidence that the horse, closely associated with the progress of man, came into being on our continent some 5,000,000 years ago, later migrating to Asia, presumably by way of Alaska. Also is the fact that the buffalo came to this continent some 400,000 years ago from Asia and we can account for seven different specie, one being a very large animal, weighing 23 to 25 hundred pounds, with horns that measured six feet from tip to tip.

During the last glacial era, the horses that had remained on our continent perished. The continent was then without horses until the 14th century, when more were brought from Spain by the explorers. The first horses in our area were those ridden by the Assiniboines around 1685. As the ice fields receded, the buffalo along with other animals and birds moved inland, the former dominating our plains until the late 70's. It was conservatively estimated by one of our noted naturalists, Thomas Seton, that at one time the great plains herds exceeded some 70,000,000, but by the early 80's the specie on the plains had been reduced to seven calves. However, a small herd of the bushland specie still existed in the timber area of the North. The slaughter of buffalo was supported by the army in the United States in order to starve the Indians into submission, and in our country, gun-crazy hunters were responsible for the destruction of our own great herds.

Evidence from early camp sites, now known to exist on the Northern slopes of the Turtle Mountains, will undoubtedly help to establish when man first inhabited our area. Stone hoes and pestles have been found near Cherry Creek, South and West of Boissevain, to prove that agriculture had been practised in this district by a people prior to the advent of the Assiniboine Indian, who emigrated from the Lake of the Woods region in the late 1500's. The Assiniboine was not an agriculturalist, but lived well or meagre according to the fortunes of the chase, as records of the early fur companies confirm. Fur traders made many attempts to encourage these people to hunt furs in the Turtle Mountain area but met with little success.

In 1809, Alexander Henry states in his diary, between 8 and 10 thousand Assiniboines lived in the Turtle Mountain and surround-

ing areas, mustering two thousand fighting men. The smallpox epidemic in 1792 had taken a heavy toll and in 1836 the disease struck again and some 4,000 perished. Whole villages were wiped out and evidence of mass burial can be found in an Indian cemetery South of Wassewa. The first contact that Indians of our area would have with the fur companies would probably be around 1785, when Brandon House was erected near Souris Mouth, North of Lang's Valley.

In 1795, Ash Fort was built in the Lauder area by the North West Fur Company. This was followed by Fort Grant owned by the Hudson Bay and then by a private fur trader by the name of Desjarlais in 1836. These were all in the same district on the banks of the Souris River. John Pritchard mentions visiting fur houses in the Whitewater Lake area in 1805, and it is assumed they were located on the South side and owned by the Hudsons Bay and North West Companies. At this time also Alexander Henry mentions in his diary visiting Lena's House located some sixty miles from Brandon House on the slopes of the Turtle Mountains. It is known from information given us by early settlers in the Wakopa district, although there seems to be no written record of it, that the Hudson Bay Company had a post due West of Old Wakopa. This may have been the one in question. Possibly this post was located at this point in an effort to halt the flow of furs to the South via the Missouri Fur Trail. Joseph Ducharme, who was well known by the people of the Wassewa and Old Desford districts in later years, drove many wagon trains of furs, first to St. Louis and later to St. Paul. His father was one of Alexander Henry's guides in 1805-06.

The beaver seems to be the most sought-after pelt in early times, although other short haired furs were popular too, and as time went on the demand for the buffalo, its pemmican and hide increased.

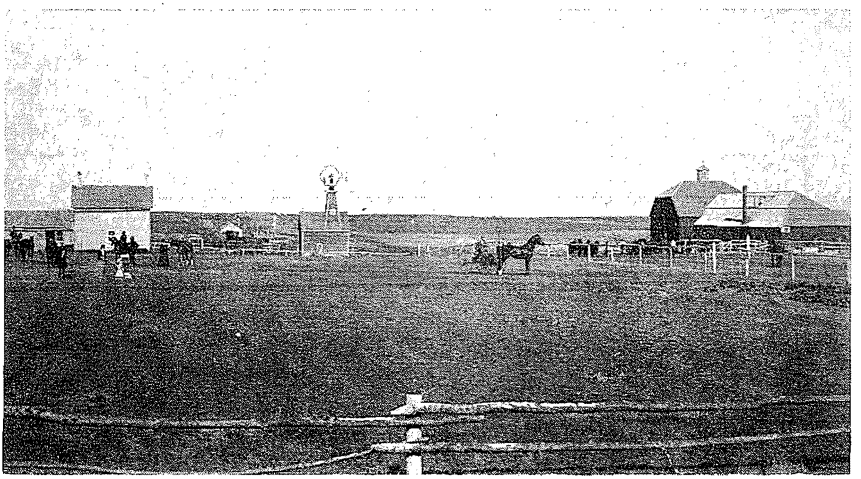
Most of the later hunters and their families would leave the Red River settlement in June and chase buffalo until their carts were full. They would then follow the North West Fur Trail, later known as the Commission, back to Fort Garry. These hunters were of many nationalities, among them were the Metis, well skilled in the art of hunting on their Indian ponies. They were well organized under the leadership of an appointed member of the group. These were the men who supported Riel's cause in the rebellion of '85, and were equal to the best the government could muster.

In 1840, approximately 1630 hunters with 1200 carts were used. In most cases ten buffalo were needed to fill a cart once the meat had been converted into pemmican. These hunts increased to between four and five thousand carts until 1874, when the great herds had been pushed off the Souris Plains to the West of Saskatchewan. The Red River hunts were then abandoned.

Early settlers found many camp sites of these hunters,

especially around Whitewater Lake. Old lead slugs from Snyders and Winchesters can still be found on our wind swept fields, mute evidence of this crazy slaughter, which brought to a close, the final chapter of fur trading in the Turtle Mountain and Souris basin areas.

In 1875, the first row of townships was surveyed along the boundary to range 23, Townships 1 and 2 were surveyed through to Range 29 in 1878-79, and were completed up to Township 6 by 1880. And so, a hunter's paradise for centuries had been made ready for pioneer settlement within the brief space of five years.



Quinte Farm 22-2-22. Clue, Wright, Taylor & Co. owners. M. D. Wright, manager. House, barn and granary, with windmill power, on separate section. Project failed in 1896. — Courtesy Mrs. Russell Barret, Deloraine, Manitoba

Burnside threshing outfit at Tom Johnson home (first house on Boissevain townsit, 1883) — Photo courtesy Wm. Lee

CHAPTER THREE

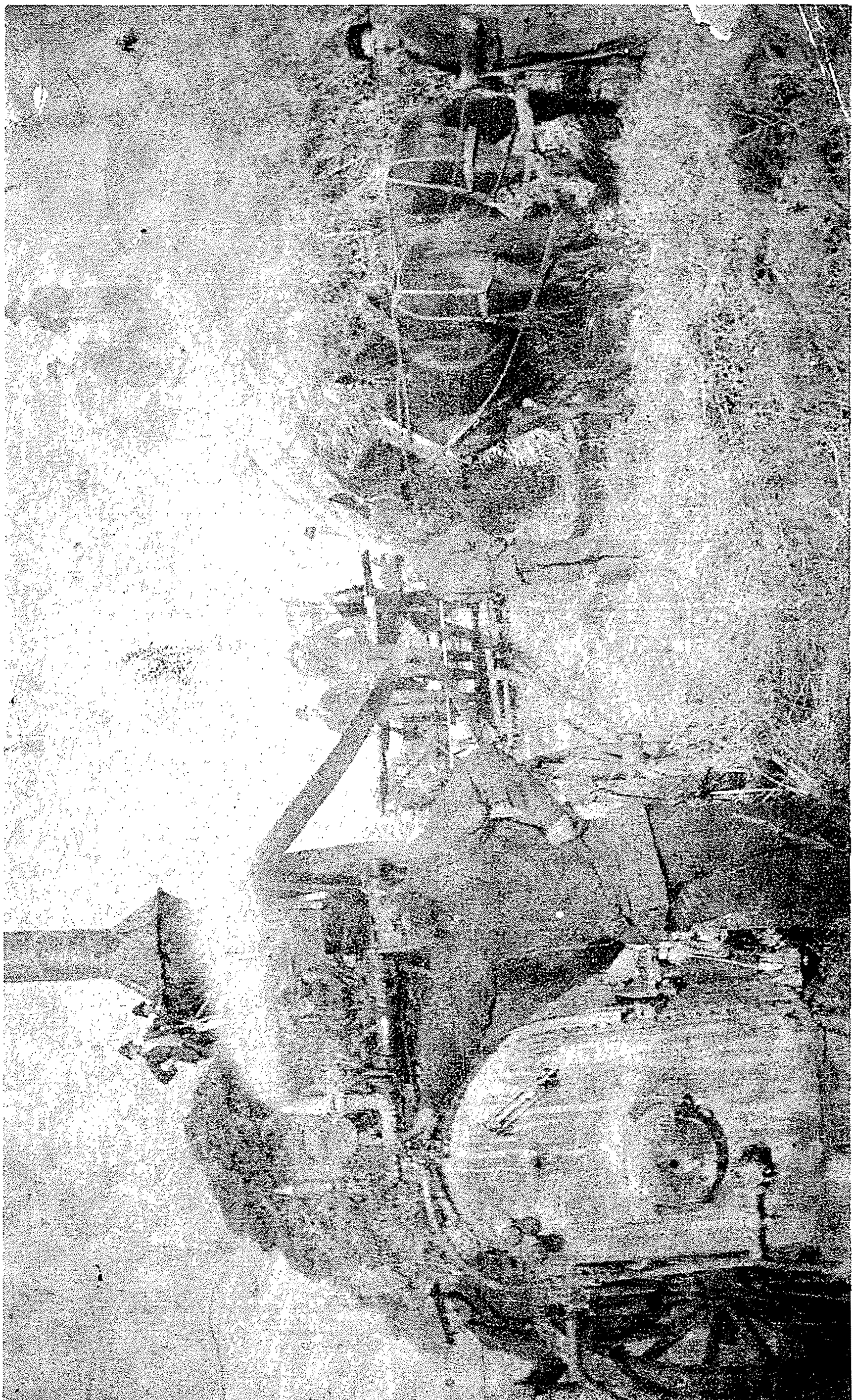
PIONEER SETTLEMENTS

During the middle seventies a mild depression was being felt, not only in Europe but also in Eastern Canada. The economic situation was aggravated by poor prices for farm produce, mounting taxes, poor wages for tradesmen, and the fact that considerable land which had cost so much to clear, was showing a marked decrease in productivity. The areas suitable for farming had become exhausted, having come to an abrupt halt against the wilderness of muskeg, rocks and forests north of the Great Lakes. By 1887 we find that settlers to the south of the International Boundary line had advanced beyond the Mississippi River. In fact, the first rancher had located in Southern Alberta in 1872 by the way of Montana.

In 1878 we find Finley Young, Coulters, Weirs, Henderson and others settling at La Riviere (Wakopa). By 1880 Jim Burgess and Bill Smith had located at Old Desford, also Rentons and Uries by Turtle Head Creek on the west end of the Turtle Mountains, just south of where Old Deloraine and the Land Office were located that same fall.

The word they took back or sent by letter concerning the abundance of wood for timber or fuel, plenty of water and broad open prairie with mile long unbroken furrows and much of it free, created a stampede for the West of not only farm folk but many tradesmen as well. During the spring of '82, it is said that every hour of each day in May, new settlers in wagons or Red River Carts could be seen following the trails in search of free land. They came by way of Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Paul to Emerson. Some had complete outfits. Others procured what they could afford at this point. They paid high prices for oxen which were supposed to have been broken and exorbitant prices for seed grain and potatoes. Many pioneers never forgot the type of deals that they were handed at this point.

The settlers of 1878 and '79 came by way of the Commission Trail from Emerson. The following year many came by the way of the Assiniboine River to Millford, near Wawanesa, on stern wheeler, flat bottom boats, and spread south and westerly via the Rowland Trail which ran south from Lang's Valley to Rowland townsite 10-4-18. Here the trail forked. One branch went southwesterly again to the Cherry Creek district, the other continued on south to the Wakopa area which was usually referred to as the "Wakopa Timber Trail."



When the railway reached Grand Valley (Brandon) in 1882, the majority used this route, bringing into being the Brandon or Heaslip Trail, named after John Heaslip who drove down the mail from Brandon to our southwest area. It crossed the Souris River at Sheppard's ferry, southwest to Sheppardville 3-5-20, then southerly to the townsites situated near or on the Commission Trail by the timber line of the Turtle Mountains. Most of the grain from our area went over this trail until the fall of 1885, when the Manitoba South Western Railway reached Cherry Creek, known as Boissevain, in '86. In 1884 the first overseas shipment of wheat from Canada, was sent from Brandon to Glasgow, Scotland, totalling one thousand bushels. Possibly some of this grain may have been grown in this district.

Naturally the homestead land along the Turtle Mountains was taken up first, being close to a source of building material and fuel. To the northeast, in the Lang's Valley area, settlement in 1880 was general. While to the south and west, the open prairie land around Whitewater Lake—few homesteads were taken up until '82 when the rush for free land reached its height in the Souris Basin Area.

There were those who had never seen a farm and experienced heartbreaking ordeals. In their spare time from homestead duties, they would do whatever job they could find, associated with their earlier profession. Until the district had been settled for some time there were few opportunities for professional men, except blacksmithing. When large barns and houses were needed by the pioneers, carpenters and masons were in demand.

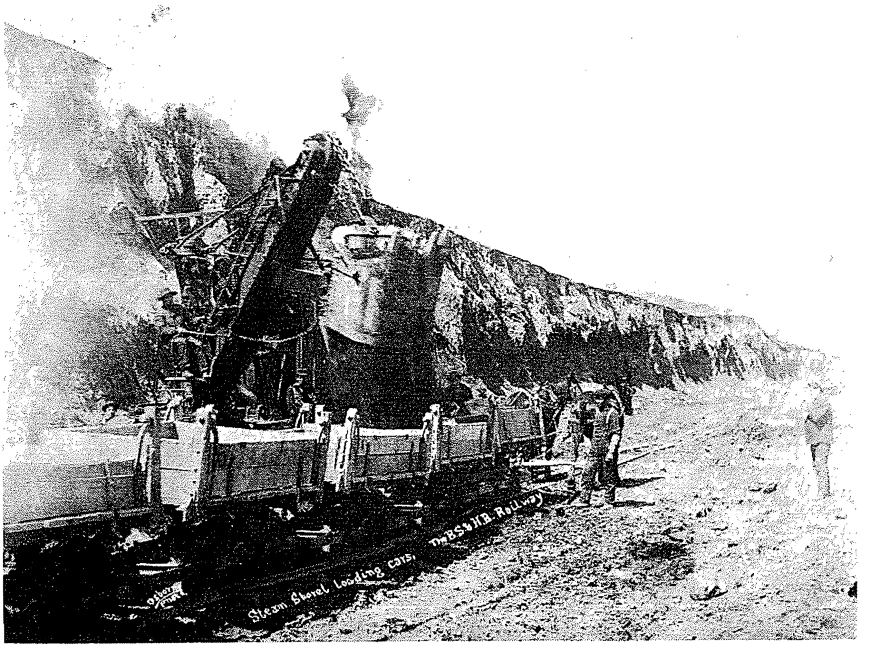
Pioneers who came from farms in the East and the Old Country were quick to adjust themselves to meet the demands and rigors of early settlement, but they too suffered many hardships.

Of the pioneers who settled our area, the majority came from Eastern Canada, principally Ontario, and the balance from the British Isles. However, on the north side of Whitewater Lake, a small community of French speaking people settled. In years that followed until the 1920's most of the immigrants were from the same source. Then we find people of Belgian origin settling in the Boissevain district and in 1924 Mennonites from Southern Russia settled in the Whitewater area on the land formerly known as the English settlement.

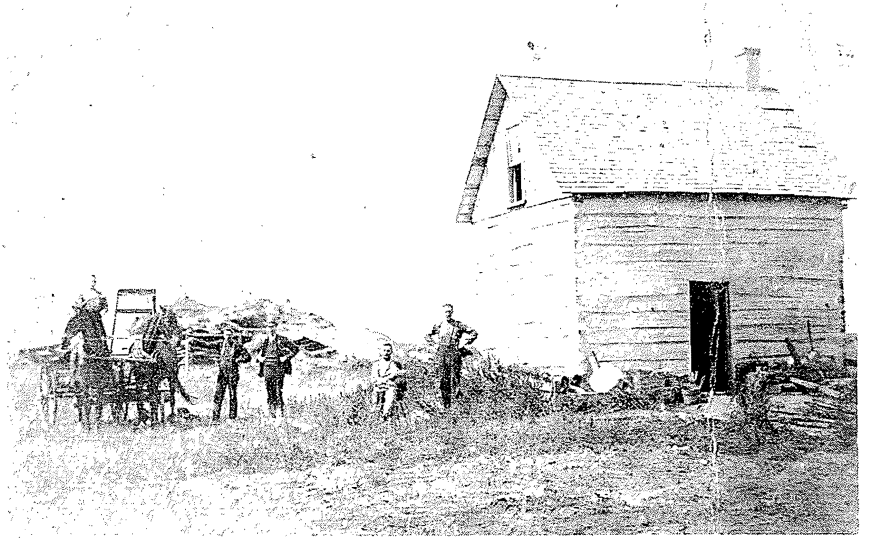
And so, mainly through hardship and determination, what was part of the Redman's kingdom for unknown ages, had been transformed by the walking plow, from endless miles of waving grass to one of Canada's finest grain growing regions.

The Cassidy Threshing outfit. A John Abel, formerly owned by Porrith Bros. of Old Desford in 1882, first steam power south west of Brandon.

— Photo courtesy Miss J. Armstrong



Steam shovel loading mule — drawing cars crossing the Souris River when building The Great Northern Railway. (B. S. and H. B. Railway)



Peter Henderson Homestead, 1884-6. James Henderson on rack; Peter Henderson standing beside house; James Rae seated with James Jr. — Courtesy Mrs. Lily Henderson

BOISSEVAIN

The land that was to become Southern Manitoba had lain for changeless ages beneath the summer suns and winter snows. Explorers reported it to be wonderful buffalo country, but paid it scant heed as potential farming land. The prairie fires that swept it periodically revealed an endless plain, rolled up in places into low laying wooded hills; covered with the bleached bones of buffalo and pock marked with badger holes. Wild geese and ducks clamoured around every water hole. Prairie chicken drummed on every knoll and over it all the wandering red man reigned supreme.

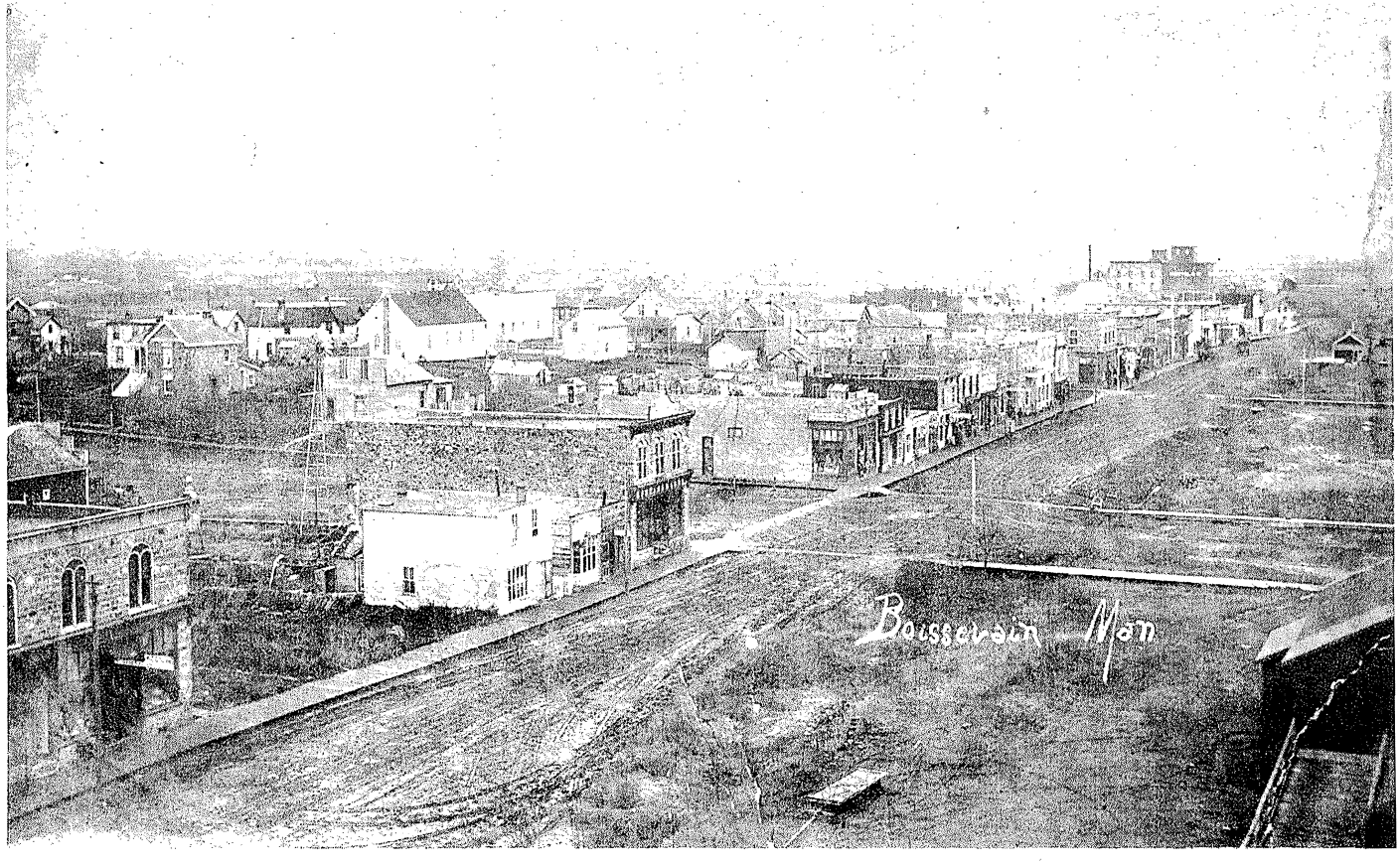
Prior to the eighties a few hardy souls had drifted West by Red River cart or covered wagon and had begun to turn the prairie sod. Their reports fired the imagination of the folk back home. This, coupled with a vigorous immigration drive overseas started the great trek westward in the early eighties. The greater movement was from the barren and rocky farms of old Ontario. The C.P.R. received their charter in 1881, amid bitter controversy, to build a transcontinental rail line, the famous "two streaks of rust that would never pay for the axle grease." The steel reached the tent town of Brandon in '82, which then became our nearest market. In '85 a branch line from Winnipeg was put through Southern Manitoba and a work train reached the Cherry Creek vicinity on November 23rd. The late Mrs. W. H. Latimer who came West in '82 recalled that the first train reached Cherry Creek (later Boissevain) on Christmas day in '85. Her eldest daughter was born the same day. In July '86, Sir John A. and Lady McDonald made an inspection trip over the new line and Mrs. Latimer with her seven months old daughter in her arms was on hand to greet them. She even recalled that Lady McDonald wore a plain print dress. It might be mentioned here that the town of Boissevain was named after a Dutch financier whose firm loaned money to the C.P.R. Incidentally, Mr. Boissevain's grandson, who bears the same family name, dropped in to look the town over in '55 while touring Canada.

Business and professional men flocked in on the heels of the railroad and a village rapidly sprang up. The present townsite is located on the homesteads of Robert Cook and Tom Johnson, who sold lots to the newcomers.

Among the first to locate in Boissevain were the following:

Alf. Ashdown (of Winnipeg Ashdowns) had the first hardware store. A second hardware followed operated by Mr. Butchart, who also had a hardware in Deloraine. Incidentally, he was a brother to the man who originated the famous Butchart Gardens so familiar to west coast visitors.

The first general store was owned by Mr. and Mrs. E. Nichol and was used until recently as a billiard hall on the West end of Main St.


Bousserolin Mon

During the same summer, Morton's Store was moved from Wassewa to Boissevain because of the new rail facilities. Previously, W. H. Latimer had freighted supplies from Emerson to Wassewa, a two hundred and sixty mile round trip, following the old Commission Trail.

The first post office was located in the rear of McLaren's General Store, with A. McKnight as postmaster, but was later moved to the Masonic hall. The first building standing on the townsite was a 12 x 12 log house, the original homestead residence of Tim Johnson. It occupied the site upon which Parker Patterson's house now stands. The first lumber to reach the town was sawn at Morton's mill at Lake Max and hauled in by J. J. Musgrove and Jas. Morton. W. J. McKinney also hauled lumber about that time.

The first blacksmith shop was located across Main St., north of the Recorder office, and was run by Sam Butler and Frith. This was closely followed by another operated by R. A. Musgrove and located where today's Royal Bank stands.

Early drug stores were operated by Mr. Cowan and J. A. Wright. Mr. Wright also built "Wright's Hall," which served until 1910 when a town hall was erected. Wright's Hall was the gathering place for stormy political meetings, travelling hypnotists, minstrel shows, local dramatics, dances and, on several occasions, Pauline Johnson gave recitals in the hall.

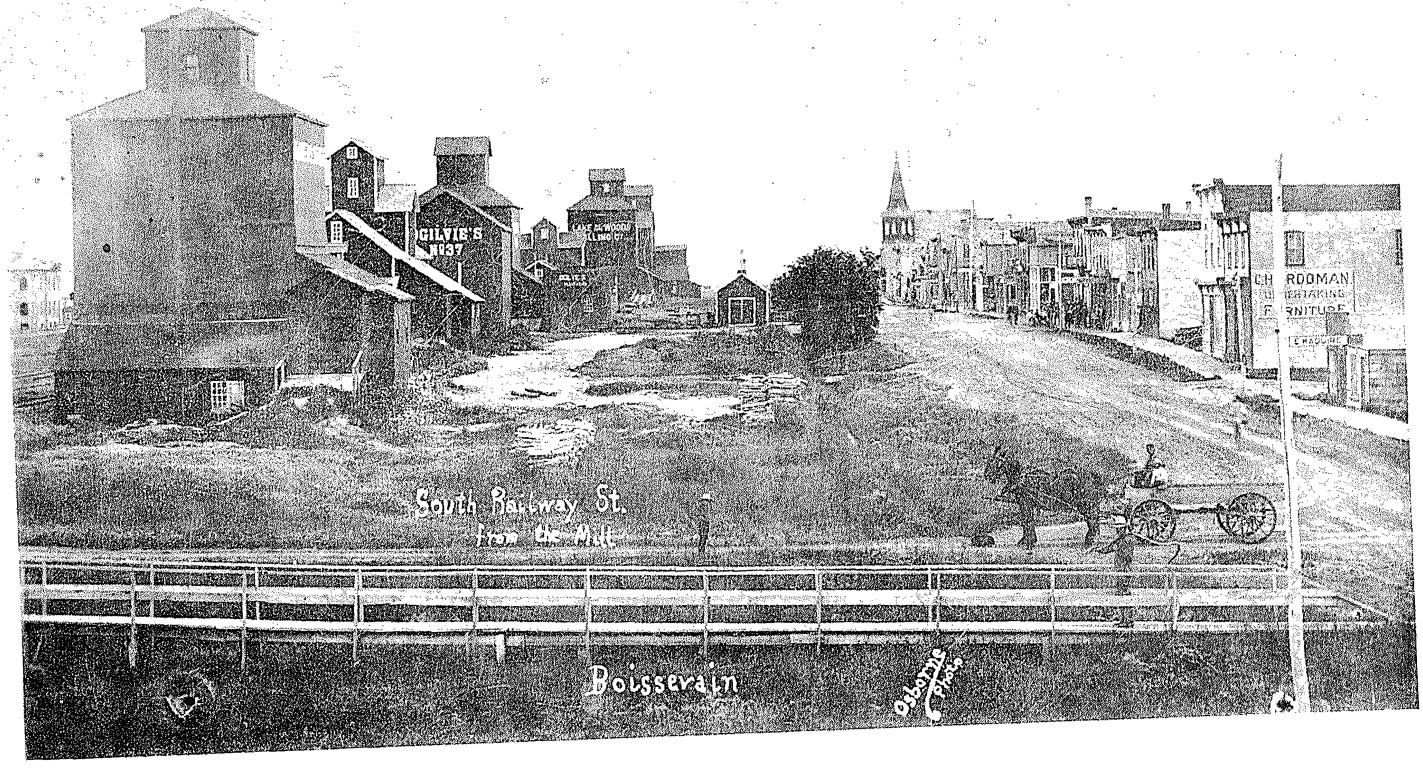
An early furniture store was operated by W. Lambert, J. Sheppard was the cobbler, and A. Bucham handled the tailoring business for many years. The first butcher shop was run by W. Woodward, followed shortly by W. Hanley, a freighter in the Riel Rebellion.

Jack Elliot, who became one of Manitoba's best known auctioneers, built the first livery barn with accommodation for 100 horses. The building today houses Love's Implement business. He also built the house now occupied by F. J. Gunnlaugson.

The first harness shop, so vital in early days, was opened by W. C. Cottingham, later taken over by J. T. Cooper. The first baker was J. Spiers and the first jeweller was J. F. Gromalte. Early general stores included McKnights, McLarens, J. D. Baine's and McEwens. The first restaurant was run by Fred Tripp and the first barber shop by Fred Ritchie.

The first lumber yard was opened by W. U. Wade and located where the Legion Hall now stands. Other very early lumber yards were run by E. Nichol and C. W. Plummer. Preston and McKay ran the first grist mill and Arthur Aitkens served the district for many long years with his machine shop. Donald Sutherland ran a notion shop and S. Fuller was listed as the town's first painter.

Looking west on Main St. — Photo courtesy Harvey McKinney


GILVIE'S
No 37
South Railway St.
from the Mill
Boissevain
Osborne Photo

The first weekly published was The Boissevain Globe, owned and edited by W. H. Ashley, but a manuscript had previously come out edited by J. J. Musgrove. Mr. Ashley had previously freighted from Winnipeg to Edmonton, being all summer on a trip.

Boissevain's first school children had to walk a mile west of the village to Nimitaw School (which was later moved and re-named Caranton). School was later held in the Masonic Hall, the first teacher being W. T. Musgrove. In 1889 a two room school was built, with W. T. Musgrove and Miss A. Holden in charge. Mr. Musgrove planted the maples that grow on the school grounds today. The stone school was built in 1894 and still carries the names of the trustees engraved in the bell, Dr. Schaffers, Jas. Rae and John Hettle.

Cabe Ryan built the first hotel. It was located on the corner of North Railway and Stephen St. It burned in '88 and a new Ryan House was built on Main St. The building is now owned by John Sushelnitsky.

Jas. Rae had the McCormick agency across from the first Ryan House. R. G. Willis and Jas. Reekie had the Massey agency. Other implement agents were Bob Orr and John Hettle.

The first bank was privately owned by Mr. Cowan. This was followed in '89 by the Commercial Bank located where the Peace Gardens Cafe now stands. The Union Bank took over in '91.

The first church services were held in a box car which also served as a depot for a short time. The Presbyterian Church was the first to be built, the first minister being Alexander Cameron. He homesteaded the N.E. ¼ of 26-3-20, and this land is still referred to by oldtimers as the Preacher Cameron quarter. Before the Church was built, Preacher Cameron held open air services on the banks of Cherry Creek. Often the service was drowned out by singing blackbirds in the willows.

The first Methodist church was the house now occupied by Charlie Oakden, and the parsonage is now lived in by Joe Carter-Squire. The first resident Methodist minister was Oliver Darwin, who at the time of writing, was still living in Vancouver at the age of ninety-seven. Both early churches had small cemeteries which were moved to the present location during the summer of '86.

The early homes were well and truly built and many are still in splendid shape. Dr. Cornell built the house now occupied by Mrs. Jean Mains, and Dr. Wilbee now lives in the house built for Mr. Nichol.

The first Land Titles office was located just south of the Jack Cameron residence.

The first jail stood where the Rest Room is today. It was here that Ed. Allan and Joe Young lodged Walter Gordon in 1900 when

1903 — Main Street looking east — Photo courtesy W. V. Udall

After the big fire in 1889 — Photo courtesy E. I. Dow

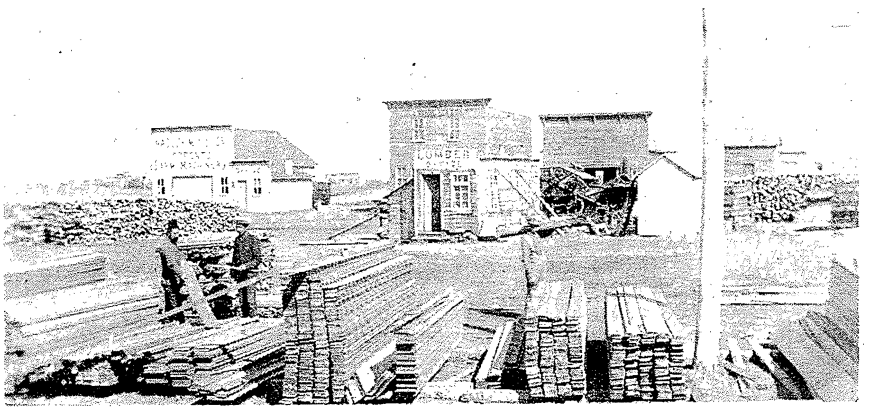
he was brought back to stand trial for the murder of Smith and Daw.

Among professional men we find the first lawyer to be John Morrow, followed by N. P. Buckingham, and then C. Y. Mackenzie. The first medical men were Dr. Cornell, followed by Dr. Shaffner, Dr. Cartner and Dr. F. V. Bird. The first Veterinary Surgeon was Dr. Little who spent many years in the district. Dr. Rutledge also practised in the early days.

Since '82, grain had been hauled to Brandon, but the first grain hauled to Boissevain was delivered to Morton's Warehouse by J. J. Musgrove, 5-3-19.

The first Sports Day was held on the farm of Wm. Smith, 17-2-20, in '83. The first picnic held by Cherry Creek in '87 (Golden Jubilee) was held in Musgrove's Grove, 14-3-20.

Among those few who arrived in the district when the town was young and who are still active today we must list A. R. Welch and C. C. Musgrove.



One of Boissevain's first lumber yards — Photo courtesy E. I. Dow

Since we are attempting to record the birth and development of Boissevain, it would seem necessary to list some dates and facts. Briefly we offer the following:

1881-1883—Cherry Creek, R.M. of Turtle Mountain.

1183-1886—Cherry Creek, R.M. of Deloraine.

1886—Name Cherry Creek changed to Boissevain.

1887—Peter Robertson, Tom Buck and Jim Wilson contract to grade Main St. for $800.00.

1891—Morton Municipality established.

1891-1898—Boissevain was Ward 4 of Morton Municipality.

1898—Messrs. Plummer, Baine and Price waited on R.M. of Morton re incorporation of village of Boissevain.

1899—First Village meeting. Mayor, J. S. Reekie; Councillors Schaffner, Hurt, Baine and Graves; Sec. Treas. R. Morrison; Ed. Allen appointed enforcer of by-laws; R. A. Musgrove, Chief of Fire Brigade. Two dollars to be paid first teamster hitching to fire engine when alarm given. Forty elm trees ordered for street planting.

1900—First mention of street light expenditure (gasoline).

1901—Tenders called for first sidewalks.

1902—Ed. Allen resigns. J. B. Young appointed. Mayor empowered to buy suit of clothes for Young, not to exceed $20.00, also handcuffs, nippers and cap.

1903—Permission granted W. J. King to erect light poles for purpose of electric lighting system. First gravelling contract let to W. J. Tait at 45c per yard.

1904—R. Morrison resigns as Sec. Treas. G. C. Smith appointed. By-law passed to have local Company take over electric lighting and telephone system. Motion passed to charge provincial government 50c daily for all provincial prisoners locked up in the local jail.

1905—Tenders called for cement sidewalks. Turtle Mountain Milling Co. take over electric light plant and supply street lights at 70c per month for each 16 C.P. light.

1906—Boissevain incorporated as a town. Engineer appointed to appraise cost of water and sewage. Report filed for future consideration.

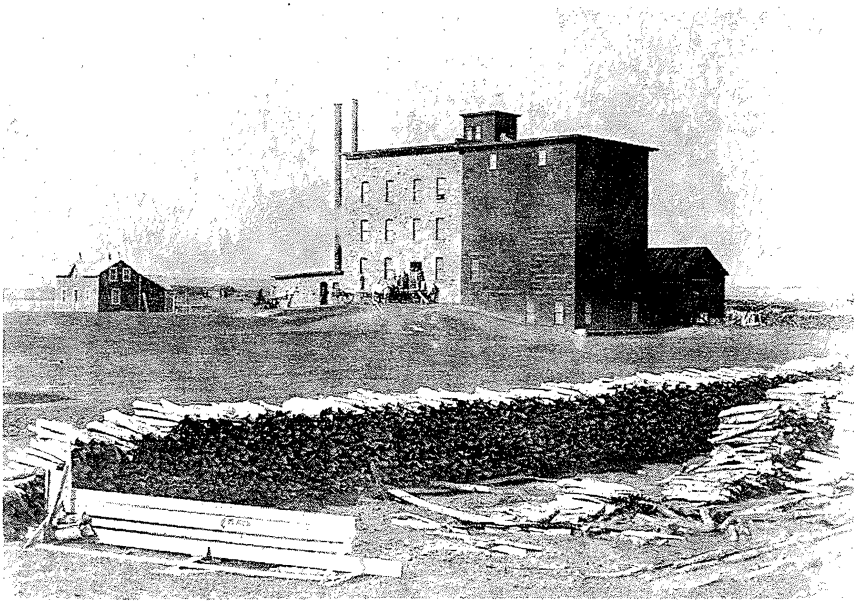
1907—First grant made to Agricultural Society ($75.00).

1908—By-law passed to establish a debt of $15,000.00 to establish electric lighting system for the town. H. S. Price erects first gasoline tank.

1910—Debentures By-Law passed for $12,000.000 to build town hall, $5,000.00 for cement sidewalks.

1911—Autos assessed for first time and put on tax roll. Touring cars $7.00, Runabouts $5.00.

1912—Request sent to provincial government to have engineer report on feasibility of water supply from dam at Musgrove's ravine.



Boissevain's first flour mills, picture taken 1889 — Photo courtesy W. Moncur

1914—J. Richardson replaces R. Hurt as plant engineer.
1915—K.W. charge reduced from 20c to 15c.
1918—Rest room established and grant made.
1920—G. C. Smith resigns. H. J. Phillips appointed Sec. Treas.
1922—$7,500.00 debenture sold at 7% for erection of skating rink.
1929—By-law passed to accept Manitoba Hydro for power in Boissevain. J. B. Young resigns as Constable. Geo. Williams appointed.
1930-1937—Relief issues main business of council.
1944—H. J. Phillips passes. C. N. Mains appointed Sec. Treas.
1946—Memorial Hospital building commenced.
1952—Waterworks question again considered.
1954—Construction waterworks system underway.
1955—June 15th official opening of waterworks system.
1956—Boissevain and District celebrate 50-75 Jubilee.

BOISSEVAIN TODAY

Realizing that many ex-residents who read this book will be unable to visit the old home town, we feel it necessary to add a few brief lines.

The town has now a first class paved highway, No. 10, running north through Brandon to the Riding Mountain Park, and beyond to the Swan River country; and running south to connect with

Queen's livery and Queen's hotel — Photo courtesy Wm. Lee

major U.S. highways. No. 3 Provincial Highway serves traffic East and West. The International Peace Garden lies South on No. 10, where modern customs buildings and residences have just been completed. The town is beautifully treed and main streets paved. A new Memorial Hospital has recently been built, as well as a three-sheet curling rink and a modern theatre. What is considered to be the most efficient water and sewage system in the province has been put into operation, the water coming from the bush lakes and impounded in a dam close to the town. Boissevain boasts many thriving businesses, outstanding among them being the Dring Laminated Rafter Factory. This firm, with a floor space of 21,000 square feet, and an annual pay roll of $100,000.00, sell their product from Montreal to Victoria, north to The Pas, and South to U.S. points.

The town is fortunate in having live and up-to-date civic bodies and other organizations who are doing a commendable work.

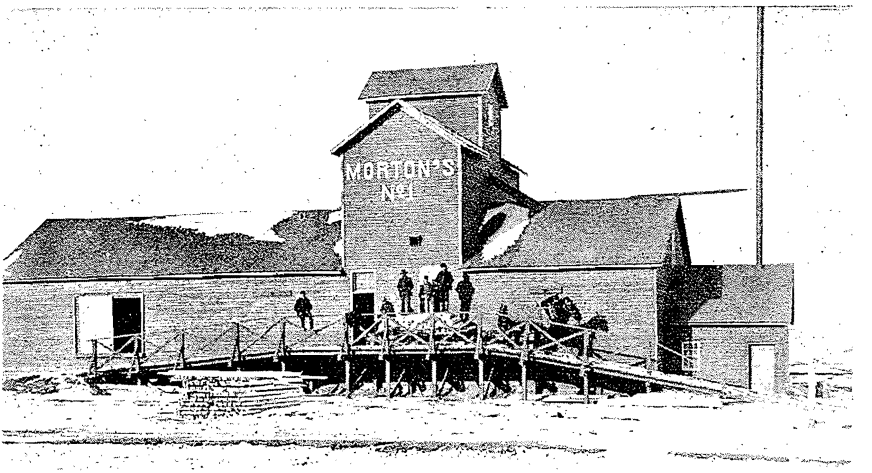
OLD DELORAINE

The story of Deloraine and the district round about ties in with the history of Southwestern Manitoba. Deloraine, as it was then located, was the jumping-off place for the settler, who felt that this was his destination . . . here was the objective: the rolling land, with good soil, plenty of water and firewood in the foothill reaches of the Turtle Mountains, was all that was needed to round out a pleasant place to venture into the business of farming and stock-raising. The area supplied all that was required. The building of homes was after the fashion of early settlers in many other newly inhabited areas: log shacks, with sod roofs, were the make-shift until better times and easier means of transportation provided the settler with better building materials. Roads also came later, schools and churches followed the homesteaders.

The desire for the accustomed combination of wood, land and water resulted in settlement appearing first in the semi-wooded ravines north of the Turtle Mountains and in the wooded parts of the Souris River Valley. The plain beneath them remained unoccupied for almost another two years, and it was comparatively sparsely settled for another fifteen years.

Oliver and Herb Smith are said to have been the first two settlers to have constructed a dwelling-place on the land sloping from the Turtle Mountains to Whitewater Lake. They had been employed with a survey party working in the district and in 1879 they constructed a shanty on the S.E. quarter of 17-2-22, not far from the Boundary Commission Trail. They lived in this home during the winter of 1879-80, but in the Spring they went away, returning later to work in a sawmill on the Mountain.

"The first settlers," says Norman Wright, M.A., in his book, "In View of the Turtle Hill," "to reach the Turtle Mountain district



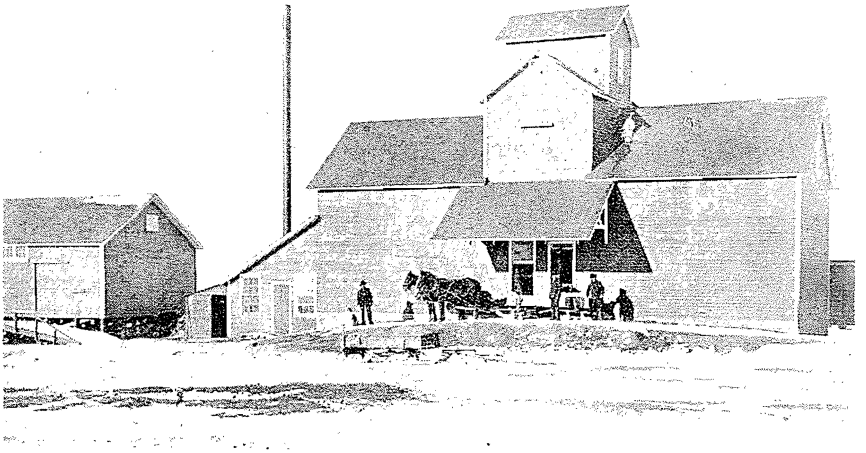
Morton's Elevator, 1886 — Photo courtesy E. I. Dow

and remain permanently on the land they selected, seem to have been the Rentons and the Uries, who arrived early in the Spring of 1880. John Renton had been through the country the year before, while Will Urie had been with the Northwest Mounted Police in the Birtle district. Urie preferred the Turtle Mountain location because of the general belief that railroad connections with Winnipeg would be completed earlier than in the Birtle area. Both men were from the neighborhood of Hamilton, Ontario, and they had gone back for their families. The Uries stayed at Emerson for almost a year, and when the Rentons arrived, both families started along the Boundary Commission Trail which was to be the highway of settlement for Southwestern Manitoba until the C.P.R. reached Brandon late in 1881.

The settlers awaited the opening of the Land Office until Ottawa appointed G. F. Newcombe as the land officer. He arrived in late July, 1880. The assistant officer was P. V. Gauvreau. By the end of 1880, seventeen homesteads with pre-emptions had been selected in township two, ranges 22 and 23.

Among other early arrivals were Ashmore and wife, a son and a daughter, locating on the N. half of 16-2-22; the Johnson Bros. (Phillip and Bing) on 14-2-23. J. P. Morrison and Robert Howatt on 32-2-22. Others close to the Trail, James and John Fleming on 24-2-22 and Robert Dawson and John Taylor on 22-2-22. George B. Smith on 24-2-23, James King on 22-2-23, and Robert Russell on 28-2-23. The year 1881 was a good one for settlement, according to the Land Office records; homestead entries in the Turtle Mountain area totalled 328.

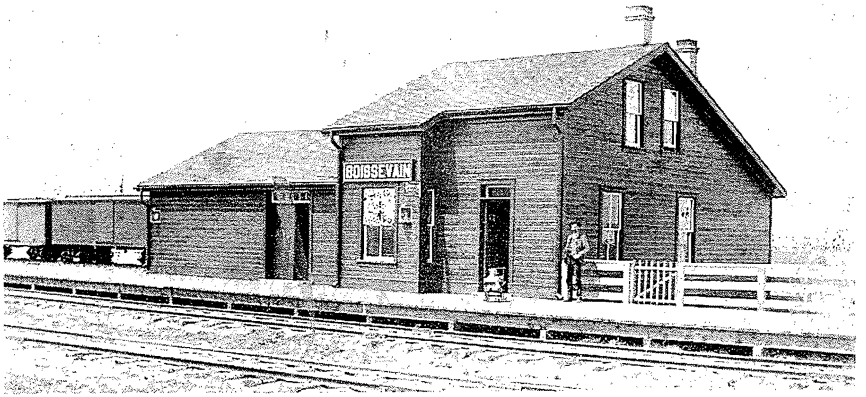
Meanwhile more Ontario settlers were moving in on the second townships of ranges 22 and 23. Andrew Morrison, his wife, and John



Boissevain's first elevator — Photo courtesy E. I. Dow

Morrison took the South half of 28-2-22, which was left vacant when Robert Howatt died. Howatt's funeral, May 12, 1881, was the first funeral in the area. He was buried in a plot of ground on Whitewater Creek, South of 19-2-22. Others arriving, included R. Russell, Alex Craig, the Gages (Albert, Ham and Thomas) and Emerson Lampman. Bera Pinch located on the boundary.

The pattern of settlement was further rounded out in 1882 by the arrival of settlers in the Waskada district, the treeless plain area, between the river and the mountains. John Spence located right on the Commission Trail. John Lee and Richard Wickham came in with Spence and the Rowe families, Sankeys and Lovells with the Nicholls came with the Anglican Church settlement



Boissevain's first station — Photo courtesy E. I. Dow

scheme, and the Smart Bros. located the same year in the Waskada area.

In Old Deloraine, James Cavers and A. P. Stuart built a store and laid out a townsite on 30-2-22, on the banks of Turtle Head Creek. This was called Deloraine after J. Cavers' old home in Scotland. They had to freight their goods from Brandon, 70 miles.

After five years in this settlement, the railway made its appearance and located the present station. The old town had two implement dealers, one general store, the Land Office, the Grist Mill, two blacksmiths, two ministers, six agents of various kinds, a law office and a school.

After going through all the worries and inconveniences brought on by the lack of railway transportation, the railroad was finally laid north of the foothills town, and it was necessary to move the buildings to the new town location, as designated by the C.P.R. This was done in 1886 and the moving day was spread over a month.

— Deloraine Times

NINGA

The Man. South Western Railway laid its steel through the Ninga District in 1885, but it was not until 1889 that the townsite was surveyed. That year Mr. C. Sesfield built a store and later a hotel which was rented by W. Coleman. The postmaster was George Robinson and first station agent was Mr. McKinley, the section foreman being C. Peterson.

Fern Hallow School No. 485, situated on NE¼ of Section 24, Township 3, Range 19, was moved into the new townsite in 1898 and became Ninga School No. 485. The first teacher being James Laird at the new site.

The Anglican Church was built in 1904, student in charge, Mr. Cowley. Of the members present at the opening, only Mr. Ferdo Smith remains. Archbishop S. Mathieson of Ruperts Land dedicated the church in 1907.

The Methodist services were first held in the late John Robinson home 16-3-18 in 1889. Mr. Darwin, student in charge at Boissevain, conducted the service, bringing Miss Elizabeth Robinson, teacher at Fairburn School to play the organ. He came from Lakefield, Quebec. The congregation came by oxen, on stoneboats and often on foot, walking for miles.

field, Quebec. The congregation came by oven, on stoneboats and work with volunteer labor being supplied by members of the church throughout the district. In 1926 the church became the United Church.

The Baptist Church was the first built in Ninga, being erected on the present site in 1890. The first clergyman being Mr. A. B. Reckie. Two ladies of the first congregation are still living: Mrs. T.

E. Bell and Miss Jane McKnight. The first elders of the church were W. U. Wade and J. Fisher.

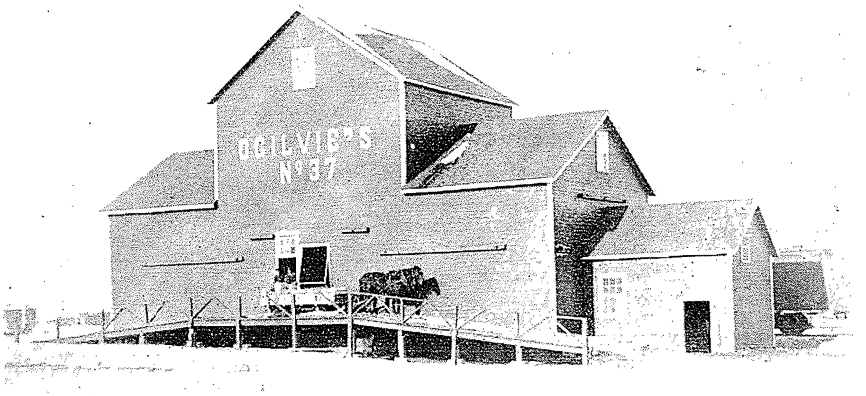
NINGA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The building of the Presbyterian Church at Ninga was begun at September 1905, when the sod was turned and the foundation laid. It was completed the following spring. The opening and dedication service was held on March 25, 1906 with Rev. Sinclair, Winnipeg, guest speaker and Rev. McBain as first minister of the new church.

The church was built by Mr. Robert Johnstone, and the masonry and brickwork done by Lucas and Tripp. The lumber was procured through the Kilgour and Smith Lumber Company, who also supplied the solid oak pews.

The Presbyterian congregation was organized a decade before the turn of the century, holding services in the Baptist church at Ninga until their own church was built. During the early years before the church was built, Rev. Mr. Forsythe was minister for a number of years taking the services at Ninga and two other points: Llyonshall and Burnside. Before holding services in the Baptist church, the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations held cottage services together on Sundays, being served by visiting ministers of both denominations alternately.

The elders and managers of the early days in the Presbyterian Church were: William Nay, Thomas Mackintosh, Thomas Hill, Norman Forsyth, Robert Johnstone, Joseph Kilgour and W. Mitchell. Mrs. Mackintosh and Mrs. Wilkins were president and secretary of the Ladies Aid. The church was filled on Sundays and the family pew was an institution that was much in evidence.



Early Elevators, Boissevain — Photo courtesy E. I. Dow

The first wedding in the church was that of Miss Clara Deacon who was married to Mr. John Bulloch on July 30, 1919.

In 1925 when church union was voted upon, the congregation voted to continue with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. This church held its golden anniversary in 1956: fifty years of holding forth the Word of Life.

OLD WAKOPA (1877 LaRIVIERE)

In the fall of 1876 B. B. LaRiviere went on a hunting trip to the Turtle Mtns. and Whitewater Lake from his home at Nelsonville, North of the present day Morden. He was accompanied by his son-in-law, Lee Severene, and two other companions. Although it was called a "hunting trip," he was mixing business with pleasure. Being of an enterprising nature, the possibility of setting up a store near the old Turtle Hills, in advance of the settlers, was uppermost in his mind. He knew the needs of the pioneers would be many; and to be established and in position to supply their wants would net him neat dividends.

Each rider of the party had his own pack horse, as they did not plan to return to Nelsonville for several weeks. They followed the Commission Trail, and on nearing the timber line of the Turtle Mtns., came to the R.N.W. Mounted Police Fort, short of where the Missouri Fur Trail branches off South to St. Louis. No one was in the building, but they could see it was being used as a stopping place. Continuing on, they came to a spot about a mile beyond the Fort, which they noted had been used by many campers. There were many rings of stones which LaRiviera knew were used by Indians to hold down their tents, in years gone by. This location was in the elbow of Long River, and he felt that this was the ideal site for his store. After two weeks of hunting bear in the mountains, and geese of Whitewater Lake, they returned home.

He spent the winter of 1876-77 preparing for his venture, and early the following spring set off for the Turtle Mtns. with several wagon loads of supplies and about twenty cattle. By the late spring he had built both his house and store on either side of the Commission Trail, which was later to become the Main. St. of La Riviere, as the village was then known. A few years later it was renamed "Wakopa" by an old Indian Chieftain, who thought a lot of the store-keeper—the translation being "White father."

In the following spring of '78, Johnny, Henry and Tom Coulter, William Henderson, Finley Young, Donald and Fred, Robert Cowan and Wier settled in the district.

During the winter of '79 and '80, Harrison Bros. and Williams built a grist mill and saw-mill. They were in full operation when the spring breakup came, both being powered by water wheels. The stones for the grist mill came from France in 1878. Billy Weir

had the first blacksmith shop, and Bob Tyler also had one, four miles west on 2-2-19.

In the summer of 1880 George Scott and Tom Sharpe obtained jobs with a coal prospecting company. A fifteen horse portable steam engine and drilling outfit were hauled to Estevan, in search of coal. It took a week to build a bridge across Wakopa Creek, to move this outfit over. On the return from the west, a shaft was sunk on 5-2-19, with a good quality coal discovered at a considerable depth.

In 1883 T. A. Sharpe, who homesteaded 26-1-19, commenced operating a creamery. George Scott freighted in the necessary machinery from Brandon. This enterprise lasted only a short time, as the owner's cattle had to be destroyed, due to T.B., without compensation.

The first school erected in the Turtle Mountain and Souris Basin area was built at Wakopa in 1882, named Wakopa No. 308. In the previous year, the Coulter Bros. brought in a horse-powered threshing outfit. The acreage was not large, but crops were drawn for miles to a central point, to keep the moving of the outfit to a minimum. Most of the early crops were needed locally, for gristing, feed and seed.

In '80, Williams built a store, and took over the post-office duties. The company of Harrisons and Williams built a boarding-house on the North side of the trail, and a large livery barn on the South side of the village. Several houses were built by '83. Thus the village had become a very busy centre.

It has been said that in one day, during the latter part of May in '82, one hundred and two settlers passed through Wakopa, on every mode of travel imaginable.

In 1880, Presbyterian services were held in LaRiviere's house, and later, when the school was opened, several denominations made use of this new location to hold services.

The village was a very active settlement for several years. When, however, the grist and saw-mill ceased operation, like many other pioneer towns, building by building was taken down or moved away, until other than a few basements, the site once more became part of the original landscape. The waters of Long River, which were harnessed to power the rumbling grist mill and the whining blades of the saw-mill, now flow leisurely through the old dam site, and sparkle as they wend their way on down Wakopa Creek, and one to the Pembina River. White-tail deer browse on the deep rutted, grass covered trail, which was once its main street; and occasionally the silence is broken by the whirr of what is left of the bushland and pin tail grouse.

And so, after a period of busy pioneer days, the happy memories of Old Wakopa lie beneath a mantle of forest green.

James Scott
Desford

FAIRFAX IN THE 19TH CENTURY—By JAS. B. KING

Crown School District was organized in 1883. A few years after wards, the people of this district petitioned for a post office and suggested that the post office be named "Crown." For obvious reasons the name Crown was not suitable, and the postal authority gave it the name of Fairfax. The office was situated on the north half of 24-6-21, the home of the late Joseph Taylor, he being the first postmaster. The mail was brought from Souris once a week.

In 1898, the Northern Pacific Railway built a line westward from Belmont and a station was laid out on the J. H. Douglas farm. This station the railway people called "Fairfax." The Fairfax post office which was about seven miles from the station, was shortly afterwards moved to the station site. For a short period J. H. Douglas was postmaster. Hettle and Graves opened a general store at Fairfax and J. L. Hettle took over the postmastership, which he filled in a capable manner for about 20 years. The Northern Pacific lines in the Province of Manitoba were subsequently leased for a term of 99 years by the Manitoba Government and became part of the Canadian Northern which was later incorporated in our present Canadian National.

The spiritual needs of the early settlers were well looked after. Perhaps the first to hold services was Randolph Sparrow, a local resident and an ardent disciple of the Plymouth Brethern, who held services intermittently in most of the local schools. In the eighties, church services were also held in the home of Robert Douglas, the Presbyterian minister from Souris supplying. In the nineties, church services were well organized, Presbyterian or Methodist services being held in the surrounding schools of Crown, Gilead, Plainville and St. Lukes, and Baptist service in at least two of them.

Practically the only outlet for grain the first few years of settlement was Brandon, the flour mill at Souris taking only a limited supply. The building of the C.P.R. line through Boissevain in '85 gave an outlet to the South and the construction of the Brandon-Souris line by the same company in 1889 gave a market to the Northwest.

For several years wood was the only fuel used. The banks of the Souris River gave a supply for a few years and then it had to be hauled from Turtle Mountain. In the late eighties, a number of farmers experimented with straw burners to heat their houses. There were a few inventions of straw burning stoves and straw burning attachments on the market at that time. Those that bought them for the most part used them but a short time, while a few used them an entire winter.

The close of the 19th century saw the present Fairfax with no school facilities, the nearest schools being Gilead, two miles west; St. Lukes, three and one-half miles northwest; and Plainville, four miles south.

The beginning of the 20th century saw the organization of a one-room school and the building of a Presbyterian Church, this being the present United Church. The first Fairfax school district was formed by taking parts of Gilead, Plainville and St. Lukes districts. Later, the present Consolidated District was formed, taking in Plainville and St. Lukes districts and part Gilead district.

MARGARET DISTRICT—1880-1900

What is now known as the Margaret District, was originally the school districts of Greenfield, Landvale, Pinkham and Harmony, each school being the centre of a small community, but with the coming of the railway in 1898, the village of Margaret became the centre of the larger district.

The 25th day of July, 1880, saw the arrival of the first homesteaders, Duncan and Hugh McMillan of Woodville, Ontario, having travelled from Winnipeg with two Red River carts drawn by oxen and loaded with supplies. By chance, they met William and Lachlan McKellar of Glencoe, Ont., on the North bank of what was later to be known as Langs Valley. After spending the night together, they crossed the valley and came out on the open plain to the South. Duncan McMillan decided on the Northwest ¼ of 22-5-18 as a homestead, and Hugh McMillan the S.E. ¼ 28-5-18, both within about a mile of what was to be the site of the present village of Margaret. The McKellars located about two miles to the north and west, in what was to become the Pinkham district.

While the four men mentioned were the first settlers in the area, they were soon followed by others, and within three or four years quite a number had come in.

To settle in the Greenfield district were: John Magwood, Robt. Nixon, John Gorlay, O. Alton, J. Kinnear, H. Cline, D. McDougall, Wm. Robertson, Wm. McFadden, Wm. Irvine, Harry Watson, John Garbutt and Duncan Muir.

In the Langvale district, there were: Jas. and Geo. Lang, Alex Bissett, Geo. Bissett, David Black, Wm. Coulthard, R. Both, H. Booker and Jas. Dalgleish.

In the Pinkham district were: Jas. Muir, Peter Munroe, D. King, Jas. Robertson, John Hettle, Thos. Clarke, John Reekie, Wm. Reekie, Wm. Patton, Robt. Drysdale, Jas. Heaslip, Jas. Fleming and Chas. Walkinshaw.

In the Harmony district, the settlers were: Wm. Long, D. Fitzpatrick, F. Fitzpatrick, Wm. McGuire, Alex Mitchell, Robt. Mitchell, Andrew Mitchell, Wm. McDougall and Thos. Monk.

The first few years in the district followed the pattern peculiar to pioneer life in the West. There was very little money. Lumber, if it could be procured, had to be hauled long distances, so that many of the first buildings were made of sod, however the majority of the

buildings were of log construction, the logs being hauled from the Souris River Valley, or Langs Valley.

Oxen were the general source of power used on the land, and the small acreage grown the first year or two had to be harvested by hand. Until the coming of the C.P.R. to the South in 1885, any saleable grain had to be hauled to Brandon, a distance of some forty miles. As the crop acreage increased, the problem of getting it threshed became very acute. Threshing machines were very scarce and often the work would continue on into the winter, and sometimes grain would stand in the stacks till the following spring. In an effort to solve the problem, a number of farmers in the south part of the area formed a syndicate and purchased a threshing outfit, however owing to a combination of unfortunate circumstances the venture did not prove to be a happy one.

The building of Greogories' Flour Mill on the Souris Rive,r about six miles north of the present site of Margaret village, provided a limited market for wheat, and a convenient source of flour for the few years it was in operation. This mill was operated by water power developed by the building of a mud dam across the river.

The Post Office of Millford, which was situated at the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine Rivers, about thirty miles to the Northeast, was the first Post Office to serve the area. Supplies were also brought in from this point after having been brought from Winnipeg by boat up the Assiniboine River. After the coming of the Railway to the South, Langvale Post Office was opened with Jas. Lang as Postmaster, mail being brought in twice weekly by horse and buggy from Ninga. A few years later the Post Office of Margaret was opened with John Magwood in charge. Mr. Mag. wood held this position until he retired some forty years later; he also selected the name of the village, Margaret being the name of Mrs. Nixon, one of the first women of the district.

In spite of the fact that money was scarce, and building supplies had to be hauled long distances, the settlers were not long in making provisions for schools. Pinkham school was built in 1884, Geo. Lang being the first teacher. Greenfield and Langvale were built in 1885, Miss J. Sproule being the first Greenfield teacher. Harmony was built a few years later.

The first religious services held in the district were conducted in the home of Hugh McMillan, in June 1881. As no women had come in at this date, the congregation consisted of seven men. These men were: Duncan McMillan, Hugh McMillan, Wm. and Lachlan McKellar, John Magwood, Robert Nixon and William Robertson. The minister was a young student travelling through the country, holding services wherever he could get a few people together.

With the building of the schools, which provided community centres, regular services for the summer months at least were pro-

vided and within a year both the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches had full time ministers holding regular weekly services in the different schools. Some of the early ministers of the Presbyterian Church were: Mr. Robt. Patterson, Mr. E. C. Currie, Mr. McIntosh and Mr. Andrews. Some of the Methodist ministers were: Mr. Wm. Kinley, Mr. Morden, Mr. Hopper, Mr. Ireland and Mr. Parish.

One of the special activities that was carried on for several years, in which both denominations took part, was the holding of what was known as field meetings. These meetings took on more or less the nature of revival meetings and would be held afternoon and evening for several days. The meetings were held in what was gnown as Magwoods Grove, about one half mile North of Margaret. The spirit of good will and friendship exhibited in the coming together of the two denominations in this way may have been the forerunner of the formation years later of the United Church.

Mrs. Duncan McMillan, coming to join her husband in 1882, brought with her the first organ to come to the district. For several years this organ was used at special church services and school concerts.

As in all early settlements, the social life was somewhat restricted. The people had to provide their own entertainment by way of house parties and school concerts. One special event that was always looked forward to was the Annual First of July Picnic held at Flemings Grove on the South bank of the Souris River. People would come from miles around in buggies, buckboards and wagons. Baseball, football and races would provide a full afternoon's entertainment, and in the evening supper would be served at a long table where all sat down as one large family. Bill Woodrow of Boissevain would always be there with a refreshment booth, cold lemonade being an important item of his stock in trade as Coke and Seven-Up had not been invented.

Even as early as the late 80's and early 90's baseball had become very popular. Two teams in particular were outstanding, and were considered by many as the best in the southern part of the Province; the one was from the Pinkham district, the other from Langvale. Members of the Pinkham team were: J. W. Scott, Alex and T. Simpson, Joe Simpson, Jim and Joe Patton, Geo. Murray and Dave Thompson. The Langvale players were: Fred, Grant and Harry Lang, Andrew and Alex Bissett, Thos. Rea, Robt. Dunlop, Ben. Davis and John Bissett.

The fall of 1896 saw the building of the first skating rink. This was built by David Nixon on his farm one mile East of the village of Margaret. While it was only a temporary building with posts down the centre, and a straw roof, it became the centre of gravity for the young people for miles around. The following fall a similar

Pioneer plowing — Photo courtesy of J. Marriott

rink was built by J. Sproule across the road from the Nixon farm. This also was only a temporary building, and was followed in the fall of 1898 by what was hoped to be a permanent skating and curling rink in the Village of Margaret, built by A. Sproule and A. McMillan. This rink too proved to be short lived as it was completely demolished the following summer by a wind storm.

Of more than passing interest at the time was the birth of the first baby boy and baby girl in the area. Norman A. McMillan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Duncan McMillan was born Jan. 4th, 1883, and Mildred Cline, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Cline, was born in July of the same year. Mr. McMillan is now practising law in the city of Winnipeg. Miss Cline, who spent her life in church work, is now retired and living in Chelsea, Mich., U.S.A.

The first business places opened in Margaret were: David Dalgleish, general store; Garnet Morris, general store; Wm. Jekill, blacksmith shop; W. H. Thompson, implement business; John Meldrum, lumber business; Winnipeg Elevator Co., with Jas. Inkster as operator, and the Northern Elevator Co., with Wm. Heard as operator. The first Railway office was opened in the Dalgleish store with Jas. Cameron as agent.

With the coming of the Railway in the fall of 1898, and the turning of the century a new era was entered. But even a sketchy history, such as the foregoing cannot be brought to a close without paying tribute to the pioneers of the district. The men and women of these early years were men and women of courage, integrity

and independence, who asked for nothing but the opportunity to work to establish homes for themselves and their families, and a district that would be a fit place for coming generations. As they looked back over the years of hard work and sometimes of privation, it must surely have been with a feeling of satisfaction in work well done. They were standing on the threshold of a new era, had seen many great changes in their day but still couldn't envision the still greater changes that were to come with the advent of the automobile, farm tractors, self-propelled combines, telephones, radio, television, airplanes and modern farm homes with electric lights and running water. — A. J. McMillan

RIVERSIDE AND MINTO DISTRICT

Some time previous to 1880 this district was surveyed into townships. The summer of 1880 the land was surveyed into sections.

In 1880 some of the first settlers to arrive were Duncan and Hugh McMillan, and Joe Fleming; their families coming the next year; also James Lang, Laughie and William McKellar. Then, in 1881, quite a large number of settlers came in among whom were Jimmie Graham, Robert Howard, Tom Wood, David King, Tom Little, S. A. Heaslip, Bob Campbell, Sandy Scott, Captain West, Tom and Joe McKee. These settlers walked from Emerson to Portage la Prairie, which was then the end of steel. In 1882, the year of the big rush, most of the land was taken up.

In 1882 the C.P.R. came to Brandon, and in the fall of '85 the C.P.R. came to Boissevain. A little later the Glenboro branch of the C.P.R. came through to Souris, and in the fall of '98 the Northern Pacific, now the Canadian National, rails were laid, giving us a much closer market at Margaret and Minto.

One of the early activities was a meeting held at Laughlie McKellers, 6-6-18 (McKellar's Bridge) in December 1881, which selected S. A. Heaslip and Hugh McMillan to represent the Northern part of the first Municipality of Turtle Mountain. The other officers were: Jimmie Burgess, John Renton, George Wright, Mr. Coulthard, and Finlay Young of Wakopa as Warden (now called Reeve). At this meeting were Hugh and Duncan McMillan, William and Laughie McKellar, Jas. Lang and son, S. A. Heaslip and son Allan, David King, Tommy Clark, Joe Fleming and Tom and Joe McKee.

Old Riverside Municipality was formed in '83 and closed in '91. The first council consisted of Adam Dunlop, Hugh McMillan and Sandy Scott, Charlie Shaw, Alonzo James and George Foster, with James Lang as Reeve. William Gordon, who later moved to Boissevain, was sec.-treas. during the life of Old Riverside. The municipality consisted of townships 5 and 6, in ranges 17 to 22 inclusive. That is from Main. St. Ninette to eight miles west of Elgin. Later, township 4, in 17 and 22 was added.

For the first election there was only one polling place, and some of the voters lived more than 30 miles from the poll, which was on section 28-5-18. We were in Morton Municipality from '91 until '97, when Whitewater Municipality was formed.

One of the first elections was held in '82, when Mr. Hugh Sutherland was elected to the Dominion House, he being the first advocate of the Hudson Bay Railway. Open voting was used at elections in those days.

The first mail came up in the Assiniboine River by boat from Winnipeg to Milford, a distance of about forty mlies from here. Then, in '82 it came to Langvale. In '83 S. A. Heaslip, N.E. 32-5-19, opened a post office and store. He also ran a stage from Brandon to Old Deloraine.

In '82, the first church services were held in the different homes, then later, services were held in the schools. Mr. John Stewart, a Presbyterian, was the first minister.

In the spring of '83, school was started in Heaslip's granary, with Miss Smith in charge. That summer, Mr. Duncan Gordon built the present Riverside School, and the following year he taught there.

In '83, the first picnic was held at Fleming's Crossing, N.W. 12-6-19, which later developed into an annual event, and was looked forward to with much interest from year to year. Some people came long distances to take part in sports, or to renew old acquaintances.

Mrs. Duncan McMillan (12-5-18) had one of the first organs, which was used at all the affairs, being taken to Riverside School for a concert, also to a picnic at Fleming's Crossing.

The first houses were made of logs, the roof made of poles and sods, or thatched. The stables were mostly made of sods. Bob Campbell's thatched roof took fire from the stove pipe and burned the house down in March '84.

Mr. Howard cut part of his crop in '81 with a butcher knife and shelled it in the house. In '81, Mr. Fleming's crop of over twenty acres was cut with a cradle by myuncle Tom McKee, and bound by hand by Mr. Tom Wood and was threshed with a flail.

About all the implements that were used were the walking plow, harrow and wagon. The grain was sown by hand and harvested, in '81, with a cradle, in '82 with a cradle and reaper. In '83, binders came in; one was a wire binder. The price of a 7-ft. binder, without a bundle carrier, was $360.00.

The first crops were threshed by horse power. The grain was hauled to Brandon, which meant a three day trip with oxen, or two days if horses were used. They crossed the Souris River on Sheppard's Ferry, which was started in the spring of '82, a little east of the present No. 10 Highway; and Heaslip's Ferry, which was started in '83 at what is known as Fleming's Crossing.

The first white baby, South of Minto, was a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Graham, Nov. '81. In our district, John Fleming was born March 27th, '82, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Fleming, 12-6-19, now residing at Fort Maclead, Alberta.

The first wedding in the district was that of Alice King and Wm. McKellar, who were married by Rev. Lantrow, March 18th, '85, at the home of her father, David King, 6-6-18; and the first death was that of Delbert Heaslip, June 11th, '83. He was the three year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Heaslip.

Many stories could be told of these times; such as the time Jack Fleming set his bread and, next day, carried it a distance of about two miles to be baked in Laughie McKellar's oven; of the time Bob Campbell was patching his pants, when a prairie fire broke out and, in his excitement, he used the pants to beat the fire; and when the fire was out, all he had left was the waistband. He had to borrow a pair of pants from a neighbor.

"Timmis" was the first cat in the district. He was brought from Crystal City by the McKees, and, being a good mouser, he was loaned around from McKellars and Kings on the East to Frasers and Tweedies on the West.

Baseball was played at all the picnics, and Dave Hainstock used to catch behind the bat barehanded.

One of the means of travel in those days was an ox, hitched to the stone boat with a box or wash tub for a seat.

Though no one would, perhaps, care to re-live those days of privation and hardship, still, for the pioneers who experienced them, they provided a "yardstick" whereby they could measure all future progress toward modern living, as we know it today.

Margaret McKee

EARLY HISTORY OF OLD ROWLAND

This information is supplied by Seymour Haight, the last living son of a family of four boys of George and Nancy Haight, together with the kindly assistance of Mr. Freeman Ferries, both living in Vancouver, B.C. Seymour is 92 years young, has all his faculties, keen of mind, body and spirit.

The Rowland district had its early beginning in the year 1881 and 1882 situated on S.W. corner of S.W. quarter 10-4-18, and across the road on N.W. Quarter 3-4-18, where old basements and wells can still be found. The townsite was located here owing to a survey for a proposed railway to Brandon, and was named Rowland by Mr. George Haight on account of the rolling contour of the surrounding country-side. At that time it consisted of a Post Office, Mr. George Haight as first postmaster; a store managed by Hugh McKellar with Bob Rogers as silent owner, who later became Honourable Robt.

Rogers; a blacksmith shop, with Neil Johnson as village smithy, who used to walk seven miles to and from his homestead, night and morning to his work; a stopping house, operated by the Haights, where everyone was assured of real hospitality; and a horse exchange, feed and stable; the horses for this business were bought in the Eastern States, shipped to Emerson, Manitoba, and driven across country by the Haight family, sold and traded to the early settlers. This venture however, came to a sad end, when the horses, 40 in number, became sick with Glanders, and had to be shot and burned along with the buildings, as there was no cure for this very contagious disease.

The Post Office however, remained at the Haight farm home until confusion arose in the mails with the town of Roland, which later sprang up on the C.P.R. line between Brandon and Winnipeg. Then it was moved two miles North to N.E. quarter 22-4-18, the homestead of Mr. and Mrs. Hyder, and was named Hyder P.O., and remained there until the siding at Ninga was made, to start a town between Killarney and Boissevain. It was again moved, to the Arnott farm, still under the name of Hyder, with Mr. Alex Arnott as postmaster.

Among the early settlers in the district: Haight family, Fred Topping, Bertrands, Blakelys, Muirheads, Tom and Ed Mustard, Horays, Frank Alds, Billy Barber, Charlie O'Niel, Bill Anderson, Geo. and Tom Cuthbertson, J. K. Wye, Hugh, James and Alex McKnight, Russell family, Tom Wilson, Ferries family, George Vipond.

The first church service was held in the Haight home, Rev. Pat Lawery, a real Irishman as minister. Later Rev. Oliver Darwin, and Rev. Stewart served the community, also a Catholic priest, Father Turcotte. Services were later held in the school house until a fine modern brick church was constructed at the S.W. corner of the S.W. quarter of 13-4-18. The property for this community structure was donated by Mr. David Lister,

In 1887, Rowland School District No. 470 was organized, situated on S.W. quarter 24-4-18, with trustees Tom Wilson, J. K. Wye, and Tom Muirhead; and Ed Muirhead as first teacher. First pupils: Bob and Stella Campbell, Mary Russell, Emily Russell, George and Jim Russell, Flossie, Edith and Will McKnight, Harry Wye, Bailey family, Lizzy and Tom Monk, the Cuthbertsons, Hilson family.

The social life was as you made it in those early days, there being many artists of no mean ability. To mention some—Wm. Blakey, Tom Muirhead, James K. Wray, Ozro Haight and Will Haight. Boissevain social life will remember them all as entertainers in those days.

Also, they had their sport—baseball tournaments, and there were any number of real bat-men. They came from far and near to play the game at the Haight field. When Alex David drove up

with a yoke of oxen hitched to a covered buggy to help swell the crowd—they did get around. Football was also a popular sport; among the enthusiasts were Harry Stover, Herb Powell, Muirhead brothers, who were known to have walked to Ninga, a distance of from seven to eleven miles, to participate in a local tournament.

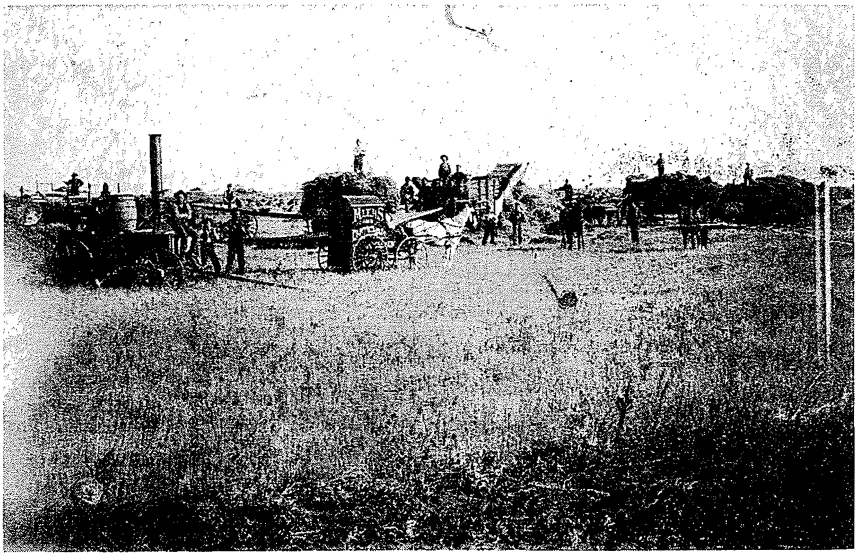
For those who enjoyed hunting, there was an abundance of wild life, consisting of small animals, fox, skunk, coyote, mink, muskrats, weasel, badger, also gophers, which ravaged the early settlers' crops. But why bother with these, when one could take his gun out and get 13 geese at one blast, as Jim Russell did in those days of plentiful fowl. Ducks, prairie chicken, also huge flocks of sand hill cranes were most interesting to watch in their early morning dances.

An early history would not be complete without relating some of the hardships and experiences of the early settlers who followed the old Indian Trail which wound its way through the Brandon Hills across country to Lang's Valley Crossing on Souris River, south to Old Rowland stopping house, from there through the Ferries and Darron farmsteads and South to Old Wakopa.

To mention a few—when Mr. Tom Hillier was walking to Brandon, a distance of about 57 miles, and carrying 100 pounds flour back to his homestead, swimming the Souris River, floating the flour across on a log. This laborious means of survival was also accomplished by Mr. James Dempsey, who would make the crossing swimming the river with his groceries on his back. And again, the experience of Mr. James McKnight, when the family ran out of flour in midwinter, walked to Gregory's Mills on Souris River, was caught in a four-day blizzard, while the family at home lived on a diet of potatoes and milk. One survivor says she has never liked potatoes since. Another experience in a lighter vein, when during a heavy rain-storm, Mrs. Muirhead having set her bread to rise, became ill, and unable to attend it. As was the habit of sod-roofed houses, the roof leaked, ran into the dough, spoiling the batch of bread. Mr. Muirhead in cleaning up the mess, threw the bread dough out-doors, where it was duly consumed by the family pig, which straightaway up and died. Great was the lamentation, because a family with the prospect of pork in a barrel was in a most fortunate position in those days.

Again we could relate instances of these hardy pioneers walking to the blacksmith shop, ten, twelve, and even twenty miles and back, with one plough share to be sharpened; also having to make a few rounds with the blacksmith's oxen and plough, to pay for the sharpening.

Then there was the hazard of winter blizzards which would blow three days one way, and three days back the other way; they were coupled with prairie fires in the fall, which would creep up in the night, though these usually gave some warning by the red glow in the sky.



Photographer Meirs visits Henderson Bros. threshing outfit in the Caranton district northwest of Boissevain 1887 — Courtesy W. D. Henderson, Brandon

In looking back over the experiences of those early days, we who today live in our good homes with electric light and appliances, telephone, radio, television, cars and tractors, our highways and market roads, should stop and pay tribute to the fortitude, perseverance, the high hopes, farsightedness and many heart-aches of the pioneer men and women who laid the foundation for all the privileges we enjoy today.

Allen J. Haight

WHITEWATER

In the late 1890's and early 1900's Whitewater consisted of five elevators, built in the following order: Morton No. 2, later known as the "King Coal" elevator, so named after the fellow who was grain, buyer, John Brondgeest, who had been given that nickname. Then followed Dominion Grain, Lake of the Woods, the Imperial. Imperial had a lumber yard which also housed Bill Hanley's butcher shop, the beef being killed at Boissevain. Sid Fyson, employed by Hanley, drove a meat van throughout the district at this time. A large general store, operated by George Morton, with living quarters above, did a big business. He also had a boarding house of considerable size. Tom Sheppard and Son had the John Deere and McCormick machinery agency. Billy Scott apparently had an interest in this agency for a short time.

The blacksmiths were Billy Scott, Cam Frazer, and Bill Rolston, who had opened the first shop.

North of the townsite, on the N.W. quarter of 17-3-21 a brick yard was located, the product being of excellent quality. W. Barker was the operator and employed between thirty and forty men. A fellow by the name of Hyman was foreman.

Waubeesh, one and a half miles S.E. of Whitewater, was homesteaded by John Brondgeest in 1881, and became quite a settlement. There was a store, a post office called Turtle Mountain, a blacksmith shop, a grist mill that never ground any grain, and a building for a printing press, but the press was never installed.

Jack Livingston drove the stage coach and carried the mail from here to Brandon.

With the C.P.R., which was put through to Deloraine in 1886, running two miles North, the little settlement was abandoned.

The post office was moved to the Robert Scott farm, two miles south of Whitewater.

A freight car was used for a station, with an agent only during the busy season. Gus Westagreen was the first section foreman. This was the start of Whitewater.

Some of the settlers in the early 1880's were: the Hazelwoods, Jake Smith, Lon Jones, Scotts, Lampmans, Turnbulls, Kellers, Huttons, McGregors, Hansons and Charlie Hunt, closely followed by the Rombaughs, Jones brothers, and Tom Robertson. Farther South at Mountainside were the Flemings, Dougalls, John Bells, and the Shepherds.

George Morton, for whom the municipality was named, had a sawmill at Lake Max and he had lumber hauled to Whitewater for the first elevator, store and boarding house in 1888. The post office was moved here at this time.

Fred Peters, who came to run the store for George Morton, later acquired all of this property.

Farther east were the Sankeys, Tatchells, Leonard Thompson and John Nicholson.

In the early 1890's, new settlers to the district were the Tom Wilsons, Carlsons, Kings, Zetterstroms, Swansons, Robertsons, Christiansons and the Rombough family, to be followed soon by the Hills, Frasers, McKays, Whites, Bates and Billy Scott.

In July 1900 Charlie Daw and his friend Jake Smith were murdered on the former Charlie Sankey farm.

The children of the community attended Mountainside School, which was two and a half miles South of Whitewater, until 1894, when school was started in a room above the store with Miss Emma Rombough as the first teacher. The school, Petersburgh, was built in the village the following spring.

The Whitewater football team won the Manitoba championship in 1898.

Church services were first held in the Mountainside School, then in Petersburgh until 1904 when a Presbyterian Church was built. It was opened by Dr. Carmichael with Rev. J. Hamilton as the first minister. Previous ministers of the community were Revs. Munroe, Law, and Dewar.

In 1912 a consolidated district was organized between Mountainside, Whitewater and Strathallan and called Waukeemo. This was dissolved in 1915, as it was realized that these districts were not suitable for consolidation.

Then we come to 1913 when Mountainside has a roalroad, C.N.R., and the farmers that previously hauled grain to Whitewater had an elevator.

About the same time the C.P.R. built a railroad on the North side of Whitewater Lake and the grain teams that plied across the lake all winter ceased and the village began to dwindle.

The store was burned in 1913 to be replaced by a smaller one. The lumber yard, implement shed, boarding house, blacksmith shop and elevators were torn down one by one, or hauled away.

Now to 1924 when we saw a great change in our Whitewater district with the coming of the Mennonite people from Southern Russia. Where there were large grain fields and scattered homes, we saw little houses springing up on many half sections. Soon trees were surrounding the houses and we knew that homes had been established.

In the late 1940's when men came with seismographs and tested the land for oil, and then agents to buy our oil rights, little thought was given to it. It was not until they started drilling on Gid Rombough's old place, now Abram Dyck's, in the summer of 1953, and oil was struck, that excitement grew.

We have now six producing wells in our Whitewater field.

Our community and village is now thickly settled with the Mennonite people and a few of the old timers, the Zetterstroms, Caldbicks, the J. Wilsons and the Robertsons; and so we close with a new era in the Whitewater district.

Written by Whitewater W.I.

HISTORY OF MUNICIPALITIES

When the earliest settlers arrived in this district, it was part of the Northwest Territories and the only administrative authority was the Turtle Mountain Land District, which was administered from the Lands Office at Old Deloraine. The duties of the officials of the district consisted only of the registration of homesteads and pre-emption entries. With the extension of the boundaries of the province in 1881 part of the added territory consisting of Townships 1 to 6 in Ranges 17 and 22 were formed into the Rural Municipality

of Turtle Mountain. The first reeve of the municipality was Finlay Young. The excessive size of the municipality, with the inadequate means of communication, resulted in the division of the district into three rural municipalities, Turtle Mountain consisting of Townships 1 to 4 in Ranges 17 to 19, Deloraine consisting of Townships 5 and 6 in Ranges 17 to 22. The first reeve of Deloraine Municipality was James Fleming; of Turtle Mountain, Wm. Ryan and of Riverside H. McMillan. The boundaries of the municipalities have been changed at various times, until in 1896 they assumed their present form.

With the organization of the district into municipalities, provision was made for the erection of Judicial and County Court Districts and Land Titles Districts.

With the extension of the boundaries of the province the district was included in the Western Judicial District with its centre at Brandon, and Boissevain became the centre of a County Court Division. The Hon. D. M. Walker was the first county court judge, and was succeeded in 1891 by the Hon. T. D. Cumberland. In 1902, the Southern Judicial District was formed and the first judge was Corbet Locke, who was succeeded by G. T. Armstrong, who in turn was succeeded by the present judge, Hon. J. Milton George.

The first Registry Office was located at Old Deloraine; later with the coming of the railway at Deloraine, and in 1902 was moved to Boissevain.

CHAPTER FOUR

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

In the writing of history, whether national or local, interest for a long time concentrated upon political and constitutional questions, forms of government and their development. Religion was not disregarded, but little consideration was given to economics, how men earned their living and how they spent their income. Such a branch of history is of absorbing interest as it deals with the every day doings of the community. The economic history of a purely agricultural community might be considered as a subject requiring no special investigation, but it is bound up with many matters which can be considered as part of the nation's history—the government's land policy, railway policies, trade policies, various strains of wheat or the invention of various types of machines. To deal with these adequately would require much study and investigation, and is beyond the scope of a local history, but there are certain factors that are peculiar to our district and these are worthy of consideration.

Among the early settlers of the district there were members of numerous trades and occupations, such as merchants, clerks, millworkers, stone masons, bricklayers, plasterers, wheelwrights and carpenters. The intention of all was to make their living from the soil and all who were eligible, made entry for a grant of government land. In acquiring land they had no intention of becoming peasant proprietors, living on what they could produce, and producing only what was essential to their needs. They had a vision of unlimited quantities of wheat being grown in the West, and made available for export, and were part of the system of Capitalism which then embraced the whole world.

The classical school of economists, beginning with Adam Smith, has maintained that wealth is derived from land, labour and capital, and the land acquired by the early settlers, either by homestead or pre-emption was the source of the wealth of the district. The methods of farming were of the simplest nature, and nothing was then known of crop rotation, soil erosion, summer-fallowing or strip farming. Having located a homestead, each farmer set about breaking the land, the average area broken each year not exceeding fifteen acres. None of the farms in those days exceeded 320 acres, and by 1885 not more than a fifth of the land was under cultivation.


Wm Wilsons Outfit Threshing near Roosevelt 1908

As a factor in the production of wealth, the buildings were of importance. The first houses were sod shanties, which were not models of architecture, but they had the merit of being economical to construct as the only tool required was a plow. The upturned sods were picked up and placed one upon the other, breaking the joints. One door and one window served the purposes of the household, and the roof was made of poles surmounted by a layer of sods. Following the sod shanties came the log house, which in turn was The floors were likewise made of poles levelled with an adze. displaced by frame buildings patterned after the dwellings in Ontario. In the early days of the present century, large houses of brick or cement blocks became common to accommodate the larger families which were then the order of the day. The earliest barns were of the most promitive type, but with the increase in stock more elaborate barns were constructed, many of them with the lower story of stone.

The equipment owned by the earlier settlers were meagre, and an inventory in a chattel mortgage given in 1888 to secure the price of the minimum requirements is enlightening. Each item is set out with the price, and the document reads as follows:

One yoke oxen	$125.00
Cow and calf	37.00
One set ox-harness	9.80
One plow	22.50
One wagon	67.50
Lumber—290 feet 2x4's	4.04
1132 feet boards	16.50
Windows	1.20
35 pounds nails	1.40
Saw .80, hammer .37, axe .95, screwdriver .22, hay-fork .37, rake .14, spade .64, shovel .64. Total	4.13
Stove $12.75, fittings $5.25, pipes .89	18.89
One bag flour $2.20, bag oat meal $2.50, bag beans $2.85 bag sugar $3.85	11.30
155 pounds bacon	17.05
One can syrup	2.40
One box soap	2.05
Five pounds of tea	1.65
One bag salt	.15
Matches	.15
Pepper	.25
Powder	.40

Such an inventory is typical of the equipment and supplies with which many of the pioneers entered on their work.

The first sowing of wheat by the pioneers never exceeded fifteen acres. The seed was sown broadcast and harrowed in and cut with a cradle, tied by hand and threshed with a flail. In no case

Photo courtesy D. B. Wilson

was there any of the first crop marketed. Part of it was used by the farmer for his own use, ground at the grist mill at Wakopa or Crystal City, and the remainder could always be disposed of to newcomers for seed. There is no exact record of the types of wheat used. Part may have been of the Red River variety, purchased in Winnipeg or Emerson, and part was Red Fife, brought from Ontario. In the beginning, the motive power was supplied by oxen and later by horses. In the eighteen-eighties the grain was cut, stooked and stacked before any threshing was done, and threshing operations might not be completed till spring. It was a decade later that the farmers conceived the idea of threshing direct from the stook to save extra labour.

In no type of machinery has there been so great progress as in the threshing machine. In the earliest types used in the district, the machines were hand fed and the straw was bucked away from the carriers at the back of the machine with a horse on each end of a pole or plank. The power to run the machine was supplied by a horse-power. In the eighteen-nineties, steam engines supplied the power, and in 1906 gas engines were introduced into the district, and were the standard type until the thirties when the combine came on the market. Larger and heavier machinery of all kinds came into use with the introduction of the tractor, and the increased power of the tractor has led in turn to heavier and larger types of machinery.

Although the primary interest of the early settler was wheat, they realized that successful farming operations could not be carried on without the raising of livestock. It is noteworthy that at the first fair of the Turtle Mountain Agricultural Society held on the Jas. Burgess farm in 1882 there were no entries of horses. There were prizes for the best decorated oxen, and a race for teams of oxen. At the fair held two years later there were numerous entries of horses. By 1890 oxen had been replaced by horses and many of the farmers in the district had made a valuable contribution to the breed. Such names as Finlayson, Washington and Robertson Bros.—John, Chas., Jas., and Peter—recall many fine animals imported, and also many fine ones raised here. Competition at the local fairs was very keen. In modern times A. J. Arnold has been one of the most successful exhibitors, both at local fairs as well as at Toronto and Brandon.

From the beginning of the settlement of the district, cattle formed a necessary part of the wealth of the community, and as early as 1886, efforts were made by John Hettle, the local representative in the legislature to improve the breed. He purchased half a dozen pure-bred Shorthorns in Ontario and introduced them to the district. One of these was purchased by J. G. (Joe) Washington and was the foundation of what was one of the finest herds in Western Canada. Joe purchased several females from Ontario, and

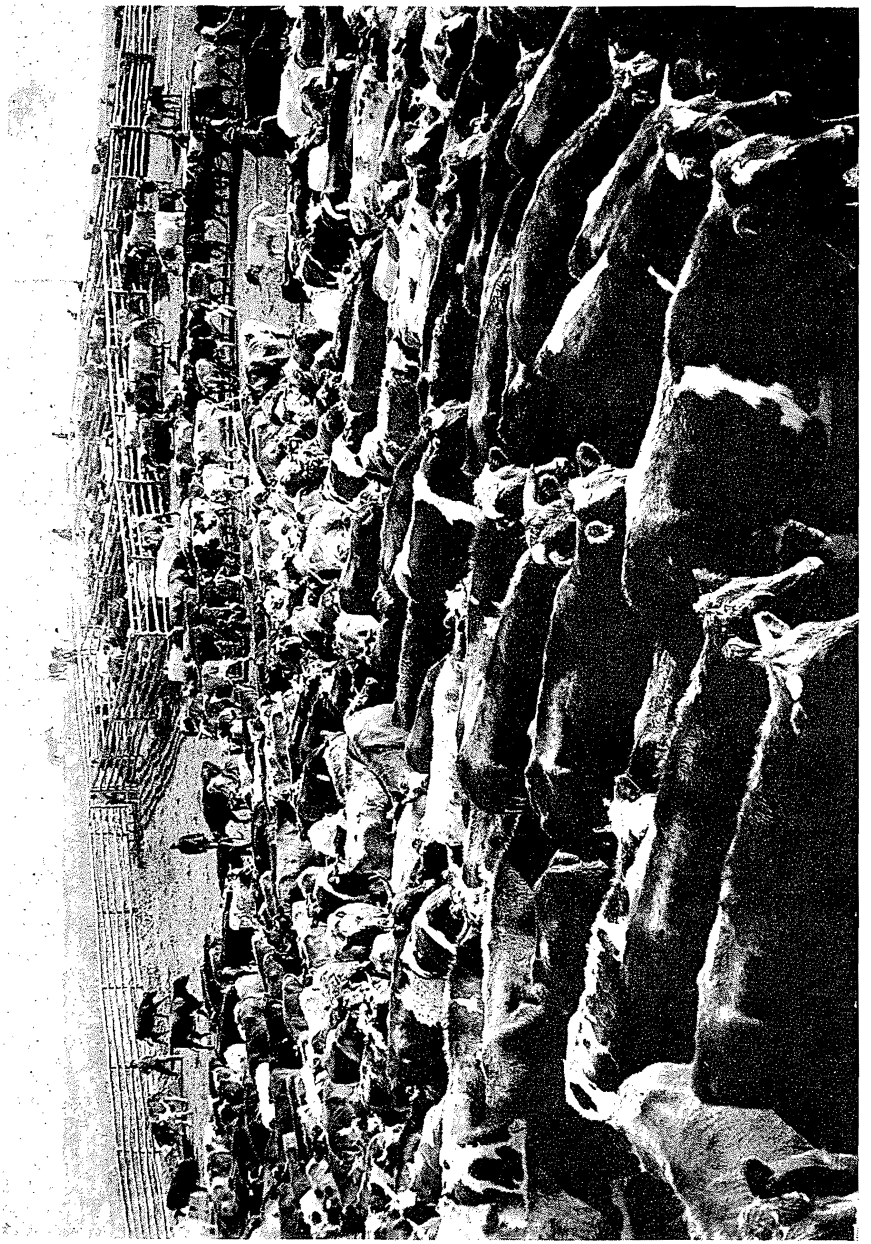
a bull—Red Knight II, and from the mating of these, young bulls were sold to neighboring farmers. Entries from the Washington herd won championships at the Minnesota State Fair, Brandon and Toronto, and before the herd was dispersed, Joe's son Henry, who succeeded him, had shown the champion male and female at Brandon.

Another important herd in the district was that of Jones Bros. Their herd of Polled Herefords, which was instituted at the turn of the century, was the first herd of its kind in Western Canada. Entries from this herd won high honors at fairs all over the West.

In the eighteen-eighties, two large dairy companies were incorporated in the Turtle Mountains—the Quinte Farms and the Morton Dairy Farms. The Quinte Farm was located West of Mountainside and consisted of five sections. Inaugurated as a dairy farm, it was found that lack of transportation facilities and poor prices made it impossible to carry on with any financial success. In the late eighties, it had become a grain producing farm, but by reason of crop failures, in the next decade the company was wound up. The Morton Dairy Farm Project was founded by Geo. Morton, who had been prominent in the cheese industry in Ontario. About 1880, he became interested in the West, acquired land, and made plans for the erection of a cheese factory, and imported a large herd of cattle. Climatic conditions and the lack of transportation contributed to the failure of the undertaking, which was abandoned. Both of these undertakings were failures, but they contributed to the development of the area by pointing out some of the pit-falls to be avoided in the operation of large farms.

During the earliest years of the settlement of the district money was scare and the community could not be regarded as being on a cash economy. There was little grain to market until 1883 and the return from it was meagre. The first bank in the district was opened in Boissevain in 1889 by Crawford Cowan, and furnished facilities for banking and borrowing; but the chief source of money was from loan companies in Winnipeg and in the East, and a large proportion of the settlers, after obtaining the patent for their land, immediately mortgaged it to obtain the necessary capital for the extension of their farming operations. Criticism has been directed at the companies for exacting exorbitant rates of interest and dispossessing the mortgagors when default occurred, but without the capital furnished by the loan companies to the farmers, the progress and development of the community would have been seriously retarded.

The sources of income on which the farmer depended were grain and livestock, and in disposing of these commodities he was confronted with various difficulties among which were the lack of communications and the difficulty of obtaining means of transporting his products.



In the early days of the district the nearest Post Office was Emerson, the mail might be there for weeks before it was called for, or could be forwarded. As the settlement became more populous, it became the practice for anyone entering the district to pick up the mail and carry it to its destination. As Southern Manitoba became settled, Post Offices were established at Nelsonville and later at Crystal City, which became in turn the centre for distribution of the mail to the Turtle Mountain. The first Post Office in the area was at Wakopa, and later Post Offices were opened at various other points. With the extension of the Railway to Boissevain the district was linked to the outside world by telegraph, but it was not until the beginning of the century that a telephone service was set up in the district. This was inaugurated by the Bell Telephone Company in Boissevain, became part of a municipal undertaking and ultimately was taken over by the Manitoba Telephone System.

In marketing the products of the farm, the roads and railways are of major importance. In the early days of the settlement of the district, the roads were in poor condition, and there was difficulty in reaching the markets. Grain in those days was sacked, and the pioneers could tell of unloading the sacks, carrying them across a stream and loading them again on the other side. Prior to the construction of the railway to Boissevain, the nearest market was Brandon, and it took three days to make the round trip. With the coming of the railway and the construction of grain warehouses, and later elevators the problem of disposing of the grain was simplified.

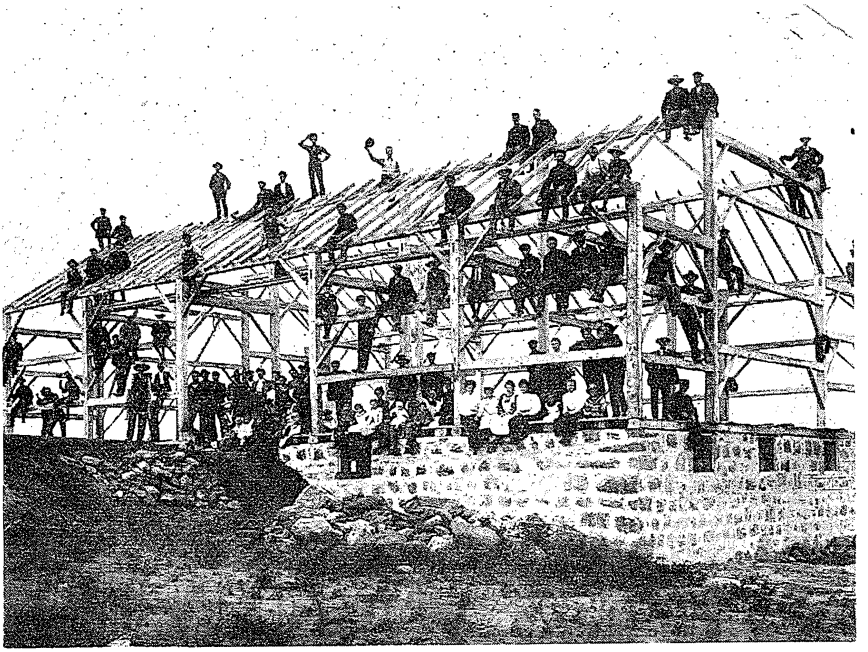
The population of a district is one of the factors to be considered in economic progress. The figures revealed by the census returns for the whole district—Townships 1 to 6 in ranges 18 to 22—are of interest:

1901	6430	1931	7340
1906	7506	1936	6914
1911	7011	1941	6478
1916	7056	1946	5882
1921	6664	1951	5615
1926	7011		

The returns for the Municipality of Morton show a similar decrease between 1931 and 1951. Such decrease can be accounted for in some measure by larger farms and by the introduction of labour saving machinery, which accounts for a reduction in the hired labour on farms.

1916 "Round up" on the Turtle Forest Reserve — Photo courtesy Mrs. Ina McKinney

1894 threshing on the farm of Taylor and Hall, south of Boissevain — Photo courtesy W. V. Udall



G. Johnston's barn raising about 1909 — Photo courtesy Miss Jean Armstrong

CHAPTER FIVE

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

PROVINCIAL CONSTITUENCIES—ELECTIONS

When Manitoba entered confederation in 1870, the boundaries were fixed by statute—on the East by the meridian of 96 degrees, on the West by the meridian of 99 degrees, on the South by the international boundary, and on the North by the parallel of 50 degrees, and thirty minutes North latitude. The Eastern boundary lay about 30 miles East of Winnipeg; the Western boundary about 20 miles West of Portage la Prairie and the Northern boundary lay about 120 miles North of the International Boundary. Manitoba was then the "Postage Stamp Province." The districts beyond these boundaries were still part of the North West Territories and there was no provision for any local government, for representation in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, or in the Canadian House of Commons. In 1881 the Western boundary was located at its present position and the country West of Clearwater became part of the Province of Manitoba, and entitled to representation to the Legislature. On the extension of the boundary new electoral divisions were formed and the constituency of Turtle Mountain consisting of Townships 1 to 6, Ranges 13 to 29, came into being. Changes in its boundaries have been made from time to time, but Boissevain has at all times been the geographical and political centre of the constituency.

The first election in the constituency held in November 1881, with J. P. Alexander and J. C. Waugh as candidates, resulted as follows:

J. P. Alexander—C 102
J. C. Waugh—L 93

In the 1883 election Finlay M. Young entered on a long political career, defeating the former member, J. P. Alexander, 232 to 145. He was re-elected in 1886, when his opponent was George Morton, with a count of 503 to 378. In the elections of 1888 to 1892, John Hettle, as Liberal, defeated Dr. F. L. Schaffner, and in 1896 defeated William Miller, the vote being Hettle 464 and Miller 441. On the death of Mr. Hettle in 1897, a by-election was held in which the late James Johnson, later a Cabinet Minister and Speaker of the Legislature, made his appearance in the political field and fought the first of his seven elections. His opponent was the late Thos. Nicol and the result was:

Jas. Johnson—C 516
Thos. Nicol—L 366

The figures in the contests in which Mr. Johnson was returned at later elections were as follows:

1899	Jas. Johnson—C	753
	Jas. Reekie—L	562
1903	Jas. Johnson—C	741
	J. S. McEwen—L	4775
	J. F. Hunter—Ind.	142
1907	Jas. Johnson—C	649
	John Morrow—L	462
1910	Jas. Johnson—C	742
	W. Hanley—L	580
1914	Jas. Johnson—C	707
	Geo. W. McDonald—L	645

In the election of 1915, after the Roblin Government resigned, Mr. Johnson was again a candidate opposed by the late G. W. McDonald. The result was: :

Geo. W. McDonald—L 687
Jas. Johnson—C 651

The late Mr. R. G. Willis, after having served for many years as Reeve of the Municipality of Morton, entered the contest for the provincial constituency against Mr. McDonald in 1920. The result Donald. The result was:

G. W. McDonald—L 1022
R. G. Willis—C 1006

In the General Election in 1922, Mr. Willis defeated Mr. F. W. Ransom 1059 to 953, and in 1927, defeated Mr. D. Henderson 1167 to 951.

On the death of Mr. Willis in 1929, Mr. A. R. Welch entered the Legislature by defeating Mr. Earl Campbell, his Liberal opponent, 1327 to 995.

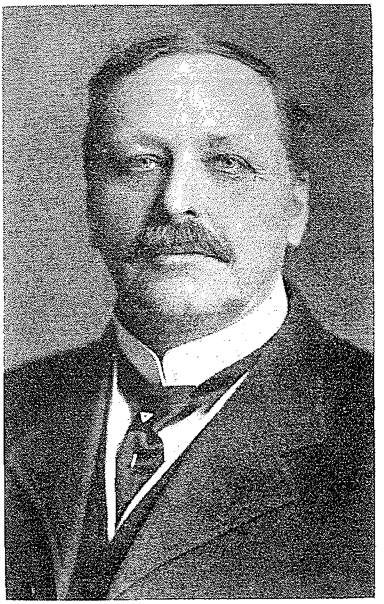
In the elections of 1932 and 1936, Mr. Welch was opposed by Dr. F. B. Bird, and the results were as follows:

1932	A. R. Welch—C	1322
	F. V. Bird—L	1273
1936	A. R. Welch—C	1526
	F. V. Bird—L	1008

Mr. Welch was returned unopposed in 1941, and on his retirement the present member, Mr. E. F. Willis was elected by acclamation in 1945 as a supporter of the Coalition Government and again in 1949. Mr. Willis was opposed in 1953 by Mr. W. J. M. Gorrie and Mr. Clarence Ferguson and the poll was as follows:

E. F. Willis—C 1777
W. J. M. Gorrie—L 883
C. Ferguson—Soc. Cr. 507

Many of the candidates—successful and unsuccessful—in these elections have at one time and another played an important part in political life. Finlay M. Young and Dr. F. L. Schaffner became members of the Canadian Senate. Mr. James Johnson, Mr. A. R. Welch, and Mr. E. F. Willis attained to Cabinet rank, and Mr. G. W. McDonald and Mr. E. F. Wlilis sat as members of the House of Commons.



Senator F. L. Schaffner
Photo courtesy G. Wright

CHANGE IN BOUNDARIES

Prior to the extension of the boundaries of the Province in 1881, there were only four Dominion constituencies for Manitoba, and it was not until after the census of 1891 that additional constituencies were formed. In 1892 a new constituency was created consisting of the City of Brandon, the Town of Virden, the Municipality of Morton and eleven ohter Municipalities in the Southwest corner of the Province. The first election was held in that year with D'Alton McCarthy, W. A. McDonald (late Chief Justice of British Columbia) and W. Postlethwaite as candidates. McCarthy was elected, but never took his seat as the member for Brandon as he had been elected for Simcoe North and chose to represent that constituency. In the election of 1896 Clifford Sifton was elected by acclamation, and became Minister of the Interior in the Laurier government. In the election of 1900, Sifton was opposed by Hugh John McDonald, who resigned from the Premiership of Manitoba to contest the seat. The result of the election in which there were many dramatic incidents which have become historical was:

C. Sifton—L 5011
H. J. McDonald—C 4342

With the redistribution of the constituencies in 1903, the Souris constituency was formed and remained unchanged until 1952. Dr. F. L. Schaffner was nominated by the Progressive Conservatices and fought three elections in which he was elected. His opponents were George Patterson in 1904, A. Campbell in 1908 and again in 1911. In 1917, Dr. Schaffner was appointed to the Senate and in that year, Dr. A. E. Finlay of Elgin was elected by acclamation as a supporter of the Union Government after being nominated at a joint convention of Liberals and Conservatives.

When the next election came around the Farmers Party—the Progressives—had attained great numerical strength and in 1921, 1925 and 1926, their candidate, Mr. J. Steedsman, was elected, defeating R. G. Willis, Wm. Willson and E. F. Willis respectively in these years. In 1930 Mr. E. F. Willis defeated J. Steedsman by a majority of 472. The election of 1935 saw four candidates in the field and the result was as follows:

G. W. McDonald—L 4504
E. F. Willis—C 4501
Parkes—CCF 953
Glendening—R 631

Col. J. A. Ross, the Conservative candidate, was elected in the next three elections in which the polls were as follows:

1940	J. A. Ross—(NG)	4991
	G. W. McDonald—L	4861
	Parkes—CC F	1370
1945	J. A. Ross—C	6286
	McIlwraith—L	2636
	Craven—CCF	1838
1949	J. A. Ross—C	6108
	E. I. Dow—L	5495
	Watson—CCF	1083

After the redistribution following the census of 1951, the Souris Constituency was merged in Brandon and at the election in 1953, Walter G. Dinsdale, the Conservative candidate, was elected by a large majority.

Turtle Mountain Boundry Survey early 1900's. — Photo courtesy T. R. Robertson

CHAPTER SIX

HISTORY OF EDUCATION

WAPAHA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 634

Wapaha School District was organized in 1891, however school was held the first summer in Mrs. McGuire's log house, a few hundred yards from the present, and original site of the N. W. corner of 16-4-21.

The first teacher at Wapaha school was Mr. M. B. Jackson, and the first pupils were — Bertha and Garton Hymers; Peter, Rosy, Alexandrine, Euphemia and Louis Demasson; Minnie and Chas. Hudson; Libby, Mabel and Minnie McGuire; and Alma, Bertha Andy Oneil.

The first secretary-treasurer of the school was Mr. Tom. Dougall, who held the position for thirty-three years, and the first chairman of the board was Mr. Wm. Rheder.

The first Wapaha school was destroyed by fire in the winter of 1907-8, the early records being burned at that time. School was then held for one day in the Thomas house on the N. E. 21-4-21, when it was also destroyed by fire. The board then moved a house to the present site where classes were held until the present school was constructed by Jack McGraw in 1909.

In 1893 Mrs. C. C. Musgrove (then Nellie Irvin) taught Wapaha school. Mrs. Musgrove still resides at her home south of Boissevain.

ROYAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 417 — 1887

One has only to read the minutes of the organization meeting and of the board meetings which follow, to note the enthusiasm with which the pioneers set about to build this school and community centre.

Known as the Protestant School District of Royal No. 417, and located in the municipality of Whitewater, it comprised sixteen sections in the form of a square, namely 1 to 4, 9 to 16, and 21 to 24, in township 4, range 20.

Meetings were held in the year 1886 to plan for a school. On the 13th day of July 1887 the following were elected at a meeting held in the home of one of the homesteaders.

Welch and Elliotts' Telephone Construction Camp, Morton Municipality — Photo courtesy Geo. King, Sr.

Trustees— G. C. Wright, James Burns, Duncan Henderson.
Auditors — Mr. P. Sall, Frank Howell.
Chairman of meeting — G. C. Wright.
Secretary of meeting — Frank Howell.

The trustees were instructed to borrow the sum of five hundred and fifty dollars by an issue of debentures for the purpose of erecting and furnishing a school.

The building was erected on the south-east corner of 15-4-20 which is located in the centre of the district. Work was commenced on the erection of the school in August of '87 and was completed in time for school to open Nov. 28th of the same year. Wm. Lambert who farmed the north-east quarter of 21-3-20, Nimitaw District, was the builder and Samuel Hall who homesteaded the south-east quarter of 20-4-19 in the Browka District was the mason and plasterer.

The enthusiasm of both young and old must have mounted as the building neared completion. It was without a doubt a new experience for most of the children, and for the grown ups it would mean a centre of community life.

In the years that followed the Anglicans in the district used the school for church services as well as did some other denominations, while during the winter months many enjoyable social evenings were held.

Prior to the opening of the school it was named "Royal" by Mary Burns, daughter of James Burns, in honor of Great Britain's Queen Victoria. Judson D. Cook was in charge of school when classes commenced and the following are the names of the students who answered the first roll call — Bella Armstrong, Hattie Wright, Georgina Wright, John Nebin, Mary A. Burns, Jennie Thompson, Harry Thompson, Ralph W. Thompson, Grace H. Thompson, David Campbell, Maggie Campbell and Edith Wilson.

In 1887, each half section was assessed at $960.00, each quarter at $400.00 except the John Russell quarter which was $480.00. We also find that E. Hammond was secretary-treasurer of the Whitewater Municipality at this time.

In the year 1911 the school was moved to the present site, located in the south-west corner of 14-4-20, which was donated by Frank Howell.

In the years that have passed since Royal opened we find there were two era's in which due to financial difficulties the ratepayers found it difficult to keep the school open. Between 1889 and 1894 several homesteaders had given up due to frost and the total loss by hail in August 1890 which had promised to be a wonderful crop. This threw an extra tax load on the ones remaining making it more difficult to finance.

In the "Dirty Thirties" when taxes were hard to collect, financial difficulties arose once more when the municipality made it even more difficult by taking the reserve built up over a period of favourable years, leaving the district with little funds to meet expenses. It is known that certain taxpayers deprived themselves to pay the teacher's salary when reserves were exhausted.

In 1951 the school which had schooled 226 pupils was replaced by a modern type building on the same location.

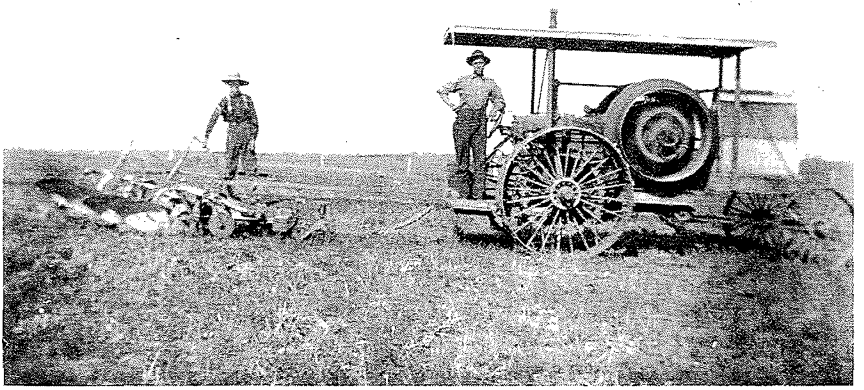
CARANTON SCHOOL

Perhaps the first school built in the Boissevain District was a small frame structure located one mile west of the present town site. It was named Nimitaw, an Indian name. Nimitaw Post Office was located about two miles northwest of the school on Sec. 34-3-20, it was run by Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Rae, two of our earliest settlers. The first school children in Boissevain had to walk a mile out of town to attend school.

On April 4, 1888, the first Caranton School meeting was held in Wm. Willson's house. Among those present were, Messrs. W. Wilson, Pete and Dunc. Henderson, A. J. Cameron, P. Hill, Wm. Lambert, Jas. Rae, Wm. Latimer and Wm. Miller. It was decided to purchase Nimitaw School for $160.00, plus a moving charge of $85.00, name it "Caranton" and locate it on S½ 28-3-20, in the then Municipality of Deloraine. Debentures were issued for $500.00 to pay for and furnish the school. First expenditures were for a broom, dust pan, chalk and correction strap. One item always found in the pioneer accounts was "plowing the fire break." The first teacher was Robert Fletcher of Deloraine. Dr. Beath was the secretary-treasurer. The following are the names of the pupils who first attended at the opening — Mellissa King, Maud Hill, Esther Hill, Wes Musgrove, Bob Robertson, Rebecca Johnson, Eva Johnson, Mina Johnson, Fred Johnson, Edgar Johnson, Lena Cook, Bob Cook, Janet Rae, Jim Rae, John Nelin and Ada Cook.

The records would not be complete without mention of some of the early pioneers. In addition to those mentioned above appear the names of Chas. Irvine, Mr. Kennedy, W. H. T. Lee, Bill Rae, Wm. Cumpstone, John Wilson, Frank Latimer, Frank Thompson, John and Davy Brown, Gerald Sankey, Robert Baskerville, Lou Smith and Joe Birbeck. Accounts payable were to Chas Plummer, Geo. Morton, D. S. McCuaig, J. D. Blaine, J. A. Wright and Joe Bowes.

New settlers quickly followed and from the distant past we call to mind the families of T. Jones, Tom Tyreman, John A. Smith, Fred Noton, Robt. Robertson, Ed. Watson, Art Raymer, Billy Bristow, Kincaid brothers, Chas. Stewart, Affleck brothers, Jack Wadell,



First gasoline tractor in district owned by Jac. A. Patterson

Geo. Baskerville, Frank Beedle, H. A. Harris, Alex Love, Geo. Collinson, Bob Orr and John Ford.

In 1903 the school was burned and a much larger one was erected one mile north of the old school on the same section. Our first school cost $500.00, the second one $1400.00, and today schools of similar size are costing upwards of $14,000.00.

Caranton has been served by a long line of teachers. Some inevitably chose to remain in the district. Among them we recall Nellie Irvine (Mrs. C. C. Musgrove), Jean Craig (Mrs. Reid, Elgin), Alberta Roe (Mrs. Earl Henderson), Emma Hammond (Mrs. W. Latimer) and Jenny Taylor (Mrs. Geo. McDonald). We like to think that some who got their start in life teaching in our school rose to great heights. Randolph Cottingham, deceased, was raised on a farm south of Boissevain, taught at Caranton, and later at Wesley College, and eventually rose to a high position in the Provincial Government. Hamilton Laing, a teacher who taught all his pupils a love and understanding of nature, later became an author. He resides in Comox and still writes. An autographed copy of one of his books is in our museum.

Today, many of our old pupils are but a memory. Some passed on long since. Some served in two world wars. Many have made a name in industry and the professions, but we are most pleased to report that some are farming the land that their grandfathers wrested from the wilderness. The homesteads of Wm. Willson, Pete and Dunc Henderson, Wm. Latimer and Robt. Baskerville still bear the family names.

The old School has been closed for some years now. "John Loves Mary" has all but faded from its walls. The initials on the

desks whisper faintly of days long gone. A brooding silence envelopes it, but a new generation is growing up and once again it will ring with childish laughter. Plans are being made to re-open it. May its future be as happy as its past.

WASSEWA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 612

Prior to the formation of Wassewa S. D. in 1889 two other schools had served the district. The first school, formerly a house on the farm of Mr. Morton, was open for five months in the summers of 1888 and 1889. The teacher, Mr. Carruthers, was paid by the parents of the pupils. These pupils attending at this time were Pete and Bill McCorquodale and Mina Campbell.

The second school, known as the Shanty school, was opened in the spring of 1890 with William Finley as teacher. The school was situated on S.E.¼ of 22-2-21, which was owned by Alex McNeil. The lumber for the building was donated by Sam Smith. The interior featured a sloping desk, built along one side of the room, at which the older pupils sat on a long bench. The younger pupils had shorter benches and held box-like desks across their knees.

The present school, built in 1890 by Ellis Maguire on land donated by Hugh McCorquodale, was opened in June 1891 with Miss May Ross as teacher. Pupils enrolled were Pete and Bill McCorquodale, Mina Campbell, Janette and Mary Currie, Flora and Sinclair Smith, Merle and Cecil Millions, Grace, Alf and Oscar Dusenbury, Jack, Laura and Bert French, Smillie Ross, Maude Eaton, Pauline, Jack and Ernest Thorne, three other Smith girls and seven pupils with the surname Fourieners. The first trustees of the district were Sam Smith, Alex McNeil and Robert Ross. The school was closed from 1908 to 1915. In 1929 a second room was added to the building.

Early settlers of the district included: W. J. McKinney, John Peacock, E. Blackenbaugh, Frank Thompson, Robert Ross, Ned and Richard Spankey, Robert Eaton, Richard and Henry Birbeck, Lou Morton, Walter and John Millions, Gilbert and Sam Smith, Donald Currie, Bill Turner, Alex McNeil, Jim McKinley, Hugh McCorquodale, Henry French and a Mr. Donaldson.

RICHVIEW SCHOOL

Plans for erecting and opening a school which were much discussed in the year 1887, culminated in the circulating of a petition setting out the proposed district and site. The site, donated by the late Wm. Patterson Sr. was the S.W. corner of 2-3-20, which area was at that time in the Municipality of Deloraine.

In April 1888 permission was granted from the Board of Education, and a meeting held to elect a board. This consisted of

John Musgrove, Robt. Johnson, Jas. Patterson, Hugh Johnson and A. M. Stuart; the first three being the trustees, and the last two the auditors.

On April 7, 1888 a further meeting was held at the home of Jas. Patterson and designated the school district to be known as Richview No. 528, and arrangements made to sell debentures to the extent of $500.00 to build and equip the school. These were sold and the contract awarded to Mr. Benjamin Cook who constructed the building.

It is interesting to note that according to the minute book the first teacher, Mr. Wm. L. King was engaged for a period of four and one half months or five months, if weather permitted. In the early years the school was only kept open in the spring, summer and fall months as winter was considered too severe. This policy was discarded after a while. It was realized that a lot of boys and girls who had to work on the farms in the summer months would get very little schooling, hence a program to include winter schooling was adopted. This decision brought forth a contentious question of fires and light. The light problem prevailed for some time, but the heat question was settled by paying the sum of five cents per morning to a pupil to start the fire.

The school today has progressed with the rest of the district, and with modern heating and lighting facilities boasts of being the social centre in a community winter program.

The first six teachers were — Mr. Wm. L. King, Miss Bertha Cooper, Miss Jane McKay, Mr. J. R. Cooke, Mr. F. W. Robinson, and Miss Nellie Irvine (now Mrs. C. C. Musgrove and still living at Boissevain).

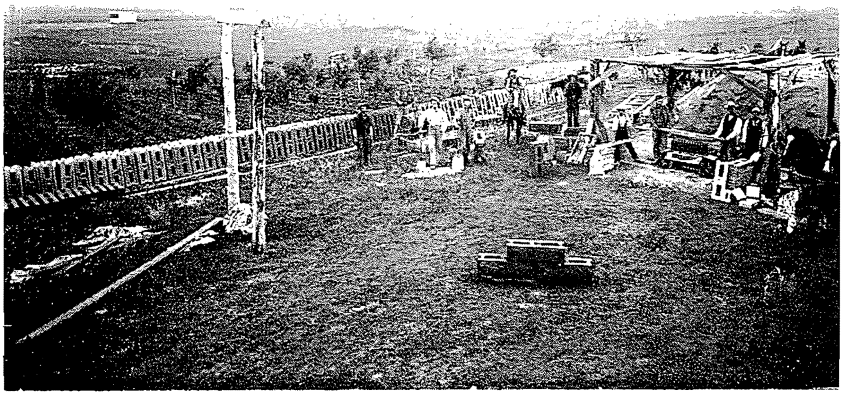
The religious exercises of the community were ably taken care of in the nineteen hundreds under the leadership of Mr. J. J. Musgrove, who acted both as superintendent and Bible class teacher. Even after Mr. Musgrove moved from the farm to Boissevain, he drove back with the horse and buggy to continue the services.

PETERSBURG SCHOOL

Owing to loss of the school books, the history of Petersburg School is very limited.

It appears that prior to 1894 school was held at the correction line, south of Whitewater, then in 1894 was held above the store owned by Fred Peters, Miss E. Rombough being the teacher. The following year a new school was built on the present site, which is in the south side of the village of Whitewater. The school was called Petersburg, being named after Fred Peters.

Among the first trustees were, Fred Peters, Tom Willson, and Bob White. The first pupils of which we have a record were, Lyle Rombough, Ted and Jim Peters; Gint, Harry, Maude, Nelly and Ethel Rolston; Bob Zetterstrom, Percy Jones and Elsie Law.



Cement Block Manufacturing on farm of W. J. McKinney, 1904 — Photo courtesy Mrs. Ina McKinney

WOOD LAKE SCHOOL NO. 751

Wood Lake School situated near the N.W. corner of 8-2-19, was built in 1893, and opened in August of the same year. Mr. W. L. Webster was teacher at a salary of $375.00 for the year.

Sixteen pupils enrolled for the opening, namely — Amy, Teena and John Armitage; Mabel, Etta, Emily, Chas. and Geo. Blanchard; Robt. and Jane McRuer; Jas. and Nellie Scott; Teena, Jas. and John Cossar.

The first school board consisted of Andrew Cossar, Thos. Kempthorne and John Deacon, the latter also being secretary-treasurer.

In the year 1900 the enrollment had increased to 53, but by 1922 was down to six; again by 1935 it was back to 34, and today stands at nine.

Owing to the fact that a large number of the registers cannot be located, much of the early history of the district is lost since it was formed 63 years ago.

CROLL SCHOOL NO. 1929

The first meeting of the ratepayers of Croll School District No. 1929 was held June 12th, 1918, with G. Barefoot elected to act as secretary-treasurer and Alex Grant as chairman. The other two trustees besides A. Grant were Fred Sanderson and J. M. Pierce.

J. McDonald's offer of a school site on 35-4-20 was accepted and plans the same as Conworth School adopted. The contractor was G. B. Robinson who erected the frame building during September and October of the same year.

The school was opened on February 14, 1919 with Murray Anderson as teacher at an annual salary of $800.00. There were only twelve pupils registered to start with, but very shortly the enrollment was up to twenty. The school yard was fenced and a well drilled the same year.

The first pupils were — Kay Barefoot, Wilbert Stokes, Arthur Stokes, Myrtle Stokes, Henry Stokes, Gordon Pierce, Gertie Sanderson, Daisy Sanderson, Alfred Wolsley, Bill Sanderson, Duncan Pierce, Florence Pierce, Pearl Mills, Irene Abbott, John Abbott, Morris Sanderson, Roy Hanne, Edith Pierce, Gordon Grant, Philip Barefoot.

PRIMROSE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 457

Primrose School District was organized in 1885 and the school built the same syear. During '85 it was open seventy-five days with Mr. Isaac Roger in charge and sixteen pupils attending. The names of the pupils were — Oscar, Arthur, and Berla McCutcheon; Amy, Jim, and Nellie Munro; Bert Cameron; Irwine and Givis Boyd; Alvin Wilson; Bert McKenzie and Della Moles.

On the first school board were Mr. H. Duncan, Joe Boyd and Joe McCutcheon, Mr. H. Duncan being secretary.

Mr. Alex Munro built the school which is located on the N.W.¼ 18-4-20. The government grant for the first year being $50.00.

The district was well known for the wild primroses that grow in profusion throughout the area, consequently the name "Primrose" was the natural choice.

In 1955 the old school was replaced by the most modern school building in the Boissevain area.

DESFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 800

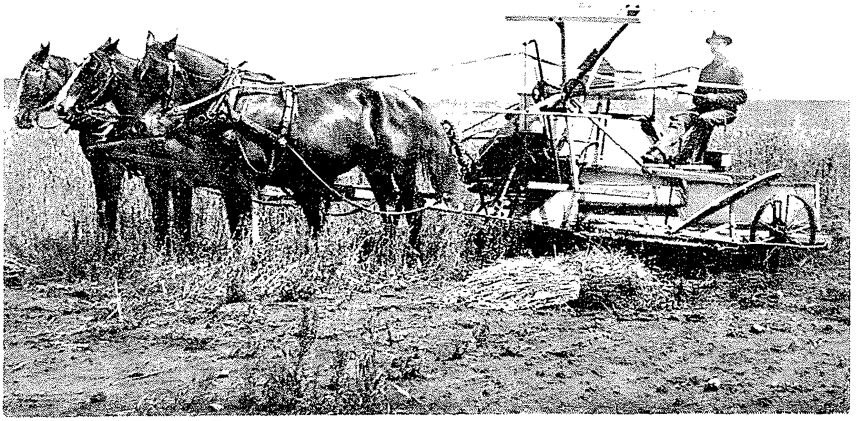
By order of the Municipal Council, Desford School District came into being on January 2 ,1894, the district to comprise sections one to twenty-four inclusive in township two, range twenty, with the exception of sections eighteen and nineteen. Proposed site of the school to be the southwest corner of southeast quarter 22-2-20.

The Reeve at that time was Wm. Miller, and the Secretary Treasurer R. Morrison.

A month later on February 1 a meeting of the residents of the district was held at the residence of J. W. Taylor where they elected a board of trustees comprised of Robt. Willis, Owen Bill and J. W. Taylor, the latter to act as secretary treasurer.

The same day the trustees met and called a ratepayers meeting for February 8 to select a school site, and arrange for raising the money for the building.

At this meeting it would appear that the proposed site wasn't



Early binder — Photo curtesy Mrs. A. Plunkett

entirely satisfactory, as we have a motion to have the site changed to N.E. 15-2-20, however an amendment carried in favor of the original site of 22-2-20 except that it be on the southeast corner of the quarter instead of the southwest.

The trustees were empowered to borrow the sum of $500.00 for the purpose of building a school and to issue debentures to this amount at six per cent. Repayment to be made in ten equal instalments.

A. King constructed the school the same year, and it was opened with Miss Ada Cook as the first teacher. Information as to the first pupils is limited, but some of these were the Raymer family, Joe Taylor family and Griffen family, also Roy and May Birbeck (now Mrs. J. McCorquodale).

Notes of interest among the minutes include twelve cords of wood cut in two foot lengths, delivered by Frank Woods at seventy-five cents a cord in 1900. In 1901 the price of cordwood had soared to ninety cents and by 1906 reached a peak of $3.85 to slump the next year to $1.60 a cord.

In 1905 we find R. McIntosh delivering a quantity of gravel and spreading it on the school yard at ninety cents a load.

The problem of lighting school fires was solved in 1901 by granting the teacher the sum of five dollars for the year to start same.

While we don't have a record of the salary paid the first teacher we do find that Laura French who succeeded Miss Cook received $37.50 per month for ten months. Teachers salaries averaged a

little lower than this however in 1899, being $32.00 per month and in 1900 $34.00.

Desford school was used until 1950 when it was sold and moved to Boissevain where it is at present used as a residence. A contract was awarded and a new school constructed on the same site at a cost of $9,900.00. This served until 1954 when the attendance got too heavy and it was found necessary to use the basement to convert it into a two room school. The enrollment at Desford now stands at fifty.

The Desford district has also been served since 1899 by St. John's Anglican Church which stands just across the road from the school.

LAKE MAX SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1239

The residents of Lake Max district feeling the need of a school met on the 15th day of July, 1903, for the purpose of organizing and setting up a school board. At this meeting Walter Harrington, A. S. Woods and Thos. Tyreman were elected trustees and Henry Woods as secretary treasurer.

The following were residents of the district at the time: Chas. Calder, Wm. Maddess, Walter Harrington, Jacob Dow, Henry Wood, A. S. Wood, Thos. Tyreman, Jas. Thomlinson, Chas. Dunn, Harry Hammond, John Hamilton, Jas. Gordon, Wm. Cox, C. F. Wood, John Reever and P. Mulholland.

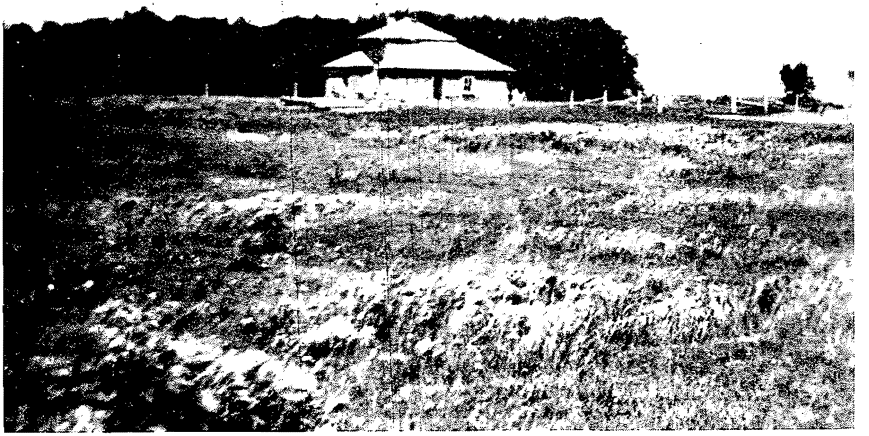
On July 23, 1903, a ratepayers meeting was called for the purpose of choosing a school site and also to arrange for the raising of $700.00 for erection of the school. It required several meetings to decide on a site and also a contractor. However, the contract was let on November 4, 1903 to Mr. A. King, he being the contractor for several of the earlier schools.

The site choosen was the southeast corner of 12-2-21, this piece of ground being purchased from Henry Woods.

At little if any outside carpentry was attempted in the winter time in those days, and school didn't open until the fall term of 1904, with Mr. Frank Bowey as teacher. It closed for the winter months and re-opened again in the spring of 1905 with Mr. E. H. Black as teacher at a salary of $45.00 per month. There were fifteen pupils enrolled at the opening, namely — Florence Daw. Maud and Grace Woods; Maggie Cox; Jane, Ben and Ida Harrington; Hessie, Annie, Ida, Lucy and Dave Maddess; Henry and Lena Reever.

BROWN LEA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 474

The first minutes of Brown Lea which are available record a meeting in 1887 for the purpose of receiving and considering tenders for the erection of a school house. The day and month are not



G. C. Wright adobe home 22-4-20. Possibly first of its kind in the west, built in the late 80's — Courtesy Mrs. A. E. Cook, formerly Georgia May Wright

mentioned but it must have been early in the year, as a special meeting followed on February 7 of the same year, held in the house of Harry Maxwell, 28-4-19. It was unanimously agreed that the sum of $400.00 be raised by the sale of debentures for the construction and equipping of a school. Those present were D. Pringle, T. Hammond, H. Maxwell, G. Brown, A. Houck, E. Copper and J. Brown.

The minutes of the annual meeting were now read, also A. Houck elected trustee for another term, which indicates that the district must have organized for at least a year previous to this meeting.

J. Brown received the sum of $5.00 for one acre, and tenders received which ranged all the way from $330.00 for school and furnishings to $425.00. Geo. Brown was the low bidder and was awarded the contract and constructed the building on the N.E. 20-4-19.

Miss Lucy Cockburn was engaged as teacher for a six month term at $30.00 per month, followed the next year by Miss Eliza for a term of six months at $35.00 per month. The first pupils were— Isabel, Mamie and Thos. Armstrong; Billy Pringle; Kate, Joe and Sinclair Brown; Gardner Hammond; Lottie Hopwood; Mary and Beatrice Halls; Liza Taylor; Bertha, Lizzie and Jack Cooper.

We have a number of old timers' names appearing on wood contracts and in office. To mention a few of them we have, Dave

Hammond, Adam Armstrong, H. Maxwell, Hiram and Chas. Ruttle, F. A. Walker, Jas. A. McCormick, Joe Latimer, Geo. Scott and R. McCurdy.

Attendance having increased considerably ten new seats were ordered from Mr. Lambert in 1893.

In 1898 and 1899 several special meetings were called with a view to building a new school, however, nothing in this regard was done until 1902 when tenders were called for the erection of a new school 22 by 30 feet and a stable 22 by 36 feet. A. King was awarded the contract with a tender of $698.00. Miss Edith Young of Manitou was the first teacher in the new school.

Several residents of the district served on the board for rather lengthy terms, but the longest was J. W. Kyle who was secretary treasurer from 1924 to 1948.

This school is still in use, and though closed for a few years due to low enrollment, was re-opened in 1953.

FAIRBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 524

The first meeting of the ratepayers of Fairburn School District was held at the home of Robt. Wells at one o'clock in the afternoon of March 20, 1888.

From this meeting came the first board of trustees which consisted of Samuel Oke, Jas. J. Musgrove and John Johnstone.

William Robertson granted an acre of land on the northwest corner of 32-2-19, and tenders were called for the erection of a school house 16 feet by 28 feet. Later at a trustee meeting held April 6, 1888, the tenders were opened and the contract awarded to A. E. Lambert in the sum of $398.00.

Fairburn school opened for classes on June 1 of the same year with an enrollment of sixteen pupils, and Mr. W. F. Musgrove as teacher at a salary of $40.00 per month.

In 1902 it was found necessary to enlarge the school to 28 by 32 feet and place a stone foundation under it upon which it still stands.

As the school had been slightly damaged by lightning on two occasions, rods were installed in 1905, and a new stable built in 1907.

In 1811 another half acre of land was added to the grounds, the same being procured from John McCausland, providing a much better playground. After these, a few changes were made until 1943 when a re-arrangement of blackboards and windows took place along with the addition of some extra windows to provide better lighting. Then in 1948 electric lights were installed in the school.

The present board of trustees are Harry McCausland, Jas. Patterson and Wilbert Armstrong with Jas. Harper as secretary. The present teacher is Mrs. Elizabeth K. Armstrong.

BLUEVALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1141

The first meeting to organize Bluevale School District was held August 5, 1901.

The name Bluevale was chosen because the majority of the ratepayers came from Bluevale, Ontario. Among these being the Peacocks, Hills, McKinneys and Johnsons.

A site was chosen on the southeast quarter of 8-3-20, and the school built and furnished for $650.00. This sum having been borrowed for that purpose.

The construction of this school filled a long felt need in the neighborhood as many children had to drive some distance to Richview, Wasewa or Strathallen.

The first rustees were D. A. Taylor, John Peacock, and Kuben Hill, the secretary being Robt. Johnson.

The first pupils to attend Bluevale were — Elmer and Wilson Peacock; Alan, Hattie and Harold Johnson; Gertie Johnson; Wilfred and Jessie Cantelon; Cliff, Harry and Edna McKinney; Bruce, Gerald, Pearl, and Charlotte Burney; Margaret Taylor. The teacher was Miss E. J. Gillespie.

The average enrollment for the first year was twenty-three but by 1904 had jumped to thirty-seven.

In 1948 the school was removed to the southwest quarter, 8-3-20.

One of the first pupils, in the person of Elmer Peacock, is now one of the trustees. Other trustees are J. J. Heide, and H. A. Neufeld. Galon Martin is secretary.

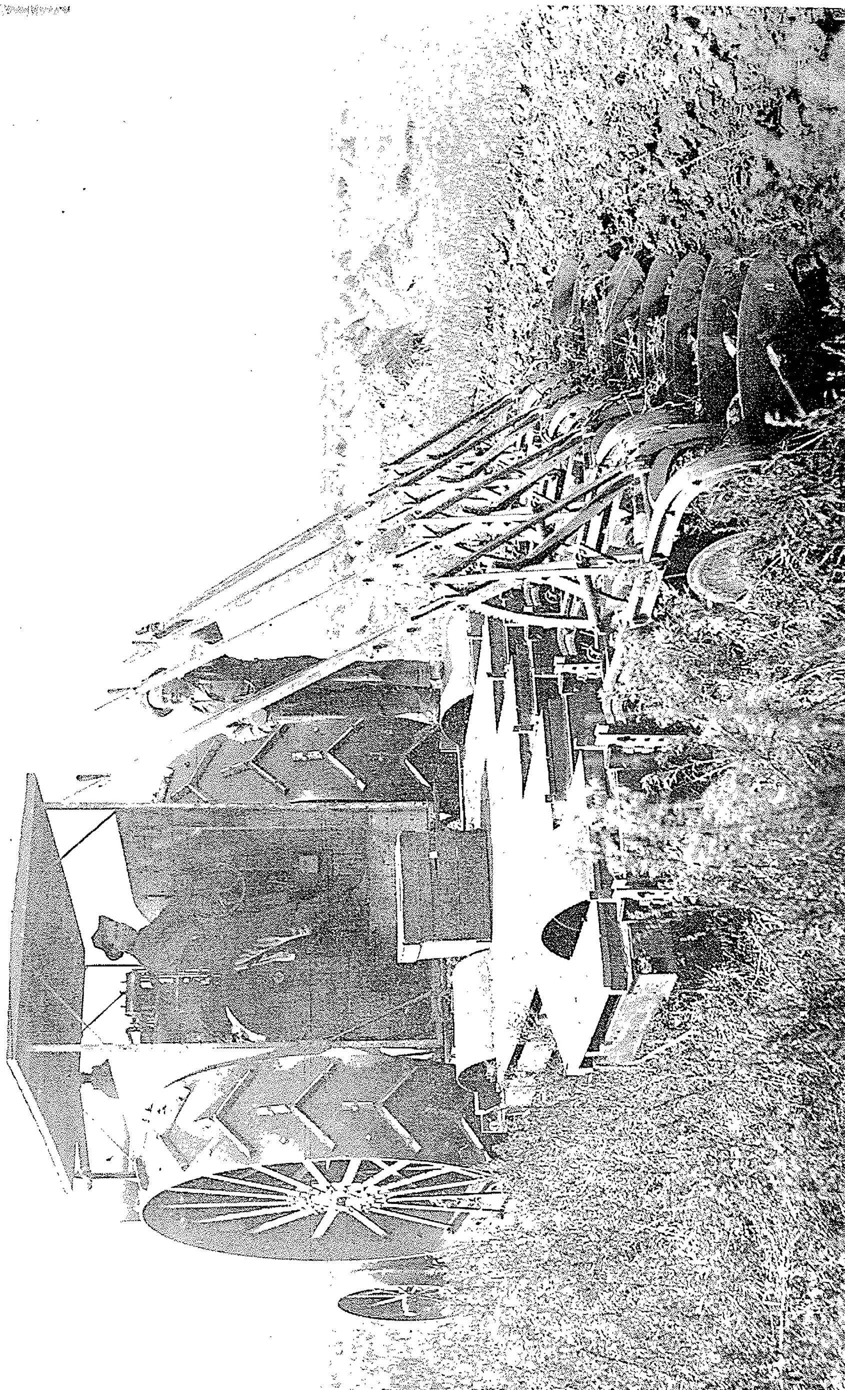
"All Saints Church" was also located in Bluevale district on the southwest 6-3-20, the land being donated by Mrs. Sankey. A number of residents of the district had relatives residing in England, who recognizing the need of a church, donated the funds to erect same. Mr. Blackenbar bought the organ and was also the organist.

The first wedding to be held in this church was that of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, the last was Mr. and Mrs. Alpine Taylor on December 9, 1915.

The church fell into disuse and after standing idle a number of years was sold in 1930, and moved to Horton where it serves as a farm home.

MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL NO. 248

Mountainside School opened in the summer of 1884 with Miss Cline as teacher at a salary of $30.00 per month. As there was no school building erected at the time, classes were held in a log house of a Mr. Andrew Wightman, who had left the district. The first trustees were A. Naylor, secretary treasurer; J. Wightman and R. W. Dawson. The first pupils to attend Mountainside were —



Brondgeest — John, Percy, Stella, Violet and Cassy; Hazelwood — Robert, John, Alonzo, Edith and Stella; Hanson — Edith, James, Fred; White — Thomas and Brent; Naylor — Irene, Mable and Morton; Kellan — Clara, Florence, Jane, Carry and Bertha; Wightman — Bessie, Dawson, Norman; French — Laura.

Some of the early items of expense are interesting such as— operating expenses for 1884, $295.54, digging well $3.00, seven school desks $17.00, cleaning school $1.00, plastering and whitewashing school $12.00.

In 1888 it was felt that a new school was needed, so debentures were sold to the sum of $600.00, the contract awarded to C. Oliver and a new school erected on northeast 36-2-22.

Ten years later two acres of land were donated to the Mountainside school district by Mr. John Fleming and the school moved to a new location on northeast 24-2-22. Trustees were J. W. Eaton, Jas. Dougall and R. W. Dawson, with Jas. Fleming as secretary treasurer. Another expense item of note here is 22 cords of wood supplied by J. Bell for $19.80. By 1908 the price of wood was $4.00 per cord, resulting in a motion by the trustees that the school children saw the wood.

In 1919 the district became interested in consolidation, which became a reality in 1920. By 1924 it required three vans to transport the pupils. A continued rise in attendance necessitated a larger school, consequently a vote was taken and by-law passed in July 1927. The contract for the erection of the new school was awarded to W. Tabberner for $1765.00.

School opened in August 1928, in the old school with Miss Mortinsen (later Mrs. C. Hill) in charge of the senior room, and Miss Ashworth (later Mrs. S. E. Ransom) in charge of the junior room. By November the new school was finished and was officially opened.

In 1954 it was found necessary to add a third room to the school to accommodate the increased attendance. For a number of years now it has required four vans to handle the transportation.

Costs of administration have risen too, from $295.54 in 1884 to $14000.00 in 1955.

A word of thanks is due here to Mr. Norman Dawson of Vancouver, one of the first pupils of Mountainside, for much of the valuable information relating to the school and district.

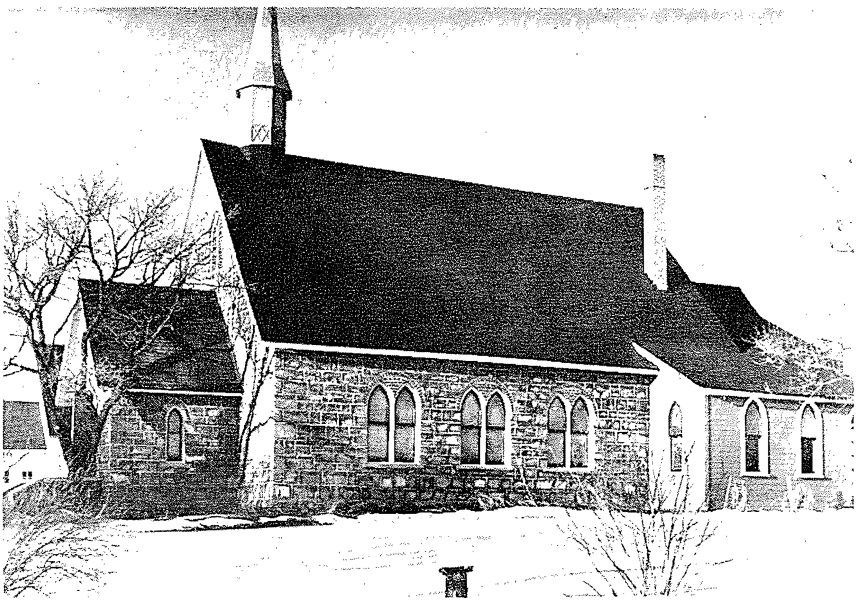
A. Cameron plowing, 1918 — Photo courtesy J. Cameron

CHAPTER SEVEN

HISTORY OF LOCAL CHURCHES

With the coming of the first settlers to the district, social needs arose—the administration of law, public works, education and the ministrations of religion—and as elsewhere in the West, the work of the Church preceded the maintenance of law and order and the education of the children. Immediately upon their settlement the newcomers made provisions for assembling themselves together for the Worship of God, and the Home Mission authorities of the various denominations represented—Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics—gave what help they could in the establishment of places of worship. In all cases advantage had to be taken of the presence of lay readers and lay preachers among the settlers and the earliest services were conducted by laymen in the homes which were then being established.

Among the pioneer settlers were many young Englishmen, fired by a spirit of adventure and a desire to experience life in a new land. They brought with them the religious traditions of their homeland and a desire to maintain these traditions in the land of



St. Mathew's, Boissevain — Courtesy Dr. F. V. Bird, Boissevain

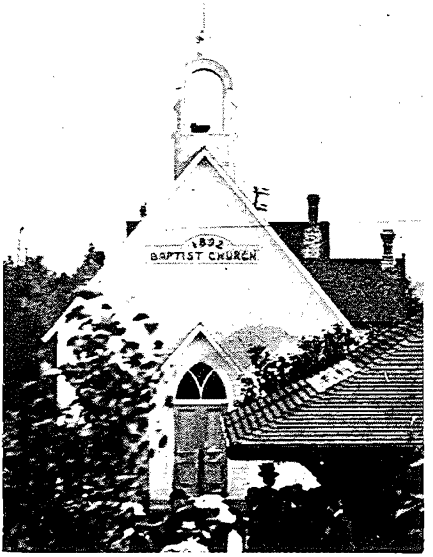
their adoption. Among them was Henry Drummond, Lord Strathallan, afterwards, the Earl of Perth, a layreader in the Church of England, and he it was who conducted the first Anglican service in the district in 1880, and was thus instrumental in establishing the Anglican Church in the community. Services were conducted by him in the homes of the various settlers and later as an established practice at "Waubeesh," the home of John A. Brondgeest. In 1883, the Rev. George Aitkens, who had come to Canada with his brothers and homesteaded in the district, took up the work, and for three years conducted services and administered the rites of the Church. With the extension of the railway to Boissevain, the Church authorities decided to form a parish and established the work on a permanent basis. In 1887 Archbishop Machray appointed the Rev. Chas. Wood, as the first incumbent and he held his initial service in the new parish of Boissevain, now St. Matthews, on the last of January, 1885. For a time, until suitable accommodation could be found, the services were held in the dining room of the Ryan House, and later in the Masonic Hall. In 1889, Caleb Ryan, proprietor of the Ryan House, donated the land to form the site of the Anglican Church. The contract was let to Wm. Lambert, and with the volunteer labour of members of the congregation, who furnished the stone drawn from the surrounding district, the mason work was completed in the autumn of that year, but it was not until the end of March 1890 that the church was opened by Archbishop Machray. At various times the church has been enlarged and during the encumbency of Rev. J. W. Matheson, a commodious rectory was erected on the church grounds.

In addition to the work in Boissevain, All Saints Church ten miles Southwest of the Town was erected in 1898, largely through the generosity of friends in England, and was formally opened by the Archbishop. For more than thirty years All Saints served the district, but finally on account of the removal of the majority of the parishioners, it had to be closed and the church which was once a landmark and a centre of community life is but a memory of the past.

In other parts of the district, Anglican Churches have been built to minister to the needs of members of that denomination, at Desford, Old Desford, Ninga and Fairfax—and the work has been carried on at these points since the last decade of the past century.

The history of the Baptist Church in the Boissevain district begins in the late 1880's when H. J. Haviland of McMaster Hall, Toronto, ministered to a widely scattered group of Baptists in Holmfield, Killarney and Boissevain. In 1888, the local members of the denomination requested that a church be organized, which was done. The first church clerk was L. Underwood, and Dr. F. L. Schaffner, J. G. Frith and Wm. Wade were elected deacons. Arrangements were made with the local Methodists for the use of

The Ninga Presbyterian Church, Ninga, Man.
Courtesy, Mrs. Sam Tripp



Baptist Church, Boissevain—Courtesy Mrs. Ken Chambers, Boissevain, Man.

their church for Sunday services. In 1890 the Ninga and Boissevain congregations were organized as one field and churches were erected in both places, which arrangement has pertained to the present time.

The home of Samuel Oke, in the Fairburn District, is credited with being the first meeting place of those who later constituted the Methodist Church. This was in 1881. In the following year, action was taken by the Methodists to form a circuit and application was made to the Missionary Society of the Church in Toronto for the location of a Minister in their midst. In response to this request, Rev. P. Davies was sent to the district, and a circuit was organized with its centre at Old Deloraine, and six preaching stations. In 1882, the Rev. Andrew Stewart—late on the staff of Wesley College—took charge of the work and with the help of an assistant in the summer months, ministered to the community, which stretched from the Souris River to the International boundary. During his ministry the railway was extended to Boissevain; the Village came into being as the centre of the district and attracted to itself all the organizations of the surrounding country. The Methodist Church then assumed the form which it retained until the union of the churches in 1926—a town charge ministering to several country appointments. The first service of the Methodist Church in Boissevain was held in March 1886 in the harness shop of W. C. Cottingham, and for a year the services, as well as the services of the Presbyterian Church were held in the passenger railway coach which remained

Rev. Oliver Darwin, D.D.

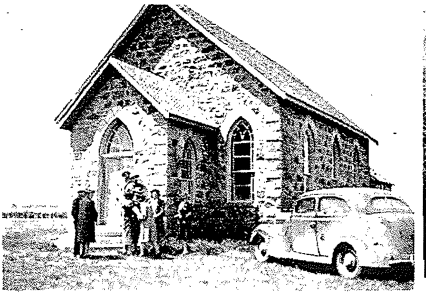
The Rev. Charles Wood. First Rector of St. Mathews, Boissevain

over the week-end at the station. In 1887, a church and parsonage were erected on the West side of Johnson Street, and the church then built remained in use until the completion of the new building in 1893. The circuit register of 1888, gives the names of many families who made a valuable contribution to the work of the congregation—Hills, Musgroves, Venables, Willsons, Okes, Curries and Cottinghams. With the organization of the congregation and its erection into a separate circuit, the Rev. Oliver Darwin, now living in Vancouver and still taking an active part in ecclesiastical affairs, became pastor and served for a period of three years. Of powerful physique and well adapted in every way to the work of the ministry in the far-flung field of a new settlement, he made his great contribution to the religious life of the community as a teacher and doctrinal preacher. An increase in membership and in church attendance under the pastorate of Mr. Darwin and his successor, the Rev. Geo. H. Long, made it necessary to erect a larger church which was opened in October 1893 and is now the place of worship of St. Paul's congregation of the United Church. In the early years the congregation was fortunate to have among its members several local preachers and class leaders—J. I. Musgrove, G. C. Currie, Wm. Venables, Geo. E. Steed and P. J. Cantelon—and with their help it was possible to maintain services at various points in the district.

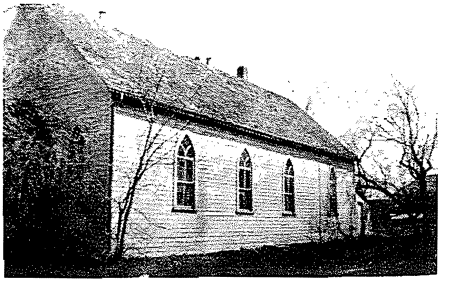
Rev. Peter and Mrs. Fisker, one of the first Presbyterian ministers in Boissevain

Several of the points in the district which were ministered to by the Methodist minister and lay preachers from Boissevain had separate beginnings. The first Methodist service in the Minto District was held in the Victoria School in 1882 with Squire Heath in charge, and it was not until 1890 that Minto became part of the Boissevain charge. Ten years later with Brownlea and Bunclody, it became a separate circuit under the leadership of Fred Wark, James Donley, W. L. Bardy and Wm. Barret.

The Methodist Church at Rowland had its beginning in 1881, in the Haight home under the Rev. Pat Lawery, and services were later conducted by the Rev. Oliver Darwin. Services were held in the school until a fine modern brick church was built, which is still in use.



Whitewater Church. Courtesy T. R. Robertson, Whitewater, Man.



The Presbyterian Church in Boiseevain Courtesy Geo. Stevenson

Immediately upon the settlement of the district the nucleus of a Presbyterian congregation could be found at various points within its bounds at Wakopa, at Mountainside and in the community centred in what is now Minto.

In 1880, Wakopa had become the business centre of the district, and it was here in that year that the first Presbyterian service was held conducted by the Rev. Jas. Robertson, the Home Mission Secretary of that denomination. In 1881, the Rev. Wm. Patterson, later of Cooke St. Church, Toronto, made his headquarters at Wakopa and travelled the district on foot ministering to the people under his charge. The first service in what is now the Municipality of Morton was held in the home of Jas. Burgess on 22-2-20 W1.

From the summer of 1883, Presbyterian services were conducted at various points in the district by the Rev. A. H. Cameron, a retired minister, who had taken up land North of Boissevain. For several years he was the only ordained minister in the locality capable of solemnizing marriages and administering the sacraments and his services were sought by the whole district. With the coming of the railway and the concentration of community organizations ni Boissevain inevitably led to the organization of a Presbyterian congregation there. It appears to have had an informal existence, but in 1886 a church was under construction and was ready for occupation in the spring of 1887. On the 25th of February in that year the congregation was formally constituted, elders elected, a Communion Roll prepared and arrangements made for the celebration of the Lord's Supper on the following Sunday. The record shows that the sacrament was dispensed to twenty-five members bearing, names familiar to the whole community — Patterson Burgess, Hettle, Richardson, Robertson, Glen and Johnston, and the elders assisting were John Linklater and Adam McAllister. The congregation at that time was under the superintendance of the Rev. Malcolm McKenzie of Morden, and it was not until 1889 that an ordained minister, Rev. J. K. Welsh became pastor. The pastorate of Mr. Welsh lasted for two years in which time the congregation

Burnside Church, situated on a hilltop, visible from miles around. Courtesy Mr. Allen Johnstone

was built up, extra elders appointed and a Sunday School and choir organized. Mr. Welsh was succeeded by the Rev. Peter Fisher, a fervent preacher and zealous pastor who was followed by the Rev. Alex. Hamilton, whose encumbency lasted until 1912, and whose retirement marked the completion of tweny-five years of the congregation life of the Presbyterian Church.

The appointment of an ordained minister in Boissevain naturally resulted in outside appointments of the Presbyterian Church being placed under his charge, but some of these churches had been in being before there was a church in Boissevain. As early as 1882, the church at Burnside took form in services held in the home of John Linklater and a Sunday School was organized for the religious training of the young. Church and Sunday School were carried on in the Linklater home until 1890 when the church was built and John Linklater, Adam McAllister and Andrew Glen were ordained as elders. The church was the centre of a wholesome social life for many years until improved methods of transportation were introduced and the members found it possible to worship in larger centres.

In the Mountainside District, Presbyterian services were held in the homes of the early settlers prior to 1882, when the new school began to be used for the purposes of public worship. In 1895 with the erection of Petersburg School at Whitewater, services were held there and Mountainside and Whitewater became a charge under an ordained minister. In 1904, the church was built in Whitewater and continued to be used for about thirty years until the removal of old members from the district forced the discontinuance of the services.

In the northern part of the district, now tributary to Mino, Presbyterian services were held as early as 1882, and were conducted by the Minister of Plum Creek, now Souris. The first services

were held in the home of Alexander Scott, and in 1883 began to be held in the upper story of S. A. Heaslip's granary. Later services were held at Riverside School until the Church was built in Minto in 1903. The Church maintained a separate existence until 1912, when a local Union Church was formed—the first of its kind in Manitoba.

Prior to the coming of the settlers from Ontario, and Great Britain, the only inhabitants of the district were trappers and hunters of whom a large number were members of the Roman Catholic Church. Long before there were any churches in the district several priests travelled through the country ministering to members of their communion. Among them was Mons. W. L. Jubinville, later Rector of St. Boniface, whose parish extended from the Red River far into Saskatchewan. In the district centering on Margaret and Dunrea, Father Turcotte ministered to the needs of members of his Church.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

THEY SERVE IN PEACE AS IN WAR

In the 78 years that have passed since the first settlers came to the Boissevain Area, our fighting men have taken part in four conflicts, namely the Boer War, the Riel Rebellion, and the First and Second World Wars.

We do not have a complete record of men of our district who joined the Canadian Mounted Rifles and served our country during the Boer War, but the following list will help to honor those who were ready to keep the banner of freedom flying.

Teddy Shefield, Jeffrey White, Archie Mason, Arthur Holditch, Joseph Bennet, Jack Vicars, and Jack French, and Jim Sparks, the only one of these veterans still living now residing in Boissevain.

During the Riel Rebellion of 1885, many who might have gone West to help fight at the actual scene of battle, felt called upon to remain back here to protect their own homes and property, as there was widespread uneasiness among the Indians and some were sympathetic to Riel's cause. However some men with teams were commandeered to carry much needed supplies to the Gob forces,

among them being such local men as Jim Nelin, Bill Handley, Allan Armitage, John Harrison, Harry Hammond, William Boyd. The latter was an exception, having been on active service.

In 1919 at the conclusion of the first World War the veterans of the district banded together in a branch of the Great War Veterans association.

The National Association of the Canadian Legion B.E.S.L. was formed in 1925, amalgamating most of the veterans' organizations then in existence, the local charter being granted in December, 1926.

Charter members were Comrades A. J. Robbins, F. J. Crowhurst, H. J. Philipps, C. Jackson, Rev. O. L. Jull, R. G. Cowie, and C. N. Mains. "Bob" Cowie is the only charter member remaining and was presented with a Life Membership last year

The present membership roll consists of 115 paid up members.

They remember their fallen comrades with three parades a year and conduct a sale of poppies on Nov. 11.

A number of local, Provincial and Dominion appeals are recognized each year and the branch sponsors a hockey and baseball team. They also hold a Veterans Picnic and Bonspiel yearly and are presently constructing a new Community Hall which will be a distinct asset to the Community.

Their greatest activity is in the field of veterans' welfare.

Our veterans have taken their place in the community and serve on the Town Council, Hospital and School Boards and are active in all other local organizations.

"They serve in Peace as in War."

In order to assist and promote the work of the local branch of the Canadian Legion a group of Ladies applied for and received a charter on 8th Nov., 1927 to form a Ladies Auxiliary.

Charter members were Mesdames Margaret Bowes, Grace S. Philipps, Jane L. Holditch, Mary Kelly, Gladys Robbins, Ann Cowie, Augusta Crowhurst, Ada M. Grant, Ellen M. Jull, Jane Le Dain, and Ada Bowes.

WORLD WAR I

John Alvis, Geo. Anderson, W. H. Anderson, Geo. Appes, W. R. Armitage, B. Ashley, W. F. Ashley, F. Avison, M. Armstrong, Thos. Alexander, A. Alard.

C. Burton, E. Bruthers, R. C. Booth, A. Baker, J. Baker, W. Barker, J. Barlow, C. Barrett, W. Barton, Walter Barton, H. Bedford, A. J. Best, E. Bennett, H. Binnions, H. A. Birch, F. Bird, W. Bissett, S. Blaydon, A. Blanchard, G. Bolton, D. Bonard, C. Bowes, F. Bowes, J. L. Bowes, A. Boyd, H. Bridger, W. Broad, J. E. Brown, Bobby Burns, Lou. Burns, A. F. Bush, J. H. Baskerville, E. Braund B. Braund, E. J. Brechon, R. Bigham.

W. Cann, G. Capel, G. Carlson, Wm. Cartwright, Ben. Chambers,

Ed. Chambers, G. Chambers, T. Chambers, R. M. Chapman, P. Christianson, J. R. Claxton, H. Coker, E. Cooper, Wm. Coward, R. G. Cowie, F. Cox, S. Crafter, L. M. Crow, F. J. Crowhurst, J. W. Currie, W. Currie, J. Cutland, H. Crowston, F. W. Casdis.

Wm. Dalrymple, C. Davies, W. Daymond, C. G. Deighton, J. Dennys, C. Donald, A. Doran, C. N. Dow, D. Downs, J. Doyle, A. Dusenbury, A. W. Deacon, G. Denny, F. F. Dayment, A. H. Dayment, J. Ducharme, J. Durbury, G. A. Doran.

T. Edmondson, C. P. Edwards, H. Elliott, W. Elliott, E. Evans, F. Evason, F. Evans, R. Elkin.

F. Fisher, N. Fitton, A. Flockhart, J. Forbes, C. Ford, A. Fordham, A. Foster, F. Fox, A. Frances, W. Frances, R. Frost, W. Farager, H. Ferguson, Geo. Fisher, J. A. Fisher, E. F. French, J. T. Facey.

W. Galager, A. Gammon, F. Gately, Geo. Gates, A. Gibbon, R. Gibson, D. K. Glen, J. A. Glen, Ed. Glover, G. Godden, W. Gohl, F. Goode, N. Gordon, W. Gowanlock, A. R. Graham, J. Greaves, W. Gold, A. D. Galloway, W. E. Gill, R. Glover.

C. Hafft, D. H. Hall, M. Hammond, D. V. Hammond, H. Hamon, C. W. Handford, W. W. Hanley, W. D. Henderson, J. T. Hickman, W. Hickson, C. Hill, G. E. Hill, G. J. Hill, L. Holditch, R. H. Holditch, D. Holroyd, R. Hood, H. Hope, H. Houck, H. Howarth, A. Hudson, R. Hustan, J. R. Hutchinson, G. R. Hyde, N/S L. M. Halladay, W. Holden, Geo. Hughes, E. Harris, F. R. Helm, W. Hickman

F. Ingle, C. P. Insley.

C. Jackson, K. Johns, C. Johnson, C. B. Johnston, G. Jones, P. Jones, C. K. Johns, H. M. Jones, Chas. James, J. Johnston, T. Johnson.

E. F. Keith, C. Kelley, F. Kemp, M. V. Kempthorne, W. B. Kempthorne, J. King, W. E. King, N. R. Kempthorne.

R. Laidler, G. H. Langham, P. Le Dain, W. Le Parde, G. Lindsay, T. Lindsay, G. Little, W. S. Little, Geo. Latimer, H. Lawrence, C. Lawrence, A. N. Love, P. Lamb, F. J. Love, G. S. Love.

D. N. MacGregor, C. Maguire, F. Maguire, C. N. Mains, P. B. Mann, L. Marsh, F. Mayo, G. S. Maxwell, F. Miles, T. Miles, L. Millions, S. J. Mitchell, W. Moore, A. Munton, G. Murrey, G. V. Musgrove, L. Musgrove, M. Musgrove, S. Musgrove, C. H. Macgregor, H. Munro, J. Munro, S. Munro, H. Morris, H. Mains, D. S. Murray, R. Mansfield, R. H. Matthews, E. Merril, F. Morton, Wm. McCarthy, S. McEwen, A. McGaughey, C. R. McKinney, A. McLachlan, A. McLatchie, J. McLaughlin, A. McRae, K. McAllister, J. McLaughlan, T. M. McBride, A. McDonald.

H. E. Neil, J. A. Neil, R. J. Neil, W. G. Nixon.

J. O'Brien, E. O'Neil, B. Oke, C. R. Oke, A. Orriss, C. Orriss, G. Orriss, L. Opperman.

Joe Park, J. T. Park, R. A. Park, J. Parker, C. A. Parks, R. H.


BOISSEVAIN
April 17, 1918.
Boissevain Det.
222 Officers.
Batln. C.E.F.

Patterson, T. W. Patterson, F. G. Peachey, W. Peacock, Eric Peacock, F. H. Pearson, Bert Penhale, J. C. Penny, Wm. Perry, H. J. Philipps, H. Plummer, W. H. Price, R. M. Pritchard, Wm. Page, M. J. Patterson, A. A. Patterson, D. Page,

F. C. Quayle.

C. Rawcliffe, G. Reed, W. T. Reed, A. Reid, C. Reid, J. Reid, S. Reid, W. H. Remnant, A. J. Revoir, D. Ribbons, L. A. Richards, O. Richards, D. Ritchie, M. Ritchie, F. Rodwell, B. Roe, C. Russell, M. Ryan, F. Rathwell, W. Rutherford, G. S. Robertson, W. Raine, E. G. Ransome, F. A. Richwald, R. Reid.

E. H. Sankey, N. Sankey, F. Saults, A. Scambol, Dr. F. I. Schaffner, T. Seaton, H. Seddon, J. Sergeant, E. Sharpe, W. Sharpe, J. E. Sheffield, G. C. Smith, R. Smith, G. Stacey, H. Stanton, B. Stapley, H. Steggles, C. Steiner, W. Sterling, H. Stodgles, E. Stow, W. J. Summerfield, G. Sunderland, H. N. Sankey, Geo. Smith, W. Swail, A. Smith, O. J. Snepp, J. W. Smith, T. Stenhouse, J. Steel, C. Steel, R. Steel, D. Stroud, J. A. Sedger.

J. Talbot, J. Tannock, R. Taylor, Harry Taylor, A. L. Taylor, G. T. Taylor, H. Taylor, J. G. Taylor, L. Taylor, Wm. Taylor, A. E. Terry, J. L. Thompson, F. N. Thompson, G. B. Till, S. Till, F. Tulley, J. J. Tulley, A. Turner, G. Turner, W. Turner, A. Turton, J. Tweed, T. H. Tyreman, E. Talbot, N/S M. Taylor, E. Turner, B. Terry, John Taylor, W. Toden, W. R. Tremaine.

E. M. Venables, E. D. Valliant, Geo. Valliant, J. Venables.

J. Walsh, H. G. Waight, S. Wake, A. Walker, D. Walker, L. Walker, W. Walker, L. Wark, R. Warnock, J. Watson, J. Roy Watt, A. Whating, C. Whyte, T. Wild, G. Williams, E. R. Wilson, T. Wilson, T. Wier, T. Willis, J. H. Winters, J. Winton, C. A. Wood, Wm. Woods, A. H. Wright, C. Wright, J. A. Wright, J. A. Wright, Jr., S. Wright, J. Wyllie, P. Wake, Ern. Wilson, A. Walkinshaw, C. G. Webb, H. E. Whiffin, Wm. White, R. Whiting, E. F. Wright.

WORLD WAR II

J. Acheson, N/S E. Acheson, J. Albrecht, C. Anderson, Jean Armitage, D. C. Armstrong, J. K. Armstrong, G. R. L. Armstrong, K. L. Armstrong, A. Ashley, L. Arnold, R. Alvis.

L. Bartley, W. R. Barefoot, B. Birbeck, F. C. Bird, J. M. Bird, A. Beaton, C. Bowes, B. Bridger, A. Brooks, R. Brooks, A. Brook, Wm. Brook, L. Burney, T. Bridger, H. J. Bridger, H. Brake, D. Burney, L. Birbeck.

J. Chester, D. G. Crossman, G. Cooper, J. A. Cameron, J. Carter-squire, A. Chalmers, E. J. Clark, N. Clark, P. Clark, R. Clark, E. Clelland, W. H. Cliffe, B. Coker, K. Coker, Alice Corkish, Wm. Corkish, B. Cosgrove, C. Cove, Wm. Cove, J. Cowie, Jim Cowie, G. Crowston, D. Culbert, Ruth Culbert, F. Culbert, M. Culbert, B. G.

Boissevain Platton of the 222nd, Southern Manitoba Battalion. Officer Lieut. Clendenning

Chambers, L. Camp, H. Clark, Tom Chambers, R. J. Carey, M. Carey, G. W. Cochrane, J. Chambers, A. A. Cameron, A. W. Clements, D. A. Cochrane.

G. Davidson, P. Davidson, D. Denny, R. Denny, A. E. Dickson, D. B. Dickson, Geo. Dusenbury, J. D. Dyck, J. Dueck.

J. Ekin.

A. Facey, L. Facey, W. French, J. Foley, L. Fox, A. Fast.

J. Gardner, W. Garton, R. Garton, R. W. Gladstone, J. W. Gladstone, A. Gohl, J. Gohl, R. Gohl, R. D. Graham, J. Graham, K. Grey, T. W. Garton, M. H. Garton, L. M. Gouldie, G. Gouldie, D. G. Gillespie, G. Gudmundson, W. Gregg.

F. Hamilton, H. G. Harvie, J. A. Harvie, L. Henderson, R. D. Henderson, K. Henderson, E. Henderson, Ross Henderson, W. Henderson, T. Hill, G. Holditch, B. Howell, D. Howe, S. W. Harrison, L. G. Hardy, R. J. Hamilton, N. Hunt, C. W. Houlden, Grace Henderson, A. E. Hamilton.

N/S E. Johnson, B. Johnson, Mel. Johnson.

L. W. Kingdon, F. Kendrick, R. Kendrick, N. Kell, S. Kell, Joe Kelly, H. Kelly, P. Kelly N/S K. King, F. N. Kempthorne, A. Kenward, S. Kenward, K. Kenward, T. Kenward, R. Keown, F. Keown, H. Keown, J. Keown, A. Kilmury, C. Kilmury, W. Kilmury, A. King, L. King, K. G. King, E. L. King, A. H. Kinsey, G. Kinsey, H. Kinsey, S. Kinsey, G. Krocker, J. Krupa, Wm. Kuzenko, E. J. Kyle, Yes Kempthorne, John Kelly, E. Kinsey.

E. R. Little, B. Little, W. Love, O. Lloyd, L. D. Ludgate, E. W. T. Lee, J. Lindsay, E. J. Leifso, D. P. Lamont, S. E. Leppert.

E. McKinney, J. McKinnon, J. McLachlan, G. McLaughlin, M. McLeod, B. McLeod, D. McLeod, G. McNeil, J. McDonald, A. J. McGregor, J. K. Murry, T. Merino.

D. J. MacDonald, Doug. MacDonald, A. J. McDonald, J. Meldrum, L. Merck, F. Moore, J. T. Moore, D. R. Moore, A. Morton, D. Morton, I. Morton, W. Mann, W. Mowatt.

E. F. Noble, Eva Noton, G. Nelin, J. Newson, D. Noton, R. Noton.

A. Oakden, C. Oakden, D. Opperman, G. Opperman, F. Opperman, C. Orriss.

G. Pennock, J. Philipps, D. Philipps, A. Powell, Alma Parsons, C. Pettypiece, N. Peters, Tom Patterson, B. Penner.

E. Reid, A. V. Robbins, A. J. Robbins, J. Roberts, E. Roberts, M. C. Robertson, J. Rodwell, F. Rodwell, D. Ruggles, J. F. Ryan, J. W. Ryan, A. Rivest, K. A. Reynolds, Irene Reynolds, A. H. Ransom.

J. Sawatsky, K. Sexton, M. Sexton, R. Sexton, G. Scott, W. Shorey, Robt. Shorey, J. Shorey, R. Shorey, T. Shields, R. Shields, A. Sneath, D. Sneath, R. Stevenson, J. Stone, G. Storey, W. Storey, J. Storr, E. Strong, C. D. Stroud, C. Smith, A. F. Shepherd, N. Smith,

D. Scott, W. Smith, A. Sutton, Geo. Smith, F. C. Stenhouse.

J. Talbot, Lillian Taylor, R. Thomas, G. Thompson B. Topping, D. Tuck, J. Turner, C. Turner, L. Tripp, S. Taylor.

A. R. Venables, T. L. Venables.

A. Waddell, M. Waddell, L. Wakefield, C. E. Walker, R. Welch, L. White, W. White, A. Wilson, J. Wilson, Joe Wilson, A. Willson, K. Wood, R. Wood, R. Wright, G. Wright, A. Wyman, E. Wyman, Ed. Wyman, H. Wyman, Herb. Wyman, H. Wilkinson, M. Wilkinson, J. B. Whitfield, E. C. Wheeler, R. R. Wheeler, R. H. Wark, W. J. Walker, D. A. Wilkinson, Leroy Wright, H. Wheeler.

CANADIAN ORDER OF FORESTERS, COURT SYLVAN NO. 10

Court Sylvan was instituted on March 22nd, 1887, Queen Victoria's Jubilee year, and has carried on with various degrees of success from that date to this year 1956, the year of Boissevain's Jubilee Celebration.

The Charter members, whose names are given below, were, of course, pioneers of those early days who have, unfortunately, now passed to the "Great Beyond": Peter Robertson, Adam McAllister, James A. Wright, William Lambert, W. A. Brown, Hy. Chapman, W. J. Armstrong, W. A. Woodrow, S. A. Cornell, Fred D. Peters, A J. Cameron.

The presiding officers or "Chief Rangers" to 1900 were as follows: 1887 Fred D. Peters, 1888 Robert Cook, 1889 Dr. F. L. Schaffner, 1890 W. C. Cottingham, 1891 G. G. Richardson, 1892 James A. Wright, 1893 G. C. Currie, 1894 W. Woodrow, 1895 A. McKnight, 1896 G. C. Hill, 1897 J. Munroe, 1898 A. Venables, 1899 F. G. Fox, 1900 J. T. Elliott.

A distinctive feature of the Canadian Order of Foresters is its Life Insurance; every member has made some financial provision for those near relatives who may be left behind at his demise.

The sum of its activities might, perhaps be quoted in cold figures, suffice it to say its members have, throughout its 69 years, endeavoured to practise the principles of fraternity, bring help to the sick and comfort to the bereaved.

It might happily be noted in this year of Boissevain's Jubilee celebration that the Canadian Order of Foresters, through its head office in Brantford, Ontario, had a part to play in the installation of our waterworks system and purchased debentures to the extent of $25,000.

SEVENTIETH YEAR

In the year 1956, which Boissevain is celebrating the seventy fifth anniversary of the coming of the pioneers to this community it is interesting to note that Doric Lodge is observing its seventieth anniversary.

Freemasonry being what it is, a system of morality, or a code of conduct, enjoining its members to practise of every virtue, the organization of a Masonic Lodge at so early a time in the settlement of this part of our country adds additional testimony to the quality of those "Old Settlers."

On May 6, 1886 Doric Lodge No. 36 A.F. & A.M., G.R.M., received from the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, a dispensation permitting the holding of meetings by members of the craft. The first meeting was held in the home of Rev. Alexander Henry Cameron. The first "regular" meeting was held on June 30, 1886, and the charter was granted on Feb. 12, 1887.

The charter members were:

CAMERON, Alexander Henry
IRELAND, Walter Wallace
CORNELL, Sanford Augustus
COWAN, William Edward
BUTCHART, David Martin
KELLETT, Thomas Henry
MOORE, James Peter
COOKE, Frederick Augustus
WILLIAMS, Clarence Wood
NELSON, John Linn
HIGHMAN, John
STURT, John Richard
LOVELL, William
OKE, Samuel
MORTON, George
REA, James
SMITH, William
ASHDOWN, Alfred
PETERS, Frank Damand
TATCHELL, Edwin Barrett

The first officers were:

IRELAND, Walter Wallace ..... Worshipful Master
CORNELL, Sanford Augustus ..... Senior Warden
KELLETT, Thos. Henry ..... Junior Warden
CAMERON, Alexander Henry ..... Chaplin
COWAN, William Edward ..... Treasurer
COOKE, Frederick Augustus ..... Secretary
HIGHMAN, John ..... Senior Deacon
TATCHELL, Edwin Barrett ..... Junior Deacon
REA, James ..... Inner Guard
PETERS, Frederick Damand ..... Tyler

In 1888 the present Masonic Hall was built, the cost having been financed by subscriptions of members of the Lodge; an addition was built in 1897. At first the lower floor of the building was used as a school. In 1903 it was leased as a Post Office and was so used until 1935, when the first part of the present modern Post Office building was erected.

The following are some of the historical events especially noted by Doric Lodge:

1. On 2 Aug. 1891—A memorial service for Sir John A. MacDonald, a leader amongst the Fathers of Confederation, and a Prime Minister of Canada, who had been a Free Mason for 45 years.

2. On May 26, 1936—Doric Lodge celebrated its Golden Jubilee Anniversary by special ceremonies at which many distinguished Masons were present.

3. During World War II Doric Lodge sponsored the local unit of AIR FORCE CADETS, the only Masonic Lodge in Manitoba to support this commendable and patriotic activity. A strong committee of Masons, with Alf. H. Gardner as Commanding Officer and Ralph W. Clarke as assistant brought this unit to a high state of efficiency.

A catalogue of the names of Boissevain Freemasons who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the good life in this community, would overflow the space allotted for this summary, but a few references, more or less at random, may be of interest.

James D. Baine, a greatly beloved Brother, was Master of the Lodge in 1889. In 1909 he was Grand Master for Manitoba, the only member of Doric to attain to the highest office among the Masons of Manitoba. He died in 1922, greatly mourned by all his Brethren.

In 1890, Dr. Fred L. Schaffner was Master. He was elected to the House of Commons of Canada in 1911 and later became a member of the Senate.

R. G. Willis became Master in 1895. He was for many years a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

In 1896 William Gordon, who had been on two occasions Secretary of the Lodge, became Master of Doric. He was for many years Clerk of the County Court of Boissevain.

In 1902 two of our better known citizens became members in the persons of W. V. Udall and Alex. R. Welch. Both are still with us and are Fifty Year Gold Medal Masons. Both are prominent in promoting the International Peace Garden. Mr. Udall was for many years the aggressive publisher of the Boissevain Recorder, and Mr. Welch was a member of the Coalition Government, representing the Constituency of Turtle Mountain.

An item of interest in the year in which we are examining "old things" as well as thinking of "old timers," is the grand piano which is in regular use in the Masonic Lodge Room. It was brought from England to this part of Manitoba by the Holditches and was in 1928 presented to the Masonic Lodge by a Past Master member of the family, E. D. Holditch.

The M.O.Y.O. maintains on behalf of, and with the financial assistance of the public, a pre school age Play Ground. This has for several years been an outstanding feature of the summer months in Boissevain.

These are a few of the activities of some of the Masons of Boissevain which may be considered of interest to the general public. Throughout its 70 years of continuous active existence, the members of Doric Lodge have devoted much more of their time, effort and money to the advancement of the cardinal principals of the order, namely, Brotherly Love, Relief of Necessity and the Quest for Truth.

ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

On Monday evening, April 12, 1920, wives, daughters and sisters of Master Masons met in the Masonic Hall for the purpose of organizing a chapter of the Eastern Star in Boissevain. Mrs. Gibson acted as chairman; Mrs. Bolton, as secretary for the meeting.

The name Minnehaha was chosen for the chapter to be instituted under the General Grand Chapter since there was no Manitoba Grand Chapter in 1920.

In the afternoon of July 8, 1920, the initiation of the new members and the institution of Minnehaha Chapter No. 9, O.E.S., took place in the Masonic Hall. Fifty responded to the roll call. The new chapter was instituted by Queen Mary Chapter No. 3 of Brandon and Victoria Chapter No. 5 of Hartney. The following officers were elected and appointed.

W.M.	Mrs. Kate Gibson	Org.	Mrs. Ada Grant
W.P.	Mr. R. G. Willis	Adah	Mrs. Jane Aitkens
A.M.	Mrs. Mary Johnson	Ruth	Mrs. Eliz. Bush
Sec.	Miss Rosa M. Saults	Esther	Mrs. Cassie Udall
Treas.	Mrs. Margaret Acheson	Martha	Mrs. Mary White
Con.	Mrs. Ella Willis	Electa	Mrs. Augusta Crowhurst
A.C.	Mrs. Eva Graham	Warder	Mrs. Josephine King
Chap.	Mrs. Constance Sankey	Sentinel	Mr. J. H. Gibson
Mar.	Mrs. E. J. Le Dain		

As well as these officers the following became members at this meeting:

Mrs. M. Bolton	Mr. E. D. Holditch
Mrs. A. Fox	Mr. E. T. Johnson
Mrs. Rosa Brooks	Mr. Bert Grant
Mr. S. R .Acheson	Mr. W. V. Udall

The third Tuesday of each month was chosen as the regular meeting day. The first degrees to be conferred by the new chapter took place Sept. 21, 1920. Degrees were conferred upon Mrs. Ethel Gamble, Mrs. Carrie Beckstead, Mrs. Eliza Taylor, Mr. W. P. McAvoy.

EARLY HISTORY OF BOISSEVAIN LODGE NO 17 I.O.O.F.

Among the settlers who came into the new town in the "Eighties" were four members of the order: W. H. Woodrow from Ontario, Jim Wilson from California, L. Underwood from U.S. and Alex McCullah. They required a fifth man to apply for a Charter, so they borrowed Jack Henderson from Deloraine and on the 19th of March 1889, a Lodge was instituted under the authority of Horace Raymer, Grand Master, Winnipeg.

On the night of the institution, nineteen new members were initiated into the Lodge. These were: Wm. Haight, Geo. Richardson,

F. L. Schaffner, Tom Nicol, H. Gallogher, Joseph Birbeck, Wm. Lambert, Ham Gage, J. D. Bain, D. McTavish, J. A. Wright, T. Buck, Jack Cassady, R. A. Musgrove, John Morrow, Donald Young, D. McArthur, C. Embree, A. C. McEwn, Fred Young.

As the years went by, the membership increased to over one hundred. In those days we never heard of a trained nurse and the Brothers took turns waiting on sick members. It was the duty of the Lodge, and still is, to care for the sick, relieve distress, bury the dead and educate the orphan. Our Lodge became very proficient in conferring degrees and were called on to help institute many new Lodges including Ninga, Killarney, Minto, Elgin, Waskada, and Carnduff.

For the first 35 years the Lodge met in the Masonic Hall. Then we purchased our present home on the corner of Main and Broadway South. In the year '29, our hall was destroyed by fire and nearly all records were lost. A new hall was rebuilt better than ever.

This Lodge is now in its 68th year, and is still going strong and endeavouring to practice the principles of true fraternity by doing something for somebody else.

C. C. Musgrove

BOISSEVAIN L.O.L 1545

The Loyal Orange Lodge No. 1545 was instituted in August 17th, 1885 at Rayfield School, Municipality of Morton. The charter members who had brought their certificates from Ontario a few years previous to this occasion were Thomas M. Barker, J. Burns, Thomas Wyman, J. Peacock, Richard Barwick, John Musgrove, James Thompson, A. S .Walker, John J. Walker.

Worshipful Masters for the ensuing years were as follows: 1886 T. M. Barker, 1887 J. T. Cooper, 1888 J. T. Cooper, 1889 T. M. Barker, 1890 John Bowes, 1891 John Bowes, 1892 J. M. Deacon, 1893 John Peacock, 1894 James Burns, 1895 J. W. Barker, 1896 J. W. Walker, 1897 J. J. Cooper, 1898 E. Sankey, 1899 E. D. Allen, 1900 G. Lumsly.

On Oct. 21, 1926 the Ladies Orange Benevolent Association Maple Leaf No. 730 was instituted in Boissevain by the Right Worshipful Grand Mistress of Manitoba, Sister Ada Rayne, with Sister Jean Kyle as the first Worthy Mistress of the Lodge.

THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The Boissevain Women's Institute came into being on Feb. 19th, 1915 with Miss Crawford, head of the women's division of the Dept. of Agriculture as organizer. The first president was Mrs. Jas. Robinson, and of the original membership, only Mrs. Frank Howell and Mrs. C. C. Musgrove remain on the list.

Our motto "For Home and Country," we have endeavored to maintain for the forty-one years of our existence.

Our chief activities have been maintaining a rest room and a library of some 500 volumes, which is open to the public.

The rest room has changed its location several times, however, in 1944, largely by subscription, we were able to build on our present location, and now with the help of the councils, we are able to maintain a rest room of which we are justly proud, and which is second to none in rural Manitoba.

During the thirties, when money was scarce, we sponsored a "baby clinic" at the fair-grounds on Fair Day, and for many years have sponsored Cancer Tag Day.

Down through the years, we have held many sewing and cooking classes, which have been a great benefit to the women and girls of our community.

The present officers of our W.I. are: Hon. Presidents, Mrs. C. C. Musgrove and Mrs. Frank Howell; President, Mrs. A. E. Henderson; Secretary, Mrs. M. Howell, and Treasurer, Mrs. L. S. Oke.

May the good work that is being done be carried on with greater enthusiasm in the years to come.

WHITEWATER WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Early in 1915 Rev. and Mrs. A. T. Macintosh conceived the idea of a "Home Economics" society for the women of Whitewater.

In the spring of that year Miss Crawford of the Agric. College came out and in the home of Mrs. McKee a "Home Economics" society was organized, later known as the "Women's Institute." The first president elected was Mrs. Tom Wilson, and the first sec. treas. was Mrs. Aylsworth.

Some of the early members were Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Jas. Robertson, Mrs. Stanfield, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Lucas, Mrs. Carlson, Mrs. McKee, Mrs. Rutherford and Miss Walker.

Three of the original members are still living—Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Stanfield and Mrs. Rutherford.

Through the years, the Whitewater Womens Institute has worked for the good of the home and the community, which is the ultimate aim of all "Women's Institutes."

Our present officers are: President, Mrs. R. Robertson; 1st Vice Pres., Mrs. L. Ransom; 2nd Vice Pres., Mrs. Fleming; Sec., Mrs. N. Swanson; Treas., Mrs. S. E. Ransom.

While we are now a very scattered group, with only three of our members living in and around Whitewater, we take a backward look at what has been accomplished and face the future with faith and courage.

"WHAT THEY LAUGHED AT THEN"

It was back in the days when we had to make our own entertainment, that a dramatic society headed by the local preacher were putting on a play. The script called for the preacher to shoot his opponent in the breast, who was then to fall backwards with hands on heart and cry, "Oh my God, I'm shot." The preacher insisted that the speech be watered down to, "Oh my goodness, I'm shot." Came the big night, with all in readiness, including the shotgun off stage, loaded with a pinch of powder to make a bang. Two boys, hoping to hop it up, sneaked off stage and put a shot of tomato juice down the barrel. The preacher fired at the villain who fell back moaning "Oh my goodness, I'm shot," then noticing his shirt front was all red, jumped to his feet and screamed, "Oh you damn fool, you did shoot me."

Many of the early pioneers who got a kick out of horse trading, got an equal satisfaction when able to beat the "City Slicker." Young Geo. Armstrong who farmed South of Boissevain was driving to town one day, and worrying about a $50 note overdue on a sewing machine. He met a stranger driving a livery rig, who stopped him and asked him the road to Geo. Armstrong's. Geo. gave him instructions, and then casually remarked, "If by any chance you are going out there to collect, I have a $60 note of his that I'll sell for $2. After he received the astonishing information that the drummer held a $50 note, they tossed a coin, the winner to pay $2 for the other note. Geo. won and drove on into town followed by the stranger, with his $50 note in his pocket, and a tale to tell the boys that would keep them laughing for a long time.

In pioneer days, a man habitually checked on his neighbor's chimney. No smoke called for an investigation. So it was one day, that a bunch of the boys suddenly realized that they had seen no smoke from old Bachelor Bill's stove pipe in over a week. They drove over, and sure enough Bill was sick in bed suffering from a malady that is still politely referred to on the radio commercials. They had no hospitals, no doctors, no nurses, but they did have a thresherman's tank pump and six husky men. He recovered. No details please.

He was a newcomer from old England, just out to have a look at the "Wild West" and do a bit of hunting. He had trudged along a trail in the Turtle Mountains all day, had seen nothing to shoot, and was hot, dusty, weary and about ready to give up when he met a farmer with a load of wood. The farmer told him that if he kept straight on for about three miles that he would come to a hill, and on the other side would find young foxes running all over the place. He grimly plodded on with his gun at the ready, and upon topping

the last hill, came upon a farmyard—the homestead of Mr. and Mrs. F. Fox, whose youngsters (young foxes) were indeed running all over the place.

It happened many years ago, D. A. Taylor, Chas. Robertson, Sid. Acheson and Ed. Dow decided to hunt at Whitewater Lake. They picked up Ward Caldbick at his lakeside farm and headed in to the rushes. It was late at night when they returned after having no luck. Dropping Ward off, they noticed as they were leaving his place, some turkeys roosting in a tree. Being empty handed, they grabbed one and headed for home. Car trouble developed at Whitewater, so they cleaned the gobbler for a midnight supper at the boarding house and invited Ward by phone. Ward duly arrived, and couldn't thank them enough for their kindness. However, next morning he missed his $25 pure bred gobbler. Feathers and car tracks told the tale. He headed for Boissevain while in the proper frame of mind to express his opinion. To this day, no one has located two pigs that disappeared from Charlie Robertson's pig-pen that night.

CHAPTER NINE

THE SMITH-DAW MURDER

In the year 1900, a murder was committed in this settlement. Many conflicting stories have been circulated concerning this incident but through several reliable sources we have been able to obtain the reasonably true story.

When the site of the old Turtle Mountain City (S.E. ¼ Sec. 4-3-21), was abandoned, a pioneer, Charley Sankey, claimed it for a homestead. After obtaining a title to the land, he sold it to Neil Bell who, after several bad years, sold it to an Englishman, Charley Daw, a quiet, unobtrusive man.

At the time when Daw came into possession of the former Sankey homestead, a young man from Ontario, Walter Gordon, was working for Leonard Thompson. Gordon apparently became obsessed with the desire to possess Daw's property. Daw's health had failed badly and he was advised by doctors to return to England. This seemed to Gordon to be the opportune time to obtain the property. He offered to buy the farm from Daw, claiming that he was expecting money from a man with whom he was supposedly in partnership in a gold mine in Mexico. Daw agreed to wait and

hired a man, Jake Smith, to look after the farm until the sale could be completed.

Some time later Smith was informed by Gordon that the expected money had arrived and that he and Daw were going to Boissevain to make the final settlement. On the way to town it is thought that Gordon confessed to Daw that the whole story about the gold mine in Mexico was a hoax and that he had no money at all. It is supposed that Daw refused to sell the farm on any other terms than straight cash. Whether or not Gordon shot Daw accidentally or whether he did it deliberately was never known. Nevertheless, he proceeded with cold deliberation to do away with the body. He hid it in a secluded spot in the ravine on the farm, and he then went on to Boissevain. Later that night it is supposed he returned to the ravine with a stoneboat and hauled the body back to the farm where he threw it in a shallow well situated near the house. The well, dug by Charley Sankey, was surrounded by red willow bushes.

That same day Smith had gone to Deloraine, but since he had been late returning to the farm, he did not realize until the next morning that Daw had not returned with Gordon. He became suspicious of Daw's absence and accused Gordon of doing away with him. A violent quarrel followed in which Gordon shot Smith as he was running to the house. Smith's body was also thrown down the well. Several neighbors heard the gun shots and saw the men running about. The same day they saw Gordon and asked what had happened. Gordon unhesitatingly replied that their dog had mauled a calf and they had had to shoot it. Later he threw the dog's body down the well.

Several days later, a young neighbour, Johnny Brondgeest, came to the farm and told Gordon as he was coming up the ravine grade on the road to Boissevain he saw a lot of blood on a spot where the scrub had been crushed down. Gordon glibly replied that he had killed a badger and had had quite a fight with it. Gordon told Johnny that Smith had gone to his home and that Daw had returned to the Old Country. Gordon asked the boy to come and help him for a day. Fortunately Johnny was busy with haying at home and refused. He might have been the next victim.

Not having heard from Daw for several days, a close friend, Tom Wilson, came over to enquire about him. He was told by Gordon that Smith and Daw had gone to Brandon on a spree and had probably gotten into trouble. Tom became suspicious because he knew enough about Daw to be able to tell that such behaviour was entirely out of keeping with his character. He accordingly went to Brandon and confided his suspicions to an Inspector Forester.

Gordon heard in Boissevain that Tom had gone to Brandon to consult the Inspector. Terrified, he immediately drove back to the farm and from there, via old Deloraine, to Saskatchewan, and thence

to the United States. He drove to Fort Benton where he joined the United States Army. He had abandoned his horse and buggy at some wayside place.

Needless to say the unusual happenings, topped by Gordon's disappearance, caused much stir in the district. Murder was suspected and an air of mystery prevailed around the Daw farm. Gordon was reportedly seen near Estevan and then north of Brandon. These reports proved untrue and it appeared that Gordon had completely disappeared. No evidence could be found to confirm people's suspicions and interest began to wane. Unexpectedly, news came from North Dakota that a Canadian buggy, with a bullet hole in the top curtain and blood on the floor, had been found. This created new interest and a thorough search was made of the ravine and farm. The old well was discovered and finally the bodies of the dog, Smith, and Daw. When this condemning evidence was brought to light, a large reward was offered for Gordon's capture. The excitement abated, however, when the report was circulated that he had fled to Mexico.

The Boissevain town constable, Ed. Allan, was not satisfied to drop the case. Knowing that the Chicago papers had a large Western circulation, he had a photograph of Gordon, along with information regarding the murder and the reward offered for his capture, inserted in this paper.

Gordon's luck was running out. A soldier from Fort Benton obtained one of the Chicago papers and recognized Gordon. When questioned about the murder Gordon claimed he had fought with a man in Canada and had fled without knowing whether or not he had killed him. Gordon was terrified and slipping away in the night, he fled back to Canada. He made his way to Vancouver where he joined a regiment bound for South Africa to take part in the Boer War.

The soldier at Fort Benton reported his suspicions to the authorities who immediately instigated a search. A description of Gordon was wired to Vancouver where he was recognized by his military photograph. Meanwhile Gordon was on a transcontinental flier under military orders bound for Halifax and overseas.

Word was wired ahead to Halifax and he was apprehended just as he was mounting the gangplank of a ship bound for South Africa. Gordon was brought back to Brandon where he was tried and convicted of murder. He was hanged and buried in Brandon jail yard.

We are indebted to Mr. C. Sankey of Waskada and to Mr. Robertson of Whitewater for the information contained herein.

Jane Wilson

CHAPTER TEN

SOCIAL LIFE, SPORTS AND RECREATION IN THE COMMUNITY

BASEBALL

The first baseball game I recall took place May 24, 1883, at Bill Smith's farm on the Commission Trail when Range 19 (our team) defeated the Range 20 team. Supper was served in Smith's granary for 25c each and the losers had to pay the bill. After everything was cleared away the day ended with an old time dance at which fiddlers Pete Cantlon and Dick McIntosh provided the music. Among the praticipants that day were Cousin Bob Musgrove, Pete Robertson, Bill Anderson, Bill Armitage and Al Birbeck. The catcher was the dude, Joe Birbeck, whose baseball attire consisted of a white shirt and a black suit.

Other early games were played at Chas. Wright's (now Art Shorey's place) and at the former site of Caranton School to which diamond such players as Jim and Bill Rae, Bill and Jim Willson, Bill Lambert, D. Henderson, Tom Patterson, Jim Musgrove and I used to walk.

After the railway came through in 1885, baseball flourished in town and games were played against Deloraine, Killarney and Ninga. Groups known as the first and second teams met at picnics at Victoria near Minto and at Langvale, north of town. Baseball continued as a popular sport for many years with such strong contenders as brothers Will and Bob Musgrove, Jim Steele, Harry Chapman, Dick Sparling, George Musgrove, Ben Steel and Harman Frayne.

Baseball in the early days was a rugged game with no masks or mitt to prevent a broken finger—by one who knows.

C. C. Musgrove

LACROSSE

A leading sporting interest around Boissevain in the 1880's was lacrosse—a game which was popular for ten years. Opposing teams came from Deloraine or Hartney. Occasionally Boissevain and Souris met at Deloraine. Transportation was provided by liveryman

Boissevain Hockey Team, 1909-1910 winners of the S.W.M.A.H.A. and Southern Saskatchewan A. H. A. Lleft to right, back row: (Executive) Wm. Knox, Geo. Aitkens, Alex Fletcher, A. R. Welch, John Taylor.
2nd row: Ralph Hicks, Spike Clendenning, Heck McKinnon, Lochie McKinnon.
3rd row: Lee Todd, Harry Dunn, Howard Ringer, Russ Stone

Jack Elliott in his "bandwagon," a closed-in wagon box drawn by a double team of horses. The return trip was completed the same night. On the first team were Bob Cantlon, Tom Hyslop, restaurateur; Jack Hamilton, clerk in Baine's store; Jim Miller, clerk in McLaren's, Chas. James, Globe office; Bert Poyle, laborer; Will McKnight, postmaster; Harry Chapman, bartender of Queen's Hotel; Tom Brodie, grain buyer; Jim Steele and I. Among those who participated later were Harry Dunn, Dr. Graham, Jack Campbell, teacher; Geo. Aitkens, Russel Stone and H. J. Stevenson.

Recently I had the pleasure of renewing the acquaintance of Mr. Ingo, uncle of Ed Dow, who reminded me that I had given him my name badge in 1890 when a Winnipeg travelling team played in Boissevain. Chas. James used to print personal badges for each player. The gala day ended with a concert in McEwen's hall.

C. C. Musgrove

HOCKEY

Boissevain and district have always been keen followers and supporters of hockey through the years, and we are sorry to say

Ninga Hockey Club, 1897. Back: J. C. Hainer, unknown, J. Kilpatrick Geo. Courley, R. Butchard, Rev. H. Hull, Geo. King

we are unable to find any more definite information than the following re hockey in the olden days.

In the winter 1909-10 Boissevain played in a league with Pilot Mound and Crystal City and were defeated for the league leadership by Pilot Mound.

Then in the winter of 1910-11 Boissevain and District decided to go all out for hockey and under an Executive of George Aitkens, Wm. Knox and Judge John Taylor they built up a strong team from players from the previous year along with the addition of 2 or 3 more brought in from Ontario, and as the winter progressed the ability and winning ways of this team also progressed by the winning of the league championship with teams composed of the towns of Boissevain, Pilot Mound and Crystal City, and then in the Manitoba Playdowns they defeated Strathclair for the Western Manitoba Championship, and then for the Manitoba Championship they defeated Winnipeg in a sudden death game on Brandon ice.

The players on this Manitoba Championship team of the winter of 1910-11 were: Goal, Hector McKinnon; Left Defence, Ralph Hicks; Right Defence, Spike Clendening; Right Wing, Russell Stone; Left Wing, Todd Lee; Rover, Harry Dunn; Centre, Lauchlan McKinnon; Spare, B. Ringer.

Unknown, Alec McNeil, Geo. Klea, Sandy Cameron
Photo courtesy Jack Cameron

You will note these were the days of 7 man hockey when every player played almost the full 60 minutes and there was no forward passing as there is today.

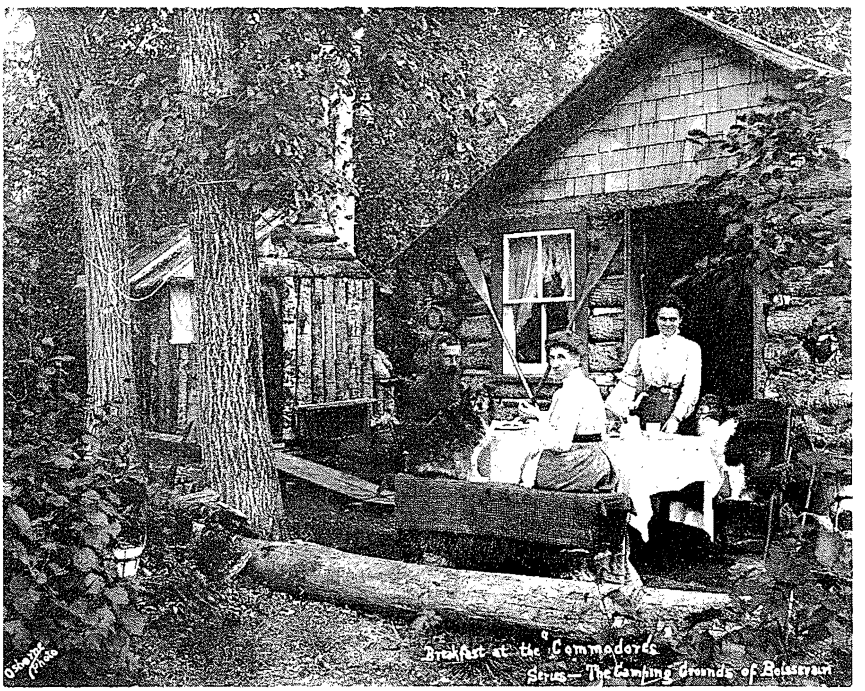
LAKE MAX

About the first we know of this beautiful island-dotted lake situated four miles west and ten miles south of the town of Boissevain was in the early 80's when Mr. Geo. Morton erected a saw mill, about fifteen or twenty rods east of the present bath-houses, and a large boarding house for the men quite near.

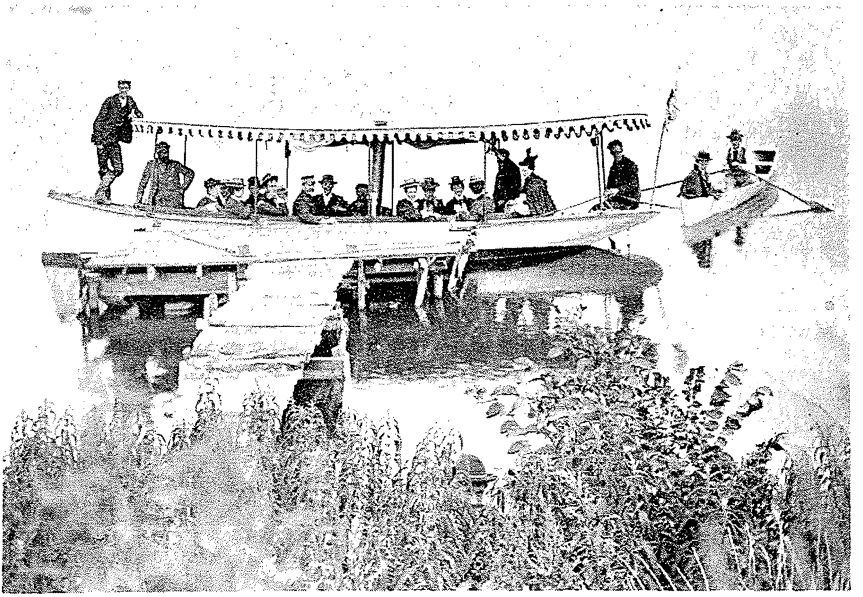
This bit of industry was very welcome to the early settlers as it brought some much needed employment and a little money into the district. Most of the men's wages were taken out in lumber to build houses to replace the sod shacks used in homesteading duties. Much lumber from this mill and from Fox's mill at Desford was used to build the first houses and business places in Boissevain.

Mr. Morton had a small launch called "The Lady of the Lake," which held thirty or forty passengers and was used solely to give pleasure to his friends and visitors and was also at the service of S.S. picnics and other groups at a very nominal fee. This boat later became the property of Mr. Hurst.

Bolton Sawmill at Lake Max, 1881, taken over by George Morton
Photo Courtesy Mrs. Lily Henderson



Lake Max. Mr. Hurt, Mrs. Hurt, Miss Pelly — Photo courtesy W. Moncur



"Lady of the Lake" Hurt's steam launch on Lake Max — Photo courtesy Jean Armstrong

It was not until about the turn of the century when horses replaced the oxen and travelling became a little less difficult that several of the town people decided that "Arbor Island" would be a wonderful place for their families to spend their summer holidays, and before many years there were about a dozen cottages. The first was erected by Mr. Embree, and later sold to Mr. Udall. Others belonged to Mr. Ashley, Mr. J. A. Wright, Mr. Birbeck, Mr. Frank Thompson, Mr. Hurt, Mr. A. R. Welch, Mr. Dougal Taylor, Mr. F. Howell, Mr. E. Phillips, Mr. Johnson and Dunn Brothers.

The children of these families have many happy memories of the summers spent at Lake Max, where they learned to study nature, swim and dive and row a boat. During the long summer evenings they would row across to the mainland, play baseball until dark, then return to the island and build a huge bonfire in front of one of the cottages where they would pop corn and sing songs and tell stories until weariness sent them to rest.

Later as cars took the place of horses, travelling over the old trails was very difficult in wet weather and interest waned, but with improved road conditions the last few years, and the introduction of several motor boats, Lake Max is once more coming into its own and many of the larger groups in the vicinity hold their annual gatherings there.

In 1900, or thereabouts, large groups of people used to go down to the Lake to pick raspberries, as after the fire the berries grew in

great quantities. Parties would drive with pots and pans, tents and bedding, and stay for several days, making their jam on the spot.

After picking all day they would often go for a run in the old "Lady of the Lake," and sometimes the Captain (often Bob Hurt) would stop the boat out in the lake, and let it drift. Then everyone would sing; someone usually had a mouth organ or banjo, or cornet, and it made lovely music, over the water in the moonlight. Truly a happy time to remember.

My first visit to the Lake must have been about 1896 I think. We drove down with Captain Whitla and Mrs. Whitla. The road was corduroy most of the way to the Lake, on account of the overhanging trees, which met overhead; the sun never got through to dry the road.

Some way along we came to a tree fallen right across the road. The men folk were somewhat stumped as no one had thought to bring an axe. It was impossible to turn as the trees were too thick. What to do was the burning question? Presently we heard the noise of a wagon approaching from the opposite direction. Ned Sankey hove in sight, and what a welcome one too. He had an axe and soon made away with the fallen tree. Then he took his wagon apart and turned it by hand, so he could go back to the Lake with us.

I can well remember the saw mill and all the buildings, including the planing mill, also all the piles of lumber, and slabs. I can still smell the new cut wood.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Thompson joined us at the Lake, and we had a fine picnic. Captain Whitla was a great cook and provider, we had wine and wine glasses as well as many other luxuries.

After lunch Mrs. Thompson elected to do the dishes; she put them into a large basket and then took them in swimming with her, swishing them about in the water. I never heard how many were broken.

The first time I saw the island at the Lake must have been about 1898, when our cottage was being built. We crossed at the northwest corner of the island, in a home made boat of sievelike quality. Two people baled madly while one rowed, and the passengers prayed. I was terrified. We walked through a very rough path to the cottage, which was built of logs and had a nice big red door. It stood on the site where the Holditch cottage now stands, and the tree with the ladder that Arthur Aitkens put up is still there.

By this time the fire had swept through the Mountain and there was no mill, and no timber, only black stumps to show where the lovely hardwood forest had been.

So ends my reminiscing of childhood memories.

Sincerely yours

Ailsa Hurt


SANDERS HARDWARE
THE HOME OF THE
GOOD CHEER FURNACE
A GOOD CHEER WITH EVERY
STOVE RANGE & HEATER
THE J.D. BAINE CO. LIMITED
STAPLE & FANCY
DRY GOODS
BOISSEVAIN MAN
IS COMPLETE AND WELL ASSORTED
THE PORTAGE LUMBER CO. LTD
PAINTING
GLASS
& DECORATING
PAPERHANGING SIGNS ETC
J. G. WHITE
BOISSEVAIN MAN

Drill Produced by Mrs. Caldbick — Back row, G. Cantelon, M. Doran, Mrs. N. Norris, Ethel Venables, Miss Cassidy, Edith Doran, L. Syms;
Front row: Adele Robinson, Cecil Ashley, L. Cantelon, Alma Oke, C. Ashley, Vera Sutton, E. Somerville.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. AND MRS. W. H. ASHLEY

Mr. and Mrs. Ashley came to Boissevain from Hanover, Ontario, in the year 1890 and Mr. Ashley commenced publication of "The Globe," our first weekly newsppaper.

Mr. Ashley learned the business in the early '80's and went by ox cart from Winnipeg to Edmonton, where he and Hon. Frank Oliver started "The Bulletin." Next he was on the night staff of "The Free Press"; later he was editor of "The Post" in Hanover, Ontario, and from there he removed to Boissevain with his wife and small family. Mr. Ashley continued publication of "The Globe" until 1914.

"Culture vs. Kultur" produced by Mrs. W. H. Ashley — 1915

Dennis Glover, J. M. Oke, F. Crowhurst, Miss Card, Mrs. R. S. Willis, Rose Sault, Ruth Bowering, Ola Hill, N. Sault, B. Johnston, Winona Howell, Mrs. C. Robertson, Marg. Smith, Mildred Musgrove, Jessie Robertson, Mrs. W. Willison, Miss Hardy, Jas. Howe, Ben Hill, Wildred Latimer, Elsie Graham, M. Fields, Mrs. M. V. Udall, Rev. G. Haywood, Mrs. Haywod, Mrs. A. Burgess, N. Thompson, Miss Henders, Mrs. C. C. Musgrove, Jean Little

Mrs. McKnight's Painting Class, 1909 — Back row: Mrs. G. Currie, Jean Armstrong, Luella Morris, Mrs. Braund, Mrs. W. Morris, Laura Smith;
Centre row: Alma Oke, Mrs. R. S. Willis, M. Hughes, Mrs. McKnight, Mrs. J. Johnson, Mrs. W. Knox;
Front row: Mabel Armstrong, Lucille Currie, Dora Little, Marg. Smith, Vivian Musgrove.

Mrs. Ashley has made a greater contribution to Boissevain and community in the line of music and drama than any other person. Besides always having a large music class she was instrumental in producing such operettas as "Cinderella," "Pirates of Penzance," "Madam Butterfly" and "The Mikado," and in drama "The Temple of Fame" and "Culture versus Kultur."

Mrs. Ashley was first Regent of the I.O.D.E, first president of the first "Music Club," and organist and choir leader in the Methodist Church for many years.

THE FIRST TRAIN COMES TO CHERRY CREEK

Lights glowed early in the shanties, coal-oil, tallow candles too,
They shone gaily, it was good to be alive
And know the prayers of settlers, today were coming true,
That Xmas day way back in '85.

Mrs. W. H. Ashley's Music Class, 1900 — Back row: Etta Millions, Dora Springer, Pearly Strain, Etta Washington, Myrtle Millions;
Third row: Cecil Ashley, unknown, Gwen Glover Mabel Armstrong, Loretta Wiliams, Gertie Fry;
Second row: Maimie Springer, Mrs. Ashley, Maud French, Erna Latimer;
Front row: Eileen Tatchell, Doris Hanley.

Preparations started early, long journeys must be made,
All must go, the rich, the poor, the weak;
The beginning of an era, really launching prairie trade—
The coming of the train to Cherry Creek.

Down the "Heaslip Trail" from Brandon, and the "Rowland Trail" Northeast,
And the "Morton Trail" from Lake Max, Wassewa;
By stone,boat- sleigh, or cutter pulled by horse or cattle-beast,
As well as all the folks from Wakopa.

They also came from Wapaha—the "Deloraine Trail" too,
Brought many in to celebrate, and say—
You'd find them on the "Burnside Trail," both young and old ones who,
Were out to fete the coming of this day.

Just a few log-shanties here and there, that early Xmas morn,
Before the folks start drifting into town;
By early afternoon a little city had been born,
How far and wide the news had got around.

"Cinderella" Produced by Mrs. W. H. Ashley — Mrs. Nelson, Miss Bennett, Louise Willis, M. Springer, M. Robb, N. Sault, J. Dayment, S. Hardy; Mrs. C. E. Hutcheson Miss Fitzgerald Mrs. R. G. Willis A. Miller B. French D. Springer

'T was getting near mid afternoon, there's tension in the air,
This day will change the settlers' life a lot;
The smoke still drifts up lazily from shanties everywhere,
The box-car station holds the central spot.

Some shout "we hear it coming," with their ear held to a rail,
This method some proclaimed to be a joke,
But the funny thing is, Brother, and this is not a tale,
About a minute later—there's the smoke.

Those anxious eyes strained Eastward, focused on that cloud of black,
In festive mood—all hearts were light and gay;
As many hands were shaken, many backs received a whack,
As cheer on cheer burst forth that Xmas day.

As the iron horse came closer, whistle blowing with a flair,
Before the train had really made a stop;
The hats and mitts were flying like pigeons in the air,
And here and there a bottle starts to pop.

Some held a little square dance, they didn't mind the snow,
It meant such easing of this Prairie Life;
And some a bit more recklessly, well, shall we say, let go,
Turned 'round and promptly kissed their neighbor's wife.

The train inched slowly forward, thru' the shouting and the cheers,
Resplendent all—arrayed in Sunday best;
The dawning of an Era—yes a lot were moved to tears,
At last the steel had reached their "Golden West."

Beside a heap of cord-wood, it was quite a tidy pile,
Before hand it was stacked beside the track;
All hands pitched in with gusto, in just a little while
The train was fuelled to make the journey back.

It puffed out to the West of town, with burst of smoke and steam,
To where they had a "Y" to turn around;
While many followed after, it was like a pleasant dream,
That "Right-of-Way" seemed almost sacred ground.

Again that surging, cheering mob—this happy day complete,
—The train heads Eastward in the failing light;
They know tonight they'll breathe their thanks before they fall to sleep,
As they watch it till it slowly fades from sight.

They'll soon be starting homeward now, the day is all but gone,
Acclaimed by all—the best they ever saw,
And many are the shanties, where the lights will burn till dawn,
As they hoe-it-down to "Turkey in the Straw."

It's hard for us in modern times, to fully realize,
The lacks the Settler came to know and feel;
If we could just be privileged to see it thru' his eyes,
Before they knew the coming of the steel.

No storage bins; no modern shops; no doctors, hospital;
It seemed an uphill battle against fate;
So many sick and ailing folks, they mustn't move at all,
Then some that could—'twas just a little late.

Small wonder too, in '85, the way those settlers feel,
The long hauls they had made to move their grain;
They long had loudly heralded the coming of the steel,
And now they greet the coming of the train.

We've seen many celebrations as we travel down life's way,
To mark and show the progress that we seek;
But we've never seen an equal to that happy Xmas Day
When the first train made its way to "Cherry Creek."

A. E. Henderson—1956

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE EARLY SNOW STORM THAT DROVE A HERD TO DISASTER

There was no hint of trouble that September night in 1903, but before morning a blizzard had struck and death disaster came riding in the wind . . .

By H. G. Duncan

A stiff northeast wind sent low, dark clouds scudding along over the shallow water of Whitewater Lake in Southwestern Manitoba as Tom Stephenson gathered his cows and steers from their feeding ground along the shore of the lake and headed them for the home corral a mile and a half to the north.

It was the twelfth day of September, 1903, just fifty years ago this fall, and the darkening sky heralded an event that was to live long in the memories of residents of the district at that time.

Stephenson had been running a herd along the north shore of Whitewater for three years, and was doing quite well at it. Each spring he gathered cattle from the settlers, most of whom had a number of head but hadn't gotten around to doing much fencing at that time, and herded them till fall on the unbroken prairie surrounding the lake.

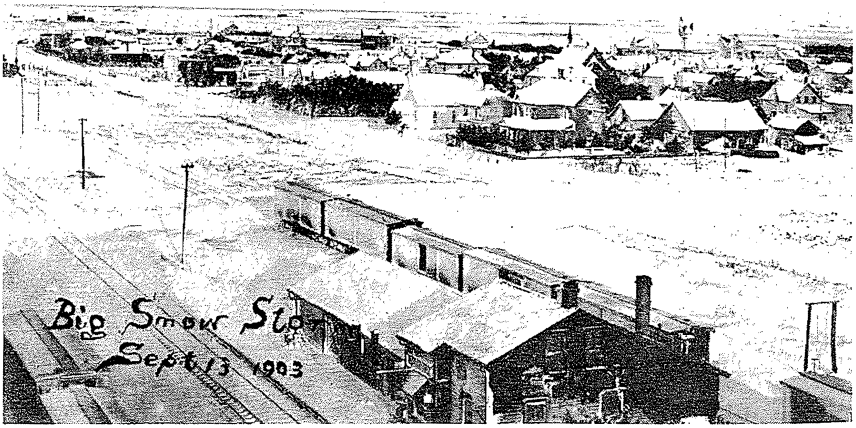
The usual charge of herding was fifty cents a head per month and if a herder could gather a fair sized herd he got a pretty good return for his summer's labor.

The cattle shook their heads as Stephenson headed them into the wind and some of the half-wild spookier ones tried to turn them back but his two good dogs kept the flankers up in their place and by riding hard and swinging his rope on any laggards he soon had the herd in the corral.

A few big, soft snow-flakes splattered against the poles of the corral gate as he swung it shut and he cussed the country as he headed for his shack to get his supper.

Some time after finishing his meal he looked out to see what the weather was doing. It was still snowing but not very hard, though the wind seemed to have increased a little. Stephenson shut the door and went to bed sure the weather would probably be clear by morning. After all, it was only the middle of September.

But Tom Stephenson, like every other person in the country,



Looking northwest from Boissevain. Whitewater Lake on the horizon.
Courtesy, Mrs. H. J. Stevenson, Boissevain

was wrong. During the night the wind swung sharply and howling down from the northwest swept in one of the most disastrous storms that ever hit that part of the prairies.

When Stephenson opened his shack door the next morning there as two feet of snow piled against it and he could only make out a dim blur of the corral through the driving snow that swirled down in dense clouds.

He pulled on whatever warm clothing he could find and hurried out to see how the cattle were faring. But they were gone. Buffeted and lashed by the fierce storm they had smashed down a section of the corral and stampeded.

By noon the storm seemed to be abating somewhat so Stephenson mounted his best cow-pony and, calling his dogs, set out in search of the herd. He knew that they would go straight down wind which would take them towards the lake and he hoped to find them in the shelter of one of the bunches of tall canes that grew out from the water-line. He tried to tell himself that the cattle would be all right but a sense of foreboding filled him as he rode along.

As he neared the lake he began to see evidence that he was on the right trail but it wasn't until he was within a hundred yards or so of the water that he saw the first animals, standing knee deep in the slush and mud churned up by the trampling feet of the herd. He realized then that the fear he wouldn't admit to was only too true.

Driven relentlessly by the gale and their own terror the herd had stampeded right into the lake, the ones behind shoving the leaders out into the soft, mud botton till they went down, to drown in the snow clogged, icy water.

It was a grim sight. In places the bodies were piled almost on top of each other. Some had plunged out five or six hundred yards before they became exhausted and sank down. Many that were mired down but still alive kept a low terror-stricken bellowing that was like a dirge.

Stephenson rode for help and soon the nearby settlers were gathered with ponies and ropes to pull some of the bogged down animals to safety. With the thermometer hovering below the freezing mark it was a cold, heart-breaking task, the more disheartening because many of the beasts died after they were pulled ashore.

It was nightfall before the rescue work was finished, the remainder of the herd gathered together and a tally made. One hundred and six had died in the mud and water that stopped their wild rush through the darkness and storm. It was a severe loss for many of the owners, particularly hard to face because the greater part of the stooked crop was covered deep with snow. Fortunately the weather cleared after the storm and a long open fall with good harvest weather followed.

Moccasin telegraph carried the news of the stampede almost as quickly as the later day telephone would have and soon bands of Indians from North Dakota and from the Indian Reserve at Griswold arrived on the scene.

They set up their teepees, gathered some wood, sharpened their knives and went to work. With one, two and sometimes three ponies to a carcass the men hauled the dead animals ashore where the squaws took over the job of skinning. They then cut the better meat into long strips an inch or so thick and hung it to dry in the sun, in the same way that their forebears had dried the meat of the buffalo that had fed along the same shore not so very many years before.

It took many days for the job, with the stench getting stronger and the flies getting thicker each day. It was a real bonanza for the Indians though, and the meat, waving like red blankets from the drying racks of poles, meant a fat winter for them. The hides too were a source of revenue which, fortunately, wasn't available every day.

Dr. Schaffner, later Senator Schaffner, health officer for the district, ordered three barrels of kerosense sent out from Boissevain with which to burn the refuse.

The Indians frugally decided that would be a waste of good "bright light" oil but they did pour enough on the rotting carcasses to send a towering column of black smoke into the air which wrote finis to what was probably Manitoba's worst stampede.

CHAPTER TWELVE

PIONEER STORIES

JAMES HENDERSON 1879

A blustery north-west wind was blowing across the Red River late one afternoon during the last week in March 1876 when my family got off the emigrant train, the first to enter Manitoba, at Emerson. There wasn't a building in sight, so we crossed and proceeded down the river for two miles to the government sheds and there we had to remain for a week until our belongings arrived. We bought a yoke of oxen and a cart and with our supplies headed for my brother's place at Nelsonville, a distance of fifty miles. During the first day's journey we waded for fifteen miles through water three to six inches deep. It seemed such a long day and not very warm. My teeth chattered until we disembarked on a dry ridge that evening. Two and one half days were to pass before we reached our destination.

I stayed there for three years and then with my brother Robert headed west for La Riviere, known as Wakopa. I stayed here while my brother went by the Commission Trail to Deloraine. I took up the first homestead that was taken in 1 - 16, section 32, and my brother the second, 2 - 16, section 6.

As winter was approaching I decided that a dug-out would be the quickest and the warmest shelter. I must have constructed it too hurriedly as all I did the first part of that winter was eat bannocks and freeze. I just couldn't see the sense of living that way until spring arrived, so I packed a couple of cooked prairie chickens and bannocks in a tin, bid my first neighbour, Arnold Smith, adieu and with my oxen and cart, headed back to Nelsonville. My brother, who had planned to come back with me had been asked by land hunters to take them to Deloraine Land Office and there he stayed that winter doing some logging.

The night preceding the day I arrived at Nelsonville a severe blizzard broke over the prairies. I realized long before morning that I would freeze to death if I remained in my little tent. Pulling it down and tossing it into the Red River cart I hitched up the oxen who were as close to freezing as I was. They had become stiff with the cold and were badly caked with snow. It was most difficult to get them going. We travelled for about six miles until the oxen had warmed up a bit. I stopped in a depression and while they ate what dead grass showed above the snow I had the last of the chicken. It was late that evening before I could lie down on a warm bed.

Of the early homes around Wakopa some were built of sod with thatched roofs, but for the most part they were mainly log. Early in 1880 a shingle and lumber mill was in operation owned by George, Matt, and Bill Harrison. They had a grist mill powered by water wheel also, a short distance from the saw mill on the banks of Long River. This same year Billy Weir and a French fellow started blacksmithing. La Riviere's Trading post not only traded in furs now, but all the necessities of the early settler. It was in '79 that Lee Severne, La Riviere's son-in-law became post-master of the first post office in the Turtle Mountain area. When I came to this area, the R.N.W.M. Police fort still stood three-quarters of a mile approximately east of old Wakopa townsite, being a two storey structure with small holes all around the second storey to ward off any attack. It was built around 1874 and I believe it was destroyed by fire about 1880.

On my return that spring to Old Wakopa it was humming with activity. A new boarding house was in the process of being built on the north side of the Commission Trail which was the town's main street. A livery barn was built in the southern outskirts due east of the sawmill, west of the mill and around the bend of Long River stood the grist mill.

The first frame house in the Turtle Mountain was built in 1880. Indians camped in or near the townsite every night and took a keen interest in all sports. They were well liked by the Wakopa folk. Wakopa was given its name by an old Indian who thought a lot of La Riviere — it meaning "white father."

Passing Pilot Mound on my return west I noticed a flag flying from a pole on the mound that could be seen for miles. As I continued on west and neared 31-1-6 on the east of the section on another high knoll was a second flag which was also visible for miles. These were wonderful guides for people who settled many miles away from either side of the Trail. They stood for many years.

Most everyone who travelled the Commission Trail would stop at Pancake Lake to rest and eat. Harry Coulter gave it that name one evening in 1789 when he stopped for supper and cooked his pancakes over a wolfe willow fire.

In 1880 Wakopa had its first burial. Two Metis working for La Riviere got into a heated argument during milking one evening. One fellow got up off his stool and threw it at the other hitting him on one of the temples which resulted in instant death. The aggressor took flight and hid in a coil of hay northeast of the townsite. R.N.W.M. Police next day noticed the displaced hay by the coil and with help toppled the coil which uncovered the milk stool hurler.

In 1883 Bob O'Brien brought the first seeder to Wakopa, a broadcast type from Ontario. It was a very popular implement and as most farms had only a few acres broken, many settlers made use of it. One evening in 1885, when I had lain down on my hay mattress

for the night, I heard a lot of yelling and drum beating from across the meadow. Putting on my clothes I hurriedly walked, ran, and crawled to within sight of a big camp of Indians in war paint. Some three hundred were holding a pow-pow in preparation to going west to support Riel. I did not return to my cabin that night, but chose a clump of wolfe willow half a mile away, and was very pleased when morning came. They never harmed anyone in our area, left the next afternoon by the Commission Trail to the west.

Sam Kellam, Bill Barber, John Barber and another fellow by the name of McFayden were sworn in as border wardens by the R.N.W.M. Police to prevent Indians from North Dakota from joining the Reil uprising. They were paid a salary and were given powers to call anyone into service should assistance be needed. They had to report each week to the Pembina Police Detachmnt concerning any incidents, and were assured a quantity of Long Tom guns (British L.A. 1860 issue) with ample ammunition. The guns and ammunition were stored in La Riviere's Trading Post and grist mill.

It was Bill Barber and Sam Kellan with an Assiniboine Indian named Will Moon who uncovered a plot to smuggle a Gattling gun to the Duck Mountains in Saskatchewan by a large band of Indians. They had come up from North Dakota by the way of the Missouri Trail and has passed through Wakopa and proceeded about two miles beyond when they were asked to stop and uncover the so-called coffin. Even though they outnumbered the patrol by forty to one they did not offer any resitance and uncovered the box when asked to. It was Will Moon who had suspicions when the band stopped in Wakopa to rest for a few hours. The braves who were guarding the wagon with the box in it acted rather odd he thought, when they told Sam Kellan that they were going to bury an old Indian chief at the head waters of Turtle Head Creek on the west end of the Turtle Mountains.

In conclusion, I believe our district was much like the others north of the Turtle Mountains. We had our share of swell neighbours, always ready to help a family in need regardless of roads, weather, or time of year. One person who was known for her leadership and kindness and her attention to the sick was Mrs. Tom Coulter. She was largely responsible for the success of the Wakopa Picnic for a period of thirty years. Races were held in the trail and lunch was served where the Missouri and the Commission join. No doubt other districts have people of such sterling character, but she was sadly missed by the people of our community when she left.

We had many hardships in those days but there was much happiness too. Often during the evening by the fireside, or sitting on the doorstep of our modest home during the cool of the evening, my mind goes back to the days when the settlers came into this area over what remains of our "fading trails."

James Henderson, Wakopa.

PIONEER DAYS OF MRS. GEORGE DURSTON

I was born in Cambridge, England in 1861 and lived there until I was eleven years old.

I came to Canada in 1872 along with my mother, brothers and sisters. My father (Charles Brazier) having come to Canada six months ahead of us.

Bishop McCrae was out in Canada ahead of my father. When he went back to England he persuaded my father to come out to Canada to look after the Cemetery at St. John's College, Winnipeg.

My oldest brother, William, looked after St. John's Cathedral for twenty-five years, and later brother Albert took over the work for another period of twenty-five years. They also named an avenue in Winnipeg after my brother Albert (Brazier Ave.).

The ship that I came out on was just on its second voyage, and we landed at Quebec on the St. Lawrence River. The ice bergs were so numerous, we could not land at the main wharf, so we had to walk out on a floating wharf.

When we left Quebec we travelled through the U.S. to Moorhead by rail, and when we left Moorhead for Winnipeg we came down the Red River by a boat called the "International." It was the largest of the three boats and had a wheel at the back driving it.

The Red River was so crooked that we would run into banks and have to back out and make another start, took two days to come to Winnipeg from Moorhead.

Winnipeg then had two streets of which one was main street twenty miles long from one Fort to the other, which they called Lower Fort Garry. There were just a few stores named Higgins and Young, Stobet and Eden. The hardware store was James Ashdown who made dishes such as tin plates and mugs. There was a boarding house which was called the "Farmers Home" where they had their meals and sleeping quarters. Another store called Ballentine mixed store, liquor and groceries. Fort Garry store was Hudson Bay Trading Post which kept groceries, liquor and dry goods. The Hudson Bay fixed up one of their stores for Governor Morriss to live in. There was also a barracks built outside of Fort Garry.

I worked for Governor Morriss for three years or the term of his office, then he left Winnipeg and went to Toronto. It wasn't long until he came back to Winnipeg to run as a Conservative candidate against Donald A. Smith who was a Liberal leader. I kept house for Governor Morriss the second time.

Winnipeg was just a "mudhole" in those days and that is why the Indians named it Winnipeg (meaning mudhole). There was a creek running through the main street right where the Union Bank stands today. We used to walk over this creek by footbridge.

The first Riel rebellion was on in this country just before we came out. Riel being the leader told the Indians the white people were coming to take the land away from them and that they should

have to move farther back. It made the Indians very mad and they rebelled making it hardly safe to walk down the street. Finally to make it right for the Indians, Governor Morriss decided that the government should give them Treaty money of five dollars each.

I was married at the age of sixteen to George Durston, who was a Mallster for the E. L. Drewery Co. for a year. We decided to go homesteading in 1882, so we bought a yoke of oxen, wagon, horse, buggy and two cows, John Deere walking plow, a set of harrows, dozen chickens, pair of turkeys, and a pair of ducks. We loaded them on the C.P.R. for Brandon. This was the second train to run from Winnipeg to Brandon.

When we were coming to Brandon they had to stop the train to chase a herd of buffalo lying on the tracks. I have seen many a herd roaming the prairie, and I have eaten the Pemican made by the Indians which we were glad to get many a time.

W stayed in Brandon that night and it cost us fifty cents to sleep on the floor and I had my small baby Emily (Mrs. Barwick), who was six months old. It was the 22nd of May 1882 and was very cold. Emily is believed to be one of the first white babies to be brought to the Turtle Mountain.

The next morning we started on our way to Turtle Mountain, sitting on top of the wagon with my babe in my arms. We crossed over a creek called Black Creek which is called the Souris River today. The man that was with us waded across the river with a rope attached to the wagon tongue and wound it around a tree to help the oxen pull the wagon across. And as night fell we came across some settlers and asked them if we could stay all night, and they said they could make room for me and the baby but not for the men, so we left and pitched at tent. We bought an armful of hay from these people for fifty cents for the oxen to feed while we camped.

It took us three days to go to where we squatted on some railroad land which we bought later for $2.50 an acre near the Turtle Mountain. We bought a section of land of which I own three quarters of today.

My husband went to one of the neighbors by the name of Fox to get some lumber to build a house, the only kind of lumber we could get was poplar lumber which was very poor and paid $40.00 a thousand. It took my husband all day to go with the team of oxen, it was 20 miles up the old Commission Trail. The house was built of two ply lumber with saw dust in between and a tar paper roof, there were no shingles to be had for two years. We made a log stable, cut into the bank of the creek which ran through the farm.

Our lighting system in those days was coal oil, when we could get it, a rag in a dish of grease was used mostly until coal oil got more plentiful. The closest store was six miles away by the name

of Nichols store and post office combined. The closest doctor was at Deloraine 30 miles away. When my babies were born I never had any doctor, just a neighbor lady come. I've had thirteen children and ten are living today.

There was another store at Wakopa owned by Williamson. They had a grist mill and we had our grain ground there. This mill consisted of two flat stones grinding together which operated by a water wheel in a creek.

I hand picked our grain in the winter, spread it out on a table and have hand picked as much as eighteen bushels during the winter. We broke thirteen acres with the oxen the first year, the field being one half mile long, he made nine rounds a day.

The mosquitoes were so bad my husband had trouble keeping the oxen from going to ponds of water, plow and all. They had to throw stones at them to get them out. When the day's work was done we'd turn the oxen out and put hobbles on them when they were feeding to keep them from straying away.

One year we had a plague of locusts which cleaned up everything. To carry on we had to buy feed and seed. For a few years we were still troubled with them, until the government could get poison. To sell our grain my husband had to team the grain to Brandon.

Another item I might mention was the Fenian raid in the U.S. which meant we had to have protection, so the government had to supply us with rifle practise. I never was frightened of the Indians. I used to invite them into the house and serve them tea and something to eat and they used to like getting tobacco.

I've seen a great many changes in my life — from oxen and stone boat to cars and aeroplanes, from candlelight to electricity.
(Written 1949)

SAMUEL HALL

On April 23, 1886, St. George's Day, we left England. Our ship was named the Nestoria of the Allen Lines. It was no luxury liner. On trips to the new world it carried passengers. However, on the return trip to Europe, it carried cattle. Only a handful of salon passengers travelled on the ship.

As we left Liverpool we met our first misfortune. A barge ran into us and broke a yard arm, but soon we were able to continue.

Our ocean voyage lasted eighteen days. An early ice flow from the North made it necessary to change course and sail further south. This accounted for the longer than usual crossing time. During this time the precious water supply ran out and more had to be distilled. We also ran out of coal and anything handy was burned to keep up steam. We passengers disembarked at Gaspe, although the boat continued on to Montreal. Once more we continued our journey. This time we travelled in colonist coaches on

the train. In these coaches, beds could be made up and some cooking done. Father's tasks were not easy ones. He had to get off and buy food at the different stops. Of course, in Quebec it was almost impossible to find someone who spoke English. We were billed through to Brandon. Large buildings called Immigration sheds had been built there during "The Boom".

My father, Samuel Hall, was a brick layer by trade. Here he did plastering and stone work. In Brandon he worked on the Nunnery. This building, which has since been torn down, stood east of the present Roman Catholic Church.

Father heard that there was work in Boissevain, which had just been connected by rail to Winnipeg. With the prospect of work, father placed his tools in a basket on his back, and set out. Burdened with a heavy pair of English boots, father must have found the trip a real ordeal. Luckily someone picked him up along the way. Within a short time father met Mr. Cooper, who had a homestead on the land where John Houck now lives. Mr. Cooper had several children and was interested in starting a school. When he learned father had two children, he persuaded him to file on a homestead nearby. The law required that a payment of ten dollars be made. Besides this, the homesteader must live on the property six months of every year and break a few acres of ground.

Since all this happened when I was only four weeks old, it is difficult to give the exact details. However, someone drove father to Old Deloraine to file on the homestead. Somehow father made his way back to Brandon for us. He got Mr. Brown of Souris, who owned a team of mules, to drive us south. One night had to be spent in the road. When we came past Pringles, Mrs. Pringle put cream on our faces, which were all blistered from riding in the open. We spent a couple of weeks at Coopers. Afterwards we lived in Bob Heaslip's shanty until father could get ours built. The shanty was built of shiplap, that was covered with poplar shingles. Sods covered the outside. These sods were cut from shallow sloughs so they would be tough. Unfortunately they shrank away from the walls and let in the cold. Within a couple of years we took the sods down and reinforced the shanty with a ply of tar paper. Poor mother must have found that twelve by sixteen shanty a trial. Isn't it a wonder we did not freeze to death? All we had for heating was a cook stove and poplar wood. Mother had to learn to use a wood stove as she had always used coal in England. As soon as the fire went out, everything froze. I remember waking up to find frost from our breath on the sheets. The first winter we were there we saw no one. We did not even get the mail for three months. Snow had to be melted both for drinking water an dwashing. The deep wells were very alkali. Of course, no one had cistern. There was no relief. Some people were known to live on wheat boiled with sugar. I don't remember being hungry,

but I don't remember exactly what we had to eat. I recall one blizzard clearly. It must have been during 1888 or 1889. Father caught a ride to town in February with a neighbour. On the return trip they were within three miles of home when they lost the trail. They managed to make their way to Mr. Brown's, where they stayed for three days. Father, who was not strong and subject to migraine headaches, worried himself sick. Meanwhile mother in desperation had considered feeding the bed to the cows. Don't laugh. You see, each fall the ticks were emptied and filled with fresh hay. So you see they would have been quite eatable. Our first stable and hen house were made of straw and sods. Some winters father just fed snow to the stock for a drink. Mother had learned to milk, but father hadn't. In time we got a pony and a buckboard and some pigs.

In the same township there were several other settlers. George Brown homesteaded the southwest quarter. On the northeast quarter lived Jack Brown. Bob Heaslip worked the northwest quater. Section twenty-nine was a school section, but Mr. Maxwell lived on the west half of twenty-eight, which is now occupied by Carman Kyle. Section twenty-one belonged to the North West Land Company. We used to cut wild hay on it. The east half of this section was later bought by S. Moore, I believe his sons still live on it. The west half became Mr. Reeke's. Afterwards Welch and Aitkens bought it. They sold to William Horn who in turn sold to Moore. Mr. Houck lived on the south half of section thirty-two. His sons continued to work it. Mr. Tom Hammond lived east of us and Pringles lived on section twenty-seven. On the south quarter of twenty-seven, George Hammond farmed. West of this on section thirty, Mr. Emerson and Mr. Armstrong.

Our post office, called Alcester, was at Mr. Metcalf's. At first I think we got it at Rayfield.

Mother used to bake bread for the bachelors. She charged one dollar for baking one hundred pounds of flour. Mother learned to churn. She sold butter for fifteen cents a pound during the summer. The women used to pack butter in tubs till the winter time, when they traded it for groceries. Then it cost twenty-five cents. Because it was packed in tubs, and kept for long months, it was never very tasty.

I remember one man who owed father money, but who was unable to pay. He went to town and bought groceries on time. He gave these to father in payment. The poor grocer would have been pleased, if he had known, wouldn't he?

We had only a few acres broken on the homestead. Father worked as a mason and rented the land. He helped build the Anglican Church in Boissevain. He also worked south of town in what was known as the English settlement.

Harvesting never seemed to amount to much in those days.

The grain was stacked and threshed from the stack. In 1895, there was a heavy crop. They tried to thresh it during the winter, when it was full of snow. This proved to be quite unsatisfactory. Wheat was ground at Gregory's Mill, that was situated on the Souris River south of the present town of Nesbitt. Mr. Gregory had trouble getting the dam to hold, because of the mud banks. Within a few years a mill was built by Hurt and McKay in Boissevain.

Mother said the neighbours were very kind. If she were away she usually found a gift had been left in the shanty. Sometimes it was a pillow case of flour or a roast of pork. Quite often during the winter, Bob Heaslip would come across the fields with a pan of frozen milk under his arm. This was a gift from his mother, but he was willing to share it with us.

One year Mrs. Emerson set a hen for us. We were to raise the chickens once they had hatched, as poor biddy had to return home and hatch some more eggs. We were not very successful however. I believe hawks took most of the chicks. Speaking of birds reminds me of the Sand Hill cranes. They used to come and stand on a hill south of our house. From a distance they looked like men. Because of the recent North West Rebellion and the danger from Indians, mother became quite frightened.

As the years passed Mrs. T. Hammond and mother helped at many births. During one summer they brought eight babies into the world. Quite often no doctor was available.

Mother accompanied me to Brownlea School at first. She was afraid I would become lost in the long grass, as there were no paths. The first teacher was the wife of Reverend W. Johnson. Miss Bradley, who lived with her brother Dave on a homestead south of T. Hammond's taught for two summers. I also had Miss Robinson, Cyrus Wright, Mr. Whiting, Miss Potter, Miss Rose, Miss Cameron and Miss Reekie as teachers. School was held from May 1 till the snow came. Usually it was about six months. The only summer holidays were May 24, and July 12. There were several reasons for not holding school during the winter. Many people had no way of driving the children to school. Warm clothing was very scarce. Then there was not enough money to pay a teacher for an entire year. I believe it was not until 1902 that school remained open for a normal year. Brownlea may have gotten its name from the fact that it was built on Brown's land. I continued my education by attending Boissevain High School. In 1898 I went to Normal School in Brandon. We made the trip in an ope nsleigh. Bags of hot oats were placed at our feet to keep them from freezing. A ground wind made travelling difficult, so we stopped at the River to feed and rest the horses.

The first church services were Anglican, and were held in the school. Reverend Woods came from Boissevain to conduct the service. Later on we had Baptist services in the morning and Presbyterian and Methodist on alternate Sunday afternoons.

July 1 was an exciting day for everyone. We set out by wagon or buckboard for the picnic at Souris. The Congregations from Victoria, Brownlea and Greenfield all attended the picnic. Dances were held in the larger homes at first and then in the school. Music was supplied by mouth organ or violin. In the fall a dinner was held to raise money for the Minister's salary. A program of songs, dialogues and recitations made it an important occasion. A tent was set up alongside the school to serve as a hall. Threshing cabooses were used as a kitchen and for dressing rooms. Usually a couple of cakes were auctioned off. Those people who did not dance played games and pulled taffy.

In 1928 father and mother came to make their home with me. Father died in 1939. Mother passed away in 1943.

Mrs. E. A. Day

EARLY DAYS OF TURTLE MOUNTAIN AREA

as recalled by Mrs. A. E. Cook
(Formerly Georgia May Wright)

In the year 1882 my father, George C. Wright, left our home on the outskirts of the city of Belleville, Ontario, and migrated to the newly opened-up province of Manitoba (at that time usually called by Ontario folk Manitobaw). Lured by the bait of "free homesteads" he believed there were greater opportunities for himself and his four boys in the new West than in Ontario. Leaving mother and the family behind he travelled to the end of the railroad (Brandon) and took up a homestead (seven miles north of where Boissevain later was located), on property known as 22-4-20.

That first winter he lived in a dug-out roofed with poplar poles and covered with prairie sods. He had purchased a yoke of oxen, and necessary implements for "breaking" the virgin soil, and had found that wood was to be had some twenty-odd miles to the south in what was known as the Turtle Mountains. A young man, Frank Howell, had come west at the same time, and had homesteaded on a quarter section adjoining the Wright homestead.

That first winter had many hardships. On one occasion Dad ran out of food when he was storm bound by a blizzard for a week, and lived on beans cooked in snow-water and nothing else.

Maitland, the oldest of the four boys, followed Father in the spring of 1883, and in September of that year mother sold the home near Belleville and with the rest of the family (Webster, James, Cyrus, Harriet (Hattie) and Georgina (Dordie)) joined dad and Mait in their new home. This was a "slab shack," one large room below and two tiny bedrooms above, and the dug-out that had been father's home became the cellar.

Perhaps a brief look backward to the home they had left in Ontario may give some hint of the change in the lives of us all ,and

what our parents faced in the new world. The Belleville home was a ten-roomed brick dwelling, newly built, set in a ten acre plot one half mile north of the "first concession" east of the city. There was a fine bank barn, an orchard with apples, pears, plums, many kinds of berries, vegetables of all kinds, and also hives of bees, for father made barrels of honey as well as quantities of apple juice. Incidentally, that apple juice was for cider, out of which mother made vinegar. We were allowed to make as much of the sweet nearly-pressed juice as we wished, but no alcoholic beverage was ever seen in the Wright home.

Mother, who had the heart-breaking task of selling her lovely home, and the harder problem of what to take and what to leave behind, put her two small girls with friends while she settled up the necessary business. She was not used to handling such heavy responsibility and those with whom she had to deal took advantage of that fact. Hence she did not receive anything like the value of the property. With all the difficult details finally settled, the move to the homestead began. Mother had never travelled far, and instead of sending most of her luggage by freight she had so much luggage to be transferred at points of change that the trainman used language not fit for gentle ears. At Petrolia, one of mother's eight brothers met the train and I well recall the tearful farewells. The Riel rebellion was in the offing, a threat in the far west, and friends feared for our scalps, a quite unnecessary worry, as the rebellion did not trouble Manitoba much.

The C.P.R. at that time had been finished as far as Alexander, eight miles west of Brandon. At Winnipeg the second and last change of trains was made, and when we reached Chater, Dad met the train and at Brandon we spent that night.

In the early morning of a cold and dismal September day (16th, 1883), we started the forty mile trek to the homestead. The wagon was piled high with household goods with dad driving the oxen only by voice and goad. Mother, weary, ill and very lonely, rode at his side while we youngsters trotted most of the way on foot, occasionally climbing up for a brief rest. That night we slept at a place called "the stopping place" and lay on poles covered with our own blankets. For this privilege dad had to pay fifty cents each.

Brother Mait was awaiting us when we arrived. It was at dusk and it was bitterly cold with the ground covered with frost. Of that night I dimly recall seeing mother toss some filthy bedding out of the upstairs window, before she could unpack our clean things and make up the beds. The next morning everything was frosted over and as far as the eye could see was limitless reaches of dull bare prairie. Frank Howell was the only neighbor and he was living in a sod shanty at that time. The nearest post office was at Ed Hammond's home, about four or five miles from our place. When a mail day came, mother and we girls would sometimes walk for the mail, eagerly looking for some word from "home." There was no school,

no church, no Sunday School. Fire wood from the Turtle Mountains was obtained by heart-and-back breaking toil. "Bush-whacking" the men called it, and the story of preparing for a week in the bush, getting the bobsleighs ready, seeing that the ox-yokes were in good condition, cooking huge pans of potatoes, great slabs of beef or pork (after we finally had cows or beef animals), dozens of loaves of bread, and countless other necessary jobs, would take far too much space for these memoirs. There isn't a pioneer mother, whose men faced those weeks in the bush while she waited at home, but will remember the agony and fear lest her loved ones might meet with accident or even death. No word could come from the silence until the ears finally would hear the creak of sleighs and the welcoming bark of the dog.

There were no stores where food could be purchased, nearer than Brandon, except those at Desford, Wakopa and Waubeesh. The first winter the family lived on "short rations"; boiled wheat without benefit of milk or sugar, no fresh meat except prairie chicken or rabbits, no butter and no vegetables. Dad, who had been carpenter, school-teacher and butcher at various times, went to Brandon on foot, did a few days carpentering, bought a few essentials like tea, sugar, salt, etc., and walked back home carrying the load on his back. Somewhere he had purchased some pork called the vulgar name of "sow-belly" which was so rancid that after eating it we all developed skin infections like ugly ulcers. But as pioneers did and always will, we survived and thrived, and at least the younger fry enjoyed the new experiences. I never remember mother grumbling or complaining. She always had an unfailing courage, and with the utmost nothings at first, made the old log shack a home.

Suddenly, settlers began to pour into that area. The land was a rich black loam, exceedingly fertile, and practically without stones, while being slightly rolling in contour. As family after family moved in, the loneliness was broken, and companionship assured. Among the earliest of the newcomers, I well remember the Emersons, Adam Armstrongs, Jim and Sarah Burns, the Nelins, Benjamin and Robert Cooke and families, the Baskerville brothers, John Thompson. Our nearest neighbors next to Frank and Jennie Howell were Mr. and Mrs. Shillabeer and children, John and Emma.

My youngest brother, Cyrus, with Hattie and myself, now proud possessors of a pony and cart, attended Nimitaw School. My first teacher was George Currie, whose wife was Bertie Oke. As the district near the Wright became more settled and the need for a school became acute, our family took in a daughter of Adam Armstrong, in order to have the required number to form a school district. We also "boarded" the teacher, the first being Judson R. Cooke, later Dr. Cooke who died in 1955.

Before there was either school or church, Mr. and Mrs. Wright,

who were staunch Methodists, opened their home as a preaching place and Sunday School. Some of the earliest itinerant ministers of that area used to hold service in their home. One of these was a frail man whom we affectionately called "little George Hanna," whose grave is in the Edmonton Cemetery.

It was not unusual for our home to be crowded to capacity with people from many miles around who came to hear these faithful and courageous pioneer preachers. The women would bring food and mother would help prepare a meal before the congregation went home. Early Boissevain folk will remember Rev. Andrew Stewart, afterward professor in Wesley College, Winnipeg; George Long; M. C. Flatt (who once told me what those initials stood for, on condition I would never tell while he lived. I never did but I wonder how many knew his name was Menotti Carvossa?); John Ridd, a veteran curler; W. A. Vrooman; Oliver Darwin (Dr. Darwin's book "Pioneering With the Pioneers" has some very interesting memories of his time in Boissevain); "Sammy" Sharp; "Squire" Heath; and James Harrison are all names that bring memories of the first Methodist chapel in Boissevain.

"The Indians, sometimes showed their dusky faces, but they didn't teem with conversational graces," so wrote the American folk-poet, Will Varleton. Yes, we often saw Indians, but they were all peaceful, and we never had any cause to fear them. There was an Indian Reserve at Deloraine, and one at Brandon, and in berry-picking time we used to see their caravans passing along the trail just west of our home. Once a Cree chief, a tall, fine looking man, came to our door. He could speak a little English and proved to be very friendly. Mother gave him food and then, in broken speech, he talked to her about the children. Next he said, "Me got five," and with his uplifted hand indicated the sizes of his family. Last, he pointed upward and said sadly, "Great Spirit take one." When he first came to the door he saw that mother seemed a little nervous, so he pointed his rifle away from the house, then set it down outside the door, to show she need not be afraid. Outside the house dad and the chief staged a little show of skill with the rifle, and needless to say dad's efforts brought a friendly grunt and chuckle from the Indian, as he said, shaking his head, "Too slow."

After a few years the original slab shack that dad had built was replaced by an adobe house. It was extended by adobe walls around three sides, making two bedrooms on the west side, a long room across the north, which was summer kitchen and winter storeroom, while on the east side was the large living and dining room. The centre room, the original downstairs part, became the "parlor." The walls were two feet thick, put up in layers a foot deep, which were each allowed to sun-dry before the next was put on. The material was mud and clay, mixed with hair and straw, and prepared by soaking with water and the whole mass worked over by the treading of oxen. I can still hear the heavy, sucking

"plop, plop" of the clumsy hooves of the oxen as they patiently did their job. It was cruel, back-breaking labor to pitch that mud with forks, but when it was done it made a home that was beautifully cool in summer and perfectly warm in winter. The deep window seats, with no storm windows, were usually filled with mother's favorite geraniums, which never froze in winter. There was a seventy barrel cistern in the north end of the east room, and when it was dry in winter, we melted great blocks of ice for soft water. I believe ours was the first adobe house in Canada, at least in Western Canada, though many made their first homes of heavy prairie sods.

Father did not believe that every foot of land should be devoted to utility purposes only and one of the first things he did was to plant maples along the south and west sides of our house. This was not only that some beauty might be brought to the treeless bleakness of the landscape, but also as protection from the severe northern winds. He had reserved a large plot for the houe, with room for flower-beds, croquet ground, a driveway and large swing for the young folk. Neighborhood picnics and church and Sunday School picnics were frequently held at "Maple Grove Farm" as the homestead was named, for dad and mother were sociable folk and liked to see not only young people have a happy time, but both would join in the fun.

BUFFALO TRAILS

Old deep buffalo trails were to be seen everywhere about the Turtle Mountain area, and several of these criss-crossed our farm. Not far from the house one of these trails led down into a deep depression around a huge boulder. This stone was about five feet wide, two or three feet high and perhaps ten or twelve feet long. It was a glorious place on which a tom-boy could sprawl on a summer day, to dream her "long, long thoughts."

STORM, FIRE AND FROST

Many incidents, some amusing, some tragic, are vivid pictures on the indestructible film of memory. In the year 1890, just when the bumper crop was ready for the binders, disaster struck. It was a blisteringly hot day, turning sultry and stifling toward afternoon. Suddenly heavy black clouds began to pile up from the southeast and southwest, while a menacing purplish color darkened the whole sky. It was so hot, breathing became difficult, and all at once the great banks of clouds converged in a head-on collision, with crashing thunder, wild flashes of lightning, and a cyclonic wind. Hail followed with such a rushing, roaring noise that it was impossible to hear anyone speak, even though shouting. To save the windows we all grabbed pillows and pressed them against the panes. Hailstones were of various sizes, from marbles to even larger than eggs. At Deloraine (for this devastating storm swept over thousands of

square miles) some hailstones were as large as croquet balls, and beat with such force that shingles were smashed. The loss was complete; no farmer within the orbit of that storm harvested a bushel of grain, and the ground looked, after the storm passed, as if it had been plowed and rolled.

In the year 1895 another catastrophe, which oldtimers still call "the great prairie fire" struck the area north of Boissevain. Once again it struck just as the harvest was in the stacks and ready for the threshers. On one of the Wright farms ten stacks of No. 1 wheat were to be threshed the next Monday, and this was Saturday. The story was told, for the truth of which I am not able to vouch, that a young lad newly from England, while strolling across the prairie some fifty miles northwest of the Royal District, dropped a lighted match in some grass that the intense summer heat had made dry as tinder, and when someone, who saw the blaze that instantly sprang up, shouted to him, "Why under heaven did you do that?" he is reported to have innocently replied, "I thought I'd like to see a wee bit of fiah." How true this story may be I do not know, but I do know that a section of that part of the country some fifty miles wide by a hundred miles long saw that year's wonderful crop go up in smoke. Mother, who had been ailing for some months, collapsed from the shock and heart-break, and never rallied. On December 20th of that year she slipped quietly away in her sleep.

Prior to 1895 a succession of crop failures hit the region around the Boissevain area, lean years caused by droughts, frosts, fall rains, early snows, hail and then the fire. All the Turtle Mountain area had sometimes amazingly good crops, but with prices so low we today can scarcely believe our own memories. Wheat sold at elevators at whatever price the competing buyers offered, sometimes as low as twenty-five cents a bushel for oats, or forty-five cents for No. 1 wheat, and barley even lower than oats. Eggs were often eight or ten cents a dozen, and rhubarb one cent a pound, and you took your pay out in trade at merchants' prices.

But through the worst times and the good times the pioneers never lost heart. They were mostly Eastern Canadian folk, until immigrants began to come from over "the big pond" as they used to call the Atlantic. On the whole a God-fearing, Sabbath-reverencing, hospitable and neighboring clan. I have already noted that on the Sabbath all farming stopped, even if the "threshing-gang" was quartered in the house. Until a doctor came to the area it was the house-mother who had to act as doctor, nurse and mid-wife, and many a baby was born in those rugged days without anyone near but the good man himself, yet these brave women, those often gently-reared women, faced all these trials with courage and faith, not only in God but in the men they had followed or accompanied into the unknown.

It wasn't all stress and strain. We had a good life, a full life, and even if some of us have grown soft in the easier life of today,

we are glad for the rigor and discipline of those early days. We had lots of fun and good times. It was even fun to leave home at nine o'clock Sunday morning with the old oxen hitched (or yoked) to the bob-sleighs, in order to get to the old Methodist chapel. Settlers went to church twice on Sunday, to Sunday School after the morning service, and then again for the seven o'clock evening service. There was no closing down of church services for two months in the summer, and in many a home there would be found week-night groups in "cottage prayer-meetings." Beside regular church and Sunday School, the old-timers will remember "class-meetings" and "love-feasts," with "testimony meetings" prior to sacrament.

JIM BURNS

One of the earliest settlers in the Royal District was a jolly Irishman and his equally jolly and big-hearted wife and their small daughter. Jim's place, now known as the W. Moncur farm, was just a short walk south of the site of Royal School, 15-4-20, later moved to its present locale.

HUNTING GROUNDS AND PLEASURE RESORTS

Two of the best known hunting grounds in the area were Whitewater Lake, a large, somewhat swampy body of water lying about five miles northwest of Boissevain and about equally distant southeast of Deloraine, and Pelican Lake, where Ninette Sanatorium now is located. Whitewater Lake was a hunters' paradise in spring and fall when the ducks and geese were on migration.

Pelican Lake was noted for its fish, especially big jack fish. One winter the two older Wright boys, Mait and Webb, with two cousins, Edgar and Gus Wight, built a small shack on bob-sleighs, installed a stove and bunk and trekked with oxen the twenty miles from the homestead to Pelican Lake to fish. While there they encountered a group of hardy folk from Scotland, called "Crofters," and found them friendly and helpful.

One day Webb had hauled in a big fish, and as he shook it free of the hook, tiny minnows fell from its mouth. One old Crofter, in alarm called out, "No, no! Don't shak 'im. Don't shak 'im! Loss weight! Loss weight!" The boys caught such a haul that the frozen fish were stacked up like cordwood in the home yard, some of them over two feet in length. I was old enough by then to be useful, and my task was to pull a big frozen fish out of the pile, shave off the scales with the old draw-knife, then crack off the head and it was ready to thaw and clean. That winter we ate fish, boiled fish, baked fish, fried fish, hot and cold and to this day need I confess that fish is NOT a favorite food with me, unless someone else cleans and cooks it. As a slight side-light on the trials of pioneer mothers and fathers (perhaps especially the mothers) it may be remembered

that when the boys went out of sight of the home, dad and mom knew that until their lads returned there was no way of knowing what might befall on those almost trackless prairie wilds, so they could only wait, and hope and pray for the safety of their dear ones.

ANIMAL AND BIRD LIFE IN EARLY DAYS

One of the earliest harbingers of spring was the gopher, that lively little squirrel-like fellow, with the voracious appetite for grain. A nuisance, yet we knew it was spring when he came out of winter hiding. Kids at school used to tame the odd one, and it was fun to watch the small creature come up to nibble a bit of your noon lunch. Badgers were frequently seen, rolling along on short legs and looking like an animated muff. Vicious things they were, but caught when newly born could be tamed, as the Wright family proved. "Badg" was a great pet, and lived with the family till fully grown, but one day went away on his own affairs, and never came back.

Coyotes, weasels, mink and jack rabbits were plentiful, and the rabbits formed the main fresh meat of many a family in those early days. Birds of many sorts, large and small, were abundant. In the spring when one heard that wild cry from high up in the heavens, we knew the whooping cranes were with us. We did not call them "whooping cranes," but I know now they were those wonderful birds which are now almost extinct. They would fly in circles higher and higher until out of sight, still giving out that strange wild cry, a sound no one has heard can ever forget.

The great V's of wild geese were so unafraid of man in the early days that they flew so low one could almost strike them down. There were the two kinds, the smaller grey goose and the beautiful snow goose, or "wavey" as these were called. Literally tens of thousands passed over in their migration to and from their northern and southern nesting and feeding grounds. I recall one day seeing a large field on dad's farm, not many rods from the house, completely covered with waveys, till it looked as if there had been a snowstorm. The noise of their honking as they passed over at night was such music that those who have heard, sometimes ache to hear again. To see huge flocks flying across the heavens on a moonlight night was a thrilling sight. Man's greediness and the coming of noisy machines have driven these beautiful birds either along other migratory paths or so high they are no longer often seen.

Prairie chickens were very plentiful, and when well nourished and plump were pretty good eating. The meadow lark was the first spring warbler, and his bubbling notes made father say he was saying "a peck o' peas for their thrubble." There were whippoorwills, blackbirds, gulls (usually fore-runners of rain), night (or mosquito) hawks, several kinds of marauding chicken hawks which plagued the housewife when the chicks were small. There were

also kingbirds, cowbirds (a grey bird that took its name from the habit of riding on the backs of the cows), barn swallows and swallows that built nests under the eaves of the houses were common. Plovers, snipes and crows were also among the birds I can remember.

My scattered memories are almost done. So much more could be written. Sometimes I say my memories are like a photo-film which has been doubly exposed, for many times as I watch the tremendous advance of invention and science, pictures of the days of then and now superimpose upon the things I see in these later days. One is not wise to regret progress but perhaps we who lived those early days may sometimes wonder if we are happier NOW than we were THEN, when homes had to be closely knit to exist at all.

The sagas of pioneer life, rugged as it was, difficult as those times were, are heroic tales, and this generation should not be allowed to forget or grow heedless of the sacrifices made by the fathers and mothers of the great west trails to give today's advantages and security.

I would like to end my story with the words of a song I wrote some years ago, which were set to music by a Montreal musician and sung over the nationwide radio by the Vancouver "Balladeer."

"MOTHERS OF THE GREAT WEST TRAILS"

By Georgia May Cook

When the wander-lust assailed him, and he said he had to go,
That man of yours you wedded long ago;
But when the Great West Trails allured him and the East seemed old and slow,
He never dreamed the heartache that you bore.
You never shed a tear-drop, not at least where he could see,
You never let your fears his hopes assail,
But you packed up all and followed, for you loved him so, you see,
You Mothers of the Great West Trail.

Chorus: Mothers of the Great West Trail,
Mothers of the Great West Trail,
Though leaving home and kindred far behind,
you smiled . . . and came,
You Mothers of the Great West Trail.
Mothers of the Great West Trail.

Through the long, long weary winters, through the summer's blazing heat,
His cabin was his palace with you there,
His children played around you and your joy seemed all complete,
For you told to GOD alone your fear and care.
But the man you loved so truly only saw your cheery smile,

But you never let him see your cheeks grow pale,
But I know that in His heaven God was watching all the while,
You Mothers of the Great West Trail.

2nd Chorus: Mothers of the Great West Trail,
Mothers of the Great West Trail,
The heritage we hold today is safe
because of you,
O MOTHERS OF THE GREAT WEST TRAIL.

Georgia May Cook (nee Wright)

THE WM. LATIMER STORY

From information compiled by Edwin Latimer, January, 1950

Boissevain received its name from a Dutch financier of that name, whose descendant was some years later to be the Dutch ambassador to Canada. At the time of the steel coming through in '85, the town was still known as Cherry Creek, however it was renamed Boissevain before the steel reached Napinka, not long after.

The first record of white men in this district dates back to approximately August 1870. Some buffalo hunters with Red River carts were going southwest from Fort Garry when they met a band of Sioux Indians camped on the bank of a creek near the present site of Boissevain. These Indians were some of those fleeing from the United States cavalry after the Minnesota massacre. At their belts, most of them had scalps, some with the long hair of women. The white men gave the Indians whiskey and made them drunk. There ensued a fight among themselves. When the fight was over, several Indians were dead. Since they considered the white men responsible for the fight (because the whiskey had made them drunk), they demanded that the white men bury the dead. These Indians were later rounded up by the Royal North West Mounted Police and were put in a reserve near Griswold, Manitoba, where their descendants still reside.

The next white men to come into the district were the surveyors. In surveying the land, they placed a stage in a small mound on the corner of every section to show the section, township and range of each. When a homesteader had picked the land he wanted, he would take down the location of the land from the stage, then file this information at the nearest land office. At that time the nearest land office for this district was Old Deloraine, situated one half mile south and four miles west of the present Mountainside. Only the cemetery of "Old Deloraine" remains.

The first settlers in this district came to the Turtle Mountains in the 1880's. Some of these were Wm. H. Latimer, Peter Henderson and Jas. Rae, who came from Ontario by rail through the United States to Emerson, Manitoba. From there they drove with wagons

to this district in the summer of 1881. Wm. Latimer homesteaded the west half of 28-3-20, Peter Henderson, the east half of 34-3-20, and Jas. Rae the west half of 34-3-20.

Wm. Latimer was born on a farm near Packinham, Ont., southwest of Ottawa. When he came to this district in 1881, he stopped the first night with Wm. Miller, whose homestead was three miles west of Old Desford School. After taking up his homestead on 28-3-20, he filed the next day at the Old Deloraine land office. He then went to the Darlingford district where he helped his brother-in-law get out building logs that winter. Returning in the spring, he set to hauling logs from the Turtle Mountains for buildings of his own on the homestead. The next winter he went East to work in a lumber camp, getting out ties for the building of the new railway. Davis, the camp operator who hired the men, disappeared in the spring, knowing that the men had to return to their homestead. Thus, all the men hired in that camp worked hard all winter and never received any wages. Part of the following summer of 1883, Mr. Latimer spent driving spikes on the C.P.R.

One of the early women to come to this district was Mrs. Margaret Latimer, who was accompanied by her sister, Mrs. Chas. Stewart, and also by their mother. Mrs. Latimer's brother, Jas. Henderson, accompanied them as far as Brandon, May 2nd, 1884. Here another brother, Duncan Henderson met them, and after spending the night at the Baubier Hotel in Brandon they all started south by team and wagon. The next night was spent about ten or twelve miles south of Brandon with people by the name of McCanlish. The next day they reach the Souris River, where the wagon stuck and they had to get help. A ferry took them across the river, and they reached home the next day. Even though it was early in May, there were patches of snow here and there along the way. The house on the S.W. quarter 19-2-20 was built by Mr. Morton, after whom the Municipality was named, who operated a store there. W. H. Latimer drew supplies for Morton's store from Emerson with a team of grey percherons. On the trip which took quite a number of days to make, he slept under the wagon. One of the ferries wasn't large enough for the team and wagon, so he would jump on one horse's back and swim the team across. Nichols also had a store on his homestead, about a mile southeast of Horton. A round barn is still there on the site of the buildings.

The first buildings erected by the pioneers were of logs or sods, although some early stone barns had hand-hewn oak beams. Regardless of construction, all the neighbors helped when a new building was being erected. Some of the settlers put up log buildings, high at the front and low at the back, by keeping the butt ends of the logs all one way, while the small ends of the logs formed the low side of the building. The roof was then covered with poles and sods. The walls of some others were straight sod, the layers of

prairie sod being piled one upon the other, with the usual pole and sod roof. There was at one time an adobe house on the old G. C. Wright place, where Arnott Wheeler now resides. The main part of this house is still as built, with only the adobe part removed and replaced with siding. A further use of mud was in the construction of chimneys, many being of straight mud, and though homely, were quite serviceable.

In the Turtle Mountains, the settlers had many varieties of wild fruit: raspberries, gooseberries—both red and white, currants, juneberries, saskatoons and strawberries. There were hazelnuts and wild sage used for seasoning fowl. Wild hops were used for yeast in bread making. Besides all the fruit, the mountains provided the settlers with all their firewood and oak fence posts. Many of the first ox-yokes were made of oak also.

Jas. Rae opened the first Post Office, called Nimitaw, in this district on his homestead three miles northwest of Boissevain. The first mail was brought in by wagon along the old Commission Trail, which ran along the north side of the International boundary and the Turtle Mountains.

The first threshing machines took a great number of men to keep them going. The straw was taken away from the machine by carriers into a heap at the back of the machine, then every few minutes, when the heap got up near the top of the carriers, it was "bucked" away with a long stout pole, hauled by a team on each end. The sheaves were fed into the machine by two men, who had to cut the bands, then shove the sheaf in. The grain was all bagged, wich made a tremendous lot of extra work. Most of the early machines were driven by portable engines, though some of the very early ones were driven by horse-power. Harvesters in the early days usually came from Ontario, and worked from dawn to dark for a dollar a day. One of the first threshers in this district was owned and operated by Duncan and Peter Henderson. They always had a big stook-ring to thresh, to be followed by stack-threshing. As machines were scarce, many farmers stacked their grain and then had a machine thresh it later. The Henderson men often threshed stacks till Xmas, working all the way from the Turtle Mountains to the Souris River.

Many interesting and painful stories are told about the early pioneer days. The first settlers near Wakopa heard from the Indians about a lake near the "Turtle's Back." A number of the men with axes, wagons and oxen cut a way through the bush to this lake. They called it Lake William, as that was the first name of most of the men in the party.

In the early days, many places on the prairies were white with Buffalo bones. When Mr. Latimer took his homestead in the summer of '81, he found a buffalo skull with the hide still on it, lying on a knoll near the spot where Caranton School now stands. Apparently it had been shot shortly before. The last buffalo shot in North

Dakota, was supposed to have been shot in the spring of '82 by Teddy Roosevelt, who was then ranching near the present town of Medora, N.D.

W. H. Latimer and Jas. Rae were going to Brandon with a load of wheat one winter when they caught up to an Englishman walking to Brandon. He had no overcoat and only leather boots on his feet. As Rae had two coats, he gave the fellow one. Shortly after a blizzard came up very suddenly, and got so bad that they couldn't follow the trail. They tied the team to the sleigh, and kept running around it all night to keep from freezing. They had to force the Englishman to keep running, and even then his feet were badly frozen. When the weather cleared the next morning the men found themselves only a half a mile from a farm house.

One day in the spring of '82, W. H. Latimer was out in his yard on the homestead when he saw a yoke of oxen and wagon with a cow tied behind, drive into the yard. The driver turned out to be John Brown who located on the section northwest of Latimers. John lived that summer on his homestead, sleeping under the wagon-box which he had propped up with a stick. One night when Latimer was staying with John a very bad thunder storm came up. In a little while the water was running under the box, John said, "William, let's go out where it's dry." One of the oxen tethered nearby by was knocked down by a bolt of lightning. John called him "Witness" after that. John drew logs that summer for a shanty, but didn't have time to get any for a barn, consequently, the result was that John and the oxen both wintered in the shanty. The oxen were so close to the stove that they broke off the damper.

Another story is told of a settler who lived about twelve miles northwest of Latimers, and went out one night to do the chores and feed the stock. He took his little girl with him, and upon finishing for the night, took her on his back and started for the house. It was storming so badly by this time that they missed the house. He tramped all night with the little girl on his back, the next day staggering into John Brown's shack. When he put the girl down on the floor, he found she was frozen solid.

The early pioneers used to travel great distances by team and on foot. They hauled wheat fifty or more miles to Brandon for twenty five cents a bushel. One day a Methodist minister stopped at Peter Henderson's for dinner. He was walking from Brandon to "Old Deloraine," a distance of seventy miles. Duncan Henderson once walked from his homestead to Nichols' store near Old Desford, a distance of thirteen miles, and carried home a hundred pound sack of flour and an armful of groceries. As the pioneers travelled from Emerson, they watched for landmarks along the way, such as the "Mound" near Pilot Mound, the Pembina River, Pancake Lake, certain creeks and finally the "Turtle's Back" in the Turtle Mountains. Whitewater Lake was another landmark.

"Buffalo wallows" are still to be seen on the prairies. They are

perfectly round sloughs with a stone in the centre. They were formed by the buffalos rubbing on the stone in hot weather. The dirt around the stone got kicked out in a hollow which filled with water during a rain. The stone kept working down as the buffalos stamped, rubbed and wallowed in the water.

There was ample evidence of the Indians and their doings in those days. One day John Baskerville, who homesteaded the east half of 6-3-20, was walking home from Latimer's place when he came upon an Indian camp. They had a fire going and were eating skunks which they had roasted on the ends of long sticks. It was a common occurrence for the Latimers to have Indians stop at the homestead for a meal. The Indian would say, "Bockety, bockety," meaning hungry. The pioneers never turned a hungry Indian away.

Many Indian stone mallets have been picked up on the prairies. Around the centre of the stone was a groove, in which a wooden handle was held by a thong. One of the important uses of these mallets was in the making of "pemmican." Buffalo meat was sliced into strips and spread on the grass to dry, then pounded into a powder to be mixed with wild fruits and fat. It formed a staple supply of food for the Indian and some white men as it would keep for months. Many of these Indian mallets can be seen imbedded in the Cairn at the Peace Garden.

The women in those days had as hard a time as the men. They gathered hops in the bush and boiled them down to make their own yeast. They made their own soap, baked their own bread and made most of the clothes for the family. At harvest time they often cooked for threshing gangs of twenty-five men. They had no phones, electric lights or appliances, radios or cars. There was no hospital near them and no nurses. When a doctor was needed, someone had to ride miles to get him. It was a survival of the fittest, and the back was made for the burden.

The buffalo are gone; the herds of antelope are gone; the trumpeter swans are gone, and the whooping cranes and upland plovers are almost gone. It will be only a few years till the last of the pioneers are also gone.

PIONEER DAYS OF WILLIAM CUMPSTONE, SR. AND JR.

As related by A. A. Patterson

William Cumpstone, Sr., was the eldest son of John Cumpstone, a farmer and contractor of Montgomeryshire, Wales, where William was born December 9, 1834. He married Mary Poston at Hope Church, Shropshire, April 25, 1867.

After William had worked on a farm until he was eighteen, he apprenticed himself to a wheelwright. After serving his apprenticeship, he went to a lead mine as a millwright until 1876 when he rented Santley, a 350-acre farm, from the Earl of Tankerville in Shropshire. In the early days it was an old stage coach inn on the

Shrewsberry-London road. After he lost heavily as a result of disease amongst the sheep and cattle, he decided to go to New Zealand to relatives. When he arrived at Liverpool, he met the Canadian Government immigration agent, who persuaded him to change his plans and join a party of emigrants ready to start for Canada.

In the party were Wm. Lovel, Mrs. Lovel, their son Charles, Fred and Herbert Porritt, and E. Tobias. The party, under the government guide Armstrong, left on the liner "Circassion" on May 6, 1880. The voyage to Point Levis, Quebec, took fourteen days. William Cumpstone was accompanied by his wife and four children, William, Jr., Emily, Sarah, Jane, and Edward, ranging in age from ten to two years. They travelled by train to Toronto and Collingwood where they made connection with a lake boat which carried them to Duluth. From Duluth, they reached Emerson via the "Soo Line." At Emerson they bought oxen, supplies, and covered wagons. Their only piece of machinery was a breaking plow. When all was ready, they struck west for the Turtle Mountains in Southwestern Manitoba along the Boundary Commission Trail.

It was spring with high water and bad roads without bridges on the river crossings. It took them two days to cross the Pembina River south of Manitou as the wagons had to be unloaded, the goods taken across the river on a scow, the oxen swum across, and the wagons reloaded. After three weeks of travel, the party reached Wakopa. From there they went on to 16-2-20 where they pitched their tents to stay while the men looked for suitable land. As the survey of the district was not nearly complete with only two townships completely surveyed and only even-numbered sections open for homesteads, they had to scatter a little to get land. William Lovel chose 32-2-20; William Cumpstone, west half 34-2-20; Porritt Bros., 14-2-20, Tobias, east quarter 12-2-20. As there was no land agent nearer than Winnipeg, they simply squatted on the land they had selected. However, in August a land officer, Mr. Code, pitched a tent on 12-2-20 and took entry of their homesteads. They were able to break a few acres that year, 1880, but no grain or potatoes were planted.

William Cumpstone's house was raised on August 5, 1880. It was a one and a half story house, thatched with prairie grass and chinked with clay. The corners were saddled as no one, except Ontario men, knew how to dovetail corners. As there were no nails, all the timbers had to be bored with an auger and pinned with a wooden pin. Since there was no lumber, the middle partition was made of split logs .The first winter the oxen occupied one side of this partition with the family on the other side. They stretched the tent over the beams, laid poles on it for a floor, and adzed them level.

When William's family took erysipelas, he drove seventy miles east to buy a cow and calf which cost him $85.00. When he reached

home, he found his wife very ill with blood poisoning in her hand. As there was no doctor, she partially lost the use of her right hand. This greatly handicapped her for the rest of her life.

These people had come from a country where they did not have to bake their own bread or cakes as it was only a short way to the nearest bakeshop. Now, they were almost two hundred miles from supplies even at Emerson; their cooking utensils were few in number, hence the variety of their foods was limited. Only those who have experienced such times can fully appreciate the hardships and trials of those pioneer women.

At the beginning of October nearly everyone had to go to Emerson for winter supplies. After they reached Emerson that first October, the weather changed and it began to rain. They were delayed four days when the Red River rose so much that the ferryman refused to carry them back across the river. With provisions short at home when they left, they were even shorter when the men reached home again three weeks later. The men then had to go back to Nelsonville, north of Morden, for flour. With snow and low temperatures coming that year on October 23, the last trip proved disastrous, for one of Compstone's oxen had its foot frozen so that it had to be killed. Now he was left with one ox, a cow, and a calf.

That fall Mrs. Tom Fox of Wood Lake gave William, Jr., two tiny chickens. Living with the family that winter, they thrived and became respected members of the family. Although one chicken was accidentally crushed the next spring, the other was set on eleven eggs obtained from Mrs. Burgess. Some of these chickens helped other pioneers get a start in poultry.

Mrs. Cumpstone was midwife at the birth of Harry Miller, the first white child born in this settlement along the Turtle Mountains. He was born in James Burgess' house, November 16, 1880. The closest doctor was in Winnipeg 180 miles away. Mrs. Cumpstone never saw a woman and only two men outside of her family from December 1880 to March 1881. For Christmas the family had roast beef and potatoes which were only used for special occasions as they were scarce. That winter there was not too much snow but there were some bad storms and cold weather.

During the winter of 1880-81 William Cumpstone put his knowledge of the wheelwright trade to use in the construction of two "Red River" carts. These were genuine as not a particle of iron was used in their construction. Wooden pegs were used instead of bolts and nails. There were no tires, skeins, or boxings in them. They were made of oak from the Turtle Mountains. The Porritt brothers bought one cart while Mr. Cumpstone kept the other for himself. The carts travelled many miles. One of the first trips made in them was to Millford in the spring of 1881 to meet the parents of the Porritt brothers who had come up the Assiniboine and Souris Rivers on a stern-wheel paddle steamer. The carts also travelled many miles hauling supplies for Nicol's store.

With his one ox and another he hired, Mr. Cumpstone broke eight acres on which he sowed some Red Fife wheat, another red wheat which proved unsatisfactory, and some oats. With a scythe rigged like an "Ontario" cradle, the Cumpstones and Pattersons cut their first crop together. The Pattersons swung the cradles and Cumpstone tied the bundles. The grain was threshed by the Porritt brothers' threshing outfit run by an eight horse-power steam engine. Nelson, who lived on east half 24-2-20, was the engineer. When Nelson's grain was threshed, it was poured into a wagon box on the ground. After the outfit was moved to Tobias', a fire which started on the marsh at Whitewater swept southeast, burned Nelson's straw, wheat, and wagon-box, and threatened Cumpstone's and Patterson's buildings. Prairie fires were to be feared in those days as there was very little plowing anywhere to stop the fire sweeping through the grass.

Life became easier as more settlers came into the country and as they obtained more implements and household utensils. The Cumpstones still drove oxen until 1886 but did have a pair of ponies in 1884. In that year Cumpstone, Sr., got a second homestead on east half 30-3-20 near Whitewater and later William, Jr., homesteaded the northwest quarter of the same section. They put up hay on this land in 1884 and 1885 and moved on to it with the family in January 1886 with the intention of going into the cattle business in a big way. No land was broken on this new homestead for a number of years. William, Sr., resided here until he retired to Boissevain where he died April 11, 1911. His wife had died December 25, 1909. Both were buried in Boissevain.

In 1896, William, Jr., had rented the old home place from his father. That fall he took a trip to the Old Country for four months with Dunc. Holditch of Boissevain and Billy Sparks of Minto. In 1897 he dug a cellar and stoned it ready for a new house which was not finished until 1898. August 9, 1898, he married Eva Chambers in All Saints Church. They lived on the old home place where their three children, Edmund, Edith, and Bessie were born. This farm was sold to Tom Patterson, Jim and William's brother, while William Cumpstone, Jr., purchased west quarter 24-2-20. In 1901 William and his brother Ned purchased their first threshing outfit. It was a Battle Creek Advance outfit. The separator was 36 by 56 and was driven by a 20 horse-power tractor steam engine. It was fully equipped with blower, weigher, and bagger.

A. J. VENABLES, 1887

We came to Canada from England in the year 1887 in the month of June. My brother Tom came out during 1886. By trade my father was a confectioner and baker while in England, although he did not carry on this trade in Canada.

I remember very clearly our trip from Montreal by train. As we neared the Lake Superior district we saw Indians for the first

time. The conductor led a group of Indians through the train to the smoker. I was almost frightened speechless.

We had a very short stop-over in Winnipeg, which I remember as being a mere cluster of buildings. The train we caught from Winnipeg which took us to Boissevain was a new line the previous year.

My first glimpse of Boissevain was rather discouraging as I saw only a few houses. I remember a man was shooting ducks off a slough where the park is now located.

My brother was to meet us at the station but he was unable to do so. Fortunately one of his neighbours, Mr. Bob Campbell, was in town. We were able to get a ride to my brother's farm with him. The ride was one which was never to be forgotten.

The journey was made by a team of oxen and wagon. The one wagon was so overloaded it still amazes me that we ever moved at all. The wagon conveyed Mr. Campbell and Mrs. Campbell, son Charlie, daughter Miss Lester, mother and father, my three sisters, my brother and myself over the rugged road. The clouds of mosquitoes and the countless sleighs each made their impression on me. We took the old Brandon Trail to Tom's farm southeast of Minto. During the trip we had to cross the Souris River by the Heaslip Ferry.

During the summer we came to know the following people as our neighbours: Mr. Adam Armstrong, Mr. Fred Wark, Harry and Robert Graham, Mr. Jim Graham and family. I'm sure it was these kind friends that made our life livable. That fall I attended Victoria School which was located east of Jim Graham's.

During one of my first school days in Canada I spotted my first lizard. Thinking it a crocodile I ran like mad to tell the teacher.

Our first home was a small little sod shanty. The walls were of sod, but it had glass windows and a roof which as not entirely water proof. In the fall we moved to the town of Boissevain. Our house was situated on the present site of the phone office. The magnificent willow which can be seen there today was planted by my father all those years ago.

During the next year the town was practically swept off the map by a fire. A whole block of buildings was destroyed as well as an elevator.

Being only a boy at the time the thing which impressed me then will sound rather foolish now. The morning after the fire an army of bed bugs were seen marching from the burnt ruins to the next victim's house. There seemed to be millions of them climbing up house walls.

In 1888 everyone was terrified when the news came that there was an uprising among the Indians at the west end of Turtle Mountain. I was thrilled at the sight of a trainload of mounted men passing through town.

Soon after father took a homestead on the section 16-3-20 which is my home today.

At that time the Deloraine Trail passed through the farm. The Waubeesh Trail also ran across our farm. It branched from the northeast to southwest points of the section. This was a trail much frequented by Indians. An old Indian camp-site was in Barton Coulee on the farm later owned by Alpine Taylor.

On the farm known as Cecil Millions' at the present time, once stood a road-house owned by George Morton, who was known to all as the farmer's friend.

My first neighbours in the district were Chris Musgrove and Peter Hill.

I hope you will find something of interest in this story. It has been a pleasure looking back to my first days spent in Canada.

A MAN WHO CAME WEST

(The following article, a prize winning entry published in the Grain Growers Guide thirty years ago, is reproduced in full because so many of the events described were typical of early day experiences.)

Duncan Henderson

I was born in Beckwith Township, near Carleton Place, Ontario, in 1863. I came of a large family, and as my father died when I was eleven years old, needless to say all hands had to pitch in at anything that was offered. I put in one year on an Ontario farm at the princely wage of $84 a year. The summer work was mostly done in those days by hand, and in the winter I helped to stone a road across a swamp. I then went into the Almonte woollen mills, where I worked for seven years.

My brother Peter went West, scouting for land in the fall of '81, going in by the old Emerson Trail and locating in the Turtle Mountain district, near where the town of Boissevain now stands. The spring of '82 followed what was long remembered as the winter of the deep snow, it being four or five feet deep on the level. It was this spring that I joined the first great rush westward. I spent my nineteenth birthday on the train and landed in Brandon, the end of steel, early in March. Early the next morning, I started out to walk to Old Deloraine land office, via what was then known as Souris City, and which is today Wawanesa.

I was arrayed for my seventy mile jaunt, in a hard hat "Sunday shoes" and a long flapping ulster, that wound around my feet at every step. After following an ox team trail for forty miles, I reached Langs Valley the first night. I located a stopping place which turned out to have a rough pole floor. Just as soon as I got inside the door, I stretched out full length on this floor, and believe me, I have never struck a feather bed since that felt half as soft as those bare poles after a forty mile walk. The next morning I

fell in with an ox team driven by Frank Howell and the late G. C. Wright, and we proceeded to Old Deloraine land office to file on our land. I then went into the Turtle Mountain bush about twelve miles distant from our homesteads, and together with my brother, Peter, James Rae and the late W. H. Latimer, took lodging in a breed's shack and began to get out logs for a shanty. We clubbed together and bought an ox team, drew out the logs and erected a 10 x 12 shanty on Rae's quarter.

Search for Work

Spring had now come and Peter and I decided we must get work. We pooled our resources and found we had $5.00, so with an old valise dangling in the centre of a pole carried on our shoulders we began our seventy mile walk to Brandon. What was then known as the Endless Slough had to be crossed, and we waded through it, holding our clothes over our head and buried to the arms in slush. I still maintain that we hold the speed record for getting into our duds on the other bank.

After the first night, half our money was gone. The next noon saw another dollar depart, but we reached Brandon that night, and after investing in some bread and cheese, hit for a box car as it was our intention to go to the end of the steel and apply for work. The conductor, on finding we had no passes, decided to eject us, but for some reason, possibly the fact that we each stood six foot three inches, he went away and forgot to return. This reminds me that I started my career in Manitoba one jump ahead of the railroads, but something tells me they have caught up long since.

Arriving at Flat Creek (now Oak Lake), thirty-five miles west of Brandon, on a Saturday night, friendless and broke, we found it necessary to pawn a watch with the keeper of the store for Sunday's board, and then on Monday morning we joined the shovel brigade.

We surfaced through to Moose Jaw that summer. When fall came Peter went home to get some work done on the homestead. I followed him via Brandon about a month later at freeze-up. I headed out from Brandon in the general direction of Rae's shack, and in the evening of the second day I decided I must be somewhere in its vicinity. It was getting dusk and I espied a dark object on the western horizon, which I decided must be the shanty. I made haste to reach it before it got too late. The shack turned out to be a haystack, so I burrowed in supperless and went to sleep. Next morning a survey taken from the top of the haystack revealed a house a few miles distant. On my arrival there I found it to be the home of A. S. Barton, who directed me to my friends.

A curious incident happened as I went through Brandon. The railroad fare was necessarily coarse, and boasted no sweets whatever. When I returned to Brandon, the first thing I did was to buy a

dollar's worth of sugar and sit right down on the ground and eat it. I realized since that it was nature's call for a balanced ration.

Humor Not Lacking

Many things happened in the early days that still give me pleasure to recollect. May I set down a few of them? I had been living on my brother's homestead. I heard that as a consequence mine might be cancelled, so I concluded I had better put in a few nights on my claim. A neighbor, Wm. Latimer, and myself rigged up a hay bed in a small log stable with this end in view. The smell of new mown hay proved conducive to sleep, but about midnight another odor became sufficiently pronounced to counteract the perfume of the hay. Dawn revealed a lusty member of the skunk tribe as our guest. I gently, oh, so gently, circled him around to the door, but he seemed loath to leave. Bill stood ready and the next circle he made he grabbed him by the tail and had him soaring skyward before he could get his defensive apparatus into action.

One of our staple articles of diet was rusty bacon, as it was known then, "Chicago chicken." We would live high on this along with potatoes and bannock until the bacon got pretty slim, then we would drive a nail in the north wall of the shanty and hang it up in reserve for visitors. In those days the common procedure was to boil a pot of potatoes "a la jackets" and dump them on the table. The man who skinned the most got the most. I have seen this method produce expert peelers in three days.

Practically all our travel was done on foot and I have walked to Old Desford, eleven miles distant, for the mail and shouldered a hundred pound sack of flour back. Being thrown on one's own resources surely makes one versatile. What would you think of a couple of young ladies who desired to visit a neighbor one winter morn, and on finding that the men had the sleigh away, hitched a horse to the henhouse door and made the trip on this novel vehicle?

In times of crop failure we were hard put to earn money enough to live. I have drawn out building logs and rails, and dug dozens of wells and cellars for farmers who came in later with some money. I have even been glad to walk five miles to Boissevain and load cars during the night after working all day. We loaded out of the old flat warehouses which preceded our modern elevators and the grain was handled in sacks. The pay was $3.00 per car; $1.50 each for two of us. Peter and I operated one of the first threshing machines in the district and have owned nine outfits in all. We often threshed twenty-five miles from home and our season lasted three months. We had excellent men at $1.00 per day, and it took more than a snow flurry to send them scuttling East.

I remember hiring a man once who was a professional song writer, who came West for his health. He composed a humorous song, mentioning the different farmers on the gang. I recall one verse referring to Peter, who had just got married.

"And then there is Peter, our other big boss,
Who still maintains threshing is all a dead loss;
He goes home every night about five or six miles,
And comes back the next morning all covered with smiles."

The old caboose rocked to this ditty more than once. Years later I hired a man who, on hearing my name, enquired if I was mentioned in the old threshing song. He had heard it in the lumber woods of Maine; so our world then, as now, was pretty small.

A Young Man's Ambition

However, I must move on to more serious things, but before I do let me relate an experience which may prove valuable food for thought to the modern young man who can't decide between a six and an eight cylinder car. A man came to my place, one evening long ago, driving the almost unheard of luxury—a new top buggy. I stabled his horse, pushed the buggy into an empty shed and took him in to supper. After I had got him seated comfortably near the kitchen stove I took the lantern and slipped out to have another look at that buggy. As I stroked its glossy panels, I could feel the tears start, and I remarked aloud to myself: "Oh, will I ever be able to afford a buggy?"

A record of our first crops in Manitoba might be of interest. It reads as follows:

1883—Nine acres frozen.
1884—Frozen, drew to Brandon, 20c per bushel.
1885—Frozen, sold entire crop 18c per bushel.
1886—Dried out.
1887—Very fair, but low in price, around 20c.
1888—Frozen August 8. Never cut a sheaf.
1889—Dry. Very scant crop.
1890—Hailed 100 per cent. No insurance.
1891—Fair to good. Some frosted.
1892—Fair to good.

Our first bumper was in '95. Wheat averaged forty bushels pere acre and sold for from 35c to 40c per bushel. This crop gave us our first real start.

It must be borne in mind that modern methods of farming, coupled with modern machinery and earlier maturing wheat, would have turned many of our failures into partial successes at least. Brandon was our first market and meant a round trip of from 100 to 140 miles, depending on the trail we followed; and this, with produce selling often for less than 20c per bushel.

Nearly everyone drove oxen in those days, and one always had the comforting thought that as a last resort we could at least eat the team. Speaking of oven reminds me of the experiences of my youngest brother, Jim, who came west in '84. Jim used to turn his oxen loose to graze during noon hour, and when hitching-up time

came they would head for the middle of the deepest slough. Jim would stand on the bank and tell those animals just what he thought of them. If oxen could be insulted they should have died of shame. The whole process was highly entertaining for the rest of us, but it always wound up by Jim pulling off his shoes and stockings and wading after them.

The Girl Back Home

I had noticed that as soon as one of our members got things kind of shipshape he invariably made a trip back east on some pretext or other and when he returned he was no longer alone. So it was not to be wondered at if some of the boys caught me whittling out chairs and tables, etc., in my spare time, that were obviously superfluous in a bachelor's abode. In '89 I gave the shack a final polish, pulled the door to on its leathern hinges, and hied me south to Hallock, Minn., where the girl I used to know back East, Miss Evaline Latimer, was visiting a sister. We were married and returned to the homestead that fall. Never will I forget that return. When all that a man has accumulated is of the labor of his hands, he has a pride of possession which bought stuff can never give. It was, perhaps, with pardonable pride and with some little flourish that I threw open the door of the shanty. Alas! some stray stock had broken in and trampled everything into oblivion. We have had many a good laugh over it since, but at the time, I must confess, I failed to see the funny side of it.

This country will always owe a debt of gratitude which it can never repay to those women who braved the hardships and loneliness of the early days, and it is due to them more than anything else that we have the splendid, virile West we are so proud of today. Raising a family far from a doctor, keeping things going while husband is out on a month's threshing season, and seeing children clothed and fed following a crop failure, are things not to be undertaken lightly. My wife and I have seen many ups and downs since those days; frost, hail, fire and drought, but looking back over it we can find no cause for regret. Before retiring to Boissevain, in 1918, we were farming 1,760 acres, with the help of four of my five sons.

Old settlers are often asked how they stood the hardships of the early days. In the first place we did not consider them hardships. Contentment is more a state of mind than anything else, and discontent usually arises from comparing one's lot with someone else's. We were all poor, hence all healthy, happy and sociable. We had much of interest, such as myriads of wild fowl and small game to hunt, famous old barn raisings, berry picking expeditions and picnics. In winter we would drive miles to country dances behind a team of oxen. When the oldtime fiddlers sawed off the music for a regular oldfashioned hoe down, I believe they gave more real enjoyment than any modern jazz band does when it supplies the racket for the "walk with variations" that we see today. I could get more

interest in those days out of a month-old newspaper than I can get out of a stack of dailies today. Don't waste too much sympathy on the oldtimers, because many of them were happier than many people are today.

Some Conclusions Drawn

I presume this article would not be complete unless I were to draw some conclusions based on my forty-odd years' experience in the West. I realize that other men who have had similar experiences will draw different conclusions, so I merely offer them for what they may be worth.

Perhaps I am treading on dangerous ground when I mention our present standard of living. Doubtless it accounts for much of the debt among farmers. However, the next generation may not regard our standard of living as so very high because it will be remembered that in years gone by, many people were shocked and amazed when the farmer quit wearing homespun and began to buy his overalls ready made. It would seem, however, that the countless number of comforts, conveniences and pleasures that flood the world today should not be denied the class who put in such long, strenuous hours to produce the nation's food. Or if such is the case our jobs in future must be to arrange for an exchange of commodities the world over on a more equitable basis, remembering always, however, that in our particular business we have the disadvantage of being in competition with countries which have a very low standard of living.

In closing I must say that during my residence in Manitoba the agricultural industry has progressed in a manner that was never dreamed of a short time ago. The western farmers have organized and through their co-operative and other agencies command the attention and respect of the entire civilized world; and to every man who is broad enough to overlook the petty incidentals and grasp the real magnitude of their accomplishments, it must be apparent that agriculture is at last headed toward its place in the sun that it so greatly merits.

JOSEPH GEORGE WASHINGTON

One of the earliest settlers in the district tributary to Boissevain was the late Joseph George Washington, known to the whole community as Joe. Born at Whitly in Ontario, he came West in 1879 at the age of eighteen, travelling by rail and boat to Emerson, where he clerked in a store for a short time, but with his mind set on farming he proceeded further west to the Turtle Mountain district, which was then talked about as a good farming country. The Red River Valley in the spring of 1879 was all under water and the district farther west offered good prospects for the agriculturist. Investing $10.00 in an Indian pony, fashioning a set of harness out of buckskin and acquiring a second hand buckboard, he started west

over the old Commission Trail with a small party seeking the same destination. They forded streams and traversed marsh lands and many times had to divest themselves of their clothes, wring them out and dry them in the sun as they travelled. At all times they were on the lookout for Indians, and the sight of a man emerging from the bush with a gun on what is now Asa Blanchard's farm, was a startling experience for the travellers. He turned out to be James Ayre, well known to all the early settlers, who gave them instructions as to the land available for homesteads—the best land the Lord ever laid out for man. He directed them to William Shannon's on 34-2-19, where they found him in the course of erecting a log house for his wife and small family, who were living in a tent pitched inside the log walls. Joe spent the next day looking over available land and hunting for corner posts and finally decided to locate on 36-2-19. As far as the eye could see there were no buildings to break the monotonous stretch of prairie, but there were many intending settlers looking for suitable land. Among these was the late William Hewitt, who settled on the east half of said section. The next evening they hitched up the pony and started for Deloraine to make their entries and arrived there on the following morning, and were among the first to line up and await the opening of the doors of the office.

With homestead duties performed, Joe went back to Emerson and thence to Winnipeg, where he worked as a carpenter for some time. While there he made the acquaintance of an Irish family—Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Boyle and their daughter Eliza Jane, whom he afterwards married. At that time Winnipeg seemed to offer no hope of being anything other than a small town and Selkirk and Portage la Prairie were looked upon as the coming cities. Moving to Portage, which was enjoying a boom, he entered the real estate business with his cousin A. G. Washington and on the crest of the boom, he married and in the spring of 1881 took a honeymoon trip to Ontario. While in the East the boom broke, and he returned to find that his contracts for lots and houses in Portage were worthless, and the land in the Turtle Mountain district was his only asset.

Leaving Mrs. Washington in the city he returned with Geo. C. Currie, who settled on 3-3-19, and together they bought a pair of oxen, a wagon, a plow and a tent, and in June of 1881 were back on their lands. In that year they built a small house, broke about ten acres on each place, and in the winter drew logs from the Mountain to build stables. The first seeding was done in 1882. It was done by hand and harrowed in with the oxen. The few loads of grain were drawn to Brandon by ox team, sold for 35c and 40c per bushel, and the round trip took about a week. These trips were generally made by a group of farmers together.

For the first few years Old Wakopa was the trading centre for the district and the trading post was in the hands of a Frenchman named LaRiviere. The settlement consisted of a boarding house, gen-

eral store, blacksmith shop, flour mill and saw mill, which were powered by a water wheel.

In 1883, Joe was joined by his wife on the homestead and here their family of six children were born. In the early days of the settlement, Mrs. Washington was afraid of the Indians and spent anxious days when her husband was in the bush or on trips to Brandon, but she later found that they were harmless and responded quickly to any kindness shown. It was a common occurrence to find half a dozen squaws sitting on the kitchen floor after having made a noiseless entrance. All they wanted was to see Mrs. Washington's white papoose and having admired it they went on their way.

The first threshing machine was brought in by Wm. Shannon. The grain in those days was all stooked and threshing was carried on until near Christmas, and when the snow became to deep to move the machine, it was left until spring. Later in the eighties, a syndicate was formed, including A. Cossar, Jas. Maxwell, Wm. Ryan and the Gregories. These were hand fed machines; the straw was bucked away from the carrier with a horse on each end of a pole or plank into long rows on each side of the outfit. It was a great privilege for the boys to be allowed to ride these horses while the straw buck man lay on the straw.

Joe Washington was one of the first of the settlers to realize that a farmer must have livestock, and have other sources of income besides grain. About 1889, he purchased his first pure bred shorthorn, one of several which had been brought from Ontario by John Hittle. A short time later, he bought a bull—Red Knight II—with a few females. From these matings were raised some animals which won honors at Minnesota State Fair, Winnipeg, Brandon and Toronto. The herd came into the hands of Joe's son Henry and before it was dispersed in 1951, he had won the Grand Championship for both male and females. Although specializing in shorthorns, Joe was also interested in Clydesdale horses and bred prizewinners at all the local fairs. He was called on to judge at most of the fairs in Western Canada, and those who knew him and competed with him remember how he talked of horses all day and far into the night.

Mr. Washington's interests were not centred on his farming operations to the exclusion of public affairs. With Will Shannon and Wm. Ryan, he was instrumental in the setting up of Maple Grove School District, and acting as a trustee for several years. He sat as member of the Municipal Council for a considerable time and in the last decade of the last century was reeve of the municipality for several terms. He was also instrumental in the incorporation of the Turtle Mountain Agricultural Society and for many years served as one of its directors.

Retiring from active participation in the work of the farm in 1931, he passed away in 1938, leaving a record of splendid work as an agriculturist and as a public servant.

A PIONEER OF 1882

By Frances Code

The events which led my grandfather, Thomas Code of Innisville, Ontario, to bring his family to Manitoba in the spring of 1882 had been gathering momentum for some time before that. His brother-in-law, Abe Code, a former land surveyor for the Dominion Government, had, with his wife, already taken up residence in the Morris district and their letter home to Ontario extolled the virtues and opportunities of life in the opening west. Eventually it was decided that Thomas Code's eldest son, John, should go as far as Morris and send back a report. John's enthusiasm matched that of his uncle and he too wrote home urging his father to come. Plans for carrying out this new venture soon took definite shape while the household effects were packed for shipment and thus it happened that when the C.P.R. train pulled out of Carleton Place on March 29th, 1882, bound for the "Northwest," Thomas Code, his wife and family of six, and two nephews were among the passengers.

In those days the railway wasn't built north of the lakes so they had to go by way of Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis and other U.S. cities in order to reach Winnipeg, but in a little over eight days they arrived safely. After a short rest in Winnipeg, which was in its boom days, they continued on to Morris by ox-team. Abe Code had arranged for them to rent a farm about nine miles north of Morris and there they sowed their first wheat in Manitoba. As soon as the crop was in, at the end of April, Thomas Code was ready to proceed farther west in search of a permanent location. Leaving part of his family at Morris he set out with two of his sons, John and William, Albert (my father), his nephews and his brother-in-law along what was then known as the Boundary Commission Trail. Their wagon was stocked with farm implements and other necessities required for a trip of possibly three weeks and drawn by four oxen hitched abreast. The original plan was to go to Deloraine, where Abe Code knew the man in the land titles office, and from there to Moose Jaw, to which point quite a few settlers were heading.

The first day, over difficult ground, they covered only thirteen miles, but afterward made steady progress till the Pilot Mound district was reached and there they met with their first flat tire, so as to speak. The right hind wagon tire suddenly went rolling off and before they realized what had happened the wheel had broken down completely. This could easily have proved a serious set-back because they didn't carry a spare, but fortunately they were able to borrow a hind wheel from a farmer living nearby. A greater mishap was still to befall them before they reached Deloraine, however. They came one afternoon to a slough area which appeared to be about half a mile across. It had been covered with water earlier in the season and alkali beds could be seen here and there. After

some hesitation they decided to try it. They were about half way across when they struck an alkali bed and down they went till the wagon box prevented them from going any deeper. For a few minutes despair reigned while they mentally pictured the work of carrying their equipment a quarter of a mile on foot. Then as luck would have it they noticed a large outfit passing north of them—twenty-five farmers who, they learned later, had come from North Dakota and were on their way to a settlement farther west. Observing their plight the leader of the wagon-train came over and generously offered to pull the stalled wagon with its load through to higher ground. When sixteen yoke of oxen were hitched to it with chains from yoke to yoke those present witnessed a feat that was worth going a long way to see. In his own words Abe Code, one of the nephews later described this unusual sight: "For some distance our wagon was drawn through the ground without a wheel turning, sliding as it did on the bottom of the box, and only the oxen which had reached dry ground getting enough solid footing to enable them to assist in moving the load. Soon three or four yokes found firm footing, then the others, and it was a revelation to see their tails fly up over their backs and our wagon pulled to safety to the opposite bank.

Sixteen days after leaving Morris the party reached Deloraine. Here the land agent advised them not to go on to Moose Jaw as a number of the settlers who went there had returned dissatisfied. Instead, he suggested that they look over several sections which were then available some thirty miles northeast of Deloraine. The property had originally been taken up by a man named Morton, who planned to start a dairy farm. But the project apparently did not mature, for he had relinquished his claims. So Thomas Code and those with him inspected this land and liked it and went back to Deloraine to file claims for a quarter-section each. My grandfather and my father were given title to the south half of 10-5-21, which became the home-place, and the others took up adjoining homesteads.

In preparation for the coming of the rest of his family Thomas Code began the building of a sod house 20 feet by 24 feet. This in itself was quite an undertaking. Thick sods eighteen to twenty-four inches long were cut from the furrows and piled on top of one another—brickwise—to form the walls. Then a trip was made to Turtle Mountain twenty miles away, for poplar poles, which were laid side by side across the walls to form a roof and liberally covered with hay from the sloughs. In this house the family lived for nearly three years. It was satisfactory enough till the heavy spring rains made it quite unpleasant via the roof. Grandmother Code, however, calmly fastened an unused carpet to the ceiling. This caught the leakage and directed it to spots on the floor where she had placed pails—just another incident of pioneer life. Besides the sod house a

sod stable and sod hen-house were constructed that summer and a well was dug.

After breaking the necessary five acres each, and remaining the required three months to establish claims to their homesteads everyone but John went back to Morris to take off the crop planted in the spring. It was from this crop, grown on the rented farm near Union Point that my father (then nineteen years old) claimed the distinction of delivering the first load of wheat to Ogilvie's Flour Mill in Winnipeg in September 1882. It was brought to Winnipeg by way of St. Norbert and St. Boniface with a yoke of oxen and graded No. 1 hard, fetching 60c a bushel.

In December 1882, Thomas Code and his family left Morris for their new home at 10-5-21. They went again to Winnipeg and took the train to Brandon, which at that time was the end of steel. In addition to their household effects they brought three cows, together with chickens, turkeys and ducks. John was at the station to meet them, with two wagons and two yoke of oxen. Anticipating the long winter they purchased a goodly supply of groceries, including five sacks of flour. Aunt Annis, Thomas Code's eldest daughter, now 95 and living at Elgin, still remembers clearly the fifty mile trip from Brandon seventy-three years ago. The trail lay over hard-packed snow four feet deep. It was cold riding so most of the time they walked. When they grew tired walking they would climb on the wagons again and ride awhile. During the two day trip one of the oxen became ill for a time so they just hitched one of the cows to the wagon instead. They spent the first night with friends on the way. The second night they stayed in James Argue's shanty six miles north of their destination. Learning of their arrival in the vicinity about nightfall Mr. Argue had promptly extended his kind hospitality. His shanty was small but warm, the wayfarers grateful. James Argue was from Peterborough, Ontario, and had taken up his homestead just six months before Thomas Code. He was their nearest neighbor at the time.

Next morning the travellers completed the last lap of their long journey from Ontario. They arrived "home" on December 18th —just in time to get everything ready for Christmas. Mr. Argue came down to be their guest on that special day. It was a Christmas quite different from those they had known in Ontario, but it was their first Christmas in a Manitoba setting—and they enjoyed it.

To My Brother Ned

Do you remember years gone by
When days and nights were not so dry,
To shoot the goose and shoot the duck,
We waded through a lot of muck.
You and I.

When steps were light and hearts were gay,
We got us up at break of day
And to the marsh we'd steal away,
And maybe not come back that day.
You and I.

We'd watch the wind, we'd watch the smoke
Then at a goose we'd get a poke,
Then to retrieve him we would run,
We got both exercise and fun.
You and I.

We often carried out a score
And then went back to get some more,
We'd have a drink and then a smoke,
And how we used to laugh and jok.
You and I.

When we got back the old man swore,
He'd mutilate that old ten bore
He'd stamp his feet and bang the doors,
Because we'd left him all the chores.
You and I.

The geese have gone likewise the duck,
The whiskey and likewise our luck
And all that's left to us—the muck
But still we've got our pipes to suck.
You and I.

And still by creek and lake or slough
In memory I walk with you,
And get a duck, a snipe or teal
Most folks don't know how good I feel.
You and I.

Wm. Cumpstone, Jr.

JOHN A. MUSGROVE

By Pearl Musgrove Mills

Of my father's early life I know little. He was born in a little Ontario town on April 19, 1853. He was the eldest son of James and Elizabeth Jane Musgrove, whose maiden name was McAvoy. He was named John, after his father's only brother .

At the age of three, he, with his father, mother, and elder sister Mary Jane and one younger child went into the bush country around Bluevale, in Huron County, to hew out a home. I can only remember in a hazy sort of way the stories of those early struggles and also the stories of the winters he later spent in the pine woods in Michigan. But I do remember his saying he handed over all his winter's savings (except a few dollars he kept to buy school books) to his father to help support the family. Such was life in the Ontario bush.

The family later moved to a farm near Gorrie, also in Huron County. Across the line fence lived the Mitchell family. In the Musgrove family there were six sons and three daughters, also in the Mitchell family there were six sons and three daughters, many of them bearing the same names.

As young men my father and his brother Jim learned the trade of carpentry and barn-framing.

In those early years there was a veritable exodus from the bush-lands of Huron, Bruce and Grey Counties in Ontario to the open prairie lands of Manitoba, a new province with great possibilities, a land of great promise.

My father, weary of the struggle to make a home in the East where he had grown to manhood, and where he had seen his parents spend the best years of their lives clearing land and making a bare living for their large family, decided to look for something better.

In 1879 he came West. He wanted land that did not need clearing, land that he could go on and plow. Yet he must not get too far from the railroad. If he settled fifty miles from one, he had a good chance of getting one close by in time. That summer my father did considerable looking around. He travelled on foot all over what was then called the "north country," up around the Riding Mountains. He was not satisfied with the country as he saw it then. There was too much bush or scrub land that needed too much clearing. He went back to Ontario.

In the fall of 1881 he returned to the West along with his brother Jim. They spent that winter doing carpenter work in Winnipeg. The city was young then, with no paved roads. Dad said he had seen many a good team stuck in the mud on what is now Portage Ave.

In March of 1882 they were on the road again. With them was their cousin Robert, known to us later as "Big Bob." As I remember him, he was a big man, with a loud voice, expressive language, and

a strong-smelling pipe. He was interesting to listen to. They had purchased oxen and sleigh, plows, household equipment and a tent. They had brought their carpenter tools from Ontario.

They came to Brandon by C.P.R. train. They began the long journey with ox teams. Their goal was a settlement on the north slope of the Turtle Mountains, fifty miles over gleaming white snow. The snow in the glare of the sun was so hard on the eyes that some of them became snow blind. They had to put veils on the oxen to keep them from becoming blind also. Twenty-five miles south of Brandon they came to the Little Souris River. Here on the bank of the river was a dwelling house, the home of Mr. McCandlish; a place that in the years that followed became to them a familiar stopping place.

The land where my father settled was the northeast quarter of 35-2-20, on the south side of the first correction line, twelve miles north of the American boundary. It was clear prairie land. Off the south, with a gentle slope rose the Turtle Mountains, well covered with trees, and close enough to afford plenty of firewood for many years to come. There they pitched their tent, and built a tiny shanty. They scooped out a shallow well in a little runway for temporary use.

Nearly all the homestead land was already taken up in the settlement—all the even numbered sections. The odd numbered sections were government land. Those who settled on them had only a squatter's claim. It was three years before my father could buy the land he was living on. It think it was three dollars an acre he paid for it.

That first summer they built my father's house, a good-sized log house. It was boarded up inside and out giving it almost the appearance of a frame house, except that the outside boards ran up and down, and were of lumber about a foot wide. The front faced the north, having two windows and a door. The furniture my father made; a table, a cupboard, a large washstand and a reclining chair that he constructed from the tent poles when they had no further use for the tent. They also dug and stoned a well, quite close to the house, a well that has never yet run dry.

Robert's place, a quarter of 6-3-19, cornered my father's, or as nearly so as the jog in the correction line would allow; Uncle Jim's place was in the next section east of Robert's, 5-3-19.

The West must indeed have looked golden to the boys in those days, even though they had many hardships. The next year their father, mother and the rest of the family joined them on the prairie. They stayed in my father's home until they had a house built on grandfather's place, a quarter of section 14-3-20.

Beside the work done on the farm, my father spent a lot of time at his trade. Many homes were being built. But it was not all work. They were young, and they were happy. There were many others like them. I think the spirit of the times was very well

expressed in the words of a song some of the young people composed to the tune of Beulah Land. I wish I could remember it all. It began—

"I've reached the land of corn and beans
Of level plains and deep ravines—

The chorus:

"Oh, glorious land, oh beauteous land
Where everyone joins heart and hand
We are a loyal jolly crew
If you were here you'd say so too.
If you were here to join our band
In this our glorious prairie land."

There were other verses but it is that chorus that always appealed to me.

In those days while my father was batching there were several other bachelors close by. In fun they named their farms. Robert gave his the Irish name of "Donnybrook." Beside him lived the Richardson family who christened their farm "Carlyle." Across the road were the McAllister boys who called their place "Hard-scrabble" while my father's place was known as "Starvation Point" or "The Orphan's Home."

Many were the hardships encountered in marketing their grain. Brandon was their nearest railroad.

One incident my father used to tell about was a trip he and Will Armstrong made. They had had more than their usual run of tough luck that day. Realizing they were not going to make the stopping-place that night, they drove into the yard of an abandoned homestead. There they found shelter for their teams. On going into the house they found it empty except for an old stove. They gathered up enough wood to make a good fire to dry their clothes as they had been wet several times that day. They were fairly comfortable but hungry, thinking of the good supper they were missing at McCandlish's. Dad noticed a large matchbox on the wall. It had a knot hole in the side of it. On examining it, he found it full of nuts; the winter provisions of some little animal, probably a squirrel. They were thankful for even that much, and made a supper of nuts. He often laughed about robbing the squirrel's nest.

My father did not like oxen very well but knew they would stand the work better, and thrive on less, than horses would. I do not know just how soon he changed to horses, but he was a great lover of good horses and always tried to have them in good condition.

The wheat in 1884 was all graded No. 1 hard. The price ranged from 43c to 55c a bushel. In 1885 the wheat was all badly frozen and sold for feed, the price running as lo was 19c a bushel. Many times he sold a load of wheat and brought it all home in provisions. The 1885 crop was the first to be sold in Boissevain. In 1886 the wheat graded all No. 1 hard. The price was higher, reaching 68c a bushel.

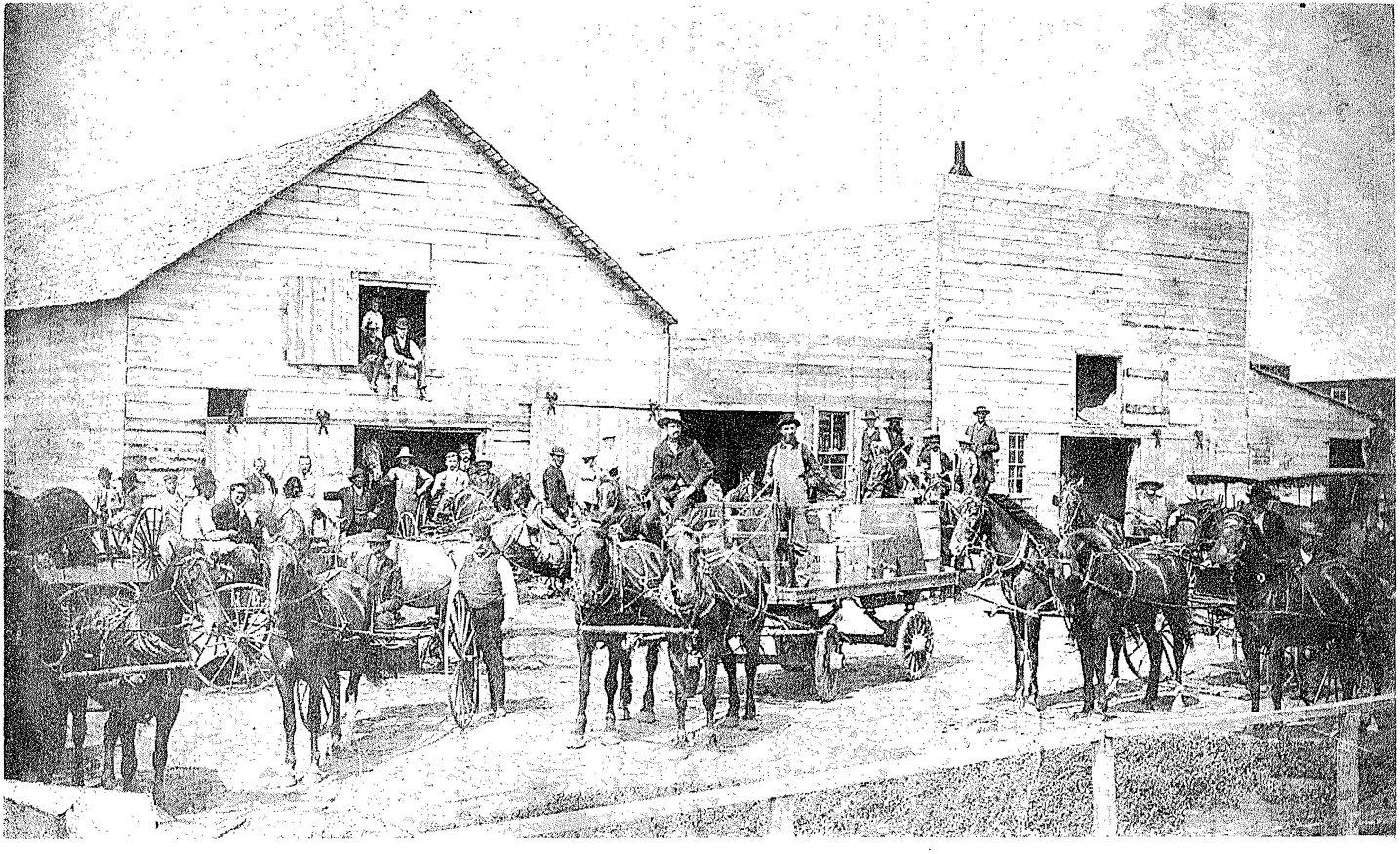
In 1889 my father went on a trip to Ontario, back to the old neighborhood. On Feb. 27 he married Annie Emma Mitchell. Early in March they came back to the prairie home. It was her first trip to the West. That year was very dry and the crop was a failure. The returns were only five bushels to the acre.

The 1890 crop was completely hailed out and my father wanted to quit but mother said, "Try it for another year," so they did and were always thankful they did. Crops were better for the next few years and in 1896 we built our stone stable. The following year my father got out the timber for the barn. He did the hewing and framing himself in the winter. Then one fine day when all was in readiness a crowd of neighbors gathered for the barn raising. I can still remember how it looked that evening, in silhouette against the western sky. When the barn was finished my mother held a quilting bee and a social evening in the new building.

In those days there were many pedlars on the road, men of dark swarthy complexion, with dark brown eyes and coal black hair. Some called them Jews but some at least were Assyrians. They travelled on foot carrying huge boxes or bags of merchandise. They went from door to door endeavoring to sell and seeking a night's lodging wherever they might be at the close of each day. Mother did not like sheltering these stranger, but dad's soft heart would not let him say no. "You know, Annie," he would say, "I can't turn anyone away. I know what it is to be hungry and have no place to lie down. All that summer of '79 I tramped over that north country in search of land. The settlers were so few and so far from supplies that they hardly dared to part with half a loaf of bread. Many a time I had money enough to buy all I wanted, but there was nothing to buy. I knew how they felt and I sympathized with them. But there were others who, when I asked for shelter for the night, refused even the privilege of lying on the bare floor of their cabin. I vowed then that if I ever had a home of my own, I would never turn anyone away. And I never will." He kept that vow.

Another little incident he used to tell us about when any of us complained about eating crusts (as children will)—It was that same summer up north. "I had travelled a long way on foot and was tired and very hungry. There was not a dwelling in sight. I came to a clearing where the Indians had camped. I looked around and saw on the ground what looked like a small loaf. I picked it up; it had been baked in the campfire but was burnt black on the outside and they had hooked the inside out of it. It may not have been very clean, but I ate it and thought it was good."

Then there was another time he told about, I think it was that same fall. "There were four of us. We had tramped a long way, and were coming to a stopping place where we knew we would get food and shelter. I was asked to be spokesman for the party, so I knocked on the door. A girl opened it and started back, frightened at what she saw. I thought I must be a tough-looking customer to



frighten her like that. But she let us in when I told her what we wanted. When we went to wash up for supper I took a look in the glass, and I did not blame her for being frightened. My face was all chapped with the sun and wind till little streaks of blood had trickled down in several places and dried."

All those hardships happened before my father settled on 35-2-20. I think the only long trip he made on foot after that was one time when he walked to Deloraine and back (45 miles) carrying a pair of plowshares to be sharpened.

When the first world war broke out in 1914 we at first thought only of the excitement of it—the glory, the adventure, the music and the flag waving; in short, the patriotic feeling that is born in each of us seemed foremost. One of the boys asked my father if he wanted to go to the war. He replied, "Yes, if I were young enough." As the months went by he saw three of his sons put on the uniform. I know he was proud to see them go, but secretly glad there were still two left at home.

In the early days in Ontario, he and Uncle Jim had belonged to the 33rd Volunteers, a military group that went each summer up to London to train. In 1885 when the Riel Rebellion took, place, the 32nd was called out. The 33rd was ready, but were not called. My father was patriotic, loyal, and proud of being a British subject. In politics, he was a life-long Conservative. In religion, he was a Methodist. He was a charter member of the Boissevain branch of the Loyal Orange Lodge, and only once in all the years did he miss a twelfth of July celebration. He was for a number of years one of the trustees of Richview School. Father was interested in everything that stood for the betterment of the community.

On August 12, 1920, my father was killed in a binder accident. Rev. M. C. Flatt, a close friend, conducted the church funeral service. The L.O.L. had charge of the graveside ceremony at the family plot in Boissevain.

There at the foot of a gentle slope sleeps one of Manitoba's pioneers.

MEMORIES OF AN OLD TIMER

Thomas Ronald Robertson

Dad, mother and I arrived in Boissevain on June 6th, 1886, when I was less than two years of age. This was then the end of the steel, which went through to Deloraine that summer. We went to the farm of Mr. Fred Blackenbaugh, 36-2-21, where dad learned farming.

In 1887 dad rented the French farm which was about a mile southwest. Mr. French was grandfather to Errick F. Willis, M.P.

Our mail came by stage coach from Brandon to Waubeesh, a little settlement on a coulee bank on the farm of J. Brondgeest, north 4-3-21. The stage coach was driven by Jack Livingstone, Mrs.

East end livery stable — Photo courtesy W. V. Udall

Brondgeest's brother, and the post office was called Turtle Mountain.

It was hoped that this settlement would become a village, for a store, blacksmith shop, printing shop and a grist mill were erected there, but in 1887 saw the end of this dream as the railway from Boissevain to Deloraine had passed nearly two miles to the north and Mr. Brondgeest, who had been one of the prime promotors, died about Christmas time and was buried on one of the hills on the ravine bank. The family then moved about two miles north to 15-3-21.

The mail now came in by train and the post office was moved to Robt. Scott's farm about two miles S.W. 5-3-21, and about 1888 to Whitewater and the name changed from Turtle Mountain to Whitewater.

The spring of 1888 we went to the farm of Chas. Hurt (Bleak House), 8-3-21, three quarters of a mile southeast of the new railway site—Whitewater. Father rented Hurt's homestead, 8-3-21 (Waukeemo—Indian name for farm by the lake). The house had been moved by capstan the previous year to 8-3-21, its present site.

Mr. Hurt had Jim McKinley, Dave Ballard and Dan Vale breaking for him that summer. Some of them had oxen. Mother boarded these men and the carpenters who were building the first store and elevator at Whitewater for Mr. Geo. Morton. The lumber for the buildings was hauled from Morton's saw mill at Lake Max.

In 1888 what small acreage the homesteaders had in crop must have yielded well, for father had 1000 bushels of wheat. It was the first grain to go into the new elevator, with the price being $1.00 a bushel. The threshing was done by either Levi or Elias Jones with a new steam threshing machine run by Jake Smith.

1889 was a very dry year with a poor crop. I remember dad had to take the knotter off the binder and put on a box to catch the heads. When the box was full the headers were lifted out with a fork and placed in heaps on the ground. The price this year was 80c a bushel.

Our neighbors at this time were Robt. Scotts; Chas. Sankey, 4-3-21; L. Thompson, 10-3-21; John Nicholson, 10-3-21; Mrs. Brondgeest, Lou Jones (Devilish Green) 17-3-21; Hazelwoods (Liberty Hollow) 18-3-21; with Hansons (The Glen) and Kellers to the west and Dougalls and Flemings to the south.

Mrs. Hazelwood died in January 1888 and was buried on the farm as there was no near cemetery at that time. The grave was dug by Jake Smith, a bachelor neighbor. Mr. Hazelwood was killed by a train at Naples crossing in March 1891.

At this time there was a brick yard near the lake on 17-3-21 and it was run by Mr. Hyman. The machinery was later removed to Deloraine.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Peters came in about 1888 to manage Morton's store and elevator, later taking over. At this time a boarding house and livery barn were built. In addition to being store keeper

and elevator agent, Mr. Peters was livery man and magistrate and also acted as doctor, dentist, druggist and veterinarian. He sold the store to Mr. McKay and son about 1904. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Rolston arrived about 1890, he being the first blacksmith and she took over the post office from Peters.

Some of the later postmasters were Mrs. Lucas, D. Collins and K. Fraser.

Among the first section men were Gus Westergreen and A. Orriss.

The first station was a box car and the agent Mr. Simpson, who it has been reported, was a survivor of the Custer massacre, being the signalman of the party and on that fateful morning was out on the hills when the Indians struck. The station box car was replaced by a station brought in from Deloraine; this was later burned in 1923. Some of the agents were Collins, Walsh and Glazier.

Elevators in the village at this time were F. F. Cole—burned about 1890; Northern Dominion; Lake of the Woods, and about 1903 the Imperial, which company also started a lumber yard. Some of the elevator agents were Tom and Bill Shepherd, Jack Brondgeest, Jack Dunbar, Billy Scott, Alfred Spreeman, Billy Rea and A. R. Aylsworth.

In 1889 Father bought our present farm from Drummond, east 14-3-21 (Strathallen) and did some breaking with horses and walking plow. In March 1890 we moved to it. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Wilson then went to the Hurt farm.

The crop that year was a promising one but on August 1, just before it was ripe enough to bind, a terrific hail storm swept through the district and destroyed everything. The farmers were heart broken but they just had to carry on.

Late and early frosts were a big hazard to grain crops in those early years, also the shelling of the Red Fyfe wheat. In 1904 we had our first rust epidemic. In 1915 Marquis wheat became general and until Durum took over about 1925 there was a heavy rust toll. As more and more land came under cultivation the climate seemed to warm somewhat and the frost damage more or less was eliminated.

There was no school at this time closer than Mountainside. Brondgeests had been having private teachers. Now there were more settlers with families, so after due consideration, a school district was formed and named Strathallen, after Lord Drummond, who had homesteaded our farm. Mr. Chas. Sankey being one of the prime movers.

In 1891 a room was rented from Mrs. Brondgeest and a teacher, Clifford Hackworth, was procured, he being my first teacher. He boarded with Dave Boothby, two miles east of here, 12-3-21.

In 1892 a school was built on the present site 15-3-21. Miss McDonald was our teacher. My first school mates were the Taylors, Brondgeests, Hazelwoods, Wrights, Bartons and Barry Tatchell.

Our neighbors now were the Thompsons, Brondgeests, Boothbys Jones, Romboughs, Forbes, Capt. Whitlaw, Woods, Bartons, Tatchells, Taylors, Wright, Kings and Frank Bells.

During the early years we attended church at Mountainside School and later at Petersburg School, until the church was opened in Whitewater in 1905.

For social activities the village had both football and baseball teams, also a rifle range. Picnics were held at Waubeesh and Bleak House. Dances were held in the different homes in the community and there was also an active literary and debating society. Concerts and box socials were held to provide funds for various projects.

In the year 1900 a terrible tragedy occurred in July when Jake Smith and Charlie Daw disappeared and in October their bodies were discovered in an old well on Daw's farm, 4-3-21, formerly Chas. Sankey's homestead. In 1902 Walter Gordon was arrested at Halifax, while boarding a transport for South Africa, tried for the crime in Brandon, found guilty and hanged for the crime.

Whitewater Lake and marsh has always been a paradise for hunters from near and far. I remember the myriads of geese and ducks in the marsh, in those early years; also the whooping crane, which is now almost extinct.

Before the C.P.R. Lauder line was built, about 1913, the lake also provided an excellent sleigh road during the winter, for grain was hauled to the elevators at Whitewater and wood was hauled from the Turtle Mountains to as far away as Souris. Dozens of teams could be seen, every fine day, plying across the ice.

The lake is really a huge slough and not very deep. It has gone dry on several occasions. According to one old Indian, it was so dry in 1870 that the fur traders had a trail across it, made by their Red River carts.

On more than one occasion it was the subject of a project to drain it and turn it into farms. However, nothing came of the scheme. I expect the cost was too great and there was also considerable doubt as to the fertility of this soil on the lake bottom.

I have seen the prairies before the plow ever cut a sod; roamed over large expanses of whistling grasses, dotted with flowers peculiar to the prairies, and followed the winding buffalo trails; also passing Indian bands and their encampments. I have seen large herds of cattle and droves of horses from Montana, passing through on their way to Canadian markets and driven by colorful cowboys. I have seen prairie trails changed from their erratic course to geometric straight roads and modern highways. What was once quagmires and bottomless coulees bridged with timber, cement and steel. I have seen sections of prairie turned from green grass to long, dark furrows; shrub and tree land into fine productive farms; where we once cut wood, turned into fire blackened waste to be later covered with large patches of wild strawberries and raspberries and still later cleared and now into luscious fields of alfalfa. I have seen

oxen laboring in front of a wooden beam, breaking plow, then horses pulling a steel walking plow. Later wheels were added and again a seat so that man would find the going easier. These gave way to larger plows pulled by steam tractors. I have helped when threshing was done by horse power and the straw was hauled away into bucks or piles. The grain was caught into a bushel measure and dumped into bags. I have seen the change to the straw blower and the grain bagger and then to bulk hauling.

The foregoing are some of the recollections of my early life. I have tried to give facts as I have known them. Some of my statements are of necessity largely hear say, but I am sure that in the main the reader will get an over all picture of the ups and downs, the joys and sorrows, that is part of the past of every Western community.

I believe I am the only remaining member of the early settlers of this community still residing on the farm.

I would like to close with the following verses written in 1906 by the late A. S. Barton of Victoria, B.C., who was one of the early settlers of this district and for some years editor of the Boissevain Recorder.

TO THE TURTLE MOUNTAIN OLD TIMERS

Strangers alike from distant lands,
Not then the clasp of parting hands,
In the happy days of long ago,
What of the future could we know?

What did we reck when we were young?
For life was sweet when the joy bells rung;
Not toil, nor pain, nor sorrow then,
Little we cared when we were Men.

Oh! the glorious days when we were young,
And never a backward glance we flung;
When all the world was ours to win,
And we'd nought to do with grief or sin.

Now you and I are old,
Aged by far more than the years,
For time rolls on and the tale must be told,
And the telling must needs be through
Sound of tears—but for some the tale has been told.

Old friends, you and I, old comrades still,
What! shall we never clasp hands again?
We stand on the brink of the long, long years
By the river of time that is filled with tears,
But it carries away our pain.

Old friends! we have earned the name,
Remember the days gone by;

Those halcyon days when joy was born,
Or that darkest hour before the dawn,
Together, you and I.

Old friends! shall we ever forget?
Ah! never while memories, sad and sweet,
Come trooping past, with flying feet.
Farewell? my friends, not yet, I pray,
Not yet.

Thomas Ronald Robertson

MEMOIRS OF PIONEERS

As remembered by J. H. Nelin

I was born at London, Ontario, and came to Manitoba in March, 1884, with my parents, brother James and two sisters, Minnie and Jessie.

Seeking for land, my father and brother had come to Manitoba in 1882. In March they arrived in Brandon where they met four other men who also were looking for land. They were told that there was good land available in the Turtle Mountain district where they decided to go. The only way to get there was to walk. Before setting out they met a man from Deloraine. He had a team of horses and sleigh and a load to take out for the Morton Dairy Company. When he was ready to leave the men joined him and walked behind the sleigh.

An earlier thaw had started the Souris River running. As the water was too deep to ford, the travellers had to detour by Souris City where they could ferry across the swollen river. (Souris City was two miles west of where Wawanesa now is.) As over a foot of snow had fallen since the thaw, the going was heavy for the men and team.

The second night out from Brandon, the party stayed at Duncan McMillan's near where Margaret is now. The following day they had dinner in James Burns' tent on the N.W. quarter of 10-4-20. Mr. Burns, too, came from London, Ontario, and when he had lived there his occupation was driving a street car with horses or mules for power. Dad was advised by Mr. Burns to homestead the south half of the section on which he was living.

After three days of plodding through snow—the snowfall that winter was ninety-eight inches—the weary men reached Mr. Hanson's farm located a few miles southwest of the present site of Whitewater. Here they spent three days until a blizzard blew itself out. When the storm was over dad went to Old Deloraine and made entry for the afore-mentioned south half of 10-4-20. Until the weather warmed up, dad and Jim boarded with Mr. and Mrs. Cumpstone on 34-2-20.

At this time Canadian Pacific Railway land had not yet been

put on the market but anyone was permitted to squat on the land with the option of buying it later. On the advice of Mr. Cumpstone, Jim squatted on the east half of 3-3-20. He and dad bought a yoke of oxen, a wagon, sleighs, a plow and harrows from a man named Tobias. They went to the bush and brought out logs to build a house on Jim's land. Also, logs were taken to Foxes' sawmill on 5-2-20, where they were sawn into lumber and shingles for dad's house. In the meantime the men provided themselves with a tent in which to live. With the help of neighbors it was not long until Jim had a house about sixteen by eighteen feet in dimensions. When, late in 1885, the C.P.R. evaluated their land, Jim purchased his half section at two dollars and fifty cents an acre.

Soon the men "broke" some land and on it sowed Red Fife wheat. At the first fair ever held in Southwestern Manitoba, dad was awarded first prize on a half-bushel of the wheat grown on that breaking. I do not know anything about the prize except that my dad received from the Parliament Building in Winnipeg a diploma bearing a large, red seal.

In December, 1883, my folks sold one of their oxen to a neighbor. Leading the other ox which weighed one and a half tons, they walked to Brandon where they sold him to a local butcher. With the proceeds of this sale my dad and brother bought tickets to their home in Ontario.

During the winter of 1884 preparations were made for all of us to come West in the spring. Dad and Jim had bought four fine, young horses, two cows and a calf. When all was ready a car was loaded at Lucon, Ontario. The household effects were packed in the ends of the car and separated by planks from the livestock which, facing the centre of the car, stood on either side of the door. Feed for them was placed in the centre passageway. Our car was in a train consisting mainly of box cars loaded with settlers' effects and a couple of passenger coaches carrying the settlers. Our train route was by Chicago, St. Paul and Winnipeg to Brandon, where we arrived late in March. The trip of five days and five nights was long and tiresome, especially so as we sat on slat seats. In spite of the tedium everyone seemed happy.

Upon our arrival it took a few days to unload the car. Much of the household furniture and many other articles were stored. Only the immediate necessities were re-loaded, this time on two sleighs, with which we left Brandon rather late one afternoon. We expected to reach McKanlas', a stopping place nine miles out, by nightfall. A recent thaw had filled the sloughs with water. When we came to a low place through which the trail passed, dad and Jim decided to keep off the road but in spite of this precaution the horses were stuck and had to be unhitched. Fortunately, Mr. Rocky, who farmed near the present site of Desford, came along in his sleigh and took mother and my sisters to the McKanlas' stopping place. As we were not very far from Mr. Doran's, Dad and Jim took the

horses and cattle there and we men-folk, too, spent the night there. Although that was seventy-two years ago I well remember what a kindly person was Mr. Doran's sister who kept house for him. I remained in the house with her until our outfit was ready to move on the next day. It took the men until noon to unload the sleighs, haul them out of the slush and re-load.

Continuing our trek we reached McKanlas' where we remained for the night as the road was too bad for us to go farther. The following day we had dinner at Seafoot's, a few miles north of the Souris River. Fearing we might have trouble, Mr. Seafoot came with us in case we needed help. It was very kind of him to accompany us as he had to walk home. At Sheppard's ferry, about a quarter of a mile east of where Number 10 Highway now crosses the river, the water was running a foot deep on the ice. About the time we arrived at the river snow began to fall. It must have continued to fall all night for the snow was deep in the morning.

The next night found us staying at Thomas Little's, a few miles south of the Souris River. The snow was too deep for the cattle which had been plodding behind the sleighs. So we left them with Mr. Little until later in the spring. By another night we had arrived at Hammond's on 34-4-20. After being stuck once on a slough not very far from where Orthez is now, we had dinner the next night at Frank Howell's on 14-4-20. At that time, Mr. and Mrs. Burns and daughter, Polly, were living with Frank until they got their house built.

On the fifth evening out from Brandon, dad and Jim arrived at the later's farm but mother, the girls and I did not reach there until the following afternoon. Our teams had been stuck again in a slough near what was Peter Henderson's farm—the east half of 34-3-20. Mr. Sandy Cameron who had come along with his team and sleigh, had taken us back to his homestead, the north half of 4-4-20, and on the next afternoon had brought us out to Jim's. Here, William and James Patterson, along with dad and Jim, were busy making an upstairs floor in the house in which we were to live until dad's house was finished.

We had come to our new home about the first of April and the Manitoba spring was with us. The weather was warm and it was not very long until the snow disappeared and the crocuses bloomed. On the vast stretches of unbroken prairie these flowers made a thick mauve carpet. Later the wild fruit—strawberries, saskatoons, black currants, gooseberries, cherries and cranberries—came out in bloom. The wild fruit was abundant in pioneer days.

Wild game, too, was plentiful. Prairie chicken, grouse, ducks, geese, wild turkeys, partridge and cranes were numerous. Their meat was certainly enjoyed in the spring and fall. When the geese came down from the north—usually about the middle of September —they would stay on Whitewater Lake. Twice daily they went out

on the fields to feed. Early in the morning they flew out, returning about ten o'clock, and again about mid-afternoon they flew to the fields. From sundown until dark, they could be heard as they returned for the night to the friendly lake. It would be difficult to estimate the number of birds in a flight, but I am sure there would be several thousands. In 1895 Jack Knettle, proprietor of the Queen's Hotel, and James Steel, the blacksmith, shot fifty-five geese in one afternoon. Percy Bennett used to shoot wild fowl and ship them to Winnipeg where he received fifty cents each for geese.

On the prairies, fall seemed to come early and frequently the crops were frozen in August. When the wheat was hauled to Brandon all that the farmer was offered for it was about fiften to twenty cents per bushel. Fifty bushels was an average load in those days. After buying groceries and some other necessities for the home and paying the expenses of his trip the farmer did not have much money left.

Another "trip" to Brandon was that of the mail man. Mr. Sam Heaslip, who lived about five miles north of where Minto is, delivered the mail from Brandon to Deloraine and called at post offices along the route. At his home he had a post office named after himself. Other post offices were Sheppardville on 3-5-20, where Mr. James Sheppard was postmaster, and Nimitaw on 34-3-20 where Mr. James Rae kept the office. Mr. Heaslip called at Waubeesh, also, and then went on to Deloraine. In summer he drove a team on a democrat and in winter his team drew a sleigh. He used to stop at our place for dinner when he was going south. At times he had passengers and light articles as well as mail, to deliver. We had one mail delivery each week.

No sooner were a few pioneers established in a district than their minds turned to community life and welfare. Rev. George Aikens with three of his brothers came from England in 1881 and homesteaded north of the present Boissevain. Rev. Aikens, of the Church of England, held services at Mr. Blackinbach's home on 31-2-20. Mr. Blackinbach played his melodian for these services. Preacher Cameron, a Presbyterian minister, whose home was a mile north of Boissevain, conducted services at Mrs. McQuire's not far from where Wapaha School is now. Rev. Stewart, a Methodist, and a school inspector in 1888, used to travel from Old Deloraine to hold services at G. C. Wright's, 22-9-20.

The first school in the district was Nimitaw, erected in 1885 on 22-3-20—one mile west of the present Boissevain. The building material used was brought from Brandon and the contractor was Mr. Wm. Lambert. After harvest the school was opened with Robert Flesher of Old Deloraine as teacher. The following were the pupils attending: Melissa King, Maud Hill, Esther Hill, Wes. Musgrove, Bob Robertson, Rebecca, Eva, Mina, Fred and Edgar Johnson, Lena, Bob and Ada Cook, Janet and Jim Rae, and myself. Later,

when Boissevain School opened, Nimitaw—renamed Carenton—was moved one and a half miles farther west. Previous to building their school, Boissevain had used the Masonic Hall for classes.

As rugged as was the pioneer life, its tedium was relieved by lusty recreations. At the Pattersons' farm—34-2-20—sports were held on Queen Victoria's birthday. In the afternoon athletic events took place and in the evening, at the correction line, there was a half-mile pony race which Bob Cassidy won. At night a dance was held in Tom Patterson's log house. William Patterson, William Lambert and James Rae who played violins were generally called on to provide the music for any dance in the district. Occasionally in one of the farm houses we had a concert put on by "local talent."

An event of social and economic interest was the country fair. In 1883 the location of the fair was changed from the James Burgess farm to Old Deloraine. The change displeased a number of the settlers who, when they heard the date of the annual meeting in 1885, organized a protest. Three sleigh loads of men journeyed to the meeting. One of the men made a motion that the fair of 1886 be held near the original fair site, and the motion carried by only a small majority. In the spring of 1886 a show for stallions was held at Boissevain and the regular fall fair was held in October.

Each year made history in this area and in the Canadian northwest. After seeding in the spring of 1885, my brother hauled a load of wheat to Brandon. He sent back word that he would not be home for awhile. The Northwest Rebellion had broken out and the government was hiring men and teams for freighting at ten dollars a day. Horses and wagons were transported in box cars to Qu'Appelle from where, in convoys of ten wagons loaded with supplies they freighted north. The men were provided with rifles and ammunition to use if they were attacked. This transportation proposition appealed to Jim and he worked on it for five weeks.

In July, 1886, Boissevain was highly honored by a visit from Sir John A. and Lady MacDonald. From a platform erected for the occasion, the Prime Minister, who was introduced by George Morton, addressed a gathering of citizens. After the visitors had departed by train, the Conservatives held a meeting at which they nominated George Morton as their candidate to contest the Federal election which would be held that fall. In that election he was defeated by the Liberal candidate, Finlay Young of Wakopa.

In the winter of 1886 some businessmen who had located at Rapid City—which town had not yet any prospect of a railroad—decided to come to Boissevain. They were Dr. Cornell, William Cowan, a druggist; Butchart Brothers, hardware merchants; Cottingham, a harness maker, Butler and Frith, blacksmiths, and John Morrow, a lawyer. After their coming Caleb Ryan built a hotel on North Railway Street but the building was destroyed by fire in the following year. In that fire, a grain buyer, Duncan McBain, lost his life. Again, fire took a heavy toll when, in 1889, a $50,000 blaze

razed all business places on South Railway between Stephen and Cook streets.

In the expanding business of the town and district, the local railway station held an important place. Among the many commodities billed in and out, the first agent, Tommy Kellet, in 1886 directed the loading of several cars of buffalo bones. The Indians made a thorough job of picking up the buffalo bones which had lain for years on the prairies.

By 1887, another community had grown until it justified the building of a school—Royal School, built by Ed. Lambert. When the school was opened the following pupils were enrolled: Polly Burns, Hattie, Georgie, Cyrus and James Wright, Jennie, Ralph, Harry and Grace Thompson and John Nelin. The first teacher was Jud Cook whose salary was forty dollars per month.

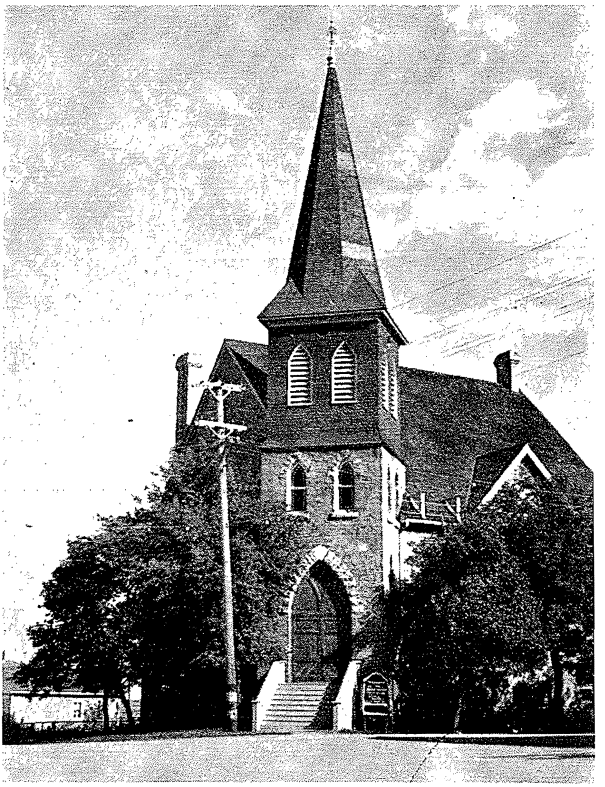
Progress in pioneering was often retarded as in 1888, when an early frost damaged much grain so badly that it was not worth harvesting. 1889 was a very dry year and gophers were so plentiful that they ate many fields bare. Hail storms took their toll and in 1890 two devastating storms struck. The first storm destroyed the crops for seven miles north of the railway and extended east and west for a long distance. The second one was south of the railway and covered an area five miles wide and about thirty miles long. Both storms completely destroyed the crops.

Prairie fires, too, were a serious threat, especially in the autumn. One never knew from what direction a fire might come. With a high wind a prairie fire would travel as fast as a good horse could run. I well remember such a fire in 1895, when Mr. P. S. Clarke who farmed two miles north of Boissevain lost fourteen stacks of wheat. That same year another fire burned thirty-eight stacks at the Holbrook farm on 3-5-20.

With 1889 came another church to Boissevain. During the winter Rev. C. Wood, an Anglican minister, arrived. He had rooms over Gilles' grocery store and he held service in his living room until the store was burned in the big fire. The church wardens then rented the top room of the Masonic Hall and services were conducted there until the church was completed. Two of those church wardens were Mr. Thomas Barker and my father, John Nelin. All Saints' Church was built in the spring of 1889. In the meantime Rev. Wood held confirmation classes in town and in the country. On May 26, 1889, Archbishop McRae came from Winnipeg to dedicate the church and to confirm a class of nearly twenty. About this time, too, Mr. Caleb Ryan donated land for a church in the town of Boissevain. The farmer church members hauled the stones from Shorey's quarry to build the present St. Matthew's Church which was opened in 1890.

I must here close my reminiscense lest I take up more than my share of the Anniversary Book.

J. H. Nelin



The United Church, Boissevain

PETER HENDERSON OF NIMITAW DISTRICT

Peter Henderson was born at Beckwith County, near Carleton Place, Ont., on the 28th day of August, in the year 1860. He was the seventh child in a family of eleven born to Robert Henderson and his wife Janet McIntosh, whose ancestry originated in Scotland.

He started working very early in life in a woollen mill near their home, and it was here that his elder brother Robert was killed by one of the machines at the age of 15. However it wasn't long until Peter decided to come west to take up land, and at the age of 21 he came to Manitoba in the company of W. H. Latimer and James Rae.

They came via Emerson to Darlingford, Man., and spent a night there at Wm. Storey's farm before continuing west. Now this turned out to be a strange coincidence, for on that very night they spent at Storey's a baby girl was born named Lillie Laura and this same girl, although 21 years younger, was later to become Peter Henderson's second wife, which will be mentioned later in this article.

From Darlingford they made the journey by foot to the land he, Peter, selected as his homestead, being the east half of section 34-3-20. James Rae took the west half of the same section. At this point it was necessary that they register their land, so they walked from their homestead to "Old Deloraine" and registered on October 29th, 1881.

Now the next problem became one of survival for the next few months so Peter walked to Brandon to find work. On arrival there he secured a job with the C.P.R. as carpenter and worked there for over a year. While Peter worked on this job his brother Duncan came west and spent his 19th birthday, March 3, 1882, aboard the train coming out to his new home. After Duncan arrived here he, too, secured work with the railroad.

Then in the fall of 1882 Peter left the railroad to come back and make preparations for the planting of their first crop the following spring, Duncan remaining with his job for the next few months.

The first few crops were not large in acres, and this is easily understood, for after the land was broken by a yoke of oxen, the seed had to be broadcast by hand out of a container carried by a strap around the neck and shoulders. When this crop was harvested their nearest market was Brandon and so the crop was delivered there by oxen.

In the following spring the boys' mother, Mrs. Robert Henderson, their sisters Margaret and Catherine, and their brother James came west and, as there was no railroad through here they came as far as Brandon by rail, arriving on the 30th of April, 1884. It was here that Duncan met them with a team and wagon and brought them back to a farm eight miles south of Brandon owned by a family named McCanlish, where Peter had taken work for the summer. They all stayed overnight here and left for the homestead the next day taking two days for the trip. This must have been a happy reunion for visitors were mighty scarce in those early times.

Moving a little more rapidly through the years now we come to 1888 when Peter Henderson married Belle Armstrong, who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Armstrong. Three sons were born of this marriage, Robert Alexander on April 23rd 1890, Peter Edwin Howard on Oct. 25th 1891 and William James born on October 15th 1894. In 1890 he built a new house of stone hauled from the stone quarry south of where Boissevain is now situated. However, this home was soon to be touched by sadness for in 1895 Peter's wife Belle, a bride of but seven short years, passed away.

During this time Duncan and Peter acquired one of the earliest threshing outfits of that time, a Cornell portable steam engine and a Wideawake separator. The separator was hand fed and it had a straw carrier from which the straw had to be bucked into piles.

Peter and Duncan soon made a name for themselves as good threshers and were known as two of the fastest feeders in the country.

It was about this time also that the first barn Peter had was destroyed. It seems that the three boys, Bob, Ed and Jim decided that one of the horses needed shoeing, so, wasting no time, they built a fire in one of the stalls to heat the shoes and the resultant fire completely destroyed barn, hay, and various smaller articles kept in such a building; however, the boys had the presence of mind to take the horse outside and tie him at a safe distance. This kindly act must have appealed to their father for they were not punished for their mistake. Punishment of any kind was very rare with this man.

In 1900 Peter Henderson married Lillie Laura Storey, whom we made mention of earlier. After their marriage he returned to the homestead with his bride to live.

On Nov 10th 1902 a daughter was born of this union and named Laura Elizabeth.

It was this same year that a new barn was erected after a barn and granary combined which they had been using was badly twisted by wind. The new barn was to be stone and mortar on the lower story and log framed above. The logs for the barn were brought out of the Turtle Mountain, and the first operation was to square them. This job usually fell to Geo. Hopkins, a man well known in this country years ago. After all preparations were completed a "barn raising" was held, when almost all the available men within driving distance would gather at the site and pool their efforts to complete the framing in one day. The stone work on this occasion was handled by George Klee and his brother Alex. George Klee lived and kept a store in Brandon until his death about the time of the Second World War. A barn raising was a special occasion and the ladies would bake for days ahead in preparation for the thirty or forty men who must be fed.

During the actual framing the men chose two captains and the captains in turn chose men about until the entire crew had been taken up. Then one team went to each side of the building and it would become a friendly contest of skill and speed. Such incidents must have added greatly to the life of our pioneers in a land where there were few entertainments of any kind.

Moving on again we come to 1906 when Peter Henderson took a sub-contract for a mile of railroad right of way north of Boissevain on the proposed Hudson Bay and South Saskatchewan route. Here again we see the women of the day taking an active part in things, for the noon meal had to be taken by horse and buggy a distance of two miles to the working site to feed the ten men employed there.

In 1909 he built a large granary and then deciding that an elevator would remove much of the hard work connected with the handling of grain, he raised it up and built a driveway and pit underneath. To this he added a leg and cupola on top to distribute grain to the bins. Overhead was also a built in cleaner while underneath he had a bin for ice storage. It was powered by a gasoline engine.

His first car was an International High Wheeler in 1909. There were three of them in the district about the same time owned by James Patterson, Bob King and Peter Henderson. The next year he changed his High Wheeler for a Cadillac and in the same year of 1910 the elevator, which was used for only one crop, was struck by lightning and burned to the ground while the family were attending a ball game at Bob Robertson's, now the Harold Henderson farm.

In 1915 he moved to town, while his son Edwin took the farm. They lived in Boissevain for a period of six years and during this time a son was born on Jan. 14, 1917. and named Melville Clair. Then in 1921 the family moved back to one of their farms closer to town. They lived here for two years and then moved a mile north to the east half of section 35, a farm which he had previously acquired as a stock and grain farm. They lived here for two years while erecting a new barn on the east half of 26 on the edge of town and on completion of the buildings and remodelling in 1925 they moved back to section 26.

During the years he had built up his holdings until at one point he farmed 11 quarters. On June 10th 1928 word was received of the death of his third son, James, who was accidentally killed while on construction work in Marshall, Oklahoma.

Peter Henderson lived out his remaining years on this farm with his family until March 22nd 1935 when he died at his home after a brief illness. His widow and youngest son carried on farming operations until 1940 when she moved to Boissevain and is presently residing there.

In 1949 their daughter Laura, who in the previous years had married John Henry Baskerville, passed away.

And so we pay tribute to our pioneers on this our 75th anniversary.

While these men and women may not have been the greatest of their day, to us they were the best. They had the faith and courage to open up and build a country that we might live and raise our children in peace.

Pioneer Days

'Fore the turning of the century, some twenty years ago,
The East was bothered by a deep unrest;
The West had more to offer with it's acres and it's lore,
They all were looking to that "Golden West".

Appealing to the young men, the 'trek' of which we hear,
Had quickly gained momentum far and wide;
As many of the older folks suppressed a hidden fear,
'Twas like an endless surging of the tide.

God-fearing men, and dauntless, strong-hearted, sound of limb,
They'd never fail to pass the acid-test;
Their destiny before them, — facing natures every whim,
They heed the call, "Go West, Young Man, Go West".

They came from Little Britain, Huron County, Almonte too,
From Pakenham and Glasgow so they say;
And also some from Belleville, and some from near the Soo,
They headed West, — they might get back some day.

Some headed west by Emerson, then up through Wakopa,
The Turtle Hills, so bright in Summers' green;
They felt the sight before them was the best man ever saw,
And said, "this should fulfill our fondest dream".

Then some came up by Brandon, it was then the end of steel,
By oxen, horse and prairie-schooner too;
Some came with grist or saw-mill to help the common weal,
Some didn't stop, —they headed right on thru'.

Some headed up near Wabeesh, and some to Morton Place,
Those groaning ox-carts barely seemed to creep;
Each had in mind a vision of the place he would embrace,
Some reached, and settled down at Cherry Creek.

No roads of black-top, concrete, or gravelled high-way grade,
Or fence to guide the traveller on his way;
The only road the settler knew was what the buffalo made,
Migrating north to make their summer stay.

The buffalo were all but gone, those herds that roamed the plain,
'Twas no surprise there's just the odd one here;
Those wond'rous sights will never light the human gaze again,
St. Louis got nine million hides one year.

That wide expanse, that sea of grass, they had to break the land,
They had to plow to have a hope of gain;
Their destiny still beckoned, they started in by hand, —
With oxen they would raise that golden grain.

The switching, blowing oxen, and the creaking of the yoke,
Those loamy furrows of this virgin land;
A grim determination, and a breast that's filled with hope,
And the sod that turns beneath a guiding hand.

That slowly turning furrow, — 'bout an acre in a day,
The arms that ache from straining at the plow;

And sometimes as you trudge along, you wonder, 'will it pay'?
You can't turn back, the road is onward now.

Yes, the road is always onward, and the bitter and the sweet,
Will take their toll, it's always been that way;
With swift discern they separate the chaff from out the wheat,
The strong survive, the weak fall by the way.

No diagnostic service, no X or Violet Ray;
No doctor, and no means to find a cure;
A troublesome appendix, I've heard the old folks say,
'Inflammation of the bowls' was for sure.

No nothing of the serums, and you couldn't get your shots,
No diagnosis, either right or wrong;
No clinics, sanitoriums, they could have helped out lots,
And long 'fore Sauk and Banting came along.

It caused a lot of heart-break, yes, anguish and dismay,
When medicine and help could not be had;
Sometimes it was the mother, or children had to pay,
Some fam'lies got along without a Dad.

Sometimes a tiny, failing form, — those pain and tear-filled eyes,
No help for miles, no doctors to be found;
With utter desolation, — your helplessness despise,
And soon, — another grassy little mound.

Sometimes it was diphtheria, and sometimes whooping cough,
Or any of a dozen, we may say;
And sometimes croup, pneumonia, or typhoid took them off,
And brought the dawning of a sterner day.

'Survival of the fittest', is a rule of nature old,
In modern times or in the earlydays;
It may be in the summer's heat or bitter cold,
The strong and weak must go their separate ways.

Hauling poplar from the mountains, or to Brandon with their wheat,
The storms, their Spartan spirits couldn't mar;
Sometimes their guide a 'homing-sense', they didn't know defeat,
Sometimes just guided by the Polar Star.

They always knew when on the trail, and they had been about,
Their hauling jobs, and day had turned to night;
That from the shanty window, some-one anxiously looked out,
And thru' the glass there'd always shine a light.

Some men turned out inventers, and some another way,
Have brought themselves acclaim and great renown;
The locomotive fire-door—it's still in use today,
Inventer was Bert Grant, — a man of town.

'Jones' Blowers for the threshers, the carriers must go,
The buck-pole ne'er again they'd have to ride;
Elias Jones invented it, we want you folks to know,
He lived about a mile from Mountainside.

The Governor of Malta, a man within their midst,
The son of J. B. Douglas we allow;
Which proves to us that hardy sons of hardy pioneers,
Have destinies besides behind a plow.

And then we have Bill Lambert, a handy man we vote,
A carpenter and farmer, both by trade;
He'd visions of the swather, it's int'resting to note,
Before the combine ever had been made.

If we could go back eight decades, and travel once again,
I'm sure that we could tell a wond'rous tale;
Baking bannock, eating hardtack in a schooner of the plain,
Down the Mandan or the old Commission Trail.

They blazed the way for progress; it's hard to quite assess,
Just what it means to us in later years;
We owe a debt we cannot pay, — may Heaven ever bless
Those Kings and Queens, — those Hardy Pioneers.

A. E. Henderson, 1956.

JAMES GRAHAM

After selling my 50 acre farm in the County of Huron, Township of Howick in 1881, my wife and family accompanied a neighbor, Mr. Copland (who had also sold his farm in Ontario), started for Manitoba to take up a homestead. Our town in Ontario was Gorrie, but we loaded our freight at Listowel, sixteen miles from Gorrie. I bought a cow and a calf, wagon and some oats, and other small things, and Mr. Copland brought at team of horses and other smaller stuff. We left Listowel on the 8th of June, 1881. When we got to Portage, I bought a team of oxen.

I left the family at Portage, but a boy, Will Ellis, came out with me. He and I drove to Palmers Landing with the oxen and Red River cart. I left the boy and oxen there and got a man to ferry me across the Assiniboine River. Mr. Copland and I got a list of the homesteads in township 6, range 20, and we had to walk thirty miles to get there. When we got there, all the homesteads that were any good were taken up. Mr. Copland managed to get a homestead and I was left alone. What grub I had was all gone so before looking any farther, I turned back to Palmers Landing to get more grub. On the way back I met Robert Campbell and Sandy Scott and told them what I was after. They said they had lots of grub, to come back with them, so I went. Mr. Campbell made some pancakes and they were good. Next morning I picked on a homestead 12-5-20 where I have since resided. It was necessary for me to go to Deloraine to make entry for the homestead, but first I went back to Palmers Landing to get the boy and oxen across the Assiniboine. The boy could then break land while I walked the thirty miles to Deloraine to make entry for homestead. We stopped at Milford to get a breaking plow, flour, tent, stove, etc. We got back to 12-5-20 and made bannock for our supper. Neither of us had had any experience cooking. Next morning I started the boy at breaking and I started out for Deloraine. I walked all day and did not see a sign of anyone or anything. I was beginning to think I would be on the

prairie all night when I saw an object in the distance and headed for it. What do you think it was but the boy and oxen I had left at home. I had been walking in a circle. The boy was disappointed and wished he was back in Ontario. Next day I started out again but I took some grub and a tin cup with me this time. I managed to get there and get my papers for the homestead and get back home again.

I then went back to Portage to get my wife and family and we loaded our trunks, bedding, a churn of water and seven fowl in the wagon and Mrs. Graham and the children had to go in the wagon too. We had a cover on it like the gypsies. The wife and family slept in the wagon and the men underneath on a straw tick. It took us a week to come from Portage la Prairie to 30-5-19 where Sandy Scott lived. We lived in tents for the summer until we got our buildings up. Mrs. Graham baked scones on top of the tent stove in a big pan with another pan turned down over and when the men were home on Sundays, she would make a big loaf and put it in Mr. Campbell's bake kettle (a flat iron pot with an iron lid) and he would take it to the smudges and cover it over with fine ashes and coals and we would have a fine big loaf. There was no variety in food in those days. We had to get our wood from the Souris River eight or nine miles away. We always took the cattle with us when we went for wood and let them have a good drink at the river, as we had to melt snow to get water at home.

In 1882, I sowed five acres of wheat and broke more for oats. I cut my crop with a cradle that year and made bands out of the wheat to tie the heaves and then stacked. Two men came along with a threshing machine they had bought in Brandon on their way to Deloraine. I got them to thresh my grain for $25.00 and I had to put a team on to help draw the machine the rest of the way to Deloraine. I sold my wheat in Brandon for about five years. It took three days to make the trip. That was before the railway was through and Boissevain started. We got the logs for our first house from the Souris River and the logs for the barn from the Turtle Mountains. While we men were taking out the timber, the wife had to look after the stock and haul water up with a pail and rope for them, as well as looking after the family.

We had nine of a family. Two died of diphtheria while I was homesteading and had to secure medical attention from Brandon until a doctor was located in Boissevain. Our daughter died in 1930. The other six are all married and looking after themselves. We have twenty-four grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Graham was real handy and besides baking bread for the bachelors in the district at $1.00 for 100 pounds of flour, she attended people when they were sick and was a great help to the pioneer women.

Mrs. Graham, who was a good wife and good mother, predeceased me in 1932. Although we had our share of hardships in

pioneer life, we lived to enjoy better times and the Lord saw fit for us to be taken care of in our declining years.

W. V. UDALL 1890

Harry Whiteside, Hugh Dusenbury and I arrived in Manitoba from the Isle of Man on March 31, 1890.

Arriving in Boissevain on April 2nd we were greeted by the customary banter and tricks played upon "green Englishmen." Amongst our tormentors were Gerald Sankey, Bert Paile, Jack Carter, Jim Nelin and bartender Harry Barnes.

At that time Boissevain was comprised of about fifteen residences north of the C.P.R. track and about twenty-five south. Business places on Main Street included the following: mill, operated by Preston and McKay; cobbler shop, J. Shepherd; photographer, John Nicholson; furniture and undertaking, W. Lambert; general store, E. Nichol and Son; hardware, Joe Birbeck; druggist, J. A. Wright; Ryan House, Caleb Ryan; general store and dress making, Morrison Bros.; Commercial Bank, Fred Young, manager; Queen's Hotel, Knettle Bros.; livery barn, Noah Brownsberger; butcher shop, W. Haight; blacksmith, R. A. Musgrove; tailor, A. Bucham; barber, R. Ritchie; jeweller, J. F. Gromalti; post office, A. McKnight; general store, J. D. Baine; restaurant, Q. W. Woodrow; fancy goods, Donald Sutherland; baker, J. Spiers; harness shop, W. Cooper; general store, A. G. McEwan; boarding house, Mrs. Mutry; two lumber yards, E. Nichol and Son and C. W. Plummer; implement dealers, Bob Orr, John Hettle; machine shop, Arthur Aitkens; lawyers, N. P. Buckingham, John Morrow, and the doctor, Dr. Cuttin, an ironical name for a medical man.

The spring break-up came early and we started out in Robert Cassidy's sleigh to the various farms to which we were assigned. The water west of town was very deep, the creek having every semblance to a river. We started to cross where the bridge was supposed to be, though we weren't sure whether it was still there. Whiteside, taking our suitcases, climbed on top of a chopper box we were taking home, while the rest of us stood up on top of the sleigh seat. Part way over Whiteside left us, floating out of the sleigh and downstream in the chopper-box. We followed along the side of the creek till he landed, none the worse except for getting his feet and pants wet.

The next day I arrived at W. J. McKinney's, and here I had my first experience with oxen. Mr. McKinney decided to take two loads of wood to town so started me off early with the ox team, his son Fred going along to show me the way and Mr. McKinney coming later with a team of horses. After about a mile and a half the oxen

crowded close to a fence and at Fred's suggestion I yelled "Gee Haw." They did and finished up straddling the fence. Mr. McKinney came along and got things straightened out for us and gave us the horses to drive.

A week later I was harrowing with the oxen and had learned to haw and gee them fairly well. However I found that these commands had no effect on them on a hot day when they wanted to head for a water-hole. I tried pelting them with stones but they promptly backed up, trampling the harrows into the mud. I now had to remove my pants, go in and unhitch the oxen and carry the harrows out section by section. I wasn't too fond of oxen by the time I was finished.

When I first arrived in the district, there being very few fences, distances were shortened considerably by angling across farms. Farm houses were mostly log or sod shanties and the barns were dugouts covered with poles and straw. Farm wages ran all the way from $8 to $20 per month. In town first class board and washing was $12 per month.

After farming for three years I went into the grain buying business and worked for the Farmer's Elevator Co., being appointed manager in 1897.

In 1902 I married Cassie C. Brondgeest, a daughter of one of the early settlers of the Whitewater district. In 1903 we moved to Napinka where I bought grain for the Imperial Elevator Co. and managed their lumber yard. Returned to Boissevain in 1905 to take over the editorship of the Boissevain Recorder, buying the business outright in 1908. During that time I also bought grain for the Ogilvie Milling Co. and was accountant in the Boissevain Land Titles Office, later being deputy registrar for a period of five years. I retired from the printing business in 1945 and moved to Winnipeg.

During my residence in Boissevain I served several terms on the Town Council; was president of the Board of Trade for many years and served on the executive of the Associated Boards of Trade; was superintendent of St. Matthew's Sunday School, a church warden and on the executive of the Diocese of Brandon for over twenty years; was Worshipful Master of Doric Lodge, A.F. & A.M. in 1909; Chairman of the Canada to Canal Highway Association in 1928; was a member of the committee which was instrumental in having the International Peace Garden located at its present site and am now honorary president of the Peace Garden Association. I served several years as a director of the Children's Aid Society and am an honorary member of the Brandon Kiwanis Club. I also served as president of the C.W.N.A. and am now an honorary life member of that Association.

EARLY FAMILY HISTORY

Contributed by C. C. Musgrove
December 28, 1955

My father, James Musgrove, was born in the county of Fernana in the north of Ireland, 1828. He came to Canada as a young man. My mother, Elizabeth McAvoy, was born in Toronto, 1833. They met at the home of my grandfather, Christopher McAvoy of Pickering, Ontario. After their marriage in 1850 they lived in Pickering. Then with three small children they moved to the township of Turnberry, Huron County, where they proceeded to hew out for themselves a home in the wilderness. Clearing land was slavish work. They walked in, mother carrying the baby and father 100 pounds of flour. Seven more children were born in Turnberry. One died in infancy but the others lived their allotted span of years. Only two of us are now living—Wesley, 83, at Saskatoon, and myself, 87, at Boissevain.

My parents were pioneers in two provinces.

About the year 1880 two men, James Burgess and Wm. Smith, came to this district from our village of Bluevale, Ont., Huron County, and settled on section 22-2-20 and 17-2-20. After their return they had so much to say about this country that they created a regular stampede from Huron County. We all thought Turtle Mountain was the only part of Manitoba. Everyone who came west went first to Burgess' and then to look for land. That is why all the land in the district south of Boissevain was settled with Huronites.

Three of my brothers, John, Jim, and Bob, came in the spring of '82. They found that the first houses of the settlers were all the same. The shanties, 12 x 12 feet, were built of small poplar logs with sod roofs, half a window and a door hung on leather hinges. A bed 12 feet long made of poles flattened on the top side and fastened to the wall occupied the back of the shack. Later these shanties gave place to houses built of logs from the Turtle Mountains. These logs were hewed on both sides to a thickness of six inches. Jim Patterson and Jack Musgrove were the champions with the broadaxe.

Some of the boys, Peter Robertson, Pete Cantlon and Dick McIntosh, who had come west in '82, returned for equipment. They, with my dad, loaded three cars for Turtle Mountain. As there was no all-Canadian railroad in those days, we had to come through the States via Detroit, Chicago and St. Paul, a journey of five days. The stock was ten days on the road. The railroad from Winnipeg to Brandon was completed in '82. Arriving in Brandon in March '83, we found the roads broken up so all our stuff had to be stored.

About the first of May we started for Brandon with six teams of oxen to bring our goods. My brother bought me a team in Brandon (my first experience with oxen). Although only a kid of 14, I brought my load home with the rest through the mud. That springs

the trails got cut axle deep in many places. In crossing the Souris River, the ruts were so deep we had to put three teams on each load to get down the hill, and six teams on each wagon to get up this side. There was a saying at that time that you couldn't drive oxen without swearing and I wasn't here long until I thought it was right.

The first trails were from one house to another but later when farmers broke up their land the trails were straightened out to the road allowance.

Prior to 1880 this country had all been surveyed and marked with stakes. The corner posts were about six inches square with the number of the section, township and range cut in the wood. A mound was raised around the post and a ditch 16 inches by 16 inches was dug around the mound. The centre stake was flat with a mound and a square hole dug at each side. These stakes have long ago decayed and the mounts removed by the farmers' plow and the ditches filled with drifting soil.

The trail from here to Brandon started east of Boissevain, detoured around each slough, crossed the Souris River at Shepherd's ferry, then continued north until it reached Brandon. There were several stopping places on the road, one at Bob Campbell's about a mile southeast of Minto, Coolings across the river, and Bill McCanlish's near Brandon.

There was not much wheat raised in those days as it cost too much to haul it to Brandon to sell for 45c a bushel. The first crop of wheat marketed in Boissevain in '86 was frozen black and sold for 18c. The next crop sold for 47c. The wheat in '88 was again frozen. The '89 crop was dried out. In 1890 we had a fine looking wheat crop almost ready to cut but on August 1st, a hail storm started six miles west of Deloraine and ended three miles east of Boissevain. In a strip twelve miles wide, there was nothing left worth cutting. Every man who could get away went out to work where there as a crop. Eight of us with our teams left with Sandy Cameron's big steam outfit for Brandon. We threshed until the stooks were done, sent our teams home and threshed stacks until Christmas. This work netted us enough money to buy seed for the following year which proved a good one.

I recall many difficulties of drawing loads over poor roads in the early days. If a fellow came to a mud hole and got stuck he would carry his load over to the other side, make his team draw the wagon out and load up again and go on. The worst experience of this kind I ever had was when my brother Jim and I went about ten miles for a load of seed grain. By the time we got the grain cleaned and loaded it was getting dark. On our way home we had to cross an alkali ravine; part way across our wagon went down. The horses tried to get it out, but they too went down. After struggling for some time they lay down. We carried out the load to the other side, got

our horses up and out on dry land, carried our wagon out one piece at a time, put it together and got our load on again in time to greet the sunrise.

The first general store and post office was owned by E. Nichol and Son on the old Commission Trail near the woods (Old Desford). We have to walk six miles every week for our mail for the first years we lived in Manitoba. Then Samuel Oke opened a post office called Fairburn at his house. Among the first schools to be built in this district was one called Nimitaw, one mile west of Boissevain on the Jim Wilson farm. This was later moved farther west and called Caranton. Maple Grove, Richview, Rayfield and Royal followed.

Our first Sports Day was held May 24, 1883, on the Smith farm. Range 19 played Range 20 a game of baseball. I played with 19 and won the first money I made in this country.

One early sawmill was owned and operated by George Morton on the bank of Lake Max. This mill supplied poplar building material of all kinds for the settlers. There were other mills located in the bush; Fox had one and Smith Bros. another; also Bolton.

Mr. Brondgeest (Mrs. Udall's father) owned and operated a small grist mill on 4-3-21, at a little place called Waubeesh. Here E. B. Tachel had a general store and Bob Musgrove a blacksmith shop. A man by the name of Jack Livingstone lived at Waubeesh and carried the mail from Wakopa via Old Desford and Old Deloraine to Brandon once a week with a team of broncos and a buckboard.

In '84 Bob Musgrove built a blacksmith shop near where the Fairburn School now stands; later he moved this shop into town. This Waubeesh farm once owned by John Morrow became the scene of a double murder when Smith and Daw were killed by Walter Gordon and buried in an old well. Gordon was later found in the U.S. and finally hanged.

We were all very glad when the C.P. built the railroad to what they called Cherry Creek, afterwards changed to Boissevain. The whole neighborhood was on hand to meet the first train which arrived on Christmas, 1885. As far as my knowledge goes, of those assembled that day, I am the only one remaining.

The first house was moved into town by George Morton from the Wassawa district and was made a boarding house. Other houses and places of business made of poplar lumber and tarpaper soon sprang up. The first general stores in Boissevain were owned and operated by: George Morton, Jim Baine, A. C. McKown, A. I. Gillis, H. G. McLaren and Alex McKnight. McKnight also kept the post office, which was in the back of McLaren's store and was reached by an alley-way at the west side of the store., at the back of his store next to where the present post office now stands. George

Morton built a large flat warehouse in which to store grain. This was operated entirely by manpower.

The lower part of the Masonic Hall was used as a public school until a school house was built in '89. W. T. Musgrove was the first principal and Miss A. Holden the first assistant.

The pioneers had only a few tin pails and a meagre supply of water with which to fight fire. One unforgettable disaster befell the young town in 1889 when a fire broke out about where Scottie's store now stands. The fire consumed the entire block, the school as well as the elevator across the street. Before the next winter these undaunted pioneers had constructed a new town on the ashes of the old.

TIME MARCHES ON

Notwithstanding the difficulties under which we lived and labored in those early days, we enjoyed life.

We are told that young men see visions and old men dream dreams; we were young and saw visions, some materialized, others vaporized. Now we are content to dream dreams.

The pioneer spirit has disappeared with the advance of time and with the advent of the telephone, the automobile and the radio.

The ox has given place to the horse, much to our satisfaction, and now that faithful animal is fast disappearing and those that are left look over the fence to see the tractors coming down the field. Since electric power has spread throughout our land, power machinery is fast displacing the machines operated by hand. The coal oil lamp is gone and we can now sit in our comfortable well-lighted homes and listen to news from all over the world—such is life!

INDIANS

The Indians (probably Dakotas) of Boissevain pioneer days came mostly from St. John, N.D., to camp west of Boissevain. They would hold pow-wows there, dry their meat on poles, annoy the white women by looking in and walking into their homes unannounced. Upon receiving gifts of flour and sugar they were content to leave. After a stay of two weeks they would disappear until the following summer. I recall an old Indian telling me of a big fight in the Musgrove ravine where the Northern Indians ambushed the Dakotas. I found one native grave ringed round with stones and containing a skull and trinkets.

While the buffalo had disappeared by '83 many buffalo skeletons lay bleaching near the wallows cut 1½ to two feet around the rocks.

That same ravine provided the stone from which the United (Methodist) Church, Royal (Union) Bank, Central School, and drug store were constructed.

My brother Jim's chief interest was the church. In fact he was a local preacher in the early Methodist Church. Meetings were held first at Fairburn in the home of Samuel Oke, Sr., then the old church in town was used from 1887 to 1893 when the present stone church was erected. J. J. was active in Young People's work and at one time started a debating society. A permanent memorial to J. J. is the International Peace Garden, for his was the original suggestion of the Turtle Mountain site.

EARLY DAYS

My father, Robert Richardson, sold his farm in Ontario, and with my brother, George, worked with a survey group on the C.P.R. when they were surveying the road west.

When they reached Brandon, they came out to the Turtle Mountain, where some of the relatives had settled and homesteaded. They built a log house and bank barn, where Jack Wilson now lives. The next year, the family came out from Ontario.

I came West in June, 1887. They met me at Boissevain with the wagon. I remember when we were driving home past the "Big Slough," south of town, we could scarcely hear each other speaking for the songs and chatter of the birds. The country was all so new and interesting, but I was so lonely for Wingham, Ontario, that I could have walked back.

A few years earlier, before the churches were built in Boissebain, the bachelors let the horses rest on Sundays and they walked to Jimmie Burgess' (22-2-20) Old Desford) for morning service, then back to Mr. Oke's (Fairburn) for afternoon service.

Later we used to walk in to service at St. Andrew's in town. One Sunday night the mosquitoes must have heard we were coming, as every one and all their relations were on hand to feast upon the life blood of we unfortunate mortals.

The church had been built in 1887. Some of the ones helping were Jim Patterson, Tom Patterson, Will Armstrong, Peter Robertson, Jack Robertson, Mr. Strong, Peter Henderson, Duncan Henderson and many others. Mr. Jim Bain was one of the Managing Board. Mr. J. K. Welch was the minister.

In the winter, we enjoyed visiting and going to dances. One sleigh load went out to near Bunclody for a surprise party. It was a surprise for all, for when they reached the home, they found the family out of bread. A big pot of potatoes was soon boiled and all enjoyed a hot potato lunch. Another outing was to a "Calico Ball" held in Boissevain.

After I was married, we came to town one beautiful moonlight night with a team of oxen hitched to the wagon. My husband just had a whip to guide them. They followed ravines, up hill, down dale, from our buildings back to where the waterworks dam is

situated. For the first mile or so, till they got winded or worked off a little energy, they galloped. Will got out of it, as for me, I held on to the board seat for dear life, and prayed the good Lord to keep us safe till the oxen got worn down to walking. That night we tied the oxen to a picket fence in front of where Dan Morrish used to live. When we finished shopping and came back to the wagon, we found that the oxen had decided the fence would look better across the street and had pulled it there. We fixed it back as best we could and started home—on the gallop. Fortunately, the first stretch was level prairie this time.

One day I borrowed my dad's pony and buckboard to come to town. That pony was the laziest creature that ever walked. For the first three miles I coaxed, scolded and tried every conceivable way to get that animal to trot, but I guess that was one day he didn't feel like trotting, and he didn't! Just as we were coming around the Robertson Hill, he slid down and dumped me and my belongings out of the buckboard. When I realized what had happened, I saw the pony lying on the ground and I was lying across the front of the buckboard, with my foot through the wheel. Did I ever talk nicely to that pony then! He finally got up, pinning me in. After more persuasive talk, he stepped forward and I extricated myself, gathered up vinegar jugs, letters, etc., and went on my way. I arrived home safely without further mishap.

I remember one day in the winter when Will had gone to the bush. I was told to feed the stock at noon. In the afternoon it began to storm, by dark it was a blizzard, and no sign of Will returning. I had wood enough to do till the middle of the night, after that I burned boxes and rubbish to keep the room warm for the baby. I guess I must have kept warm walking from window to window to look out. We had plenty of wood, but the ax was away. I kept a lamp burning in the upstairs window all night. Just as day began to break, the sleigh came past the window. Will had been completely lost within half a mile of home. As the blizzard subsided he recognized his surroundings, and he made his way home.

Many strange experiences are related about oxen. One of the neighbors was taking his family and friends to church with the oxen and wagon. When passing through a slough, they decided to stop and have a drink. It was a warm afternoon, and the water was delightfully cool, so they decided to stay where they were—in the middle of the slough. The driver tried every way to persuade the oxen to move, all to no avail.

Finally, the men got out of the wagon and began carrying the women and children to dry land. All went well until one man gallantly offered to carry a two hundred pound matron over. For the first few feet he managed to step on tufts of grass, but as the matron seemed to become very heavy, he missed a tuft of grass, and sank ankle deep in mud. Now he had not only two hundred

pounds to carry, but also had to drag his feet out of the gooey mud. A twitter went through the crowd, and his load began to shake. Her husband noticed the situation and called out, "Sarves ye richt for layin' a haund on anither man's wife!" There were peals of laughter, but the unfortunate man got assistance. He spent the next few minutes cleaning his shoes, then all went off to church—on foot.

Another neighbor was going down the road one day with his team of oxen hitched to the wagon, when for no apparent reason, they decided they needed a rest. Nothing he could do would move them. Not to be beaten, he lit a fire under the oxen to make them move. Thy did —but only about six feet, which left the fire burning under the wagon. He had to act very quickly to put the fire out before the wagon burned.

In early times, a trip to Brandon with a load of grain was a real journey. Jack Musgrove and Will were going with two loads of grain one day in the winter. When they came to the regular stopping place there was no room left. It was getting near dusk, but they had to go on. Just at dark, they came to an abandoned shack. They put the horses up for the night, and lit a fire in the shack. All that was lacking was food. After looking around the shack, they found a squirrel nest with acorns in it. Knowing the squirrels were likely to sleep for weeks, they made their meagre supper of hazel nuts.

In the early days, bank barns and sod stables were used. Well do I remember ours! The spring freshette came down one nice afternoon in March when Will was in the bush. In spite of all my efforts, the cattle were standing in two feet of ice water when he returned home.

It wasn't many years before the farmers got more stock and larger barns. Any one contemplating building a barn usually built a stone stable and got timber out from the bush (Turtle Mountain) in the winter time. These were hewed and made the floor supports for the barn. Mr. Jim Patterson and Mr. Jack Musgrove framed many of the barns.

The barn raising was an important event. All the neighborhood were invited. The men to work and the women to help with the lunch. It was quite as important as a sports day. The men worked steadily all afternoon. Usually by four-thirty they were ready to put up the rafters. They chose up sides, then the race was on, to see which side would finish first. The women all came out and watched—and held their breath. Even the children seemed to get a thrill out of it. There was always a mighty cheer for the winners. Then the lunch—and what a lunch!

The combining gang of today usually consists of two men. Quite different was the threshing gang of years ago, with the steam engines. It might consist of any number of men, from twelve to twenty. They brought their own caboose.

Very often they came at supper time. It invariably rained and kept them from working for two or three days, but the men didn't stop eating. You had them, with very healthy appetites, for breakfast, dinner and supper—and they were well fed. The more ambitious cooks even gave them pie for breakfast! Finally, when you felt completely worn out, the gang would finish. But who didn't get a thrill from hearing the seven o'clock whistle and laugh about the waterman being hurried up with a continuous tooting, when they needed water, and soon! We were often sorry to say good-bye to the fine young men from the East, who came out West for the harvest.

One strange phenomena that has always given us a feeling of awe, was the "will o' the wisp," which may often be seen west of the farm buildings now. It looks like a light floating near the ground.

One night two of the hired men were about to part and go home to the Richardson home and to our home, when they heard a swishing sound and a ball of fire arose from the ground near by and floated away. There was a sulphurous odor. The men were terrified as they were quite sure it was a sign of death. They wondered which was to be the one to pass away. They both went to the same home to stay overnight.

You can still see the "will o' the wisp"—a luminous ball of gas, usually on a dull night, floating along from the Richardson ravine over to the Robertson ravine.

Mrs. W. J. Armstrong

THE ROBERT JOHNSTONE STORY

Robert Johnstone was born July 4th, 1853, in Lockerbie, Dunfrieshire, Scotland. As both parents were dead, an older brother, John, who was married, decided to emigrate to Canada. He brought Robert, 15, and George, 7, with him in 1868. They were six weeks crossing the ocean in a sailing vessel.

They settled at Bluevale, Ontario, where Robert worked on a farm until 1879, when he came west by railroad from Minneapolis to Winnipeg, then on out to Turtle Mountain. He returned to Winnipeg for the winter, but came back to Turtle Mountain in the spring of 1880 where he homesteaded on the southwest quarter of 24-2-20.

This particular district was chosen because there was lots of good water and plenty of wood for fuel. He built a log house, a log stable for his oxen and a dugout. Later he had a lime kiln on the bank of the creek where he slacked lime to white wash his house and those of his neighbors. People who lived farther out on the prairies and therefore at a distance from the bush, built their homes of sod with walls two to three feet in thickness. Sod homes were fairly warm.

Robert's nearest neighbors were Jim and Joe Burgess, who homesteaded on 22-2-20. Brandon, 55 miles north, and Emerson, 125 miles to the east, were the nearest centres at which to buy groceries. The trips were made by oxen or on foot.

A grist mill was built at Wakopa, as well as Weir's blacksmith shop and a saw mill. There was also a saw mill at Lake Max, ruins of which may still be seen. Later still, a Mr. Nichols came from Ontario and had a store and post office at Cherry Creek just about where the round barn stands now at Horton.

The first church services were held in the Burgess and Linklater homes. In 1890, Mr. Linklater donated the northwest corner of his homestead, 19-20-19, for a church which was called Burnside.

In 1891, Linklaters had a post office. The mailcarrier at that time was Mr. Alex McKnight, who also carried the mail to Wassewa on his route. Desford was the nearest school.

In 1885, Indians, pretending to be carrying the body of an Indian chief to a northwest burial ground, attempted to smuggle a Gatling gun from Minneapolis to help in the Riel Rebellion. They came by the Missouri Trail and along the old Commission Trail, but were spotted and captured by the Border Patrol just west of Wakopa.

When the first train arrived at Boissevain on Christmas Day, 1885, Robert returned on it to his old home in Bluevale, Ontario, where he married Margaret Anderson. She was born in Canada of Irish parents who had taken two months to cross from Ireland in 1835.

On February 26th, 1886, the Johnstones arrived in Boissevain, after taking eight days to make the trip from Toronto.

Now began a strange hard task for Mrs. Johnstone, to make a home in the wilderness. She made her own yeast from wild hops that grew on the mountain; made lye from wood ashes to make soap, and also made her own vinegar. She and her husband picked saskatoons and cranberries for their winter fruit, which was supplemented by apples shipped in barrels from Ontario. In 1898, a bad bush fire destroyed much of the big timber on the mountain, and wild raspberries grew in abundance over the burned area, along with a few strawberries. People came from miles around in wagons or buggies and camped for a few days while they picked the luscious fruit for winter preserves.

At the time of the fire many wild animals perished in the blaze. Some escaped, however, and as we lived on the edge of the mountain, we saw many fleeing animals, some singed and some burned, among them rabbits, foxes, wolves, bears, a few deer and moose, and of course many wild birds.

In those early days wild life was teeming. Brown and black bears were common, and coyotes howled around our buildings at night. In spring and fall, the fields were covered with migrating

geese and ducks and cranes, called by many "wild turkeys." During winters when the snow was deep, we often threw grain to feed the prairie chicken which harbored around the straw stacks and buildings in search of food.

The first crop was sown by hand broadcast. Threshing in those old days was a very busy time with huge gangs of men to be boarded for days at a time. The earliest threshing machines required two men to cut the bands as they entered the machine and a man and team to pile the straw. A later grain separator cut the bands and a blower piled the straw. Most early day threshing gangs averaged twenty men. No wonder the women were busy!

Before it was possible to buy coal, all the firewood was cut and hauled out of the bush during the winter months. They had sheds and shacks as shelters for their horses and themselves while they camped in the woods for days at a time while getting their wood out. One of these winter camps was named Limerick.

With settlement sparse, and windbreaks not yet grown, blizzards were much dreaded as they blew unchecked across the lonely miles of prairie, often so thick one could not see a hand before the face. At such times, with only coal oil lanterns for meagre light, they would tie a rope from house to barn as a guide. Without such a precaution, many men were known to have become lost and perished in these storms.

In those long ago days, people had to make their own amusement. In winter, they had dancing parties in the different homes. In summer, it was picnics with the main feature being the ice cream freezer, laboriously turned by hand—but the resulting delicacy made the effort worth while. Our district picnic ground was Glover's Grove.

Submitted by Miss Mary Johnstone

AN OLD HURON BOY

In writing this biography I am pleased to have the opportunity to pay tribute to those early settlers who pioneered in the Boissevain district. To these men and women we are deeply indebted.

My father, Peter Joseph Cantelon, was one of these pioneers. Born in Huron County, Ontario, in June of 1857, he was 25 years old when he arrived in Manitoba in the spring of 1882. In company with Dick McIntosh, who later married a sister, they set out on foot from Brandon to locate their land. Arriving at their destination a search for the government land stakes proved fruitless. Samuel Oke had settled on land across the creek and it was to him that my father finally appealed for help. Mr. Oke suffered from rheumatism and did not dare enter the cold, chilly water. Nothing daunted, my father stripped and piggy-backed his new neighbor across. The markers found, Mr. Oke was returned high and dry to his own

domain. This was indeed a case of the mole carrying the mountain. In any event a homestead and pre-emption was secured in section 16-3-19.

He returned to Ontario and the Michigan lumber woods for the winter. It was not until the following spring that a car load of settler's effects was shipped from Ontario and farming begun in earnest. A sod shack and stable were built with a lot of back breaking labor. A few acres of land were broken and seeded to wheat. The first crop was badly frozen, and the grain dealers in Brandon refused to buy the grain. Completely discouraged and out of funds, my father was about ready to quit when a Brandon store keeper offered to take his frozen grain and gave him a grub stake for the coming winter. The next year's crop was much better.

On December 3rd, 1884, my father married Elizabeth Ann Musgrove, daughter of an early pioneer. In January of '87 my oldest brother arrived. The nearest doctor lived in Deloraine and the weather was 20 below. A neighbor, Tom Buck, who owned the only team of driving horses in the district, volunteered to bring the doctor. It was acts of kindness such as this that cemented the lives of these early pioneers. In the summer of '87 a disastrous prairie fire detroyed the stable and winter's feed. Despite these setbacks my father was slowly forging ahead. The neighbors in those days included such names as Holmes, Oke, Pugsley, Crummer, McIntosh, McAvoy, Cottingham, Musgrove, Buck and McAllister.

The social life of the community was amusing and varied. Parties and dances were held in the neighbors' homes. At these functions my father contributed his bit as an old time fiddler and singer of songs. In later years it was our delight to have him give us a repeat performance.

In the spring of '98 it was decided a frame barn should be built. A large pile of native stone was collected. Logs were hauled from the nearby Turtle Mountains which would eventually form the frame work for the new barn. Stone masons arrived who split the stones into various sizes and laid them into the foundation and walls to make the lower portion of the building. Next came the framers who shaped the logs into timbers with mortise and tenon joints properly arranged. When all was in readiness the neighbors were invited to the barn raising. In a matter of hours timbers were raised and set in their proper places. Stout pegs were hammered into the waiting holes, braces were adjusted and the frame work of the new barn stood naked before our eyes. All that remained was to put the rafters in place. This always called for a contest. Captains were chosen who in turn selected the men who would work in their team. The women, who up until this time had been busy in the kitchen, gathered round and lustily cheered their favorite competitors. The team which was first to complete the job and reach the ground was

declared the winner. The barn raising over, all that was left to do was to fill one's stomach at the well-laden tables. As far as we know this barn is still standing, a tribute to those early settlers' ingenuity.

In 1899 the homestead was sold and the following spring another farm was purchased northeast of town. This farm boasted a large roomy house and huge barn. Directly under the feed room in the barn was a deep cistern. One winter afternoon someone left the door open and three cows crowded into the feed room looking for extra grain. There was a terrific crash and three cows were in the cistern. Neighbors were hastily summoned by excited kids riding pell mell around the country side. A hoist was built and a cow at a time was slowly brought to the surface. Miraculously the two on top were still alive but the bottom one was quite dead. The culprit who left the door ajar was never discovered.

Sinclair and Joe Brown did the threshing for the neighborhood. In threshing oats, the straw had to be saved for feed and this meant that a stack must be built as the straw was delivered from the carrier. As the Brown boys owned a horse that had had a lot of experience in this work they always brought him along when stacking was to be done. As each new layer of straw was added the horse circled around to press it into place. It was jolly fun when one was chosen to be the rider. At noon time a generous feed of oats was passed up for Dobbin. With the job completed the horse slid down the stack's side to safety.

By 1905 dad was ready to expand his farming operations and the farm was traded on a full section southwest of town. Known throughout the district as the "Dingle" it was the site of many a good picnic by church and civic bodies alike. It was here that my father came into his own as a farmer. With a good supply of water he branched out into raising horses, cattle and hogs as well as wheat.

Each year saw a goodly number of these commodities marketed. A team of high-stepping Hackney mares was my father's pride and joy. During this time he served as a trustee on the Bluevale School Board. About this time dad decided to purchase a threshing outfit and for the next few years threshing was done for the Peacocks, Thompsons, Jenkins and others. Billy Nixon and John Peacock fed the grain into the separator by hand. Dan Morrish drove a grain wagon year after year. Johnnie Opperman served faithfully and well. Throughout the years crops were good and a fair price obtained. In 1909 the farm was sold to a neighbor, Dougal Taylor, for $36.00 an acre.

In the fall of that year our family left for Vancouver to begin a new life on the Pacific coast.

During their lifetime my mother and father were devout Christians and staunch supporters of the Methodist and United Church. As a member of the church's official board and as a local preacher, dad served as best he knew.

Mother passed away in 1919. Father returned to Goderich, Ontario, where he died in 1948 at the age of 92.

To my mother, whose unselfish devotion to duty won for her the respect and affection of all who knew her, and to my father, that man small in stature but big in heart, I dedicate these lines.

February 22, 1956

Contributed by
Wilfred Gaylord Cantelon
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

PIONEER YOUNGSTERS GO SHOPPING, 1884

It was the summer of 1884 Thomas Johnston, homesteader and father of a growing family was very busy keeping his breaking plow going. The success of breaking sod with oxen is to keep them going and do it every day. As there was no other means of travel, it was either stop the breaking plow or send some of the children on errands as they arose. On this particular occasion the prairie mother needed a new wash-board and father needed a share point straightened and the blade pounded out. Breaking shares will dull when cutting sod, even if if was only a few rods south of where Boissevain's railway (Main St.) now runs. Also, since there was plenty of snow water in all the ponds why should not the little mother of seven children have a good wash-board? Of course she should. But from where and how? There were only two stores considered. Desford, eight miles southwest, and Rowland, eleven miles northeast. As our Uncle William lived in the direction of Rowland we children favored throwing our trade that way. If a vote was taken, Rowland won. It was so ruled. We children were joyful. Some of us, if not all (secretly we were all pulling for a wagon ride) would have a chance to "go see" our uncle and aunt and our two cousins. We always thought cousins were grand. But father wouldn't go and take the wagon so sister Rebecca and myself (Fred) were awarded the privilege of making this shopping trip. We Johnston families hadn't seen each other for some time. We didn't come in together, and getting settled homesteading did not allow any galavanting about.

On a given day it was planned that we should start and go as far as our uncle's (seven miles), have dinner with them, rest a bit and then press on to Rowland (four miles), do our shopping, and return the four miles to our uncle's where we would stay overnight, then come on home (seven miles) the next day, making a total of twenty-two miles in two days. It goes down easily enough on paper but the stepping off of those twenty-two miles makes a pair of old legs almost ache even to mention it. Rebecca was thirteen years old and I was nine. Besides we had a 12 quart pail of eggs to carry and that heavy plow share. We were supposed (if we could manage it) to get 10 or 15c per dozen for our eggs. We probably carried the

share in a grain bag. Grain bags had a variety of uses in those days. Mother warned us not to take up with strangers on our journey and father instructed us as to the way. Except for the first few miles it was all undiscovered territory to us. We were able to follow the little prairie trail past the Robert Cook place (a log house unfinished and unoccupied), then skirting east of the ridge, travel north past bachelor Tom Allen's, then veering more to the east across Bill Hewitt's meadow beyond which we would pick up our long trail leading away off east. Prairie trails ran where they pleased in those days. They didn't worry about road allowances whatsoever. We were to follow this east going trail until it turned definitely to the north. At this angle looking away to the right and ahead we would see a house, peeking over some higher ground. That was Uncle William's house. We were to forsake all trails now and go straight across the prairie to that house. As there was no other house anywhere to be seen after passing Hewitt's there could be no mistake. We followed our directions joyously as pioneering adventures and yet with a bit of anxiety. Homesteading folk in those days were a lonely class hence little moved within the horizon that was not noticed. So having successfully accomplished the first part of our journey and drawing on toward our uncle's we saw the two cousins come racing out to meet us, Albert, nine, Willie, seven. They came jumping and stumbling along in great glee, their faces beaming with happy welcome. Albert's first words were "Our cow had a fine bull calf last night." Rebecca was able to go him one better by proffering that our cow had given us a fine heifer calf three weeks ago and that the cow and calf were doing nicely. With these important items taken care of we proceeded on our way with more casual conversation.

Our uncle's location might have been later described as being two and one-half miles northwest of Ninga, Man. Another particular of our story must not be forgotten. Mother had warned us against taking up with strangers when on our journey but we had no more than gotten out into the wide open spaces when we became conscious that there was a man following us. Who could he be? Where could he be going? We tried to hurry but the eggs in the pail seemed to turn into rocks and our feet were so poky. He gained on us in spite of our inner urging. Perhaps this man was craving companionship on his journey! When he was alongside of us we hardly dared look up at him, but he spoke in a friendly voice and asked us if the eggs were heavy? We admitted that they were a little bit heavy. When he offered to carry them for us we were afraid to let him have them for fear that he would not give them back again. However we yielded and he hooked a long arm through the pail and swung it over his hip and strode along in a manner that took our breath. He told us that he was Jim Campbell, younger brother of Alex Campbell, a homesteader who lived directly north

of our place. He said that he had heard of us and was now glad to get acquainted with some of the family. He told us that he was a veterinary student from Ontario out with his brother for health reasons. His conversation was entertaining and helped very much to shorten the journey as well as to chase loneliness away. We were really sorry when he returned the pail of eggs and said good-bye. He had given us a grand boost. His trail veered off to the north and we watched him go over the horizon on his way. We have never seen or heard of him since. Just as ships pass in the night leave with the passengers an intriguing mystery so we have often wondered regarding the purpose of his journey, its success and of his fight for health. At least we will always remember him with gratitude.

On the second lap we were accompanied by our cousin Albert. We boys stopped at times to throw stones at killdeers or at prairie gophers which persisted in defying our intrusion. At Rowland we got our shares attended to, bought that new wash-board, some bluing, a skein of gray yarn for darning, some spools of coarse thread, brown sugar, dried apples and a box of matches, etc. So that we were loaded going back as well as coming out. We traded in our pail of eggs at 12c per dozen and broke mother's five-dollar gold-piece, which must have brought our family bad luck for I know that money was mighty scarce for many a month thereafter.

When we got back to our uncle's place on that first day we had travelled fifteen miles and were quite weary. My cousins kept me awake a lot that night by talking so that the last part of my journey was the hardest. The romance of prairie hiking had lost its bloom for the time being.

Out of justice to my oldest sister Rebecca, I must confess that it was she who carried the brunt of the responsibility. She was always a sort of little mother, in conjunction with sister Eva, to the rest of us children. I was only a tag-along brother on that shopping trip. Father let me go because I was the oldest boy and he wanted to give me a chance. Rebecca was a dutiful child who took life seriously and she did things well. I believe that she purchased everything we were sent for and brought back the right change. Later she was married in the Boissevain Methodist Church, in 1896. She raised two fine sons. She lived well into her sixties and then turning aside, passed over the horizon of the Manitoba prairies to the great beyond. In accordance with the pioneering faith of our parents and a settled conviction of my own, I am bold to suggest that there was a welcome voice that said, "Well done Rebecca. You obeyed your parents always and have been a good example to all those brothers and sisters enter thou unto the joy of thy Lord." My faith turned to the south-land in 1900. Having acquired the habit I am still walking, sixty-six years later.

THE PIONEER DAYS OF HARRY DUNCAN

Harry Duncan arrived at his homestead, section 12-4-21, in what was later known as the Abigail district, on the 19th day of April in the year 1882. He and his brother, Dave, had left their home town of Simcoe, Ontario, almost a month before and headed for Manitoba by rail via Chicago, Fargo and the port town of Emerson.

A characteristic March storm had dumped from two to three feet of wet snow over the Red River Valley prior to their arrival in Emerson and under the influence of a warm sun was building up a flood around the town that, to the oldtimers at least, will never be equalled. Transportation was practically at a standstill though the trains were still getting in from Fargo and out to Winnipeg, and the housing facilities of the town were taxed to the utmost by the numerous prospective settlers that arrived every day.

The fourth day of their stay in Emerson the water was touching the door knobs of the International Hotel, where they were staying, so they decided it was time to move on, which decision was hastened when father observed the hotel cook scooping up the breakfast coffee water from the murky flood, in which a dead oxen floated a few doors away. Accordingly they moved on to Winnipeg, where they spent a few days gathering information about land, and then on to Brandon, which was almost the end of steel and the jumping-off place for the majority of homesteaders who settled north of Whitewater Lake.

Several days were spent in Brandon gathering up a yoke of oxen, a wagon, seed grain and all the other essentials for the venture out into a new and unchartered life. While in Brandon they were joined by Charlie Hicks, whom they had known in Ontario, and Raymond Asbury both of whom had also been lured west by the call of adventure and the prospect of cheap land.

By the time they had gathered together their outfits the ground had dried up somewhat from the spring run-off so without further delay they set out for the southwest corner of the province. Travelling was difficult but after crossing the Souris River they pushed on until the sweeping stretch of Whitewater Lake, with the Turtle Mountains for a backdrop, was just ahead of them. As far as they could see in any direction there wasn't any sign of habitation of any kind; just the waving, winter-browned grass that was showing green around the slough edges. But the soil looked good, the lake offered plenty of water-fowl for meat and it wasn't too far to the Mountain's wood supply so they unanimously decided that they would stake their claims right there.

Father and his brother selected the north half of section twelve and later built a shack on the dividing line with half on each side so they could live together while doing their homesteading duties. Charlie Hicks, who later owned and operated the Ryan House Hotel

in Boissevain and was well known all over southern Manitoba, and Asbury selected quarters a mile farther north of the lake.

These first spring and summer months were spent in getting some of the virgin sod broken for crop, building a shack, making an occasional trip to Brandon for supplies and getting a stock of firewood from Turtle Mountain. I don't know what the crop from the first breaking yielded but it probably was frozen. Frost was the greatest hazard to wheat crops in those days and it was nothing unusual to make the long, arduous trip to Brandon with a load of the damaged grain and get thirty cents a bushel for it. Whatever the price or yield the first crop return wasn't enough to boost the finances of the four homesteaders very much. There were some other homesteaders moved into the district that summer but none in the immediate vicinity, so the partners moved in together in the Duncans' shack for the winter, both for company and to economize as much as possible.

Father liked to hunt and trap and that first winter, and the following ones for many years, trapped in and around the lake for mink, muskrats and foxes. Mink were quite plentiful and muskrat houses dotted the marshy east end of the lake in great numbers. Muskrat pelts brought around ten cents in Brandon and mink from one to two dollars. Red fox were plentiful everywhere. One winter in the early nineties father caught thirteen foxes at one set in twelve consecutive nights. This was accomplished by catching two in the one night. The first one was caught early in the evening. Father heard it and removed it and reset the traps. The next morning, and for eleven more mornings, he had another one. Fox pelts averaged around fifty cents apiece. Coyotes were fairly plentiful but he never had much success trapping them.

That winter of 1882-83 and the following one a band of thirteen antelope stayed around the east end of the lake. Father saw them many times though he never shot one. They disappeared in eighty-four and so far as is known no one has seen an antelope in this section of the country since. There were no jumping deer in the country then, nor till many years later. There were some moose in the Turtle Mountains and also some bears. On one occasion two Indians came looking for a rifle. They had chased a moose out onto the lake and it was having trouble navigating on the ice. Father didn't have any rifle shells but he gave them a large marble which they loaded into his muzzle loading shotgun. They pursued the moose and shot it with that rather unusual load.

The summer of 1884 father built a shack and sod barn of his own on the northwest corner of his homestead. This was where the trail that the Indians used in going from the Griswold and Pipestone districts to the Mountain and North Dakota crossed and it later became the main wood trail for teams hauling wood to Elgin, Souris and as far north as Griswold. At that time there were none of the

bluffs that are seen on the prairie now and very little bush along the Souris River. As the country filled up with settlers the cutting and hauling of firewood from the Turtle Mountains became an important part in the country's development, and to a considerable degree stimulated winter activity and income in the wood camps and along the trail. It was at the site of that shack that father settled for good and many of his early recollections and incidents centered around the trail, which passed a few yards from the house.

In the late eighties, through the nineties and on until coal began to take the place of wood it was nothing uncommon to have thirty to forty teams pass with loads of wood on a winter's day. Father and mother never attempted to run a stopping house but some weary teamster was always looking for a meal for himself and team after the long trip across the marsh, or dumping part of his load in the yard and expecting father to see to it that some other wood hauler didn't steal it before he returned for it. Father did keep a casual eye on it but usually was busy enough watching his own hay and oats that he didn't have time to worry much about who owned the stacks of poles and cordwood that accumulated before the winter was over.

During the summers of eighty-three and eighty-four other homesteaders moved into the district, including Ace Macintosh, Ike Logan, the Perrot brothers and Joe McCutcheon, and though the shanties were still a long way apart the neighborhood began to form and some of the loneliness of the first winter was dispelled. Dave Duncan stayed on his homestead till poor health forced him to leave in 1887, at which time he went to the States to live. Joe McCutcheon homesteaded the quarter cornering 12-4-21 and became father's nearest neighbor. McCutcheon was famous, locally, for prefacing his remarks with various phrases; one of his favorites being "that is."

On August 1, 1884 the post office of Whitewater, the first in the district, was established at the first home of father and his brother with Dave Duncan as postmaster. I don't know, nor do available records, show, what the mail service was at that time. In all probability it would be once or twice a month and Brandon was likely the delivery point.

Dave Duncan operated the post office till 1887, when it was taken over by Joe McCutcheon and the name changed to Abigail, which was Mrs. McCutcheon's first name, and the name which the district was known by for many years. Charlie Hicks was Abigail's postmaster from 1891 to 1896, though the site was still at the McCutcheon home. Owing to ill health of his wife McCutcheon gave up the post office in 1896 at which time father took it over and was postmaster till the office was discontinued on December 16, 1920. At that time there was one mail day a week and Sinclair Brown was the mail carrier.

The winter and spring of 1885 was a time of tension in the West, with Riel stirring the Indians and Metis up to rebel against the whites. The government was calling for volunteers and offering good wages for teamsters to haul supplies to Middleton's troops in Saskatchewan. Father decided that fighting Indians wasn't for him but Charlie Hicks did make one trip as a teamster as far west as Qu'Appelle.

Father was always on good terms with the Indians and half-breeds but they were in an ugly mood those days and he kept the door of his shack well barred at night. Late one evening, after he had gone to bed, there came a terrific pounding on the door. Again he asked who was there and again the only reply was pounding on the door. So father grabbed his Winchester, which was kept close at hand, levered a shell into the barrel and, with proper emphasis, said he would make whoever it was talk. Whereupon a slightly quavering voice sputtered out, "That is—Harry—don't shoot." Needless to say McCutcheon didn't get into father's shack that night.

On another occasion he was just finishing his supper on a March evening, that was being stirred up by a late winter storm, when the door of the shanty was shoved open and in walked two squaws, a towering buck Indian and several children. With his tongue in his cheek father bade them welcome and indicated to them to make themselves at home; which they did. They cooked some meat for their supper; found room on the floor and went to sleep. Next morning, to father's immense relief, the sun was shining and after having breakfast his visitors departed down the trail in the direction of the mountain. But not until after the squaws had tidied up the shack and left him a piece of pemmican-like meat that he thought was made of rabbit meat. He was grateful for their kindness but was very glad to see the last of them and the end of a crowded and slightly odoriferous night.

In his bachelor days father was good friends with an old half-breed named John Thorne who lived a nomadic life in the Turtle Mountains and around Whitewater Lake. Thorne told father that in his youth he had crossed the lake in the summer with dry moccasins. At that time it seemed impossible that Whitewater had ever been dry. But recent years have proved that it was possible.

After the troubled days of the North-West Rebellion were over homesteaders started to move into the district again and in spite of the fact that almost as many were quitting their claims and leaving the country, because of the loneliness and hardships of pioneer life, the southwestern part of the province was gradually becoming settled. New determination to stick it out was fanned by the news that the railroad would be through within a year or so.

One day in the summer of eighty-five a young fellow came along the trail to father's shack. He was tired, and asked father if he could stay with him a few days. Father liked his looks and told

him he could. The few days turned into years and Billy Brown and father became the best of friends. Brown's past was shrouded in mystery and if he ever told father anything of his early life father never told anyone else. He did say that he thought Brown had shot an Indian, or Indians, in North Dakota but he never said that Brown had told him that.

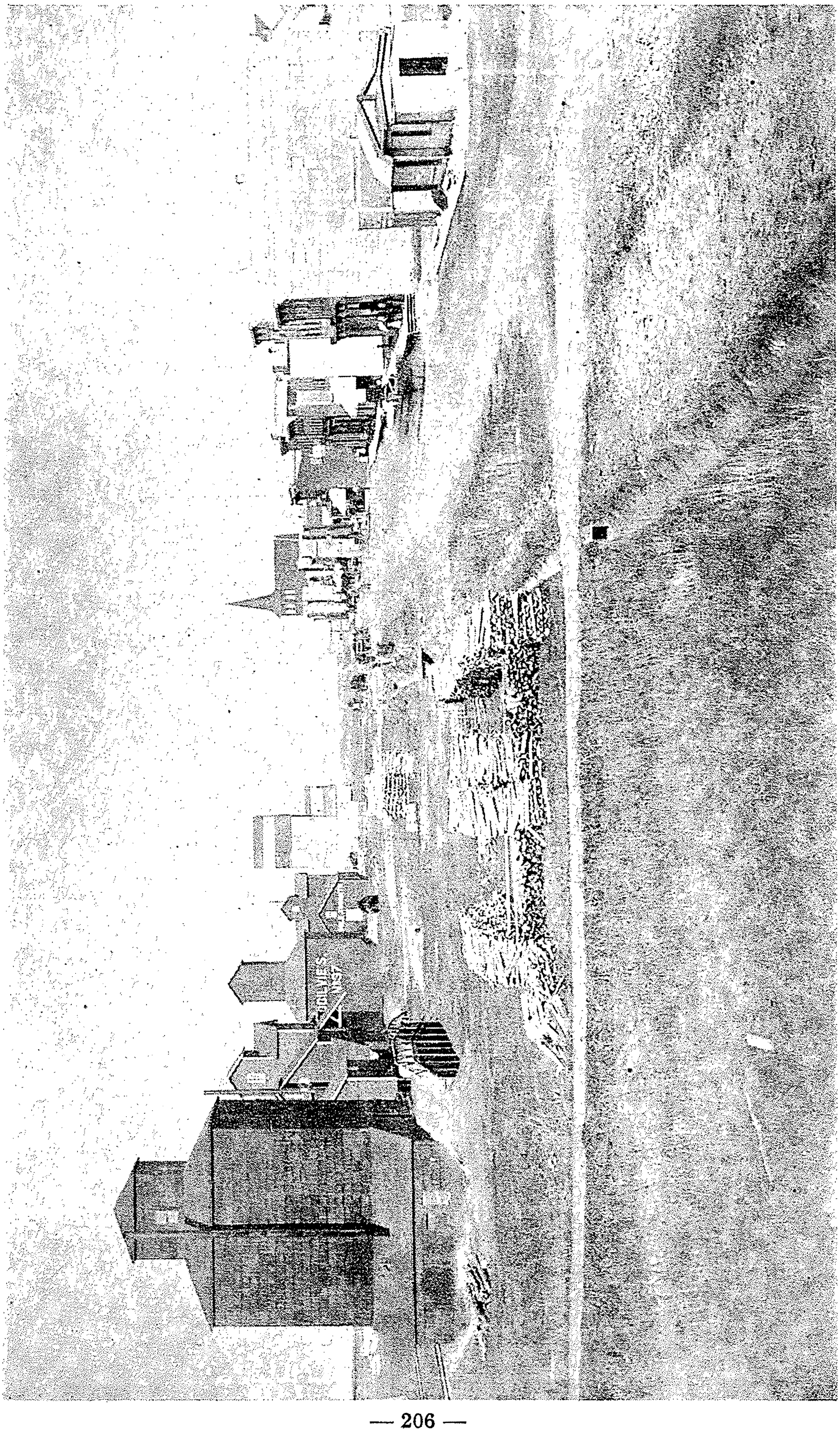
Brown was a fine shot with either rifle or shotgun and a wonderful mechanic with the limited tools of those days. Father always claimed that while he was living with him he invented the bundle carrier that was later used on the McCormick binder. Certainly Brown invented a bundle carrier and attempted to sell the idea to McCormick. Whether he ever had a patent or not I don't know but father said the McCormick people imitated, he used a blunter word, Brown's bundle carrier. The only difference between the carrier used on the McCormick binder and the one Brown tried to sell them was that the outer eight or ten inches of the teeth in Brown's model were jointed to allow them to tip up. A model of Brown's carrier was at father's for years after Brown left.

The C.P.R. railroad line from Winnipeg was pushed through to the site of the present town of Boissevain in 1885. Its coming brought to an end the long trips to Brandon, which up till that time was the only market place for any produce the settlers might have., and the finish to the hardest, though possibly the most glamorous, periods of pioneer life in the district. Father and his neighbors drove in to see the first train come into Boissevain. I don't know the date but it must have been a very eventful day in their lives.

In the summer of 1887 the building of the first school in the district north of Whitewater Lake was completed and Primrose, the name of the new school, was opened for a term of seventy-five days, with an enrollment of sixteen pupils. Many names that were associated with the early days of the area appeared on the first register of Primrose School—McKenzie, Munroe, Cruickshank, McCutcheon and others including Irvine and Gavin Boyd. Isaac Logan was the first teacher. Father and Joe McCutcheon were on the first School Board and father served as secretary-treasurer of the Primrose School for a long period.

Recently the original Primrose School was replaced by a fine, modern school. When the old building was raised for moving it was found that the stringers, which served as the school's foundation, were of square-hewed oak, which would come from Turtle Mountain, and almost as solid as the day they were laid, nearly seventy years ago.

On the morning of July 11th, 1888, father drove to the home of Albert Johnston, two and a half miles northeast of where the hamlet of Croll now stands, and he and mother, Josephine Johnston, were married. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Charles



Wood. The license was issued by John Morrow, Boissevain's first magistrate. Their wedding trip was the six mile ride home in the wagon.

By that time the influence of the railroad was showing in the district. Horses and better machinery were shipped in from the East to replace the oxen and the reaper and the horsepower threshers of the early eighties. The crops were all stacked as sometimes the threshing machine didn't arrive till early winter and stacking was the only method of insuring the harvesting of the crop. I don't know how the first small acreages were harvested but I believe Bill Lambert and Bob Orr had the first portable steam threshing outfits in the district.

An account of the pioneer days around Whitewater Lake wouldn't be complete without mention of the myriads of waterfowl that inhabited the lake in those days. It is hard now to visualize the numbers of the different species of waterfowl that thronged to Whitewater each spring and fall during the migratory periods in the days of the eighties, nineties and up until around 1910-12 when some species, notably the whooping crane and sandhill crane began to show a marked decline. Every species of ducks nested in or around the lake by the thousands, as did also the Canada geese and sandhill crane, though in much lesser numbers of course. Father once hatched two sandhill eggs under a hen and had two fine young cranes which grew rapidly, both in size and in becoming a nuisance, till their unfortunate ends, one at the hands, or teeth, of a neighbor's dog and the other through gorging itself with worms from an old manure pile that was being moved.

The Canada geese were far the most predominant of the geese with the Lesser Canada, the White Fronted, which were usually called Brants, and the Hutchinson making up the rest of the goose flocks. The Snow Geese, or Wavies, appeared only in straggling flocks until later years, when they apparently changed the course of their spring flight to this part of the country. The cranes were almost as plentiful as the geese and offered a real problem to the settlers in the spring when they would settle on a freshly sown field, many of which were broadcast sown, and proceed to rake out the seed with their big feet and gobble it up. In the fall they would light on the stooks and send the sheaves flying while they picked off the heads of grain.

As mentioned it is hard to imagine the density of the flights of ducks and geese in those days. I have often heard both mother and father say that if the morning or evening flight was going over the house they couldn't hear each other speak if they happened to have the door open. Tom Brodie and father shot eighty Canada geese one morning before seven o'clock. One stormy September

Early view of Main St. and No. 10 Highway from west — Photo courtesy W. Moon

afternoon in the eighties father and Billy Brown shot two hundred and twenty ducks in the southeastern corner of the lake. They each used two guns; one being used while the other cooled off. Nothing but Mallards and Canvas-backs were shot, and needless to say they seldom missed a shot. At that time game of all sorts was an important source of food and the sale of it was permitted.

Father used to skin or pick the ducks, split them down the back, sprinkle them with salt, pack them in barrels and ship them to Winnipeg. Mallards and Canvas-backs brought twelve cents apiece and others ten. In later years, until it became illegal, ducks and geese were sold locally, to a certain extent, with a duck bringing fifteen to twenty cents and a goose about fifty. Father loaded nearly all his own shells, as did most local hunters. I have before me a sheet taken from the books of E. Nichol and Sons, merchants of Boissevain, dated 1892 and in account with Harry Duncan. One entry catches my eye: eight pounds of shot, 80 cents. One pound costs that now—if you can get it.

The development of the district and the rapid increase in settlement through the nineties meant a big demand for more and better power and horses almost completely replaced the oxen. By that time too the Red River cart had disappeared, with its squealing wooden axles and wheels. Many times father stood in his shack door and listened to the screaching, coming from down the trail, that heralded some traveller's approach in a Red River cart.

Father went back to Ontario quite a few times to buy horses for Nichols and ship them out to Boissevain for resale. Good horses were worth money and many a struggling homesteader lost or almost lost his land through a mortgage acquired by purchasing a team of horses. Credit was glibly given by those that had money and something to sell to the settlers, most of whom didn't have any money, just a great faith that they soon would have, and most dealings were on time. Interest rates weren't government controlled in those days and the way it mounted up under the manipulation of the business men of that time would make a present day computer look like a grade one student. When harvest time came the bailiff was about the busiest man in the district as he dashed about slapping liens on granaries as fast as they were filled with grain, if there was any grain, and a good many years there wasn't. Many were the strawstacks that stood in the field covering a pile of wheat safely from the bailiff's eye till the owner could get it sold.

For many years in the late nineties and early years of 1900 father ran a herd along the north side of Whitewater Lake. At that time he bought cattle with and for Jack Towns, a well known cattle buyer. The herd was made up of cattle from owners as far away as Souris and Dunrae, father's own cattle and those bought by Towns and brought in to fatten or to hold for market. The home corral covered about six acres and was a half mile south of the homestead.

The cattle were all ear-tagged or branded and a description of each head entered in a tally book under the owner's name.

One time Towns was bringing about a hundred head across the line from North Dakota. Father met him south of Carberry, where the cattle had to be inspected, which was always a tiresome and expensive job. When a mile or so from the customs Towns pulled a couple of bottles of whisky from underneath the buggy seat, stuffed them in his pocket, mounted father's horse and rode on ahead. Shortly the veterinarian and customs officer appeared in a shining buggy behind a flashing team of bays. At top speed they whirled around the herd of cattle; then the customs officer stood up and waved his arms; "All right boys," he yelled to the men with the herd, "away you go." The herd never stopped. Pioneer days were hard but they had their compensations.

The year 1903 was remembered throughout Southwestern Manitoba as the year of the big blizzard and to the people north of Whitewater as "the year of the stampede." Tom Stevenson was herding for Bill Stewart, who by that time was also running a small herd, with his home corral two miles west of father's. The afternoon of the 12th of September was blustery but Stevenson thought little of it as he pushed the herd into the corral. He closed the corral gate, had his supper and went to bed. When he woke up next morning the cattle were gone, in one of the worst storms that had ever hit the country.

Before it ended the following day drifts of snow were piled ten feet deep. For rods in from the edge of fields the stooks were completely covered over. A howling north wind that whipped the snow in blinding clouds had lashed the cattle in Stewart's corral till they broke out of it and were driven in a wild rush the mile south into the lake. Their mad dash in the darkness and storm carried them out into the soft mud and icy water till the leaders floundered and sank while the ones behind piled on top of them. It was a grim scene that confronted father and others that were summoned by Stevenson for help. Some cattle were pulled to safety, only to die later. It was a cold, heart-breaking task, made the grimmer because of the pitiful bellowing of the dying cattle and the knowledge of the loss to the owners. One hundred and six died at the end of their fateful run into the lake.

The news of the stampede travelled fast and Indians gathered from all directions. They hauled the carcasses out of the lake with their cayuses, stripped off the hides, cut the meat in long strips and hung it to dry on racks of poles. Father and mother recalled vividly seeing the meat waving in the wind like red blankets. In true Manitoba fashion the weather changed abruptly after the storm to warm, beautiful fall weather that lasted well into November, so that harvest was completed without much loss except in the grade of the grain. (See write-up if more detail required.)

Father ran the herd for a few more years but barbwire made its appearance and soon fencing did away with the necessity of herding. It also spelt the end of the pioneer trails that wound their way across the prairie without regard to road allowances or land ownership. A few years later the fences were flanked by telephone lines and the low places in the roads were being graded so that automobiles could get through them.

In 1914 father purchased a Model T Ford car. It was a far cry from the tin beauties of today but the sound of its chugging along the three-rutted roads made by the buggies and high-stepping driving horses that it was to replace was the music for the finale of pioneer days.

Submitted by H. G. Duncan

THE PIONEER DAYS OF WILLIAM PLUNKETT

As told to his granddaughter, Leone Plunkett

On March 30th, 1890, I saw Winnipeg, Manitoba, for the first time. I was eighteen years old and had come out with my mother and father.

I was cold and tired from the trip because I had ridden in the boxcar with the horses. I slept on the bales of hay which was the feed for the horses.

Winnipeg was pretty small at that time. There was nothing but bald prairie north of the C.P.R., except one little red building standing out by itself. The northwest and northeast of Winnipeg was all prairie, stretching for miles. A fellow told me I could buy land on the northeast for two dollars an acre. It is in the heart of the city today.

I left for Boissevain on the train which ran through Morris and LaRiviere. When I reached Boissevain, my parents met me and helped me unload our belongings. We piled them on the lot directly north of the present day Recorder office.

There wasn't very much to Boissevain in 1890. The old mill was there, on the sight of McCabe's Elevator. The north end was pretty well built up, but the south was not settled very much. South of the present day Modern Motors, the prairie stretched out. East of the United Church, and west of the old mill, the prairie spread out for miles.

The first thing father did was to buy the southeast quarter of 3-4-19. We piled our belongings into wagons and headed out to the new homestead. When we reached the homestead we piled everything on the ground and covered it up. The horses were staked out until the barn was built.

It was early April and father and I set up a shelter. This was much like the peak of a house, about six feet high and ten feet long. The ends were boarded in, with a door at one end. We lived in this

shelter while father built a house, and I broke the land. We also built a sod stable with some of the sod slabs, and brought in our few livestock.

Some of the first winters were pretty severe. Sometimes we had a blizzard every week. I remember one blizzard in particular. It was in 1891, early in the fall. I was helping Abe Houck thresh on the farm now owned by Clarence Ferguson. On October 8th it rained all morning, but by mid-afternoon it turned into a raging blizzard. The next day I walked nearly seven miles in two feet of snow before I reached home. I never saw snow like it before in my life.

The winter of 1892 stands out in my mind, for it was the year my father died; and I, at the age of twenty, was left to carry on our venture in this new land.

In the fall of 1892, I recall the prairie fire which swept through Boissevain district. It was caused by a spark from the steam engine owned by Sandy Cameron, who had his outfit eight miles southwest of town. I remember that day well. I had taken in a half load of grain to the elevator in the last week of September. I was putting the team into the livery stable, when Noah Brownsberger came running out, hollering "Fire!" Sure enough! We could see the low black cloud in the southwest. I had the only team handy, and hitching them to a plow, we went to work plowing a firebreak south and west of where No. 3 and No. 10 Highways meet today. We made two furrows about fifteen feet apart and all the grass was burned between them. In less than thirty minutes the fire, which was half a mile wide, swept in from the southwest. Much to everyone's relief, the fire did not jump the break and the town was saved.

There were two other prairie fires; both came through in 1897. The one, which was in the spring, started when Bob Kirkpatrick had burned off a slough and had lost control of the fire. Earlier in the spring, the house which my father built in 1890 had burned to the ground. As I remember, it was started by a spark from the stove. We immediately began to build a new house. This was on stones at the four corners, and was directly in the path of the fire; but for some reason, the fire hardly touched it. Instead, it swept right on under the beams and kept going.

Many prairie fires were started by sparks from the C.P.R. locomotives. The fire that came through in the fall of 1897 was started that way. It was nearly a mile wide, and spread out from Wallace Ludgate's farm .There was a south wind behind the fire and it sent the fire racing straight north toward our place. A field of breaking, directly south of us, was the only thing that broke the force of the fire. It divided, and when the wind died down, mother and I beat out most of it with wet gunny sacks.

Those were the good old threshing days! There were not many

who had a threshing outfit of their own, and those who were lucky enough to have one, did custom work all over the country. Some of the outfits that threshed us were owned by Billy Bradley, Billy Sage, Wallace Hill, the Voodres, and Ed Storey. The men on those old-time outfits worked hard, and put in long hours. I worked for a dollar a day, and was glad to get it too. The women did their share too, cooking three meals a day for seventeen to twenty-one or more threshers. These were the days when men came from the East on "harvesters' excursions" for the work and adventure in the harvest fields. It wasn't always "work and no play," for many jolly times were spent in the old bunkhouse during wet spells.

To look back over the old days, with its hard way of doing things, and then to look around us and see the easier way, our hardships may not have been in vain for those who are following in our footsteps, and we hope we have left them a richer heritage.

BENJAMIN DICKSON 1864-1949

Benjamin Dickson was born in Dundalk, Ontario, in 1864 and came west to the Deloraine district in 1885.

At that time, the C.P.R. did not extend farther than Brandon, and so encountering a Mr. Longman who was freighting supplies to the Kirkwood settlement on the N.W. corner of Whitewater Lake, Mr. Dickson travelled with him. The two men followed a route from Brandon to Plum Creek (now Souris), and then southward to Deloraine. During their trip they encountered numerous small bands of Indians travelling westward, presumably to join the Riel Rebellion.

After a short stop with the Kirkwoods, Mr. Dickson proceeded to his homestead, N.E. 18-4-20, in the Primrose district. While erecting a 12 x 14 sod shanty, which was to be his home, he slept beneath his overturned wagon box. Each morning he found it necessary to rid his clothing of numerous snakes. Finishing construction of his shanty and a small stable, he turned to breaking the sod with his team of oxen. Since he had only one pair of shoes which were kept for Sundays, he followed his plow barefoot.

While reminiscing in later years, Mr. Dickson would often recall that he was never without money. Having left Brandon with a ten cent piece in his pocket, he kept this through the year of 1885.

Neighbors were few and far between. Standing by his shanty, he could look N.E. at a white tent rising from among the prairie grass. This was the temporary home of Ben Halliday while he was building himself a home. Treeless landscape surrounded Mr. Dicksons' homestead on all sides. Bluffs were scarce due to the ravage of prairie fires. Later one of Mr. Dickson's neighbors, Mr. J. McCutcheon of 14-4-21, almost lost his buildings in a prairie fire. So dense was the smoke, that Mr. McCutcheon was unaware of the

smouldering plow tongue until it dropped in two pieces. He successfully finished his fire break with the front wheels of the plow swinging freely. His wife meantime, had been fighting the fire with clothing soaked in a bucket of water.

A ravine linking the Souris River with Whitewater Lake passed through Mr. Dickson's homestead. Today, drift soil and graded roads have stopped the flow of this ravine but at times it often ran quite swiftly in the early spring. Travellers were often required to swim their horses or oxen, if they wished to cross.

The countryside with its changes also brought many changes to the wildlife. Mr. Dickson related that he found it necessary to frighten flocks of cranes (including both Whooping crane and the Sandbill) from hsi stooks quite often. The cranes enjoyed climbing over the stooks and scattering the sheaves in all directions. In the early morning, Mr. Dickson often said that he merely had to raise the window to shoot his meat for the day. Ducks were plentiful over a large slough close to his home. After dressing, he would find Kaiser, his dog, waiting on the step with the kill. Pinnated grouse were plentiful and easily taken. Mr. Dickson recalled one hunt at Whitewater Lake in which they shot until the gun barrels were hot, their bag taken, and still the geese passed over in thousands, Flights seemed to be continuous.

During the years preceding the arrival of the rails to Boissevain, settlers in the Primrose district hauled their grain to Souris. There it was milled by a stone grinder. Brandon was the chief source of supplies and market for grain over and above what was required for home use. The list of supplies for winter was given very careful consideration as one trip was usually all that could be made in the fall. Mr. Dickson related the mishap of a neighbor who returned home from his supply trip to Brandon to find that a nail had worked upward from his wagon bunk into a five gallon can of kerosene. During that winter the family derived a fair light from pork tallow candles. Those who misjudged the quantity of flour required between trips, resorted to boiled wheat as a staple food.

In 1888 the settlers suffered a severe blow on the night of August 8th when a very heavy frost completely destroyed the crops. Mr. Dickson declared that the next day he would have gladly exchanged his homestead for a suit of clothing had anyone made such a proposition.

He improved his finances somewhat by working for Mr. Heaslip for two years, when not required to work on his homestead. Later he purchased land in the Heaslip district.

In 1891, Miss Stella Wright of Brockton, Ontario, came west to visit her sister, Mrs. John Thompson. The John Thompson homestead was on 16-4-20 and the nearest on the trail eastward from Mr. Dickson's. In 1892 Miss Wright and Mr. Dickson were united in marriage.

Mrs. Dickson enjoyed visiting her neighbors, and did so in a cart driven by an ox. In winter she used a stone boat drawn by the same ox, Old Tom.

In 1895 one of the most tragic incidents of the small settlement occurred. A neighboring settler, Mr. Robinson, on S.W. 30-4-20, had taken his small daughter to the barn to do the chores. Completing the chores, they found a raging blizzard outside. Mr. Robinson attempted to go to the house, carrying the little girl on his back. Hours later he arrived at John Brown's shanty on N.E. quarter 32-3-20. The child had perished during the storm.

By 1904, with a very good set of buildings, Mr. Dickson felt pioneer days were far outdistanced. He had built a large frame house in 1897 and a barn in 1903. He erected a Massey Harris power mill with a twelve foot wheel mounted on a wooden tower. This machine pumped water and with a strong wind supplied the necessary power to operate a four inch plate chopper. This dispensed with the long trip to Boissevain to crush grain.

Mr. Dickson's family consisted of three children, Glen, Joyce and Claude, who passed away in 1921. Mr. Dickson, along with Mrs. Dickson, retired to Boissevain in 1915.

WILLIAM STOVIN

William Stovin with his family came from Sheffield, England, by sailing ship in the year 1878-79, and settled near Emerson by the Red River. After remaining five years, due to the big flood of 1882, he decided to move west, and took up a homestead on 32-1-22, located southeast of Deloraine. This long, slo wtrip was made by oxen.

Winnipeg then was made up of about two dozen buildings which included the odd store, a few houses, and shanties. There were, however, many teepees which helped to broaden the future capital of Manitoba.

William was an architect so his assistance was often sought in the planning of new buildings. Several of the important buildings of that time were planned by him, while he lived near Winnipeg.

Brandon was the nearest town when the Stovins first settled on 32-1-22, but Old Deloraine soon became a fair sized village and a very busy one, as it was the land office for the Turtle Mountain area. Pioneers from every direction flocked to this point in 1882-83 to file homesteads. Some mad the trip with oxen, some by horse, but many travelled on foot.

To the west of the Stovin homestead is an Indian reserve, where a few families still live, remnant of the Sioux tribe that crossed the boundary from the United States after the Custer Massacre at Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876, in Montana. The chief of this

tribe, who was a grand old man, was named "Addominie," which is pronounced as it sounds.

The most of this original Sioux tribe moved to the large Indian reserve at Pipestone in 1910-11. The Sioux Indians were, without a doubt, the best horsemen of the Great Plains region, being equalled or surpassed only by the Apache of the southwestern States.

The dress of the Sioux and their pinto ponies was the most brilliant of all the western Indians. For ceremonial occasions the ponies were tattooed while the braves were bedecked with eagle feathers, beads, and bright colors. Their spears had several brightly colored eagle feathers attached to the shaft. The chiefs had a band of eagle feathers attached to one heel running up over the shoulder, around the forehead and then down over the other shoulder to the other heel. The Turtle Mountains often saw these colorful riders.

Indians' funeral piers mounted on four poles, eight to ten feet high, were a common sight along the Turtle Mountains prior to the big fire of 1896. Buffalo skulls were still to be seen mounted on the corner poles in the early eighties, this was a custom rigidly adhered to by some tribes when they controlled the Great Plain area.

The information contained herein was supplied by the late William Stovin's son, Edward, who was born on the old homestead, 32-1-22, in 1884.

THE ROBERT KING FAMILY OF FAIRFAX—PIONEERS, 1887

My father, Robert King, came to Winnipeg in 1882. The family came out in 1883. Robert King, who was a building contractor in Edinburgh, Scotland, was a shareholder in the Glasgow Bank. The failure of this bank in the late '70's was the means of bringing the Limited Liabilities Act through the British House of Commons and the reason father left Scotland.

We came to the farm, section half 30-6-20 in '87. Practically all of this district was homesteaded before that. We were in Winnipeg four years. Brought a carload of effects to Brandon, neighbors meeting us there and helped us to haul our goods to the farm. We came around by Souris. In after years when the river was not too high, we forded it in going to Brandon at what was known as the Kirbyson and McGill crossings.

Our neighbors when we came to the farm were the Sandy Allan and Joe Taylor families and Isaac Dobson, who was then a bachelor. Our first home was a frame house 16' x 24' and our stable was a sod one. Nearly all of the stables were of sods in those days, though one neighbor had one built of clay and straw. He stripped a piece of land down to clay, spread straw on it, wet it with water, and drove his oxen backward and forward to mix it, and then used a fork to build

his walls. It lasted much longer than the sod stables, and he must have used it nearly 30 years before he tore it down.

The crop of 1887 was a very good one, though of limited acreage. The wheat was red fife and practically all of it on this side of Souris was hauled to Boissevain the winter of 1887 and '88. The railway had not got to Souris yet and the flour-mill there took only a limited quantity. Those north of the river hauled to Brandon. When the railway got to Souris in '89, the dividing line of what went to Souris and what to Boissevain, would be about where Fairfax is now. In 1898, the line through Minto, Fairfax and Elgin, cut off a lot of trade from both Souris and Boissevain.

The trails in both the summer and winter in the early days did not follow the road allowance but angled across the sections. The trails even went through a field in crop if the farmer did not stop them. The farmers in this district in hauling wheat to Boissevain made a two day trip of it. For dinner they stayed at either Hettle's or Bradley's and stayed overnight in Boissevain.

Those were stirring days in Boissevain. All the old-timers remember that colorful figure, Caleb Ryan, and no small portion of Boissevain business was done by the Nichol family in grain, lumber and general store. The old gentleman had a habit of saying when they were out of anything, that there was a carload on the way. The story goes that when a customer asked for a package of needles, out came the usual reply, "we are just out, but there is a carload on the way."

The main winter trail for hauling wood from Turtle Mountain for this district ran approximately between ranges 20 and 21 south till a few miles south of the track west of Boissevain and then angled slightly east and entered the bush by the Wassewa House. At the camp, about a mile in the bush, there were stables for about 25 teams and a bunk house for the teamsters. These of course were built of logs by the farmers themselves. The usual stopping place for dinner, both going and coming, was at Wm. Cumpstone's on 30-3-20. Some farmers often stayed in the bush and hauled out as far as Cumpstone's. Occasionally the north farmers would go to Boissevain and purchase wood from some of the storekeepers. They often would take wood in trade or to pay their bill from the south farmers. Each load was usually dumped off separately, so that the one purchasing it would have to take the load as it was brought in.

THE FOX FAMILY IN CANADA

From an account by T. L. Fox

Michael Fox with his wife, the former Elizabeth Stanley, and their infant daughter Margaret, left Dublin, Ireland, for Canada in 1834. They first settled near Kingston, Ontario, where their nine

other children were born. The third child, Thomas, not liking the farm, left home at the age of fourteen to take up wagon making, and later to become a carpenter in Lucan. He married Dianna McCann in 1862. Four sons, Alfred, Cambridge, Seymour, and Russell were born to Thomas and Dianna there. About 1870, the family moved to Moncton, where Mr. Fox operated a shingle mill. Here, two other sons, Frank and Arthur, were born. When the mill burned in 1874, the family moved to Windsor where Etta and Oscar were born.

Leaving his wife and family in Windsor, Mr. Thomas Fox came to Winnipeg in 1878 where he plied his trade as a contractor and builder. He sent for his family the next year. They came through Minnesota by train drawn by an old wood-burner which had to be refuelled every few miles from piles of cordwood along the track.

In the spring of 1880, the whole family came west up the Assiniboine River from Winnipeg, accompanied by Tom's brother, James, and his nephew, John Armitage, Margaret Fox's son. The party left the boat at Milford, the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine, about two miles east of the present site of Treesbank. Here they were joined by John Blanchard, who had intended going to Rapid City originally. From Milford the party could see the Turtle Mountains to the south and headed for this landmark with two yoke of oxen and a pony. They were fourteen days travelling the fifty miles from Milford to the edge of the bush to the farm now owned by Frank Kingdon. There was not a trail to be seen anywhere except the old Commission Trail.

Mr. J. P. Alexander, who lived near the present site of Wakopa, had squatter's rights to a shanty at Wood Lake. This, he allowed the Fox family to occupy. They moved in, in May 1880. The shanty was a squat structure only seven logs high with a sod roof. During heavy rains, sheets had to be hung under the roof to keep the water off the beds. All supplies had to be brought over the Commission Trail from Nelsonville, near the present site of Morden.

While Mr. Fox returned to Winnipeg to wind up his business, Alfred, who had been clerking in Winnipeg, went to Wood Lake to build a log house for the family. This log house was ten logs high with a small upstairs. When Mr. Fox returned from Winnipeg, he operated a sawmill two miles northeast of Lake Max. People came many miles for lumber, so that most of the lumber that was used for building in the district came from this mill.

While the older boys and Mr. Fox operated the mill, the younger boys roamed the prairie with their guns. They killed all kinds of wild fowl and sampled the flesh of practically every animal on the prairie, including skunk and muskrat. They cooked the fowl in Indian fashion by rolling them, feathers and all, in clay, and cooking them over the coals of the camp fire. They often spent several days at a time at some Indian camp where they learned many Indian customs.

In 1881, Tom Fox decided to take a homestead (S.E. 10-2-19) in the Turtle Mountain district. This was one of the first homesteads granted by the Turtle Mountain land office. As the chief aim of the settlers at that time was to have an abundance of wood and water, and the soil seemed to be a secondary consideration, the homestead operated by Frank, his son, proved to be a veritable rock pile. A two-storey "frame" house was built on this homestead in 1883 of poplar lumber from the mill.. To ensure warmth and prevent rodents from working in the walls, the space between the walls was filled with shavings and ashes. This house was used until 1924; when it was demolished much of the old lumber was in as good condition as when it came from the mill, 40 years earlier.

Also in 1881 Thomas Armitage, the husband of Margaret Fox, came to the Turtle Mountain district to homestead. The next year he brought out his family and his infant granddaughter, Mabel Blackwell. Armitage purchased a homestead on S.W. 10-2-19 from James Fox. In 1881, Frank Kingdon came into the district from Rapid City. He opened a store south of the Armitage homestead, 1883. By this time the railroad had reached Brandon and supplies could be obtained there. In 1885, Kingdon bought the farm he still owns.

Early church services were held by an Episcopal minister, a Mr. Aitkens, at the Fox home in the summer of 1882. These church services were conducted by travelling ministers about once a month; many settlers coming for miles, often on foot.

Schools began to make their appearance in the district about this time also. Maple Grove School was the first to be built, north-east of the present site of Desford. Westlake School was built next in 1885, two miles east and one mile south of the Armitage homestead. Frank Fox, his wife, and the older members of the family, all attended this school, which was not replaced until 1918.

In those days, doors were never locked, and it was a common occurrence to get up in the morning to find several people lying asleep on the floor. Any mail that came to the district was brought by any traveller who happened to be going through the district and was left at the Fox home for distribution. Often this mail was months old before it was delivered.

In 1884, Mr. Fox decided to move his mill west, and use it to cut lumber for snow sheds for the C.P.R. which was being rapidly extended westward. The mill was dismantled, hauled to Brandon, and shipped west of Calgary. When he moved west his son Frank fulfilled homestead duties and remained in possession of the land. Mrs. Fox and the family remained in Manitoba while Mr. Fox returned every year.

Mrs. Fox died in 1901 and Mr. Fox died in British Columbia in 1907. Thus the history of the Fox family, particularly the Thomas

Fox branch, is part of the pioneers' story of the Turtle Mountain district of Southwestern Manitoba.

PIONEER — MRS. JAMES DOUGALL 1882

On the 15th day of March in the year 1882, I left Ontario to make my home in Manitoba, arriving at Turtle Mountain on March 31st, at my new home, which was a small log house with a thatched roof. When it rained outside, it also rained in.

Several times during the trip we were delayed by the heavy snow. In those days the trains burned wood and many times we suffered from the cold when the supply ran low. Whenever we came to a pile of wood by the tracks the train would stop and the men aboard the passenger car would all go out and help restock the fuel supply. These stops also afforded an opportunity to wash with a handful of snow. There was no water on the train.

We arrived at 4 a.m. in Brandon, which was made up mostly of tents. We began the cross-country drive to Turtle Mountain, which took us over two days. The snow was four feet deep on the level. In those days there were no roads, with the exception of the Commission Trail. I have driven through ravines in a lumber wagon when the water was high enough to come into the wagon box. Quite often we could hear for miles the Red River carts squeaking for the want of grease. These carts were made of wood, not a bit of iron about them, and were usually driven by the Métis.

Neighbors in those days were very sociable. There were fourteen women in the Turtle Mountain district. Most of them came in the first summer I was there, 1882.

Brandon, which was sixty miles away, was our closest railroad. In the year 1885 the C.P.R. built a line to Boissevain. One year later the line went through to Deloraine.

In 1885 the Métis Rebellion took place and our Indians became quite saucy. They would enter our homes, help themselves to whatever they wanted, and frighten the women. I have known them to take a ham of pork that was hanging on the wall of one of my neighbors 'houses. In fact, they kept my husband off the land almost a whole afternoon. Five of our Indians got into the house and I would not stay alone. It took both of us to handle them.

Crystal City was our post office for a time. Then the mail came across country from Brandon, and the next fall we had a small post office which was called Turtle Mountain City, with Mr. Trigont as our first postmaster.

In those days there was not much sickness and a good thing it was too; there was no doctor nearer than Brandon. Our first doctor, Dr. Thornton of Deloraine, came, I believe, in the year 1883. Rev. H. Patterson, now of Knox Church, Toronto, was our first minister.

He held services in a small log house belonging to Mr. Fleming and every other Sunday the house was packed with 60-70 people. Some walked, some came in buckboards and others drove a yoke of oxen on wagons. In those days nearly everyone came out to church one way or another.

R. F. CHAPMAN

I, R. F. Chapman, was born in Yorkshire, England, September 17, 1865, and came with my parents, brothers and sisters, to Canada at the age of five, and settled in Richmond Hill, north of Toronto. My mother died shortly and four children were taken in by different families. I was adopted by James Harmon, father of Lindsay and Frank. I had very little schooling, and worked hard as a little boy. After I listened to people talking about the West I wished very much to go.

I left Ontario at the age of seventeen, via Port Huron, through Minnesota to Moorhead, where I caught a wagon train to Winnipeg, in December, 1882. They were wrecking a big log and plastered building where the City Hall now stands, and I got work there. I worked all that winter and summer until June, '83, when I got in with Ab Houck, Johnnie Powers and a couple of others who got ponies to ride and pull the cart with belongings. We set out for Old Deloraine, about four miles southeast of the present town. With guns, a sack of flour and some pork, we managed to eat. I shot ducks, made fire in the open and cooked food. We fishedwhen we could at Killarney Lake.

As a man had not fulfilled his homestead duties, I got a quarter section, 24-4-19. Five acres had been broken but had been left. The land at that time was staked with stakes three feet high with Roman numerals to mark section, township and range. I could not read the Roman numerals so had to get the information from Mr. Flesher, the land agent. I was too young by law to take a homestead, but the agent must have thought I looked capable as he gave me the right to go ahead. We had travelled west from Winnipeg on the Old Commission Trail. There was a stopping house at Wakopa. After staking my land, I went back to Emerson where I worked the rest of the year. I had been given a six months' extension so I had to be back on my homestead by February 1st, 1883. I bought a yoke of oxen from a Mr. Gunn of Birds Hill. I also bought a wagon, set of harness, sleighs, two tents (12 x 14) for self and for oxen. A carpenter fixed lumber to line up the wall of tent and for floor boards—he made a bunk out of some boards. I got a sheet iron stove and pipes, a few dishes, quilts, blankets and cooking utensils, some flour, half side of pig.

I went to the Canadian Pacific Railway to see if I could get a

car. Other settlers were going west so my things were taken along to Brandon in January, 1883.

On arrival I loaded everything in the sleigh (left wagon at hotel livery barn) and started on my way south. I got out as far as Cleveland's stopping house not far from Lake Clementi the first day. Next day I travelled to four miles north of the Souris River and stopped the night at Wm. English's stopping house.

Climbing up the Souris Hill, I overtook a team of oxen, and hitched my team ahead to help those travellers get their load up the hill. They were Dunc and Pete Henderson and their sister, who later became Mrs. W. A. Latimer. We finally arrived at Sam Heaslip's stopping place and stayed overnight.

Mr. Heaslip directed me to my land. I had put an old buffalo head on the post so I could identify it by that as well as the numbers. I arrived on homestead about noon. Mr. Heaslip had given me wood so upon arrival, I set up oxen tent and stove so I could boil water to freeze the tent pegs into the snow. I shovelled snow off the ground where my tent was to be, got floor boards down, wall boards in, and a ridge pole just steep enough to run the water off. I banked it up all around with snow.

I bought hay from Bill Long, $20.00 a ton. Bill lived north three miles. He gave me some oats and some potatoes. I got wood west of where Margaret is now, at the Souris River, and green logs to build a log shanty with sod roof. The barn was all sod with pole supports. These I built the first summer.

Spring came early and I got started to break the land. I spent all summer and winter 1883 at the homestead. In the fall of '83, a Frenchman by name of George Street who had a portable engine and separator wanted a team to haul his machine. I had back-setting done and no money so I went with George Street to thresh. I got $2.50 a day to buck straw and move the engine. Threshing was $20.00 a set (two stacks). I went threshing about September 10th and got home the 7th of November. I had $90.00 from work. Tom Hammond and wife Jane homesteaded just one and a half miles west of me. Sam Moore came about May, 1883, as did Dave Pringle and son. William Hall came in '84. Dick Oliver lived two and one half miles north and Jim Johnson was near him.

Dick and I worked together a lot, breaking, haying and getting wood. In 1884, I sowed a bit of wheat and some oats, and more potatoes and a few other vegetables. I shot ducks, geese, and snow birds which were delicious fried after a diet of salt pork. During the year '84 I poisoned and trapped about forty foxes. On October 25th, Dick Oliver and I loaded in bags two loads of wheat and started for Brandon. It started to snow before we got to the river; heavy wet snow. There were thirteen teams of oxen and one team of horses waiting at the river. They were afraid to descend the hill because of the slippery snow. We put a big rope around the axle

and wrapped it around a tree so we could edge the loads down the steep hill. It was late at night when all the loads were safely down. All stayed the night at Sam Heaslip's as clothes had to be dried and oxen fed. We started for Brandon next day with wagons in seven feet of snow and got to William English's by night. We slept in the kitchen and snow drifted in on us while we slept. Next day we got to Clevelands. The fourth day we made Brandon and went to the market. Those with white fife wheat could sell it. Dick and I had red fife. There were no elevators and I had to store my wheat with Parrish and Lindsay's Storage, Brandon. Dick sold his for seed.

I needed boots so the shoemaker, Mr. Sinkbil, sold me leather boots with felt inners for $1.50.

"If you don't pay this year, I'll get it next year," he said. In the spring, I got a letter from Parrish and Lindsay with $5.00 enclosed. They said they were unable to sell for more. Storage cost 10c a bushel and out of sixty-five bushels, I got $5.00. In the spring, Jim Johnson sold some of his wheat, the same kind as mine, for 44c a bushel. Jim had horses so I got him to haul my wheat to Brandon and sell it to Ogilvie's. I was then able to pay the shoemaker and the storekeeper for groceries, socks and supplies.

In 1885, I sowed sixty acres of red fife wheat and harvested a good crop. As it was too far to haul wheat to Brandon, I went to Cartwright and worked on the railroad, cooking (second cook) for 150 men, who were building the Canadian Pacific Railway, Deloraine branch. They paid me $65.00 a month so I made a little over two hundred dollars and paid for threshing and twine at 14c a pound. I lived on my homestead during winter, got logs out and trapped.

The year 1886 was very, very dry, with poor crop and little wheat. The year 1887 was wonderful, wheat yielded 35 to 40 bushels per acre.

I spent much time in evenings now, learning to read and educate myself for my life work in the West. Many times I was very lonely with only my dog to talk to.

I sold my grain in Boissevain at Ogilvies'. At the river, I cut logs to build with and wood to burn. In the year 1888, I had my crop in early and so avoided the frost in August. I got $1.20 per bushel for it.

I rented the farm in '88 and went to Boissevain, where I worked with Ham Gage, implement agent, and Sandy Bissett, a plasterer.

In December, I took an excursion return-trip for $45.00 to Ontario for three months and arrived just before Christmas at Aurora. I went to see the man who had taught school and to visit a girl I had been fond of, Hannah Medley. I told her all about the West; that it was a lonely place but a great country with a great future. We planned to be married the next Christmas.

I returned to Manitoba, February, 1889, and went to Deloraine

to work with Ham Gage selling implements. It was a dry summer and grasshoppers were bad. Wheat went about 10 bushels per acre, oats 20 to 25.

I went on the homestead at the end of October. I fixed up the house and got some furniture. Levi Brownsberger stayed at the homestead, cut wood, and cared for livestock while I went to Ontario to get my bride. Hannah Medley and I were married in Aurora, January 20th, 1890. We left about February 1st, for our home in the West.

Levi had the homestead so clean. The friendly neighbors came to see us and brought us gifts.

In the springtime we had a few hens, a cow and a calf, three horses and a dog. We got the crop in, and planted more trees. I had already planted trees along the road allowance.

The crops in that spring and summer looked so good until a hail storm on August 1st wiped everything out.

As the work was done early that fall, and the weather was beautiful, I drew out fourteen good loads of wood from Turtle Mountain, some of which I sold at $5.00 a load.

Harmons came out from Ontario that year and we went down to their home for New Year's dinner. The day was so warm we played baseball.

In the year 1891, after a nice winter, the spring was dry. I had a good crop in, one hundred acres of wheat, oats and barley. May 20th a lovely rain came and crops grew.

George Smith went to Brandon and bought a threshing machine to thresh for the neighbors. On October 19th, we went threshing at Dan Holmes. The morning was lovely but it started to snow by noon, an 18 inch fall. Weather was cold and windy, and snow piled up around the grain stacks. However, we threshed when we could and I got some out just before Christmas. I couldn't get a chicken or turkey, but bought a couple of fish and some oranges.

Grandmother Medley wanted to come out West to us as she was all alone now. I could get lumber fairly cheap from Sam Smith near the bush. We had a bee and built our house—18 x 24 with an upstairs. So we now had a home, and life went on as usual. We had good, fair, and poor crops throughout the years to come. We were raising our family and were busy and happy.

Harmony School was built about 1895 and I was secretary-treasurer for ten years.

In 1899, I built a frame barn. In 1903 we all had diphtheria and our Eva, five years old, died.

Everything in stores was very expensive and of poor grade. When an Eaton's catalogue came into the house we made out an order for $72.00 and saved enough on one dozen egg cups to pay the freight.

My first co-operative endeavor was the Hammond-Chapman Syndicate. We bought a threshing machine, Sawyer Massey engine, portable and 36 inch separator for $36.00. As this agreement was satisfactory we threshed this way for seventeen years. In September, 1906, the Grain Growers Grain Company came into being. I was keenly interested and worked to help organize.

In summer of 1910 I built my barn. Pioneer days now were becoming a memory. I was buying good horses, and cattle and things were going along very well.

Our family of seven were all home now. Mother had been a splendid partner for me, loved the West as I did, worked hard to raise our family and was deserving of an easier life. We lived on the farm until 1924 when we moved to Ninga, as the family now were getting married and on their own.

Mother died in Ninga in 1935.

Now in my 91st year, I sit with memories of the past and look and talk with pride of the progress of the West.

JAMES J. MUSGROVE, 1855-1931

James J. Musgrove was born at Pickering, Ontario, the second son of James and Elizabeth Musgrove. He attended the Turnberry and Gorrie schools. In October 1881 he came to this district by oxcart and the next year located on section 35-2-20. In May 1883 he acquired a part of section 5-3-19 which he farmed successfully up to the time of his retirement to Boissevain. Jim was also a carpenter of no mean ability; he has been heard to tell of his graduation from the roof of old Manitoba College.

The virgin West offered great scope for his enthusiasm and organizing ability. Mr. Musgrove was the chairman of the first entertainment in this district, which was held on section 22-2-20 in 1882. He was gatekeeper at the first day of sports, which took place at Wood Lake. He was catcher for the first baseball team organized here in 1884. Jim organized the first Sunday School, in a building on section 4-3-19, and acted as Bible class teacher. He was also the first lay preacher in Turtle Mountain. He erected the first building in town and marketed the first load of wheat in Boissevain. He was the first president of the Patrons of Industry, and a member of the board of directors of the Farmers Elevator Co. James was editor of the first paper (a manuscript) published in Boissevain.

J. J. was never happier than when he was actively engaged in furthering the interests of his town and district. He was an honorary director of the Agricultural Society; a life member of the Heather Curling Club and a member of the Board of Trade. For 61 years Mr. Musgrove was a teacher in the Sunday School and for 47 years a lay preacher of the Methodist Church.

In later years the International Peace Garden project received

his enthusiastic support and his was an early suggestion that the site be in the Turtle Mountain area. Ironically the October 15, 1931 issue of the Boissevain Recorder which printed the obituary of J. J. Musgrove also announced that the International Peace Garden Association had voted in favor of the Turtle Mountain site.

SAMUEL GREAVES

Born in 1864 at Plitworth, Nottingham, England, Samuel Greaves joined the Grenadier Guards in 1881 when seventeen years of age, serving with the regiment until he was twenty-two years old. In 1887 he came to Canada and in 1888 commenced farming operations on section 28-2-20, in what is now known as the Desford district. He built a log house of one storey and other buildings and also cleared land, breaking it up with the walking plough. In 1889 he married Miss Isabelle Wilson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wilson, who came from England a year earlier. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Woods in what is now the upstairs of Johnson's Hardware.

Same Greaves also experienced the hard times that other pioneers endured. During one storm he and his family lived on bread and potatoes for a week as it was impossible to brave the storm to get needed supplies.

In the early days wood for the town of Boissevain was hauled from the Turtle Mountain. Sam, being an expert axeman, would cut and split his load of cordwood (a load being a cord and a half to two cords) on his own farm in the morning and haul it to town in the afternoon. Many a load of wood Sam has hauled to the Ryan House and to the mill.

Sam was an immigrant officer and brought many immigrants from the United States to settle in the district. Among those whom he brought over were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Whitfield, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kelly and a Mr. Hall.

During his early years of residence Sam was a member of the local cricket team and was one of the outstanding cricket players in Southwestern Manitoba. He also had few equals as a bowler.

Sam did much for education and for the church in the Desford district. He was one of the first ratepayers of Desford School and also one of the first members of the School Board, serving as a trustee for over thirty years. He was active in organizing the district for the building of St. John's Church and served as a warden on the Church Board. He was also a member of the Masonic Order, being one of the first members of Doric Lodge and at one time was District Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba.

Mr. and Mrs. Greaves had a family of five sons and two daughters.

WILLIAM WILLSON

Wm. Willson was born in Kent County, Ont., in 1859, of United Empire Loyalist stock. He received his education in Slabtown School in Kent County. He came to this district in 1882 along with Wm. Lambert. They walked from Brandon to Old Deloraine to make entry for their homesteads. Mr. Willson took for his homestead part of 28-3-20 where he took up residence Nov. 15th, 1882. He worked on his farm in the summer and went into camp in the Turtle Mountain where he spent two or three winters cutting wood. His first post office address was Nimitaw, the first postmaster he received mail from in this district was James Rae.

Wm. Willson and Margaret Little were married in 1886. She was born near Goderich, Ont., in 1886. She lived a few years near Broadview, Sask., before she was married. Her father transported supplies in the North West Rebellion with a yoke of oxen and wagon, earning $5.00 per day.

Wm. Willson built a grain elevator on his farm in 1903, the first of its kind in the district. A J. I. Case sweep horse power was used for power. One horse could drive the elevator, but eight or ten horses were required to drive a 10 inch crusher or circular saw. Horses were used for power until 1914.

Wm. Willson helped build one of the first schools in the district and was secretary treasurer for a number of years. He attended the first church service in Boissevain, which was held in a coach on the C.P.R. tracks. In 1910 he retired from his farm and lived in Boissevain for a number of years. His farm won the Good Farming competition in 1911 and 1912. Mr. Willson was elected mayor January 4th, 1916, and served in that capacity until October 5th, 1920. He was a horseman of merit and raised several standard bred racers that made good records for themselves.

During his residence in Boissevain, Mr. Willson was an active member of Doric Lodge, A.F. and A.M., G.R.M. Both he and Mrs. Willson were members of St. Paul's United Church. In later years they resided in Brandon.

H. A. HARRIS

H. A. Harris was born near London, Ont., 1856. His father, originally from Yorkshire, England, had spent most of his life in Canada. In 1880, H. A. married Margaret Dickson, whose brother Benjamin later homesteaded in the Boissevain area. H. A. found this land very beautiful, but hard to farm, so returned to Grey County where he bought a tract of timberland near Parkdale, making the stormy and hazardous voyage by ship from Georgian Bay to Owen Sound. Three days previous to their voyage, a vessel carrying crew and passengers of over three hundred foundered with only two survivors .

After thirteen years on a stony bush farm, Mr. Harris and family decided to move to Manitoba. In 1896, the family, with six children, Marjorie, Sadie, Millie, Gertrude and twin boys, John and James, arrived at Boissevain and rented a farm near where Wakopa School now stands — about twelve miles northwest of Boissevain.

That winter Mr. Harris built a log shanty and barn in the Turtle Mountains and cut wood for the settlers, who hauled it as far as Elgin and Souris.

Mrs. Harris, in addition to her duties of caring for her family, baked and sold bread and pies to the men cutting wood nearby. On one occasion, Mr. Harris and daughter Marjorie became lost in a storm while returning from Boissevain to their home in the bush. Marjorie remained in the cutter till morning, while her father unhitched the Indian pony and drove it round and round to keep it from freezing. With the moderating weather at dawn, they were able to get their bearings and proceed to the home of Wm. King where they were able to get warm and have some breakfast. This farm was south of where Bluevale School now is.

In contrast to the severity of the winters, was the heat and myriads of mosquitoes in summer. "Travellers" usually carried a small kettle with a fire well smothered with green grass to provide smoke. During 1897 H. A. Harris worked as a stone mason in the Bidford district building the stone walls for cellars, and foundations of several new homes.

Having lost his buildings by fire at Lake Max, Mr. Harris rebuilt them, but was unable to make use of them due to an attack of typhoid. All of the family went down with the disease except Mrs. Harris, some of them being very ill. Mrs. Harris cared for the entire family till their recovery.

In 1898 the family moved to N.W. 18-4-20, where Primrose School now stands. Here they provided a stopping place for teamsters who were drawing wood to Elgin and Souris. The next year they moved to the N.W. 5-4-20, where they purchased land and built a house—owning for the first time a farm that wasn't covered with timber and stones.

With the advance of years, Mr. and Mrs. Harris decided to move to Boissevain in 1922, leaving the sons on the farm. Eight years later Gertrude and Mrs. Harris passed on, Mr. Harris continued to live in Boissevain till his passing in 1943 at the age of 85.

MR. AND MRS. JOHN HUGGARD THOMPSON

Mr. and Mrs. John Huggard Thompson, of Irish descent, and he a direct descendant of the French Huguenots, arrived in the Boissevain district by horses and wagon just after the C.P.R. reached there. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson and their six children, along

with a few pieces of furniture, completed the load. He had applied for the S.E. quarter of 16-4-20, which had previously been filed upon by a Mr. Lalond, but since abandoned, so the family was fortunate in the fact that they had a shack to live in until their house could be built.

Mr. Thompson, along with his farming duties, was very fond of music, reading and chess, and many evenings in the Thompson home were spent quietly reading, playing the Irish or Scotch reels, or settling a challenge match of chess with Mr. Howell.

With a literary background, the children did well at school. One occasion we might mention to illustrate this being Jennie Thompson (Mrs. Howell) winning first prize in a short story contest sponsored by the "Montreal Witness," a family paper.

At this time Mr. Thompson developed a T.B. condition, and never having been too strong, decided to go to a warmer climate in the hope of recovery. However in a few months' time he passed away in Los Angeles, a comparatively young man.

This left a heavy burden for Mrs. Thompson and the seventeen-year-old son, Harry, running the farm as well as training and educating the family. The children continued their education, getting through Royal, and each in turn going through Boissevain High. Three girls attended Normal and taught school. The second son, Ralph, also taught for two years at Wapaha, leaving to study Pharmacy at Manitoba "U."

The family were all on their own now, so Harry, the eldest son, sold the farm and entered Veterinary College at Guelph. Receiving his degree, he was first located as inspector at the International Boundary at Bannerman, later moving permanently to the town of Virden to go into private practice. Some years later, he and his now graduate son carried on this practice as well as operating a large apiary as a side line, on a piece of ground they owned outside of town. Some years they produced as much as fifty tons of honey.

His mother, Mrs. J. H. Thompson, had passed away in Virden in 1947 at the age of 88.

JOHN PEACOCK

John Peacock was born near the village of Bluevale, Ont., on March 9th, 1862. Born and raised on a farm, he headed west with the idea of farming in Manitoba in 1899. Arriving here, he purchased the west half of 31-2-20. The returns from the crop that year were very disappointing as the hail did a 100 percent job of destruction. That fall Mr. Peacock went back to Ontario, and in Feb., 1890, married Margaret Jane Robb, also of Bluevale, and with his bride returned west in the spring.

The residence of the farm had been on the south quarter, however Mr. Peacock decided to build on the north quarter, so he and Mrs. Peacock moved to the Bert Chambers farm for one year, while

the new dwelling was built. The crop this year was late maturing, and in the process of being cut and stacked late was an entire loss through the effects of snow and ice. This same fall Mr. Peacock, along with Mr. W. J. McKinney, and some other unfortunate neighbors, headed for Brandon to earn some money doing late threshing. They found work all right, but had to rough it as no sleeping accommodation could be found, and each night they had to sleep in a strawstack. Like many others, he did his turn at cutting and hauling cordwood to Boissevain for $2 a cord. After using the Chambers buildings the one year, Mr. and Mrs. Peacock went to live in their new house. In 1902 they felt that they could use the original house in connection with their own, so moved it up most of a mile by capstan, operated by horse power. It took ten full days to move the house approximately one mile.

Mr. and Mrs. Peacock continued farming on 31 until they retired to Boissevain in 1928, the farm since then being operated by their son Elmer.

A considerable part of Mr. Peacock's life was spent to public service. Twenty-six years were spent on the school board, sixteen of which he was secretary-treasurer. He also spent fifteen years as councillor, then being elected reeve, which position he held for eighteen years.

Mr. Peacock passed on Dec. 20th, 1953. Mrs. Peacock still lives in Boissevain with her son Willson.

GABRIEL ORRISS

Gabriel Orriss was born in 1864. He and his brother David came from Suffolk, England, in 1888 to Boissevain. For the first year or so Gabriel worked for Jim Rae, Archie Currie and Peter Henderson until he and Dave began farming north of Fairburn School. They batched in a log shack and one morning it was cold Gabriel awakened to find icicles on his moustache. In 1897 they moved to west 6-3-19 where they lived in a frame house. In 1900 Gabriel married Miss Mary Richardson who came from Wingham, Ontario, as a child with her parents in 1874. Of this marriage there were three children.

On March 28th, 1903, there was one of the worst blizzards ever experienced. Gabriel had to go for the doctor and went to the barn for horses. When he got outside he couldn't find the barn and when the storm cleared a little discovered he was standing on the barn, the building being completely covered with snow. Banks were from twelve to twenty feet deep. He dug the horses out and drove with the stone boat to the Percy Lay farm where the doctor was.

Gabriel was a staunch member of the Presbyterian Church and later of the United Church. He was an elder in the church for over forty years and was one of the first elders in the United Church.

THOMAS PATTERSON

Thomas Patterson came from Wingham, Ontario, in 1881, to the Boissevain district, homesteading on N.E. 34-2-20. He then took a pre-emption on S.W. 1-3-20. After the homestead and pre-emption duties were completed Tom decided to trade his pre-emption with his brother John so each could have his land in one block, Tom having east 34-2-20 and John west 1-3-20.

Tom broke 25 or 30 acres on his homestead with oxen and drew his wood for fuel and logs for his buildings from the Turtle Mountain with oxen also. The first grain crop was threshed with the flail|

On November 20, 1889, Tom married Miss Isabelle Johnstone and of this marriage there were four sons and one daughter.

Tom was a water witcher and used a green willow bough. His services were required as far north as Brandon North, west to Waskada and east to Morden. On his own farm the well was dug in 1883. It was five feet square and stone inside for cribbing. This well is still in use and supplies water for thirty head of stock and household use. The original stone cribbing is still holding the water.

FERDINAND COUTURE

Ferdinand Couture was born in Beaumont Coutee Belle-Chasse, P. Quebec, Oct. 26th, 1866.

With Frank and Jos. Turgeon he arrived in Boissevain in the spring of 1885, each one having the total of approximately fifty cents in his pocket. They started out to walk in a northwesterly direction, arriving in the Whitewater hay marsh just about dark. There being no where else to sleep, they found and burrowed into a hay stack for the night, continuing on in the morning. During the forenoon they arrived at their destination, it being the farm where Zeph Sexton lives now. At that time Mr. D. Turgeon owned the place.

Ferdinand worked on the Turgeon farm all summer, then in the winter he and the two men who had come West with him went into the Turtle Mountains, where they built a shanty to live in, and started in to cut wood for sale. They followed this practise for several winters, coming out to work on the farms in the spring.

Ferdinand was married to Miss Emme Turgeon from St. Michael Contee Belle-Chasse, P. Quebec, on Dec. 27th, 1894. It was a double wedding and was held at Mr. A. Demassons, the Albert Demasson place now, Mr. Demasson's daughter Lottie being married at the same time to Mr. Harry Barnes of Boissevain.

Ferdinand worked the D. Turgeon farm for a couple of years, then bought the S.E. 16-4-21, a year or two later buying the next quarter south. After working a year or two with oxen he, like the rest, graduated to horses. Grain was hauled to Boissevain or Deloraine, a lengthy trip in either case. In 1900 Ferdinand and

Frank Turgeon bought a threshing machine in partnership, this filling a long felt need. They were able to do their own threshing now, as well as go a considerable distance doing custom work.

Mail came to the Thos. Dougal place, known as Wapaha post office, however, this was later changed to Abigail post office, kept by Harry Duncan. This was considerably closer than the Wapaha post office. The mail was brought out from Boissevain once a week by horse and buggy.

Mr. Couture passed away on Jan. 29th, 1937, his wife having predeceased him two years before, passing April 5th, 1935.

HENRY JAMES WOOD

Henry Jas. Wood, born in Bayfield, Ont., Jan. 7, 1860, came West with his brother Will in 1881, being among the first settlers. Leaving Emerson by ox team, they travelled to Brandon, then to the Deloraine district, finally filing on a homestead by Cadzow siding. Shortly after this their parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Wood together with brothers Chas., Chris, Archie and sister Margaret came West also.

Like the other settlers in those days, they hauled their grain to Brandon, bringing back supplies for themselves and neighbors. They had to ford the Souris River ,many times getting stuck, which sometimes meant carrying the load of bagged wheat out a bag at a time. Stops were made at what was known as the half-way house, going and coming. Usually a three day trip, the second day being spent from the half-way house to Brandon and return.

In 1885 Mr. Wood married Eliza Birbeck of Thorold, Ont., who came West to Brandon in 1883, then travelled by covered wagon to join her parents in the Wassewa district. Some years later Mr. and Mrs. Wood and family moved to the edge of Turtle Mountain.

Recreation consisted largely of evening visits with the neighbors, playing cards, checkers or dancing. Many a trip was made to homes miles away by ox-team or horses to a dance.

Henry used to tell some very interesting experience of the early days. One of these concerned one evening while walking home from seeing his girl friend, who lived seven miles away; he was followed by a lynx, his only weapon being a pocket knife. He was able to scare it away that night, and shortly afterwards he and his brother Chris. shot it. Chris. had the skin of this lynx for a number of years.

Along with his farming duties, Mr. Wood was for a number of years trustee and sec.-treas. of Lake Max School. He also for a number of years had the Wassewa post office, bringing the mail out from Boissevain.

Mr. and Mrs. Wood moved to Regina in 1928, where they both passed away later, Mr. Wood on April 27th, 1936, and Mrs. Wood on January 16th, 1951.

JAMES BURGESS, 1880

In the year 1880 my father James Burgess came west from Bluevale, Ontario. He took up a homestead on section 22-2-20 approximately three-quarters of a mile north of Horton which used to be known as Old Desford.

In that same year he built a log house, bought a team of oxen, plough and wagon. He broke up some land, then in the fall he returned to Ontario, coming back again the next March in 1881 accompanied by Jim and William Patterson.

In July of the same year my mother and the family, four girls and two boys, came by train through Milwaukee and Chicago to Emerson where my father met us with a team of oxen and covered wagon. We headed for our new home, stopping at night, set up our tents, made our beds, and cooked our meals in the open, which we did for two weeks. We arrived at the homestead July 20, 1881. Our nearest neighbor was my uncle, Joe Burgess, who lived a mile from us.

Most newcomers stopped at my father's home until they got a bit settled.

The first grain was seeded broadcast by hand, and was cut with a cradle, something like a scythe. It was tied by hand and threshed with a flail. It was a few years later before threshing machines were brought in. Our nearest market for wheat was Brandon which was a three day trip, and at the price given for grain after getting a few supplies there was very little money left.

There was a grist mill at Crystal City where my father used to get flour.

The first church services were held at my father's home, the minister being the Rev. Cameron. There was no school for several years. Richview was built and my youngest brother, Walter Burgess, attended. I was only eight years old when I came west, so by the time the school opened I thought I was too big to go to school, so I got very little schooling.

Mr. Nichol started a store a few years later on his farm about a mile and a half from Horton School. We were able to purchase most things needed which was not too much in those days.

My mother made her own soap by saving wood ashes and pouring water over them to get lye, mix with grease and make the soap. She made her own cheese also.

We went to the Turtle Mountains to pick raspberries, the only wild fruit I can remember growing at that time.

One thing that I remember well was when I was herding the cattle on the prairie. I happened to look up towards the west and there coming down the trail were a lot of red coated Mounted Police on their ponies. It gave me such a scare I soon rounded up the cattle and hurried them home.

Another time we had a terrible prairie fire which started from a straw pile. It went all the way to Killarney before it could be put out.

The blizzards were terrible in those days, lasting often three days. The men used to tie binder twine to the door knob of the house and take it to the barn so as to be sure to make it back to the house.

The first fair was held in the fall of 1882 at my father's, ending up with a dance in the evening. There were also picnics held at Ross' grove. We would go in the morning, spend all day visiting and having the usual sports.

Mrs. Agnes Johnson

THE JOE McKEE STOREY

Not being a pioneer myself, I have written some of the stories and doings of the people along the south side of the Souris River in the early days, as told by my father, and I am sure that the names and happenings which I will mention will be familiar to many readers.

My father and his brother Tom, who had been in Minnesota for three years, decided to come to Manitoba. Arriving in Emerson, they came west by Crystal City, then northeast of Rock and Pelican Lakes, coming out of Lang's Valley at Prospect Point. After spending several days hunting land, they returned to Milford at the mouth of the Souris River, where father made application, on May 10th, 1881, for the west half of 34-5-19, and Uncle Tom the west half of the same section. These were the first entries in township 5, range 19.

Father than took the boat down the Assiniboine River to Winnipeg and back to Minnesota, where he stayed until fall.

Uncle Tom had to take the applications to the land office at Old Deloraine, then walk back to Milford and on to Portage la Prairie, which was then the end of steel. There he bought a yoke of oxen, a wagon, plow, tent and provisions for the summer, returning to the homestead early in June where he broke sixteen acres that summer, put up hay for the oxen, and got out some logs for buildings. Early next spring they went to Johnny Wilson's, who lived on the Pembina River near Crystal City, where they got fifty bushels of wheat, forty bushels of oats and ten bushels of barley, which cost about $50.00.

My father and uncle batched until 1886, when father went to his old home at Cumberland, Ontario, which is east of Ottawa, and returned with my mother as his bride.

Written by his daughter,
Miss Margaret McKee

WILLIAM JOHN McKINNEY

William John McKinney was born in Bluevale, Huron County, Ontario, and left there in 1880 for Manitoba. He and his brother Tom, who was killed by a falling tree the same year while cutting logs for lumber on the Alex McNeil farm, purchased from the C.P.R. E 31-2-20 — 350 acres in all. They built a sod shanty and returned to Ontario in the fall of 1881.

On May 24, 1882 he married Miss Mary Ann Robb and returned to Manitoba with his wife and some household effects. He sent his wife and two boys, Fred, two and a half and Harvey, one year, back to Ontario in 1885 until the Indian uprising was settled.

The land was broken with a walking plow and oxen and the seed was first sown broadcast and then with a Gatling Gun. William John cut the grain with a hand cradle and Mrs. McKinney bound it into sheaves. Later a binder was purchased and Mrs. McKinney helped William John by driving it in the harvest time. Mrs. McKinney used to build a sort of play pen walled by sheaves and put her children in it. She took a pail of water, a towel and some eats to the field and put them in the enclosure and very often took the bread out too. At the end of a round with the binder she would mix down the bread, nurse the baby and make the necessary changes. In order to run the binder she used to tie a string around her floor length skirt to keep the skirt from getting caught in the canvass and chains.

Threshing was always done with a machine and stack threshing was done for many years as threshing machines were scarce and stacks could be threshed in the winter. The women used to help stack the sheaves in the fall.

The first three years oxen were used and the bit of grain threshed was hauled to Brandon. The Souris River had to be forded coming and going and this was no easy task with grain and supplies to be handled.

In 1889 William John built the first frame house, 16 by 22 feet, a storey and a half, with poplar lumber from Morton's sawmill. Poplar joists were laid on the ground over a small dugout for a cellar. This house was nearly blown down on August 1, 1890 when a cyclone, accompanied by hail, swept the district. During the storm William John took Fred and Harvey, the only ones home at the time, down the cellar and they could see out first one side and then the other as the house rocked from side to side. William John held quilts over the window to protect it from being broken and to stop the water from running in the barrel of flour sitting under the window. The crop was completely hailed out that year and money for livelihood had to come from selling eggs. Another year the grain was frozen and had to be spread out on quilts to dry.

Mr. and Mrs. McKinney had eleven children, four boys and seven girls, the older ones being registered at Old Deloraine where William John also filed his homestead.

In 1904 William John built his cement brick house, the bricks being made right on the McKinney farm. Mr. R. G. Currie did the brick work and Mr. Ellis Maguire the carpenter work. In 1908 the frame barn was built with Mr. Steve King being the framer. A barn raising was held with Mr. John Peacock and Mr. John Musgrove as captains, the former winning. William John paid cash for having the barn built. He never kept his money in a bank but in a tin in the potato bin.

William John was an instigator in the organizing of the Orange Lodge and was one of its first members.

ROBT. BASKERVILLE

Robert Baskerville, grandson of John Baskerville, was born near Ottawa 1859. He was a descendant of the French Huguenots who fled to Ireland from France following the Protestant persecution, massacre and exile. The family later migrated to Canada prior to the great Irish famine, in 1846, making the six weeks voyage in a sailing vessel, and settling near Bytown which was later called Ottawa.

Robert A. Baskerville, one of a family of ten children, grew to manhood in Ontario. He was a pioneer son of a pioneering family in that province. At the age of nineteen years, he decided to forsake the strenuous life of an axeman in the timberlands about Ottawa, where hours of work were from dawn to dusk and wages $10 per month. The meagre fare consisted of four items of food—bread, pork, beans and tea. In 1879 he made his way Westward to Montana and Idaho via Chicago, going by rail to the end of steel, and on farther by stage coach through the mountains.

Working at logging, prospecting, mining, farming and operating a sawmill, he acquired first hand information on life and conditions in this frontier land. Business conditions became so bad due to strikes of miners that the mining and lumber industries suffered to the extent that Robt. decided to go to Canada—Manitoba in particular, where other relatives had settled. In 1892—thirteen years after leaving Ontario, he arrived at Deloraine, where he harvested, then moved on to Boissevain where he filed on the S.E. 6-4-20, six miles N.W. of town, at the same time working his deceased brother John's quarter on the same section.

In 1899 Mr. Baskerville married Marjorie Harris, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. A. Harris. Of this marriage there were two sons and six daughters—John A., Hazel, Effie (deceased), Harold J., Margaret, Irene, Ida and Melrose.

In 1904, Robert's two brothers, David and George joined him, settling on 24-3-21. David's three boys, John, William and Charles still farm near-by.

In 1914, Robert purchased his first automobile, it being a model "T" Ford.

In 1927 he purchased land on 23-3-20, close to town and built a house on this property, to make it more convenient for his family to attend high school. Following the loss of his barn by fire in 1940, he and his family moved back to the original homesite, where he died, after a short illness in 1946 at the age of 87 years.

One of Robert's vivid recollections of those early days was the death of so many young people due to T.B., known in those days as "consumption." Before the days of X-rays and sanitariums, it spread rapidly through homes and schools, causing much loss and sorrow to the pioneer families.

Over the period of more than 55 years that Robt. Baskerville resided in this area, he was a kindly neighbor, lending a helping hand to many. He was a staunch supporter of his church, being a member of the board of the Methodist Church, and later an elder of St. Pauls United for many years.

Mrs. Baskerville and son John still reside on the original homestead. One of the log buildings erected over sixty years is still standing and serves as a poultry house.

ROBERT HURT 1880

Robert Hurt and his brother Charles came to the district from Emerson by ox cart in 1880. When they arrived at Emerson, the Red River was in flood, and the ferry was stranded on the far side, the cable having broken.

Two hundred settlers were stranded with all their effects. The situation had become critical because food was becoming scarce. Due to the flood there were so many extra people to feed.

Bob Hurt had come straight from a sailing ship so he looked over the situation with interest, and decided to try crossing the river in a flat bottomed boat, taking a line attached to a new hawser to attach to the stranded ferry. Some of the other men also volunteered to go with him. They made the trip safely, and with the help of men and teams on the other side got the stranded ferry free and afloat again. Soon it was once more in service, and the settlers were able to continue on their way. Bob and Charley helped for a while and then started for the Turtle Mountain and further adventures.

The first threshing machine I saw on the farm of A. S. Barton was truly a horse power; it was operated thus: near the bottom of the threshing machine was a long iron rod three inches in diameter and at the other end of this rod was a capstan from which extended at regular intervals five poles, to each of these poles was attached a

team of horses, on top of the capstan was a platform where a man with a long whip in his hand sat or stood all day long to keep the horses going in a circle; this set the tumbling rod in rapid motion and motivated the threshing machine.

Mr. Arthur Aitkens, machine expert, had taken me out. Ned and Dick Sankey were also there helping with the threshing.

Bob Hurt worked for Mr. Morton at the saw mill at Lake Max for a time and then decided to build a grist mill at Waubeesh, run by a water wheel. He imported stones and built the mill but though the building was completed I do not think the mill ever operated.

However it served as a ballroom for Bob's twenty-first birthday party in 1884. The weather had been fine and unusually mild for January, so he sent invitations far and wide to all his friends, and also imported special food and an orchestra from Brandon. The day dawned fine and mild, everybody came, men, women and children. On the invitation was a note to the effect "Bring your own oats and hay." Everything went well and everyone had a fine time. Unfortunately around midnight the temperature began to fall fast, the wind rose to gale proportions, men began to get their families on the move. It turned out to be one of the worst storms ever experienced in the district. Some people had to stay with friends for several days. So ended a birthday party in Turtle Mountain district in the year 1884.

PIONEER DAYS OF TURTLE MOUNTAIN AREA, 1880

When the first settlers arrived in the Turtle Mountain district it could quite truthfully be described as "Butler's Great Lone Land", the title of a book written about the Canadian northwest. It was still shown on the Canadian maps as part of the Northwest Territory. Manitoba, styled the 'Postage stamp' on the maps of those days, only reached as far as what is now known as Clearwater. The land was not sub-divided any further west until a couple of years later, and there were not even road allowances between Whitewater and Mountainside.

The first settlers to arrive settled around La Riviere's Trading Post at Wakopa in 1879. They were mostly from Quebec and included the Youngs, Coulters, Weirs, T. A. Sharp, Phil Scott and others. The first to settle at the west end of the mountain were the Rentons, Uries, George Smith and George Ardmore, Jim, Dave and Harry Dougall and the two Flemings. Settlers between this point and Wakopa included Walter Millions, Henry Birbeck, Jim Burgess and J. Cassidy, with more Millions arriving later.

Log raising soon became the order of the day and good cornermen were in great demand. The first shanty was raised on the farm of Jim Dougall, 30-2-21. It was built of oak, which was somewhat of a conundrum as it was replaced within a year by a house

built of poplar. The latter burned on February 28, 1938. The first school district to be organized was at Mountainside. School was held in the Andrew Whiteman house for the first year with Katie Mannix as teacher.

The first church services were held in the aforementioned oak shanty, being conducted by a budding English church clergyman, although the congregation consisted of all Presbyterians. It is not recorded as to whether he thought they needed evangelizing or whether he just needed someone on whom he could practice. An amusing, although somewhat disconcertaing episode happened one Sunday. The preacher was in the middle of his discourse when a very long and prolonged snore broke the silence. He looked quickly around his congregation but they all seemed to be wide awake. He was greatly puzzled and tangled up his discourse somewhat, to the amusement of the congregation who were quite aware that the snore had come from a big, black dog which was asleep under the home-made table that the preacher was using for a desk.

The following year, William Patterson, a Presbyterian student from the north of Ireland was sent to this field. He conducted services at six different stations, three each Sunday from east of Wakopa to Uries on the west. In the spring, when the creeks were high, he generally went barefoot in order to keep his footwear dry, putting on his boots as soon as he came in sight of a station. Rev. Patterson was later called to Cooks Church, Toronto, which he filled to overflowing. From there he went to Philadelphia, where he was in charge of the Wanamakers Church, one of the largest in the United States.

Some years ago when in Winnipeg, Rev. Patterson decided to visit the scenes of his early missionary endeavors. He called at the manse at Deloraine and the minister there at the time rounded up as many old timers as possible and a most memorable evening was spent by all present.

After Turtle Mountain was added to the province of Manitoba the first municipality was organized in 1881, the first reeve (warden in those days) was Finley Young, later Senator Young. The councillors were: Johnnie Coulter, Wakopa; Jimmie Buyers, Desford; Wm. Patterson, Assessor; and A. C. Young, treasurer. The boundary of the municipality was practically the same as the electoral constituency of Souris.

The first fall the Norquay government was in power, thinking that some of the settlers might not be well enough provided for for the winter, they sent out circulars to all municipalities saying they did not want anyone to suffer, and that if the councillors would send in the names of all who needed help they would see what could be done. When the letter was read Finley Young suggested the best thing to do would be to send in the voters list as everyone was in the same boat.

The growth of the settlement during 1880 and 1881 was comparitively slow. Among the earlier arrivals were the two Dawsons, Jack Taylor, John Scott, the two Whitemans, Ambrose Taylor, Tom Turnbull, Jack Bell, the Jones, the Morrisons, Bob Russel and several others

The real rush began in 1882 and a continuous stream of homesteaders could be seen along the Boundary Commission Trail, making for the old log land office that had been established in the valley below Rentons.

Believed written by Jim Fleming, 1936.

FRANCIS W. LATIMER

Francis W. Latimer came to this district in July 1889, taking up a homestead on the S.W. 28-3-20.

His first two crops were hailed out, necessitating the finding of other means of getting some capital. Taking his ox team he obtained work with a farmer near Brandon where he earned the then large sum of $100, but which unfortunately he was never able to collect.

For the next several years he batched on the homestead, his favorite meal consisting of bread and canned tomatoes, a large can of that vegetable costing ten cents.

Like many young men of the time, he ended his batching days when he made a trip back East in 1896 returning with Elizabeth Ann Cavanaugh of Pakenham as his bride.

In common with the rest of the pioneers he made daily trips to the bush for wood, rising at 4 a.m., making the trip of twelve to fourteen miles each way and cutting his load.

Blizzards in those days were a particular hazard as there were few dwellings, only trails for roads, and no fences or telephone lines as guides. The storms created many anxious moments for Mrs. Latimer as she never knew where he might get lost or have to stay with someone along the road. Belonging to a family of nine and never having stayed alone at night, she was very fearful during one bad storm to hear a knock at the door, but very relieved upon opening it to find it was Mr. Latimer who had been forced to turn back home on account of the storm.

Mr. Latimer was one of those who drew stone for the building of the Methodist Church, now United, in 1893. The quarry being south of Boissevain on the Houlden farm.

He was an ardent church-goer, going every Sunday with the horse and buggy, the heavy attendance necessitating going early to ensure getting a seat.

While on the farm as well as after retiring to Boissevain in 1910 Mr. Latimer was a good sport and an enthusiastic game hunter. During the season he was a familiar sight with his twelve gauge

crooked in his arm either at Whitewater Lake or in a stubble field with decoys. On many occasions he got splendid bags of ducks and geese, and in the earlier years upland game as well.

Following thirty-four years of retirement Mr. Latimer died at his home in Boissevain in July 1944, in his eighty-seventh year. Mrs. Latimer died five years later.

WILLIAM TAYLOR

I came to Boissevain with my parents in the year 1887, from La Chute, Quebec. We settled on Section 10-4-19, which was situated ten miles northeast of Boissevain. We were not completely isolated in the Brownlea district. Our neighbours were Tom Hammond, Charlie Russell, Abe Houck, Hiram Ruttle and the Latimer brothers.

I attended Brownlea School, which was about two miles from home. My teachers were Mrs. Walter Johnson and Miss Ross.

Reverend Mr. Leitch, our first Minister, came from Boissevain to hold church services in the school.

We did our shopping in Boissevain. Our groceries were purchased at Mr. Knight's general store, and we bought our meat at Mr. Harry Hammond's butcher shop.

A trip to Gregory's Grist Mill, north of Margaret took two or three days. Father made one such trip. One only attempted this trip in fine weather .

The first threshing outfit I worked with was horsepower driven. It was owned by Latimer Brothers. Next I worked on a steam outfit owned by Charlie Brown. In the year 1891 I threshed all winter with George and Jack Smith. Jim Hammond and I later bought an outfit of our own. It consisted of a Cornell engine and a Battlecreek Advance separator. A few years later my brother Jim and I bought Jim Hammond's share. After operating this outfit a few years, we bought a Case Traction steam engine and a Waterloo thresher. In 1908 we bought a North West outfit, one of the largest in the area. The engine was 60-110 double cross compound and the thresher was a 44-78. It was steady work for twelve stook teams and nine grain teams. Two negro spike pitchers named Albert and Slim were with the outfit for several seasons. They were reliable men, who stood six foot, three inches. My brother George ran the separator. Bob Walker was the fireman. I ran the engine myself. Two men were required to tank water, which was a scarce article in dry falls. With the outfit was a six bunk caboose, which slept twelve men. The syndicate comprised George Scott, Dave Cotten, Arthur Heal, Dave and Matt Hammond. This meant a total of forty-two hundred acres. After threshing was finished in the fall of 1911, word came to Boissevain from the Dominion

Government, they would pay the freight to and from the west on any large outfit, they would go there to help thresh the heavy crop. All our plans were made and the date of the trip was set. On the eve of our departure, fifteen inches of snow fell. This ended our ideas of a western trip.

In the spring of 1901, I married Margaret Williamson, who was also a pioneer. She came to Boissevain from North Dakota in 1887. Margaret attended school in Boissevain. Her teachers were Miss Holden, Miss Calder and Mr. Chambers.

In 1902 I bought the Frost and Wood implement business from Cassidy and Watson in Boissevain. A few years later I sold the business to Alex Campbell.

In 1906 I purchased the skating rink which stood just north of the home of Norman and Gardner Taylor.

When we lived in Quebec, we made a great deal of maple syrup. This prompted me to try my luck in Manitoba. I made five gallons the first and second years. Last year I tapped one hundred and seventy-five maples, and made sixty quarts of lovely syrup. It took about forty quarts of sap to make one gallon of syrup.

William Taylor — Margaret

JOHN ANDREW HARRISON

John Andrew Harrison was born in the County of Russell, east of Ottawa, the son of John Harrison, Sr.

John Sr. came west to the Red River Valley in 1878, where he homesteaded. The family came the next year through the U.S. to Emerson.

John Andrew, was then sixteen years old. He got a job with the Canadian Pacific Railway about 1880. He was with the C.P.R. when they built the bridge at Brandon. They drove the piles in the winter of 1882 through the ice. He and Jim, his brother, stayed with the C.P.R. through to the Rockies. While with the C.P.R. survey in 1883 he encountered a fellow on Moose Jaw Creek cooking gophers for dinner. It was De Manbey, who later was a barrister in Boissevain.

In 1884, John returned to Winnipeg and enlisted with the 90th Rifles to help put down the famous North West Rebellion. They left by train for Swift Current, thence overland to Prince Albert. Their salary was fifty cents per day.

The first skirmish, which John took part in was at Fish Creek. Not many shots were fired and the enemy retired to Batoche. The regiment followed them. Here John was wounded on night patrol guarding incoming freight. The wagons were formed in a ring with horses and men inside. He got a ricochet bullet off a wagon wheel. The bullet was extracted and he continued on duty. The breeds surrendered at Batoche, but leaders like Poundmaker and Riel, and Big Bear escaped.

In the fall of 1885, the soldiers returned to Winnipeg to be mustered out of active service, but still belonged to their regiment for a term of three years from enlistment. During that time blood poison set into John's wound and he spent the most of the winter in hospital.

He then went through the west with a Smith "Horse Dealer.," gathering horses and driving them to Winnipeg for sale. Many and varied were his experiences while thus engaged. He then went with a drilling outfit through the west drilling for coal. Later he went with a government outfit between Duck and Moose Mountains to bore for oil. They got everything but oil.

In 1891 he went to Estevan to the Dominion Coal Co. mines where he got a job as a coal weigher. The mines shut down so he returned to Manitoba. He hired with Wm. Cumpstone, Sr. for his first year's salary, he got a car of oats at 15 cents a bushel.

In 1896 he married Emily Cumpstone, Wm. Cumpstone's daughter. There were five boys and two girls, James, Ted, Sidney, Dell, Joe, Bessie and Mary.

During the winter of 1996 he cut cord wood for Charles Eaket for fifty cents a cord and boarded himself.

FRANK HOWELL

Franklin Howell, at the age of twenty, arrived in Brandon from Paris, Ontario, in March 1882. Buying a yoke of oxen, wagon, plow, tent and supplies, he drove south toward the Turtle Mountain, accompanied by Duncan and Peter Henderson and Jas. Rae.

The first day's journey took them as far as the Souris River, where they camped for the night. In the morning, not liking the appearance of the soil or terrain, they travelled farther south, all four taking up homesteads in what are now the Royal and Caranton districts.

After breaking the number of acres required by homestead regulations, Mr. Howell sold his outfit and returned to Paris for the winter. He returned in the spring of '83 with a car of settler's effects, including horses, a cow and lumber for a shack. A neighbor, Mr. Perrin came out with him this time.

After a few years, better buildings replaced the first makeshift ones, his next house being painted frame with red roof, it being the first painted house in the district. The school district was organized now, and with the building of the school, Sunday School and other meetings were held, Mr. Howell being a leader in many of these gatherings.

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Thompson and family were the next to arrive, four of which were of school age. Mr. Howell's mother arrived in 1887, but after a year on the prairie returned to the East. The next year on Aug. 1st, 1890, Mr. Howell was married to Miss Jennie Thompson.

The year 1890 was rather a disastrous one for the district as a violent hail-storm completely destroyed the crops from the Turtle Mountains to the Souris River, causing a serious seed and feed situation. To combat this Mr. Howell and a close neighbor, Mr. Shillabeer made frequent trips to the bush cutting and hauling wood which was exchanged with more fortunate farmers for seed and feed.

In 1891 a good crop was cut and stacked, but due to the scarcity of threshing machines, it stood in the stack all winter, being threshed in the spring, with the exception of the oats, which didn't get done till the next fall.

These were the days of huge flocks of wild ducks and geese, often stretching for miles, and many a noble bird graced the dinner table while his plumage went into pillows or a feather mattress.

In a few years grain marketing problems started to appear. Many farmers felt they weren't being fairly treated by country elevators, and electing to ship carload lots on their own, experienced great difficulty in securing cars. At times huge piles of bagged wheat sat on loading platforms waiting for cars. It was felt something had to be done right away, so an organized effort was made to elect a farmer member to the Legislature, by the then-called "Patrons of Industry." Mr. Postelwaite of Brandon was chosen to run, but despite the fact that a great many meetings were held in his behalf, he was defeated.

This was actually the beginning of the United Farmers, in the organization of which Mr. Howell took an active part. He was also active in the Dairy Co-op., and Egg Pool, and was for many years manager of the Royallen Co-operative Society at Orthez.

The Royallen Literary and Debating Society, which was quite active for a number of years, was another interest of Mr. Howell.

September last, Mr. and Mrs. Howell celebrated their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary at the grand old age of 93.

WALTER MILLIONS

Walter Millions was born in Ramsay, Ontario, February 7th, 1855, and when he was twenty-one years old enlisted with the Royal North West Mounted Police. He joined the force at Winnipeg in 1876 and was appointed carpenter in Troop E under Major J. Walsh. During the time of his service in the force he was stationed at Fort McLeod and Fort Walsh most of the time. At the time of the uprising between the Salteaux and the Assiniboines he was with Major Walsh at the capture of Cowdance.

Mr. Millions returned east in 1879 but remained for a short time only as he once again started out west to take up land and make a home for himself. He was one of the pioneers of this district, arriving here in the spring of 1880 and locating on section 24-2-21.

In 1881 he again returned east to Almonte, Ontario, where he married Miss Annie J. Watson in 1882. Mr. and Mrs. Millions returned to their home on 24-2-21 in the spring of the same year accompanied by Mr. Millions' parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Millions, four of his brothers, Jim, John, Robert and Matthew; three sisters, Esther, Bella and Mary (Mrs. Charlie Hudson) and Mr. Charlie Hudson. They travelled by democrat and oxen from Winnipeg, having purchased supplies there and homesteaded in what is now known as the Wassewa district.

The Millions' first house was a sod shanty followed by a log house in a T shape. Then in 1900 the stone house was built by Klea Bros. and Slomke as masons, with Mr. Millions doing the carpenter work.

In 1888 Mr. Millions made entry for a second homestead at Carnduff, Sask. However he lived there only during pre-emption duties.

In the first year of residence on the homestead at Wassewa, Mr. Millions walked to Emerson for supplies and carried them home on his back. After the first year he went to Brandon, until Boissevain came into being.

About 1901 he purchased the west half 19-2-20 on which was situated the first Wassewa store, a frame house. The main part of this house is still used and is owned by Mr. John Lindsay of Winnipeg. The store, operated by Mr. George Morton, had a pole from the house towards the road with a light on it. When applying for a name "Beacon" was requested. However the name "Wassewa" was used which means "good light" in Indian language.

The Old Commission Trail passed through both Mr. Millions' farm and right through the yard of the home farm. As all traffic in the early days had to use this road Mr. and Mrs. Millions had many visitors. The Indians, too, frequented the Millions home where a welcome was always assured all who came.

During his residence in the Wassewa district Mr. Millions was postmaster for twenty years, served on the School Board as trustee, and also served on the Church Board. The first Wassewa School was held in a building in the farmyard of 19-2-20. This building was torn down just a few years ago.

In 1906 Mr. and Mrs. Millions returned to Boissevain, leaving the farms to be operated by their sons, Cecil and Lynn. Other members of the family were Merle, Myrtle, Etta and Beatrice. Mr. Millions passed away in 1906.

MR. AND MRS. R. J. LUDGATE

Robert Ludgate came from Cobourg, Ont., in 1879 to Stonewall, moving to Brandon in 1882, then walking to Deloraine to file on 23-3-19.

In 1893, he married Caroline Elizabeth Jones, and moved to 8-3-19, where they lived for a number of years. In 1894 their first baby was to be born. It was in the spring of the year, and the water in the creek so high that Mrs. Ludgate sat at the window watching her husband go, and wondered if he would make it across to get help. He did, and brought her mother, Mrs. John L. Jones, to be with her. Instead of one baby, there turned out to be twins, necessitating an extra layette. The following year another baby arrived; however this didn't deter Mrs. Ludgate from visiting her mother, about three miles distant. Rolling the babies in blankets she drove a quite spirited horse with two babies in the bottom of the buggy, the other one on her knee. When making the return journey, the horse had to be held by the head till Mrs. Ludgate had herself and the babies all settled, then he was let go and took off like a comet for the first mile before settling down.

Many were the house parties the Ludgates went to, babies and all, as Mr. Ludgate played the violin, and of course was in demand. The faster he played, the harder he kept time with his foot.

Following the birth of their sixth child, Mr. and Mrs. Ludgate moved back to 16-3-19. Their other five children were born here.

Like many of the other pioneers, they saw the hardships of those times. Oxen of course were the first means of farming, along with the walking plow, and grain had to be hauled to Brandon.

Mr. and Mrs. Ludgate continued farming on section 16 until Mr. Ludgate's demise in 1934. A few years later Mrs. Ludgate moved into Boissevain, where she still resides.

THE END

SOURIS BASIN

TWP. 4, RGE. 22, OPENED FOR SETTLIENT IN 1883

S.½ 1 - DAMASE TURGEON
N.E. 4 - EDWARD KERR
S.W. 4 - GEO. M. MANUEL
N.½ 6 - GEO. PRICE
S.½ 6 - JOHN H. COPE
W.½ 10 - ANDREW W. MORTON
E.½ 12 - SYLVANUS BUISSONNEAULT
S.E. 16 - ANDREW POTTER
S.W. 16 - GILBERT I. KETCHESON
E.½ 18 - ANDREW CASSELS
S.E. 21 - SYLVESTER T. HOLDEN
S.W. 22 - SYLVESTER T. HOLDEN
N.E. 28 - WM. O. FOWLER
S.E. 28 - THOS. R. BROWN
S.W. 30 - GEO. H. CLARK
E.½ 32 - JOHN COXWORTH
S.W. 32 - ANDREW J. ROMSON

ONE FAMILY ON EACH ¼ SEC.
GOOD BUILDINGS AND DAIRY STOCK
CHEESE FACTORY IN TOWNSITE
RAILWAY CONNECTING FACTORY
WITH FARMS
1000 CATTLE SHIPPED IN FALL OF
1882 - MOST OF HERD PERISHED
DURING SEVERE WINTER

MORTON'S DAIRY PROJECT
1881-82

LARGE RED CHERRY COMMON HEREIN NOW EATEN BY EXPLOREA - ALEXANDER HENRY — NOW EXTINCT.

WHITEWATER LAKE
(NON PERMANENT)

MARSH LAND

HAY LAND

HAY

TWP. 4 RO. 22 W

MUNICIPAL DATA OF CHERRY CREEK AREA

1881-1883 TURTLE MOUNTAIN
1883-1886 DELORAINE
1887-1889 WHITEWATER
1890- MORTON

CANADA — UNITED STATES — BOUNDARY

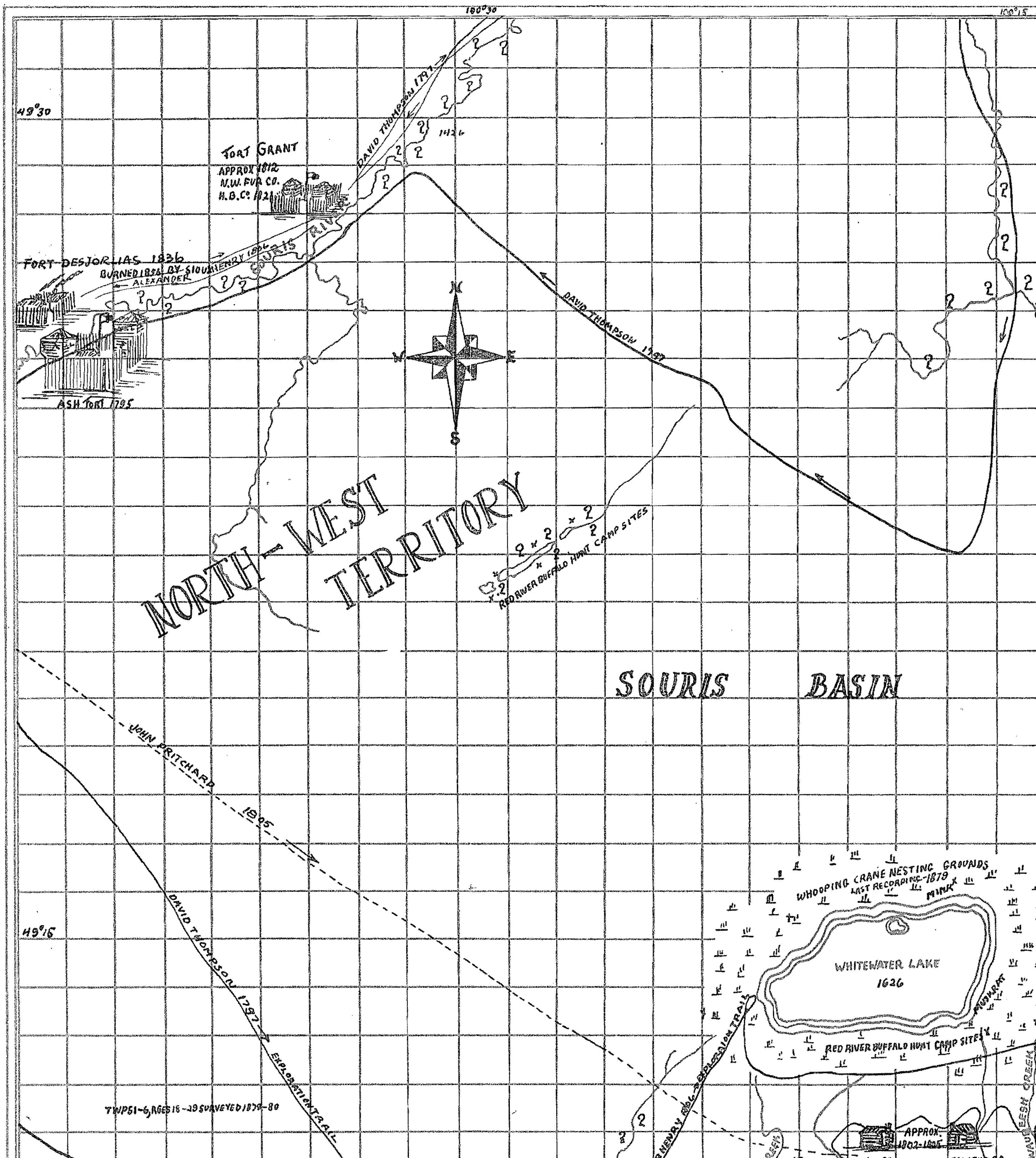
MAP OF PIONEER SETTLEMENT

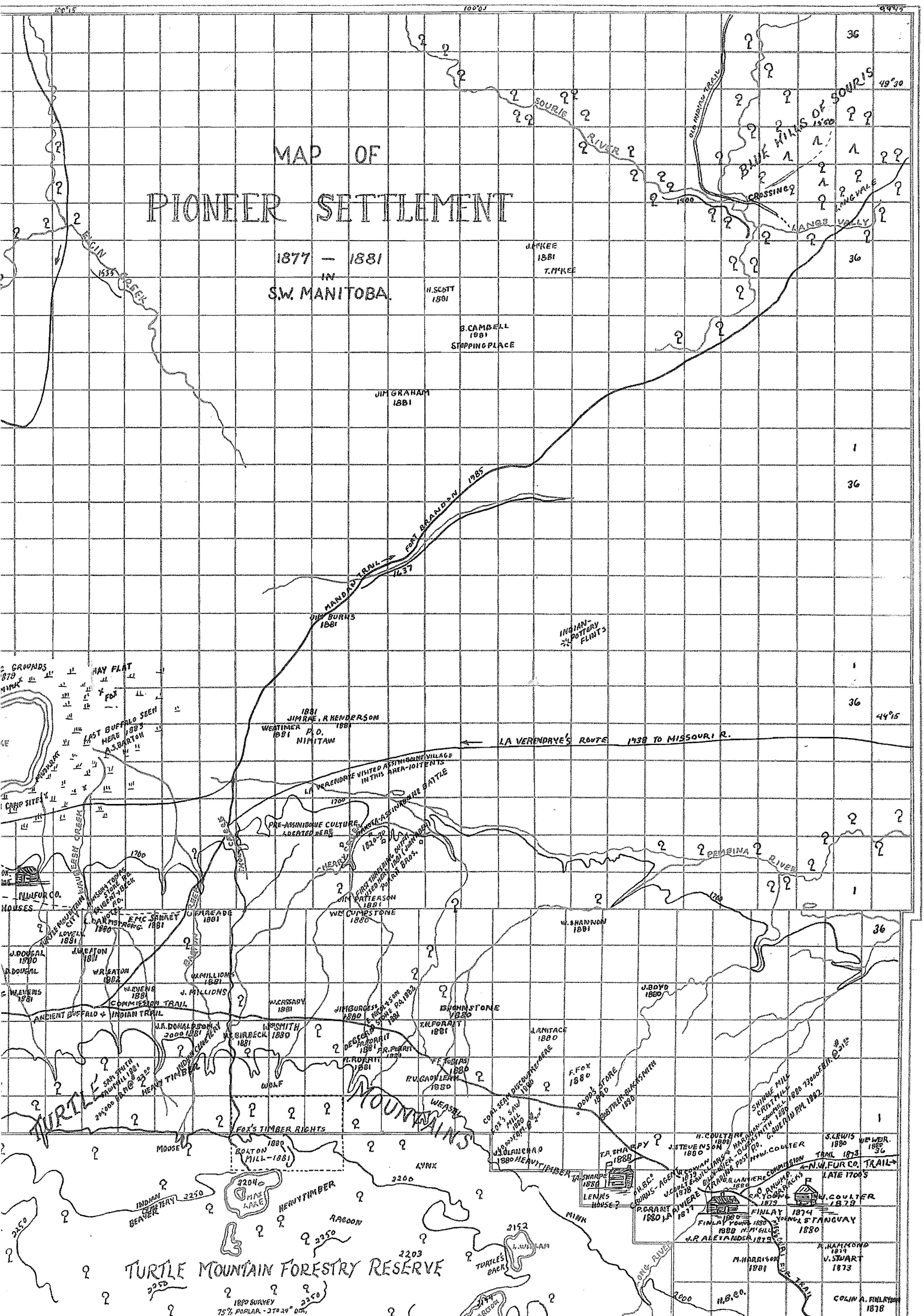
RTLE MOUNTAIN FORESTRY RESERVE

DOM. GOVT. SURVEY, 1895, ESTIMATED TIMBER RESOURCES - 150,000 CORD PER ANNUM.
1895 - ENTIRE FOREST SWEPT BY FIRE.
CREATED TIMBER RESERVE - 1895.
BECAME A FOREST RESERVE - 1906.

— BOUNDARY

ENGRAVING AND PRINTING BY DERKSEN PRINTERS LTD., STEINBACH, MAN.


100°30
100°15
49°30
49°15
49°00
FORT GRANT
APPROX 1812
N.W. FUR CO.
H.B.Co 1821
FORT DESJORLIAS 1836
BURNED 1856 BY SIOUX
HENRY 1806
ALEXANDER
SOURIS RIVER
ASH FORT 1795
DAVID THOMPSON 1797
1426
N
S
E
W
NORTH-WEST TERRITORY
RED RIVER BUFFALO HUNT CAMP SITES
SOURIS BASIN
JOHN PRITCHARD 1805
DAVID THOMPSON 1797
EXPLORATION TRAIL
WHOOPING CRANE NESTING GROUNDS
LAST RECORDING-1879
MINK
WHITEWATER LAKE
1626
MUSKRAT
RED RIVER BUFFALO HUNT CAMP SITES
ALEXANDER HENRY
APPROX. 1802-1805
H.B.Co
N.W.FUR CO.
FUR HOUSES
1700
CREEK
TWPS1-6, RGES 18-29 SURVEYED 1879-80
DAVID THOMPSON 1797
COMMISSION TRAIL 1873
MONTEFIORE P.O.
TO FORT WHOOP-UP ALBERTA
R.RUSSEL 1880
W.KING 1880
LOUGHEED 1880
A.P.STUART-BANK
CHEERS HOTEL
SHEPARDS - GRISTMILL
LIVERY BARN
BLACKSMITH
CAVERS STORE
J.URIE 1880
G.SMITH
R.MORRISON 1880
R.HOWAT 1880
MORRISON 1881
J.RENTON 1880
R.DAWSON 1880
J.TAYLOR
MANITOBA
J.DOUGAL 1880
D.DOUGAL
FLEMING BROS. 1880
W.EVENS 1881
TURTLE MOUNTAIN CITY
LOVELL 1881
ANCIENT BUFFALO
H.URIE 1880
W.URIE
DELORAINE LAND OFFICE
CEMETERY
G.SMITH
J.RENTON JR. 1880
2000
TWPS2, RGES 18-29 SURVEYED 1878-79
CREEK
TURTLE
VICTORIOUS SIOUX
CAMPED HERE FOLLOWING
CUSTER MASSACRE
JUNE 25 1876
TO THE MANDANS
2250
2200
ANTELOPE
BEAN
2250
1700
LENNOX P.O. 1882
TWPS1, RGES 18-23 SURVEYED-1875
COAL SEAM
2200
2400
2450
24
23
22
CANADIAN
UNITED STATES



MAP OF
PIONEER SETTLEMENT
1877 — 1881
IN
S.W. MANITOBA.
100°15
100°00
49°30
49°15
49°00
SOURIS RIVER
BLUE HILLS OF SOURIS
OLD INDIAN TRAIL
CROSSING
LANGS VALLY
LANGVALE
ELGIN CREEK
J. McKEE
1881
T. McKEE
H. SCOTT
1881
B. CAMBELL
1881
STOPPING PLACE
JIM GRAHAM
1881
MANDAN TRAIL
FORT BRANDON
JIM BURNS
1881
INDIAN-POTTERY FLINTS
HAY FLAT
FOX
LAST BUFFALO SEEN HERE 1883
A.S. BARTON
MUSKRAT
CAMP SITES
1881
JIM RAE, R HENDERSON
1881
WEATIMER
1881
P.O.
NIMITAW
LA VERENDRYE'S ROUTE 1738 TO MISSOURI R.
LA VERENDRYE VISITED ASSINIBOINE VILLAGE IN THIS AREA - 101 TENTS
DAKOTA-ASSINIBOINE BATTLE
PRE-ASSINIBOINE CULTURE LOCATED HERE
CHERRY CREEK
FIRST THRESHING OUTFIT USED HERE 1881
POARIT BROS.
JIM PATTERSON
1881
WM CUMPSTONE
1880
PEMBINA RIVER
W. SHANNON
1881
N.W. FUR CO.
HOUSES
TURTLE MOUNTAIN CITY
WAUBEESH CREEK
E.MC SHARKEY
1881
L. ARMSTRONG
1880
LOVELL
1881
J. DOUGAL
1880
D. DOUGAL
J.W. EATON
1881
W.R. EATON
1882
W. EVENS
1881
W. MILLIONS
1881
J. MILLIONS
COMMISSION TRAIL
ANCIENT BUFFALO & INDIAN TRAIL
J.A. DONALDSON
1881
INDIAN CEMETERY
W.E. BIRBECK
1881
Wm SMITH
1880
W. CASSADY
1881
JIM BURGESS
1880
T.H. FORRIT
1881
J. BOYD
1880
J. ANITAGE
1880
F. FOX
1880
DODD'S STORE
1880
BUTLER BLACKSMITH
1880
SAM SMITH SAWMILL 1881
HEAVY TIMBER
WOLF
TURTLE MOUNTAINS
WEASEL
FOX'S TIMBER RIGHTS
MOOSE
BOLTON MILL - 1881
LYNX
MAX LAKE
HEAVY TIMBER
RACOON
INDIAN CEMETERY
BEAVER
MINK
TURTLE'S BACK
TURTLE MOUNTAIN FORESTRY RESERVE
1880 SURVEY
75% POPLAR - 3 TO 24" DIA.
14% OAK - 14"
7% BIRCH - 12"
4% ELM, ASH -
COAL SEAM DISCOVERED HERE 1880
FOX'S SAW MILL 1880
T.A. SHARPE
1880
LENS HOUSE?
H.B.C.
BURNS - AGENT
J. STEVENSON
1880
H. COULTER
1880
SHINGLE MILL
GRIST MILL
LARIVIERE
P. GRANT
1880
FINLAY YOUNG
J.P. ALEXANDER
1879
N.W. COULTER
N.W. FUR CO. TRAIL
LATE 1700'S
W. COULTER
1879
FINLAY 1874
L. STANGUAY
1880
S. LEWIS
1880
W. WEIR
1880
R. HAMMOND
1879
V. STUART
1873
M. HARRISON
1881
MISSOURI FUR TRAIL
LONG RIVER
H.B.CO.
COLIN A. FINLAYSON
1878
J.A. RANSOME
R.B. DOUGLAS
1880
MANSW RLY.
RGE 19
W. MONCUR COPYRIGHTED - 1956
STATES — BOUNDARY