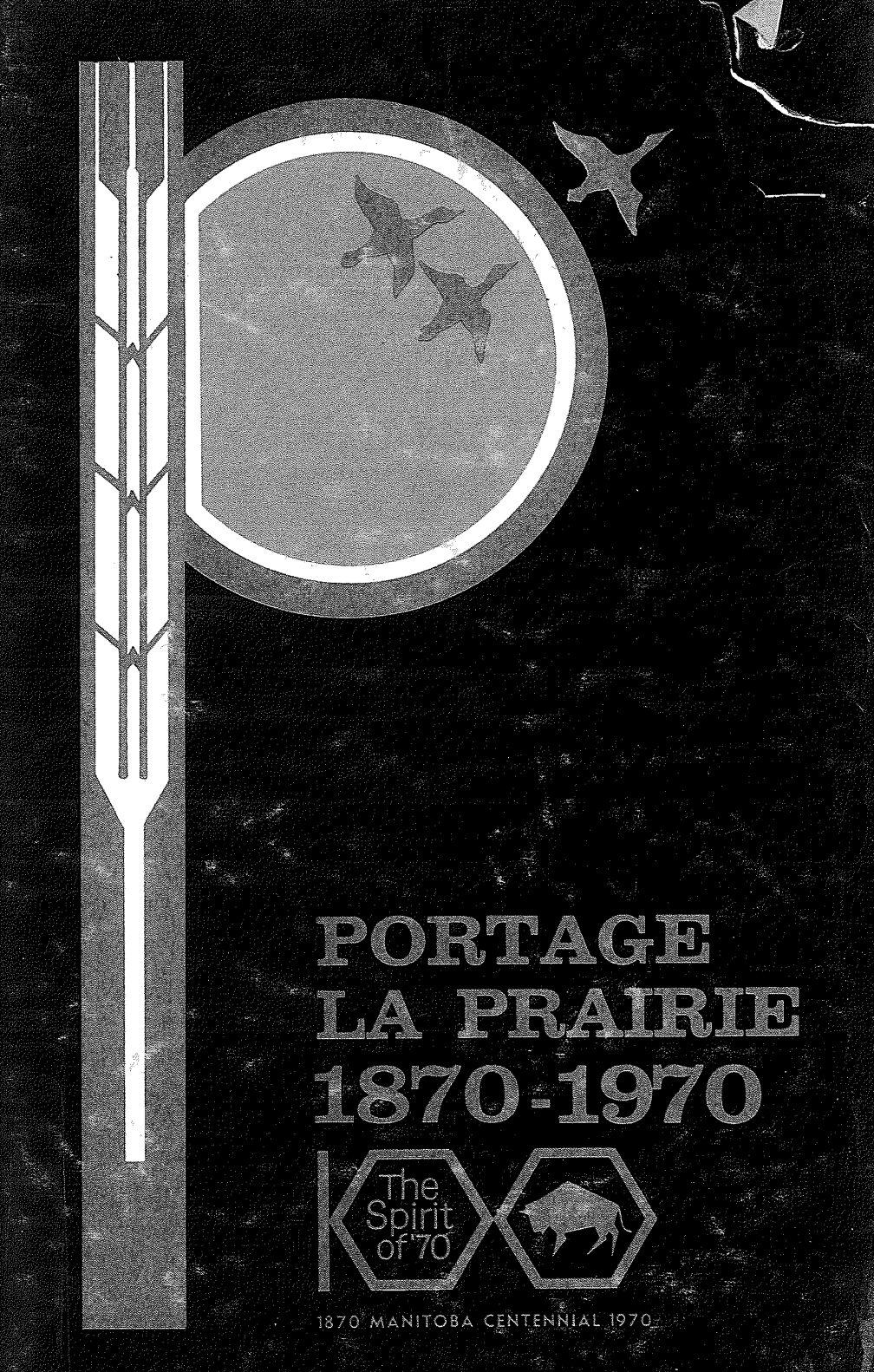
PORTAGE
LA PRAIRIE
1870-1970
The Spirit of '70
1870 MANITOBA CENTENNIAL 1970

Courtesy of Maxwell Studios,
Portage la Prairie, Man.

Anne M. Collier proudly lays claim to being a Manitoban all her life, the last four years of which have been spent in Portage la Prairie. She has always been interested in the history of places, and also interested in people from all walks of life. In this book you will read many stories about both, combined with human interest stories, a few statistics, touches of humor and pieces of poetry. This history of Portage la Prairie is written in a simple, understandable style with the aim of making it enjoyable to people of all ages.

A HISTORY OF
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE
AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT

By Anne M. Collier

This book was written on behalf of
the City of PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE,
which assumed the cost of publication,
in commemoration of Manitoba's
Centennial into Canadian Confederation.

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The Portage Historical Committee

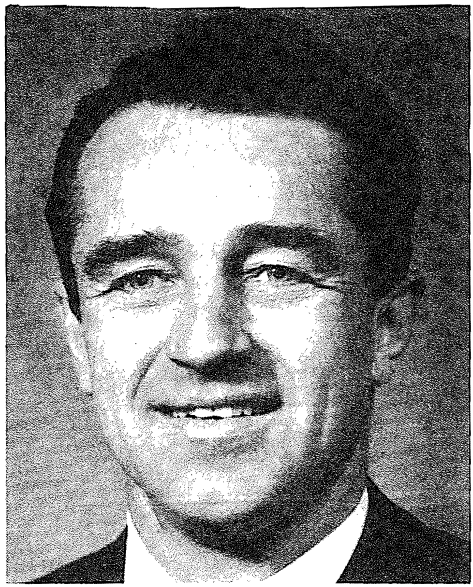
Front row (left to right): Mrs. W. N. Cuthbert, Mrs. W. L. Simpson, Mrs. C. M. Thomas, Mrs. Ben Collier, Mrs. Frank Sissons and Mrs. J. M. Campbell.

Back row (left to right): Mr. Ferris Metcalfe, Mr. Fred Thomson, Mr. J. C. Hyde, Mr. Roy McKay, Alderman Orest W. Pressey, Mayor W. A. Linden, Mr. D. Gilmour Rodger and Mr. Webster Burton.

Mr. W. H. B. Simpson, who was an enthusiastic member of the committee, and who was looking forward to reading this book, passed away on April 15th, 1969, before publication.

Mr. T. E. Maxwell and Mr. G. E. Moffat are also missing from the picture.
Chairman — Mr. Webster Burton
Secretary — Mrs. W. L. Simpson
Treasurer — Mr. D. Gilmour Rodger

A Message From The Mayor



I cannot help but feel that there could be no more appropriate way for the City of Portage la Prairie to celebrate Manitoba's Centennial than by the publishing of this book. In this book, the past hundred years and the story of our history and heritage have been recorded. The people and the happenings of the past have all been drawn together in stories that tell of the making of the City that we have today. It is important that people know the history of days past, and to know about the people and the events that were involved in the past, so that we might better understand our growth and development to the present time.

The City of Portage la Prairie has been most fortunate in having a person such as Mrs. Anne M. Collier accept the assignment of writing this book. Mrs. Collier has previously been recognized for her work in the past, in winning the "Margaret McWilliams Medal" (a Manitoba Historical Society award) for her book entitled "A Rear View Mirror". We gratefully acknowledge the time and talent spent on our book.

I commend this book to all citizens, near and far, for their reading enjoyment.

W. A. Linden, Mayor,
City of Portage la Prairie

PREFACE

It was with pride in the growth and accomplishments of Portage la Prairie that interested people of this city took on the worthwhile project of recording, and thereby preserving, its history for posterity.

Enlightening narratives have been previously written: "History of Manitoba" by Robert B. Hill (approx. 1890), "First Furrows" by A. C. Garrioch (published in 1923), "Tread of the Pioneers" by J. H. Metcalfe (published in 1932), and "Roots of Oakville" by A. J. Moore, which took in the period 1875 to the early 1900s.

It is our aim to bring the history of Portage la Prairie up to date as a Manitoba Centennial project.

Portage la Prairie, like a giant tree whose branches can be likened to the various parts of the municipality, has grown and thrived through the years. Floods, fires and disaster have only tended to strengthen its roots.

As the leaves fall from the branches, and gravestones thicken along the way, it is not without the sad, silent knowledge of us all. However, a vital spark of spirit has been part of our inheritance, and faith in a future our greatest legacy.

As we celebrate Manitoba's Centennial in 1970, we also celebrate Portage la Prairie's 89th anniversary as an incorporated town, and its 63rd anniversary as a city. This may not sound too impressive unless we consider the fact that its history actually goes back 300 years, long before the formation of the 'postage stamp province' in 1870.

(The reason for the nickname of the province at that time was due to its size and shape. A straight line drawn from approximately three miles north of the Whiteshell Forest Reserve to a spot between Plumas and Glenella was the northern boundary. Straight lines from the extremities of each northern point ran south to the U.S.A. border. Thirty-seven miles west of Portage la Prairie was the line that divided Manitoba from the North West Territories.)

We have tried, in as much as is humanly possible, to authenticate the material in this book. No one is infallible and we hope that any errors will be ones of minor importance.

Every pioneer, whether on a farm, in a business, or in a dedicated profession, played an important part in the progress of our country. It is with sincere regret that space and time does not permit us to record the hundreds of names of such people along with all their worthwhile activities.

Preference has not entered into family names mentioned or pictures used. All material in the text has been written from material submitted or gathered from documents in research.

For everyone who lives here, and everyone, everywhere, who ever called Portage la Prairie "home", we hope you will read this book and share our pride in this wonderful part of our country.

For everyone who is unfamiliar with the region, we hope you will spend many hours of enjoyable reading, and that you will obey the urge to visit the lovely place in Manitoba called "Portage la Prairie".

The history-making instinct is expressed by deeds and words.

Events are usually speedily followed by written records.

In proportion to the importance of events is the eagerness of enlightened persons to read, in understandable language, transcripts of episodes in human progress.

With that in mind it is our aim to spotlight the most interesting events in the history of Portage la Prairie.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Portage la Prairie Historical Committee wish to thank the many people in Portage la Prairie and surrounding districts who submitted, either in writing or by telephone, material which assisted in the preparation of this book.

Special thanks are extended to Mrs. E. F. Radclyffe, St. James, Man., who speeded up production by freeing the writer from long days of research in the Manitoba Archives; thereby showing her sincere interest in the history of our area. Assistance given by the Provincial Archivist and associates is very much appreciated too.

We are also greatly indebted to various writers and publishers for some of the historical information contained in this book.

A TRIBUTE TO OUR PIONEERS

We are fortunate indeed, in this year of 1970, to still be able to see faces of pioneers as they walk a street or enter a store. You recognize them by their skin which seems to be made of some durable kind of leather; by lips that can still smile even though life has held many trials and tribulations; and you recognize them by the bright faith that still shines out of their eyes, depicting the courage that held them through the struggle.

The pioneers we see are not the faces of the first settlers, but the faces of sons and daughters of the first settlers; sons and daughters who helped their parents and therefore, can be classified as pioneers too. It's an honor and a privilege to know these people, and it's an honor and a privilege for merchants to have the opportunity to serve them. We, as younger citizens of Portage la Prairie, are honored when ladies and gentlemen of yesteryear say, "Hello", when they meet us on the street. May their years of labor and self-denial, by which we have benefited, never sink into oblivion.

In memory of the departed ones, who turned the first furrow, we bow our heads in humble reverence; to the sons and daughters, who carried on where their parents left off, we gratefully acknowledge your contributions toward the development of our country; and to the grandsons and granddaughters of the first settlers, we extend our praise for the progress in which you have been instrumental.

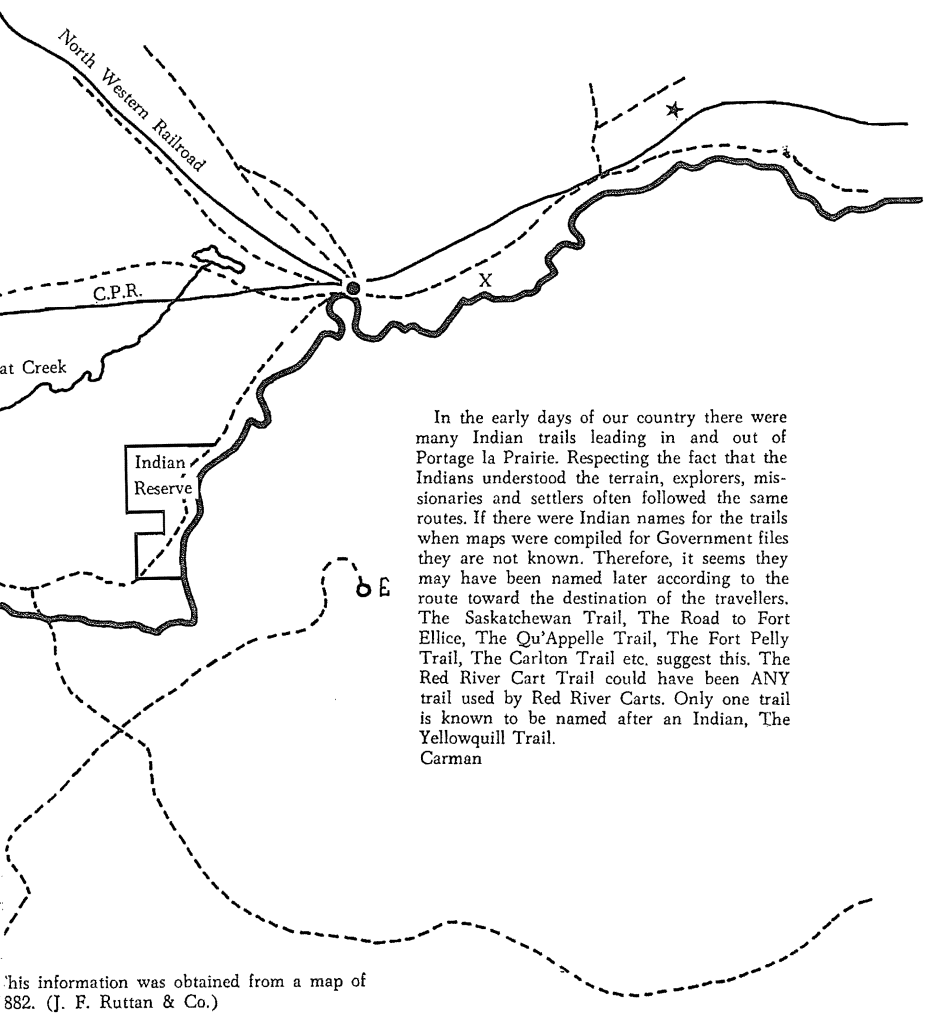
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

It's a little, but very old city,
And a well known place in the west;
A place not deserving of pity,
Because it has met every test.

It's a place where ox carts were common
When streets were only a mire;
A place that faced up to its problems,
And came through many a fire.

It's a place where pioneers pondered
The best spot to settle upon;
A place where the Indians wandered,
And a place where great deeds were done.

Map of Indian Trails ----
● Portage la Prairie
O Austin
△ Sidney
□ Manitoba Agricultural Museum
X High Bluff
★ Poplar Point



In the early days of our country there were many Indian trails leading in and out of Portage la Prairie. Respecting the fact that the Indians understood the terrain, explorers, missionaries and settlers often followed the same routes. If there were Indian names for the trails when maps were compiled for Government files they are not known. Therefore, it seems they may have been named later according to the route toward the destination of the travellers. The Saskatchewan Trail, The Road to Fort Ellice, The Qu'Appelle Trail, The Fort Pelly Trail, The Carlton Trail etc. suggest this. The Red River Cart Trail could have been ANY trail used by Red River Carts. Only one trail is known to be named after an Indian, The Yellowquill Trail.
Carman

his information was obtained from a map of
882. (J. F. Ruttan & Co.)

It's a place where many explorers
Started a portage o'er the plain;
It's a place that many a voyager
Hoped, some day, to see once again.

It's a place of the birth of leaders
Whose names have been written on files.
It's a place that knew struggle and worry,
But has ridden life's rough bumps with smiles.

A benevolent hand seems to hover
O'er the spot where Portage was planned,
And The Giver of life's very best things
Seems to bless all the homes and the land.

Anne M. Collier

GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Portage la Prairie, which is known far and wide as the hub of Central Manitoba, got its name from French for 'prairie portage'. It was here that the fur traders portaged from the Assiniboine River to a creek, approximately nine miles distant, and thence by canoes to Lake Manitoba. (See "First Furrows" by A. C. Garrioch — page 6.) The creek became known as Portage Creek which name is self explanatory.

The locality underwent a change of name three times before the final one of Portage la Prairie became permanent. Prairie Portage, Meadow Portage (Thompson) and Plain Portage (Harmon) the preceding ones.

The city stands beside the Assiniboine River at the south end of the portage, near where La Verendrye built Fort de la Reine between the years 1739 and 1744. It continued to be one of the chief trading posts of the French in the west until the cession of Canada to Great Britain. After that it was occupied from time to time by traders.

The history of Portage la Prairie is filled with as much excitement and adventure as many of the more renowned U.S.A. towns that have been immortalized through books and motion pictures. This city, for instance was the centre of the fur trade for western Canada; it was once a republic (fortunately for only a brief spell); and at one time it was almost burned to the ground by an arsonist.

Portage la Prairie is very favorably situated. It is only 52 miles from Winnipeg, the Capital of our province; 80 miles from Brandon,

where the Winter Fair which is of national interest is held yearly; 15 miles from Lake Manitoba with the lovely sandy shore space and summer homes of Delta Beach; 32 miles from the Manitoba Agricultural Museum near Austin, where thousands of people attend the Threshermen's Reunion each year; and only 70 miles from the U.S.A. border.

The richness and fertility of the soil, in and around the city, is attested by the giant shade trees, caragana and lilac hedges; the beautiful flower beds and shrubs on lawns and in Island Park; the vegetables grown in little back-yard family gardens, as well as in large market gardens; and the thousands of acres of golden wheatfields that provide food for the eyes as well as for the table.

We are indeed fortunate to live in a place of such beauty and in a land of such plenty. If Portage la Prairie should ever again have a change of name it might become "Paradise on the Prairie"!

CHIEF YELLOWQUILL

Chief Yellowquill is one of the many names we recall as we scan our domain, observe our landmarks, and acknowledge pioneer tales in this, Manitoba's Centennial Year. He was a Saulteaux, born in 1832 and later became Chief of the Long Plain and Swan Lake Indians. He presided in 1876 when the Peace Treaty was signed between the Indians and the Dominion Government. Lieutenant-Governor Alexander Morris of the Province of Manitoba was in charge of the Treaty arrangements. He was assisted by Hon. James McKay, who was himself part Indian, and by Jas. F. Graham of the Dept. of Indian Affairs.

Chief Yellowquill and his band used the Assiniboine River for transportation on water. On land they travelled a trail which followed the Assiniboine River very closely. This trail started at Winnipeg, continued west past Portage la Prairie, Brandon, and into Saskatchewan as far as the Qu'Appelle Valley. Later, this trail was named the "Yellowquill Trail" after the well known Chief.

Chief Yellowquill, with his long braids, was an arrogant leader, not always diplomatic and moreover not always co-operative. He had four wives. While he was Chief, the Indians from Long Plain and Swan Lake visited back and forth quite frequently. They crossed the Assiniboine at a point known as Indian Ford. At this point the river was easily crossed, but more important than the easy crossing was the fact that eagles nested there. This was one of the few places in

Manitoba where the Indians were able to find feathers needed for their elaborate headdresses.

One section of good farm land at Indian Ford, five miles north and one mile west of Rathwell, is still owned by the Swan Lake Reserve, and has been rented by Mr. Russell Metcalfe of Portage la Prairie since 1923.

Recently, when studying the history of Chief Yellowquill, we learned that much of the trail named after him still remains. In spots where it had followed too closely to the Assiniboine River, only mud holes remain. Some stretches are still well-travelled. Other stretches, such as the portion within the Long Plain Reserve, are gravelled thorofares. We also learned that although the Yellowquill Trail passed through property which became privately owned, the landowners could not close their gates to the travelling Indians. This trail belongs to them.

Chief Yellowquill was buried at Indian Ford about 1910. He was given the true Indian burial rites given to any Chief. His pipe and a few personal items were buried with him. A little wooden canopy was built over the grave. Food and tobacco were placed at the grave for four days after his burial, and a small fire was lighted each morning and evening at the foot of his grave. This signified the belief that it took the spirit four days to reach Heaven, and a traveller needs food and warmth in the morning and evening.

A few Portage residents remember Chief Yellowquill. Many remember his son, John. His grandson, Joe, died recently. However, there are other descendants who still reside on the Portage Plains. A great-great-granddaughter, Shirley Yellowquill, rode on a float in the "Old Home Week" parade a few years ago. Shirley's son, dressed in full Indian attire, presented Queen Elizabeth with a bouquet of roses when she stopped in Portage la Prairie in 1959.

In memory of Chief Yellowquill we have a street and a motel named after him. Both are located close to his original trail.

INDIANS — THEIR LIVES AND PROGRESS

Verifying the authenticity of the stories told about the early Indians is very difficult if not well-nigh impossible. Relics which have been found are, of course, of value in determining their methods of cooking, hunting and warfare but do not indicate the rivalry, fears and feelings of these people.

In view of the fact that there was no educational system and no written records kept, it is logical to assume that the Chiefs of tribes entrusted the 'son in line' to perpetuate history by relating stories to him, which in turn would be passed on to another generation.

Movies ridiculously tend to give the impression that Indians and white people were in a constant state of warfare in the hills and over the plains in the early days. All Indians were warlike according to the pictures! Maybe the plot would be less exciting if they showed the peace-loving tribes! But, what is more important — maybe children wouldn't grow up with the idea that all Indians are 'the bad men' and all whites 'the good men'.

The early Indians resented invasion of their land and protected it, as we would do today if it became necessary to do so!

It might also make for a greater understanding if we recognize the fact that battles were fought between white men and white men and between Indians and Indians (of different tribes) in the early days for that same reason.

Former Chief George Daniels contributed the following interesting information:

"The area around Portage was first Mandan territory. They came from North Dakota.

In 1860 the Mandans were chased by the Assiniboines to the Swan Lake area where they grew vegetables. They were then chased from Swan Lake to Devil's Lake. The Sioux chased them from that location to the Black Hills.

The Mandans were a peace-loving people, and not great fighters. This was the reason they lost their battles and had to move on.

About 1860, the Chippewas of Ontario sent scouts west to find a good buffalo area. This part of the country had great herds of buffalo, so the Chippewas started a battle with the Assiniboines to take possession of the coveted territory.

The Assiniboines tried to hold their ground and many battles ensued, but they were outnumbered by reinforcements of Chippewas from the east. They were forced to move further west where they still exist today as part of the Sioux Nation.

When the Chippewas came here, the French gave them the name "Saulteaux" which means "Plain Indian".

The Chippewa Nation was made up of Potawattamee, Eries, Hurons, Ojibways and Cree. They understood each other's language.

About 1870, a big battle was fought between the Saulteaux and the Assiniboines.

The Saulteaux used the area between the Red River and Brandon, and north to Lake Manitoba. That was the area where buffalo was most plentiful.

The main camp was situated at Long Plain near the present village of Edwin. Another big camp was near where the water tower stands today. Here they had a large burial ground called "Prairie Lake".

In the 1870s some Sioux from the west, probably renegades, camped in town. During the night they stole six horses from the Saulteaux (near the water tower). This caused the last war dance the Chippewas (or as they were by that time called — the Saulteaux) have held.

Six men took after the Sioux and tracked them to Two Hills, which is north-west of Lavenham. They saw a campfire in a bush and surrounded it.

One of the six warriors was a sharpshooter called "Mooses". He lined two men up and killed them both with one shot of his muzzleloader. They managed to get their horses back, but the rest of the Sioux escaped."

PROUD PICHEITO AND PROBLEMS OF THE TIMES

The Weekly Tribune and Marquette Review printed an interesting story on February 15, 1884. It is regrettable that the name of the writer, who submitted it to the paper, was not included. To brief the narrative could damage the context, and, for that reason, we will quote it as it was written.

"An old log house which has stood for years on the bank of the slough, near the intersection of Broadway with River Street on the left hand corner, has just succumbed to the advancement of civilization, having been torn down to make way for improvements of a more modern character. At one time the house was the best in the settlement, and was remarkable for being the first shingled house west of Winnipeg. It was built by an Indian hunter and trader named Picheito, a wealthy, shrewd and scheming man. It is more about

this Indian and the episodes of his life than the house, that this tale relates.

Picheito was the son of a white man, who was stolen, while yet a mere child by the Indians at Detroit during the War of 1812. When General Wolseley was coming through to Winnipeg with the First Expedition, he wanted a guide to take him from the Lake of the Woods to Red River. At Fort Frances, Picheito's father volunteered to act as guide, and though he had been brought up to the life of an Indian his superior blood and birth were still noticeable, and were observed by Wolseley, who took the trouble to make enquiries about his antecedents, and as a result he cited the fact that he had been stolen at Detroit as above stated.

On returning to Canada, Wolseley had not lost interest in his young guide, with whom he had been well pleased, and he again set himself to work to trace out the young man's relatives, and his trouble was again rewarded with success, he having discovered his parents. The young guide was then sent to his natural home, but the habits of Indian life had so grown upon him that he could not live among the white people, so he again returned to the wigwams of the Red-man.

He married an Indian woman, and the union was blessed with the birth of two sons, Picheito, and Mr. Tanner. The latter was killed by falling off a wagon at Poplar Point in the fall of 1870.

Mr. Tanner was a Christian and a missionary, and worked hard for the cause of the "Holy Church" among the Indians. He was the father of Mr. John Tanner, of Minnedosa, well-known as having kept the Stopping Place at the "Little Saskatchewan", known as Tanner's Crossing.

Picheito amassed a large amount of wealth by his shrewdness, and was recognized as a sort of leader and adviser among the Ojibway Indians, though socially he mixed very little with them, excepting when on trading excursions. He is supposed to have been the secret cause of the collision between the Red Lake Indians and American Sioux, at Lake Manitoba, about twelve years ago.

The arrival of the Sioux, in this part of the country, was not heralded with a very friendly spirit by the Canadian Indians, and it was soon made apparent that there would be trouble. The Sioux were camped beyond Flee Island on Lake Manitoba during the summer, subsequent to their arrival, and thought that they were free from molestation. But one night a party of Red Lake Indians, a branch

of the Ojibway, swooped down on their village and fired into their tents while all the men were sleeping, killing thirteen persons, and wounding several others. The marauding party then decamped, and would not show fight.

After this, the Sioux returned to the Portage, and the young chief with a band of followers, went to Picheito's house and accused him of being the cause of the trouble.

Picheito was not a Christian and could never be induced to become one, although he believed there was a Supreme Being, but he thought his time had come on this occasion, and as he afterwards himself said, he made good use of what few prayers he knew. The Sioux did not harm him however, but they went into his yard and took a couple of ponies and some other little things which were lying around loose, and Picheito was afraid to stop them.

The Sioux knew there would be still further trouble, so they securely entrenched themselves on the south side of the Assiniboine River, opposite the late Mr. David Cusitar's house.

A few days after the massacre at the Lake, the Red Lake Indians came into Portage and asked to have a 'Pow-wow' with the Sioux. This was granted and the two tribes feasted and pow-wowed for several days. At last, one evening after a big pow-wow, the chief of the Red Lake Indians addressed the assembly, and concluded by saying that he would come on the morrow and tell the real object of his presence here. These words seemed to have a significant meaning to the Indians, for next day all was quiet; not an Indian was to be seen.

Late in the afternoon a long, black, moving line was seen approaching on the northern horizon. It was a war party of Red Lake Indians, and as it came nearer to the Portage the men fell into the grass, separating all over the prairie, and kept crawling up unobserved behind the few who continued to walk. The Sioux had noticed the movement, and they also had come from behind their entrenchments and scattered themselves in the long grass, but they did it so stealthily that they were not observed by the opposite party.

Just before dusk, a Sioux Indian came out on the prairie, near where the Court House now stands, to help Mrs. Spence, an old half-breed woman, to draw in a load of hay, and as they were returning, on the trail leading to the river, Mrs. Spence was leading the pony and the Indian was walking behind the cart. They had got down the trail as far as the log house which is now occupied

by Mr. Kilmister, and were walking on quite unsuspicious of danger so near their own people, when suddenly the stillness was broken by the sharp report of a rifle, and the next instant the young Indian dropped dead. As quick as a shot, a half score of hideously painted Indians sprang upon the body of their murdered victim, and in an instant had the scalp from his head, and with sharp knives made incisions down his back, and tore strips of skin from the yet quivering flesh. The Red Lake Indians then retired, flourishing their bloody trophies, and concentrated their forces with alacrity and cunning, probably expecting an open attack, but the Sioux did not expose themselves.

Presently the young Sioux Chief rose, Phoenix like, from his hiding place, and challenged the Red Lake band to come and fight like men, endeavoring to incite them to war by calling them cowards and murderers, but all their endeavors failed, for the Red Lake men returned to the Lake, thus practically ending the Indian warfare in this district.

The next year, the Sioux Indians again levied blackmail on Picheito, but they could not make anything out of him, for like all great schemers he never once showed his hand.

Picheito had five sons, of whom Kaseaway, the well-known trader of the north-west, is the eldest. The last time Kaseaway was down here he had over two hundred carts, so it is evident that the success which attended his father is also attending him.

Picheito died somewhere in the Qu'Appelle Valley about the year 1872. The removal of the old house, which was once the great pride of Picheito and the envy of the settlers, recalls the somewhat romantic events of this story to the writer, and it is hoped they will be interesting to the many readers of this paper". (End of Quote.)

When you came to the "scalping" part of his story, you probably shuddered and said, "How horrible! How cruel! How terrible!" and indeed it was. You might also be associating this gruesome practice with all Indians, and condemning them as the originators of it, which is unfair, unkind and untrue.

R. M. Connelly, a Regional Director with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development says, "It's a historical fact that in the early days of the U.S. some governments in the Thirteen Colonies paid bounty money for every Indian murdered. Settlers had to show proof of kill before they could cash in, so they got into the habit of bringing scalps to the local bounty agent. It didn't take the Indians too long before they learned to repay their friendly neighbors in kind."

Many of us remember when wolves' ears had to be produced as proof of kill to collect bounty money; there was also the proof required for crows, which were legs, and gophers, which were tails. It's a very disturbing thought, that people's scalps were, at one time, in the same category!

Following the explorers, Archdeacon Cochrane and sixteen settlers were the first white people who came into contact with the Indians in the Portage la Prairie area. The Church Missionary Society Record stated that in 1852, when Mr. W. W. Kirby took a census, there were sixteen white families, 112 people living in ten houses, and seven Indian tents inhabited by ten families, with a total of 33 Indians in them.

The census would very likely be taken in the immediate vicinity of Archdeacon Cochrane's proposed mission, and not include countless square miles where a census was not possible.

An indication of brotherliness and co-operation in 1852 can be read in the church records which states: "The Indians and settlers have lived in the hope of soon seeing a Missionary placed among them, and they have prepared all the timber for a Church and a grist-mill."

In those days, as has been stated in the above narrative, the Indians lived in tepees. That would, no doubt, be in the summertime only. Log cabins would provide more warmth during our prairie winters. This is verified later in the narrative. Time has phased out the quaint old summer dwelling-places and eventually, with the pass-

ing of all older folk, they will not even be a memory. For that reason, we know you will appreciate the importance to a future generation of the pictures shown here.

Mrs. A. D. McKay, who was instrumental in starting the first Indian Residential School in Portage la Prairie in 1886, wrote an interesting document for church records which depicts Indian life in that era:

THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

"The history of this school dates back to the spring of 1886, but the idea of which it was the outcome, had been slowly evolving for more than a year, perhaps several years prior to that date.

The band of Indians, (whose proper name was said to be "Dakotah" Indians, but were commonly known as "Sioux,") who had settled near Portage la Prairie, had been forced to flee from the United States after the Minnesota Massacre of 1876 in which some of them had taken part. During the summer they lived in canvas "Tepees" (tents) on the eastern outskirts of the town, that now is, retiring in winter to wretched log huts in the bush on the banks of the Assiniboine River, three miles south. Until the advent of the white population, they roamed at will over the plains, hunting, fishing and picking up a living as best they could. When the Dominion Government entered into treaty with the Indians of the North West Territories, placing them on lands known as the Indian Reservations, the Indians at Portage la Prairie were offered a tract of land near Griswold, Man. About half the band accepted and removed their goods and chattels thither, but the rest preferred to remain where they were. Portage la Prairie had become home to them. The white settlers were kind, employing them in the grain fields in summer, and in winter often allowing them to warm themselves by the kitchen stove and drink cups of tea and eat thick slices of bread. The Indian women or "squaws" as they were called, earned considerable by washing clothes, scrubbing stores and doing other odd jobs such as picking potatoes, etc. The white "squaws" gave them old clothes and other odds and ends. It was a common sight to see the Indian men roaming about the streets, wearing beaded leggings moccasins, and blankets, their faces gaily painted with various colors, the hair braided and decorated with feathers, a terrifying sight to a newcomer in the town. The squaws were not so picturesque, their clothing was often scanty enough and they might often be seen going home with a load of poplar poles, the large ends on their shoulders, the small tops dragging on the ground. Though they

generally had food enough, if the supply failed the men might be seen searching in the refuse boxes in the back yards, or if an animal died and was carted away, it very soon disappeared.

Although most of the town people treated the Indians very kindly, there were some unscrupulous ones, who supplied them with "fire water" when there were no officers of the law nearby. The liquor crazed them and led them into all kinds of trouble. Some of them when under its influence became a terror to every one near them.

In the spring of 1885, the second Riel rebellion broke out, and it was believed Indians came from the reserves in the west and tried to induce the Sioux to join them in rebellion, but though they were excited and restless, some influence, probably the kindness of the white people restrained them, or perhaps a remembrance of their history in the United States made them doubtful of the success of the rebellion. At any rate they remained where they were. But for a time we were very fearful and thought they might be persuaded to join the rebels.

For a long time, as it came out afterwards, the sight of these Indians roaming about our streets in paint and feathers and with no thought of God except in a dim idea of a great spirit and red rags tied on the trees as a sort of symbol of Him, gave some of the women of the Presbyterian Church an uneasy feeling, that it was not enough to be kind to them, that something should be done to bring them to a higher conception of God. On Sundays when our Minister Rev. Alan Bell prayed for missionaries and missions in all parts of the world our minds turned to the pagans on our streets and we were not very happy. And no doubt the rebellion that year intensified these feelings. We felt we should be doing something to teach them about the Prince of Peace and His interest in them.

One day early in January 1886, I went into the home of Mrs. John McLeod whose husband was one of the merchants of the town and an elder in the Presbyterian church, whose home was open to all and sundry, specially to strangers. Almost before I was seated Mrs. McLeod said to me, "Do you think anything could be done for these Indians?" Instantly I knew what she meant and I replied, "I don't know, suppose we try." From these two sentences sprang the effort that resulted in the opening of a small school, the beginning of what afterwards became the "Indian Residential School." The thoughts that had so long lain dormant in our minds were at last to clothe themselves in action.

After talking that matter over, we went to our minister Mr. Bell and found him more than sympathetic, perhaps he too had been troubled over our inaction. A meeting was called and an invitation given to all who could, to attend. Ten women responded. We decided to petition the Brandon Presbytery (to which Portage belonged) to establish a mission among our Indians, pledging our support. No reply came and in March we sent another petition to the same effect. A reply came saying that in view of the large Home Mission fields for which they were responsible, they could not see their way clear to do so, and suggested that we open the mission ourselves and they would back us up with their sympathy and blessing, or words to that effect. We were rather staggered, but having "put our hands to the plough," determined to go on. We decided that we would open a day school and invite Indians old and young, whoever would come, provide a lunch daily and clothes to wear, as we knew the children had few if any. Miss Sebastian of Gladstone was engaged as teacher at the magnificient salary of $25.00 per month, out of which she had to pay her own board. A small building was secured in the east ward of the town. It has long since been demolished and cannot now be located. We scrubbed it thoroughly and put panes of glass in the windows and a lock on the door with our own hands, as we had to keep down expenditures, for so far, none had joined the venturesome ten. We decided to call our organization the "Indian Missionary Society" and pledged ourselves to provide the daily lunch week about and carry it to school. We canvassed the town for clothing and though many laughed at us and said we were undertaking a hopeless proposition, they nevertheless gave us all the clothes they could spare and we needed it in the months that followed, and we also needed both faith and patience. The lunch which was mainly soup and bread or stew and potatoes proved a drawing card and our school numbered all the way from ten to forty, ages much the same, though some came under ten and some over forty. Many who did not believe it would ever amount to anything, when they saw how persistent we were, helped us with food as well as clothing. The latter was the greatest problem, a child would be all rigged out, then disappear for two or three weeks and reappear in tatters, having used the interval tearing through the bush and wearing out our good clothes. But he always came back, and we gave him another trial, not until "Seventy times seven," but while our supplies lasted. This went on until the middle of September.

We raised the money for the teacher's salary by giving what we could ourselves, collecting some from our men friends and we staged

a grand concert with local talent and two rising stars in the musical world of Winnipeg — Miss Coultry, now Mrs. L. Verner, and the late Mr. Jackson Hanby. This concert netted us a large sum for those days and made our teacher's salary safe for months. We thought we could manage to raise funds, but where was the clothing to come from? The town was completely cleaned out. So thoroughly had we relieved them of all their surplus garments, the inhabitants had barely more than their business suits and their Sunday clothes. Whatever should we do through the long cold winter? Then our President, the aforesaid Mrs. MacLeod, came to the rescue with a suggestion. She said that in Ontario there was an organization called the "Women's Foreign Mission Society" that sent bales of clothing to Prince Albert, Round Lake and Mistawasis Indian Missions and perhaps they might send some to us if we told them of our need. So I, as Secretary, was directed to write, asking if they could help us and telling them what we were trying to do. I had never written to any society or organization and that letter cost me some sleep, but the fate of our school in which we were so deeply interested in by this time, was at stake, so the letter was dispatched. Very soon the answer came back promising the desired clothing, but going much farther than that. They offered to take over our school, turn it into a boarding school if we could secure a suitable building, pay entire expenses, rent, fuel, salary, food, clothing, etc., and we on our part might, could, would, or should, become an auxiliary to their society and remit to them whatever we could contribute voluntarily. We had not had much faith, but our mountain of difficulty had been removed. We accepted their offer and forthwith began the second stage of our school's progress.

We were able to secure a building from the late Senator Robert Watson at a very low rental and the W.F.M.S. sent out Miss Wight who was to act as matron and teacher. While all who wished could come as day pupils, though we entreated them to enroll as boarders, no one could see his or her way clear to take such a step. Some were afraid to come even as day pupils, lest in some way they might be entrapped and become residents in spite of themselves. For six months we had one solitary boarder and we bought her. She was a child named Inkabah who had negro blood in her veins as well as Indian, her face showing mainly negro. She had been abandoned by her mother, and Ada Ross, another Indian woman, had taken Inkabah into her tipi and brought her up. She was now about six or seven years of age and when Ada went out working Inkabah went along to look after Ada's papoose. One evening about dark I passed a store and saw her standing on the sidewalk with

the baby strapped on her back while Ada was inside the store spending her day's earnings, and as the Indians never hurry Inkabah had been standing outside for sometime. It was a cold night and the child was shivering. I took her inside, and asked Ada if she would not allow her to become a permanent resident of our school in words something like these, "You let her live in the school?" "No, no me need her, I work, she look after papoose." "You not work much in winter, you let her come?" "No, me get plenty work I think." It was no use that night or for some weeks after. But presently Ada decided to make a trip to Dakota and had no dress to wear. Then we approached her from another angle and offered her a dress and some other things if she would give up Inkabah to us. For a while she held out but the bait was too tempting and she gave in. Inkabah was our first conquest. She was not pretty or clever, sometimes she seemed incorrigibly stupid, but she was our first very own child of the mission and no one could take her from us. One day Mrs. MacLeod and I were going to the school and when in sight of it we looked up and saw her as we said, hanging out of an upstair window. Her face looked so like a negro and her body was in such a peculiar posture, that we both uttered the word "Topsy!" On entering we told Miss Wight where she was and how the name of "Topsy" sprang to our lips. From that day she was known as "Topsy" and the name Inkabah was all but forgotten.

The next spring, other children decided to try living in the school and gradually became accustomed to the new way of life, though order and cleanliness and obedience jarred fearfully upon them for a long time to come and a lengthened residence in the school was very irksome to them. It seemed that once in a while, their wild nature asserted itself and they just had to break away for a day."

A second school was erected, which did not prove equal for the needs of the Indians for more than a few years and the present stately structure on the western outskirts of the town replaced it. (By the way — next time you drive by this school, look at the lovely tall trees that were planted there by two Portagers — Walter Grobb and his son, John. Many will remember Arthur Grobb, another son, who worked at the MacDonald Airfield for 16 years.)

Pioneer teachers in the first schools included Miss Bessie Walker, Miss Annie Fraser (a sister-in-law of Rev. Farquhar MacRae), Miss Huston (who later became Mrs. Edward Brown), Miss Laidlaw (who later became Mrs. Marshall, of Toronto.)

Children in the school were taught reading, writing, simple arithmetic, how to mend their clothing, some cooking, keeping rooms tidy and clean, games and singing."

Many Indian children reaped rewards from the seeds sown by the above mentioned, kind, patient teachers. It's impossible to name them all, but one girl — mentioned only as "Emma" in the church records, married an Indian in Griswold, became a member of the Anglican Mission, played the organ in church and gave good service as a member of the Women's Auxiliary.

While speaking of Indians we should mention Long Plain Reserve which is situated approximately fifteen miles south-west of Portage la Prairie on the north bank of the Assiniboine River. In 1922 there were 100 Indians on this reserve. All their children were under the care of Mr. W. A. Hendrey, principal of the large Indian boarding school of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The farm consisted of 200 acres of the best land in Manitoba and the Saulteaux Indians there proved what good farmers they could be. When Mr. W. H. Ross went there in 1922 he said, "I admired the long straight-as-an-arrow lines of plowing. Drills of corn, potatoes, turnips and grain sown by the seeder across broad fields was a sight to see."

He also mentioned large stables of up to date, well bred stock, the horses sleek and fat. Many tons of potatoes were sold each year. Mr. Ross added, "In all it is a prosperous school industrially and a great credit to Mr. and Mrs. Hendrey."

It's regrettable that space does not allow all the interesting stories, related to happenings at Long Plain Reserve, to be included in this narrative. We will, however, in the interest of history, attempt to add enlightenment with a few brief statistics from the material available.

Miss Victoria Gerega, of Roblin, Man., opened the first school in the church, and in Nov. of 1949 took charge of school number one, where she taught until June, 1950.

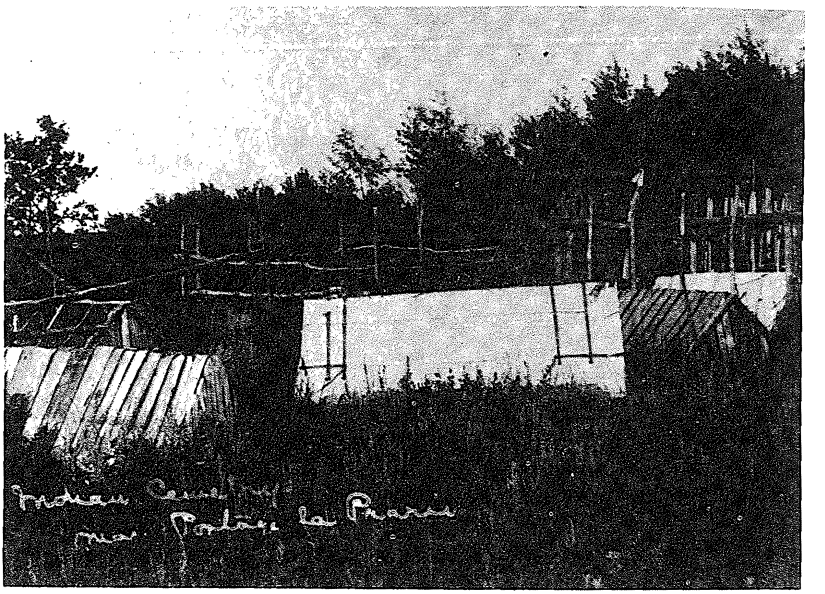
Men listed as having been in charge of the mission after the departure of Mr. W. H. Ross are: Mr. (?) Dalton, Mr. A. E. Weaver, Mr. (?) Caskey, Mr. (?) Beasworth, Mr. R. C. Matthews, Mr. (?) Friese, Mr. B. King and Mr. T. N. Ferguson (The list submitted to the author ended 1956.)

BURIAL CUSTOMS

Burial customs of the Indians were so different to the white man's that a description was written by Mr. W. H. Ross who built the church at Long Plain Reserve and served as a missionary there

from 1922 to 1927. He said: Quote — "They bury their dead in very shallow graves about 4½ feet deep. At both ends of the grave they leave a ledge of 18 inches from the bottom — the ledge would measure 18" x 24". On it they laid heavy poplar logs about 8" in diameter so that the coffin was in an open chamber, 24" wide, 18" deep and long enough for the coffin. On the top of these overlay logs they would spread old mats or a horse blanket, then fill up the grave, making quite a raised mound over each grave. Then they made a sort of canopy of rough boards, frequently covered with cloth. On one end of the gable they would cut a little star-shaped hole large enough to admit a hand. Frequently they placed inside, almost over the head of the deceased, several plugs of smoking tobacco. Relations would set small fires for 3 evenings in succession to burn through the night.

The honor of being chief of a tribe was hereditary until 1940 when elections for this position in this area started to take place.



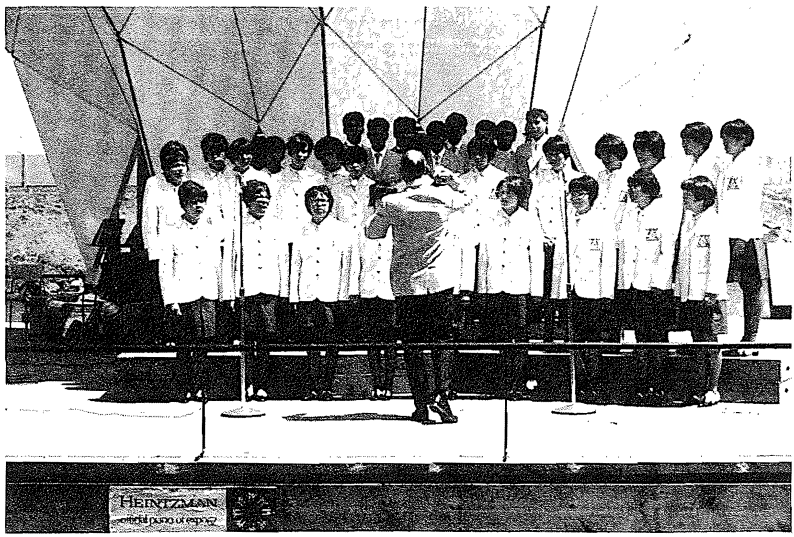
Courtesy of Manitoba Archives.

Many do not know the significance of totem poles which they may see in many places in Canada. "Totem" is a universal word among Indians," says former Chief George Daniels. "It is their way of asking a stranger what family tree he comes from. A totem pole represents one man's family tree."

Indians have come a long way since the tepee days, just as we have come a long way since the log cabin days. More emphasis is put on education and many are qualifying for worthwhile positions in various important walks of life. A Friendship Centre started in 1967, on Saskatchewan Avenue, encourages white people and Indians to mingle and in so doing benefit by what both can learn in conversation.

The Friendship Centre's board of directors oversee night classes in basic literacy, typing and art for Indians and Metis —which in turn benefits Portage la Prairie. Mrs. Joyce Hobson, a full-blooded Saulteaux Indian is the capable executive director of this establishment.

THE INDIAN GLEE CLUB



The Indian Glee Club at Expo '67 with R. E. Burk conducting.

We are especially proud of our 34-voice Indian Student Residence Glee Club, who were trained by Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Burk, and who won acclaim at Expo '67 in Montreal and again at San Antonio's HemisFair in 1968.

It was at the latter performance that they were heard by Nancy Green 'sweetheart of the ski slopes', who had just won the world

championship in that sport. So impressed was she, by their velvet voices blending in beautiful harmony, that she honored Portage by attending a banquet and social evening here on May 25, 1968 for the purpose of helping them financially. It was an unforgettable evening for everyone who attended. However, ticket sales didn't wipe out the entire deficit and $1,500.00 of it remained to be raised.

While 'walkathons' have become quite common, it took the stamina and determination of 12 Indian youths to stage the first 'runathon' in these parts; all boys anxious to keep "Canada's Singing Indians" singing and to wipe out the debt.

The 'runathon' took the form of a relay race with ten boys each running 4 miles and two running 5 miles each. The exercise was called "Miles for Song" and those inspiring words were printed on the front of the runners' white T-shirts.

At 1:30 P.M. on Oct. 18, 1968, J. O. Harris, Residence Administrator, wished the first runner luck as Mayor W. A. Linden shot the starting gun in front of the City Hall. Anthony Bear took off at top speed, in weather that was anything but favorable. Rain, snow and a little sleet couldn't cause a postponement of this important event and no one even suggested it.

The aim was to reach Polo Park, a distance of 50 miles, by 7 P.M. and they did! The remarkable young athletes who performed this feat were: Anthony Bear, Zack Knott, Gilbert Monias, Ken Omand, Robert Daniels, Henry Colon, Clarence Hart, William Moore, Gordon Muswagon, Grant Queskekapow, Larry Williams and Headley Colon.

The Polo Park Merchants' Association donated $327.25, and with other donations raised through the venture, the Indian Glee Club could carry on with a happy heart again.

After Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Burk's departure from Portage la Prairie, their place was taken by Miss Allison Cameron and Mr. Gordon Billows who are capably conducting the Indian Glee Club at this time.

It has taken a long time for the sunshine of knowledge to dispel the clouds of distrust and doubt in the minds of Indians and white men alike. Thank God, the time has come when we can love, trust, and appreciate the capabilities of each other, in a land where we can both merit awards, and share in the country's bountiful blessings.

EXPLORERS AND FUR TRADERS

"I said to a man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,' and he replied, 'Go forth and put your hand into the hand of God, and it shall be for you better than a light, and safer than the known way.' " (From a greeting to the Empire by King George VI).

The above quotation is very fitting when we apply it to the explorers, the first white men to venture into the unknown, wild, northern and western regions of Canada. Certainly they showed no fear of the 'unknown' when they came to a land which held countless hardships in those days.

Many names of explorers and traders have been listed in history: Henry Hudson, the Frobisher brothers, Samuel Hearne, Alexander Henry, Groseilliers, Radisson, Henry Kelsey, James Knight, John Macdonell, Pangman, Oakes, Boyer, Fulton, Rene Jusaume, John Pritchard, Peter Fidler, Donald McKay, Anthony Henday, Ronald Cameron, Peter Grant, Legardeur de St. Pierre, Thomas Currie, James Finley, Chevalier de la Corne, David Thompson and Sieur de la Verendrye are just a few of them!

Imagine, if you can, a country largely covered by forests in which wild animals of various kinds were numerous, where Indians who resented intrusion were the only human inhabitants, where mosquitoes dined on every bit of bare flesh they could find, and you will have a vague picture of what Manitoba was like at one time, and a greater appreciation for the bravery of the explorers and fur traders who came here.

Jacques Cartier found the opening on the eastern coast of Canada (which became known as the Gulf of St. Lawrence), and managed to get as far as the rapids of Lachine near Montreal. He also found a water-route which he felt could be used to explore the interior further. Fishermen (Europeans) who came later to the Gulf of St. Lawrence had the first dealings with the Indians and the first inkling of the wealth of resources in furs that were in the interior of Canada. While drying their cod fish on land they traded various small items, such as fish hooks, etc. for beaver robes or any fur garments that the Indians were wearing that caught their fancy. A demand for furs on the European market came next and resulted in the French fur trade.

Henry Hudson went to his tragic death unaware of the fact that he had found a route to the greatest fur field in the world. Groseilliers and Radisson (who was his brother-in-law) and through

them the founders of the Hudson's Bay Company joyfully revealed the value of his explorations and discoveries.

When Groseilliers and Radisson felt they had received a dirty deal from the French Governor who would not issue a fur trading license to them (with good reason), they managed, through Sir George Carteret, to capture an audience among the courtiers of King Charles II. Prince Rupert, the King's cousin, became interested in the fur trading prospects and in 1670 the Hudson's Bay Co. was born — when King Charles II granted "sole trade and commerce" rights within the entrances of Hudson Strait upon "our dear and entirely beloved cousin, Prince Rupert" and his associates. The Charter said they were to be "the true and absolute Lordes and Proprietors".

It is interesting to wonder if King Charles realized the vastness of the territory of which he was making the Adventurers "Lordes and Proprietors!" It actually took in Ontario, Quebec north of the Laurentian Hills and west of the Labrador boundary, the whole of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the southern half of Alberta, and the south-east corner of the Dominion's North West Territories — as it is mapped out in our geography of today!

Trouble was bound to ensue between the English and the French in a struggle for the fur trade, and many are the stories that have been told of foundering ships and burning forts.

By 1784 the North West Company, a group of nine different fur trading interests was in existence with Simon McTavish as its guiding force. The Forsythe-Richardson Co. (nicknamed the X.Y.Co.) was also cutting in on the trade and rivalry was keener than ever. In 1821 all friction and feuds came to an end when they merged into one company — the Hudson's Bay. At that time the currency consisted mostly of Hudson's Bay blankets which were notes for £1, 5s, and 1s each.

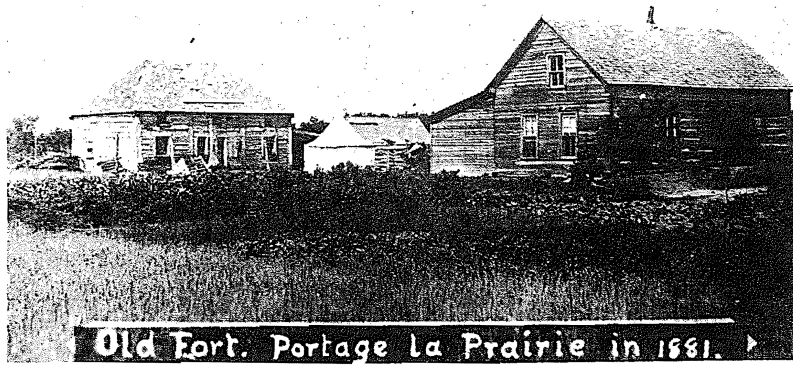
"What has all of that got to do with Portage la Prairie history?" you might ask. And the answer might well be, "Because the Assiniboine River, which was used by explorers, voyageurs, Indians and fur traders, skirts the city, and because it is important to relate with the past to give an appreciation of the progress which has been made to this time. An extract from Articles by P. M. Liba, Graphics 1958, says, "David Thompson, the explorer, passed by Portage in the early part of March, 1798, and again in autumn of the following year. Meadow Portage is the name ascribed to this area by Thompson."

We might even assume that Radisson and Groseilliers were in this area — due to the fact that historians have stated that their canoes were manned by Assiniboine Indians. Therefore, there is strong presumptive evidence that they must have gathered furs around the Assiniboine River. In "A Brief History of the Hudson's Bay Co.", from which some of the above information was obtained, it does not mention the fort that the Company had at Portage la Prairie or the store which was reported in a Free Press paper (1960) to be "one of the handsomest stores west of Winnipeg."

The Portage Graphic paper (May 25, 1951) printed the following:

"For many years before the settlers moved into the West the Hudson's Bay Company operated quite a business at Portage la Prairie. It dated back to the 1700's.

In 1796 the Company established its first fort on the south bank of the Assiniboine River, approximately 3 miles southwest of the present city of Portage la Prairie.



In 1832, "The Old Fort" shown in this picture was established by the Hudson's Bay Company on the north bank of the Assiniboine River approximately 3 miles southwest of the present city of Portage la Prairie.

Mr. J. D. McKay, who was better known by the name of 'Dougall' was in charge of the Hudson's Bay store when it was located at this old fort. One of his unforgettable experiences there was when Riel's men came up from Winnipeg, bound him and looted the store. He naturally had a few anxious moments wondering if they were going to kill him! However, he happily discovered they

were only interested in stealing provisions, and after gathering up as much as they could carry they were kind enough to unbind him.

(One of J. D. McKay's sons was an interpreter for the Mounted Police for a number of years. Another son, W. C. McKay, was a successful Conservative candidate in a Cumberland election in 1912 or 1913.)

The Hudson's Bay Fort was to collect leather and buffalo robes in as large quantities as possible. It was also used as a warehouse for trading goods brought in on the Assiniboine River.

In 1856 the Hudson's Bay Company erected a trading post on the Saskatchewan Trail at what is now known as 18th Street, N.W. From 1857 to 1870 an interpreter (unidentified) was in charge of The Fort and Trading Post." (In 1861 a man named James Sinclair took over the duties).

"In 1871 the Hudson's Bay Company had at this date removed all its interests in the "Old Fort" and concentrated them on what was known as the "West End". Its stores and warehouses, with the addition of the houses of the employees and a few others built around them, made quite a little settlement.

The "Old Fort" on the Assiniboine River (after 1871) was used as an over-night resting place and often a stopping-off place by new settlers and their families. The families stayed at the Fort while the settler went out to strike his homestead land. One prominent pioneer Portage family, namely the Trimbles, remained for three years while the men established quarters on the land.

The "Old Fort" property remained in possession of the Hudson's Bay Company until the early 1880's, when it was sold as farm land to one Jonathan Lee. A grandson, Harold Lee, formerly of the Burnside district, but now residing in Glendale, California, U.S.A., has memories of the time when as a lad he and some of his chums picked bullets out of the beams of the storehouse with their jackknives." Benjamin Lee (Father of Harold Lee and son of Jonathan) moved the storehouse to his farm. The Fort and the Storehouse have both been demolished but no definite date can be ascertained in this connection." (It is shown in an 1890 Graphic picture — and Harold mentions 1898 as a possible date.)

According to The Weekly Review (July 18, 1895), the Hudson's Bay Company were building a new two-storey brick general store in the centre of the present City of Portage la Prairie at that time. (This was the store described by the Free Press as "one of the

handsomest stores west of Winnipeg".) A picture of the building is shown in one of the business section scenes in this book. It was destroyed by fire on January 11th, 1913 and the Company did not rebuild.

PIERRE GAULTIER DE VARENNES, SIEUR DE LA VERENDRYE

Portagers have reason to be particularly interested in this man because of his connection with early history here. It is likely that other places where he built forts share the same interest in his name.

His first fort, built in 1731, was named St. Pierre and was in the Rainy River area. His next fort, built in 1732, was named St. Charles. Moving west in 1733, he built Fort Maurepas, and moving still farther west he built Fort de la Reine two miles south-east of Poplar Point Station (according to Peter Fidler in his survey in 1808) in 1738.

Historians pretty well agree on the above data but are at variance on the date the second Fort de la Reine was established at Portage la Prairie. A. S. Morton, the Saskatchewan historian, was of the opinion that the first Fort de la Reine at Poplar Point was only a temporary structure made up of a few shacks inside a palisade, and that the second Fort de la Reine at Portage was erected in 1739. Mr. Adolph Dack, President of the Pembina Hills Historical Society, told the Enterprise press (Oct. 22, 1952) that the fort was moved from Poplar Point to Portage la Prairie in 1743 or 1744 — which is a difference of four to five years in the estimated dates of the two gentlemen re establishment of the fort here.

There is also a difference in meaning of the words 'moved' and 'erected'! Was Fort de la Reine at Poplar Point dismantled and the material used to erect the fort by the same name at Portage la Prairie? Or was it abandoned and a fort built of new materials here? At this late date there is actually no way of knowing. However, it doesn't seem logical that, in a land where there was an abundance of timber, they would go to the trouble of tearing down log buildings to transport them at much inconvenience to a new fort site several miles away. We might therefore assume that the word 'moved' was not meant to be taken literally.

Mr. Barry Hyman, Assistant Provincial Archivist, went to considerable trouble to come up with some authentic dates for this book re Fort de la Reine. In a letter dated June 13th, 1968, he says,

Quote: — "I have checked all the available sources in the Archives and Library and it would seem that the first fort was constructed at Poplar Point and the second fort, built between 1739 and 1744 was built on the site of present day Portage la Prairie."

The date on the Fort de la Reine cairn (near the water tower) reads 1738 which we believed to be correct until research for this book was done! However, it is probably as close to the correct date as it would be with any date, chosen without means of verification, between the years 1739 and 1744.

The Hudson's Bay, who are noted for keeping accurate records state in "A Brief History of the Hudson's Bay Company, Quote — "The fur trade wealth west of the Great Lakes was not to be left to the Adventurers who traded only from comfortable forts on Hudson Bay. In June 1731, a party of fifty Frenchmen under Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Verendrye, started westward from Montreal. The merchants of Montreal had supplied them with goods for trading with the Indians."

In the party were La Verendrye's sons, Pierre and Francois, and a nephew, La Jemeraye.

This group are known to have built at least eight trading posts, each in the heart of hunting grounds that eliminated the long, hazardous trips to the Bay posts by the Indians.

The lure of rich fur forests was not La Verendry's only reason for invading the west however. He had an ambition to discover an overland route to the Pacific Ocean. He only knew of such a place because of tales told by Indians. They described it as a world of water that was too salty to drink! He was given no financial assistance from France even though the country would benefit and be glorified by the discovery. Their one contribution was to grant him a monopoly to trade in any land he might discover, and permission to trade wherever any other Frenchman traded.

After establishing Fort de la Reine at Portage la Prairie he decided to travel westward but hadn't gone very far when he became ill and decided to return to it.

La Verendrye's two sons went exploring on their own then. Francois is credited with having built Fort Dauphin. Both boys are credited with building Fort Bourbon on the Saskatchewan River, and Fort Pascoyak on the same river farther west. They continued moving westward until they reached the foot of the Rockies in 1743, and not knowing how close they were to the Pacific Ocean they turned

back toward the place where their father was waiting — Fort de la Reine in Portage la Prairie.

La Verendrye was decorated with the Cross of St. Louis shortly before his death. His sons suffered financial ruin, and it was only by recording their names in history after their deaths that they were in any way rewarded for their courageous attempts to give the world a knowledge of western Canada.

Any of the Verendryes could have written a book about their experiences in the wild, Canadian west. What a treasure it would be today to read, in each of their own words, of their experiences in Portage la Prairie and their impressions of this part of the country!

Fort de la Reine was put to the torch by Cree Indians in 1752 but it will never pass into oblivion because of a museum, which is the pride and joy of Portagers, built in 1967, which immortalizes the name. La Verendrye's name will always be mentioned in connection with it, and many times again through the years when visitors to the Koko Platz residential section ask, "How did La Verendrye Crescent get its name?"

Over two hundred years have rolled by since the La Verendryes trod fearlessly into this unknown land, and since the days when furs were regarded as fortune and men risked their lives in an effort to attain them. Years, like a speck, in the sands of time of the universe!

THE FIRST WHITE SETTLEMENT

It fell to a churchman, Archdeacon Cochrane of the English Church Mission Society, to establish the first white settlement at Portage la Prairie.

In the spring of 1851, the Archdeacon purchased from Chief Pe-qua-ke-kan, the point of land on which the City of Portage la Prairie now stands, the purchase price being paid in goods. The land comprising the Island, opposite Slough Road (Crescent Road) was bought for the agreed payment of a bushel of wheat from every settler during the lifetime of the Chief; an agreement which was duly honored.

A number of parishioners from St. Andrew's with their families formed the nucleus of the new parish of St. Mary's la Prairie in 1853. Among these were Peter, William and John Garrioch, Fred Bird, Charles and Martin Cummins, Gavin Garrioch and John and Henry Hudson.

One of the first tasks undertaken by the Archdeacon and his flock was the building of a church. While it was under construction, services were held in Jack Anderson's home which stood on the north bank of Crescent Lake at the foot of present 4th St. S.E. It was a 20 ft. square log building with planks laid on blocks for seats. A table at the front served as pulpit, desk and altar.

When the church was finally completed it was a structure 70 ft. long by 30 ft. wide and 14 ft. high. Rev. A. C. Garrioch describes it in his book, "First Furrows". Quote: "At the north end was a ten foot square tower sixty feet high with a spire surmounted by a cross. The walls of the church were of oak logs hewn on two sides. The church and tower were clapboarded and whitewashed and the roof of the church covered with unpainted oak shingles. Inside, the walls were plastered with clay and a mixture of finely chopped hay, and whitewashed. There was no chancel, a feature of all churches built in Archdeacon Cochrane's time, but about 10 ft. of the south end was railed off for this purpose. Two pulpits, 8 ft. high, stood in each corner of this enclosure. A communion table stood in the centre. The pews were made entirely by the people themselves. Each pew had two heavy oak ends with curved tops, and book rests and kneeling boards were attached".

The site of this church was described as being "close by the river and east, south of where the City of Portage la Prairie now stands."

Archdeacon Cochrane wrote a letter to the Church Missionary Society in 1854 which is historically enlightening: Quote — "In the spring of 1850 you authorized me, by the sanction of the Committee, to commence a station towards the west, to the south of Fairford. In the month of March I sent tobacco to the principal Indians who wandered over that quarter, to meet me at certain places in the month of May. At the beginning of this month I set out, with a certain party who were well acquainted with all the rivers and creeks which run into the Assiniboia. (Assiniboine) We travelled as far west as Beaver Creek, and found no suitable location beyond Portage la Prairie, about 75 miles west of the Red River Settlement. To this place we turned our attention, and determined here to plant a settlement.

I went in June 1851, and fixed on a location, and contracted for a schoolroom. The timber was then cut and hauled to the place, but owing to heavy rains and sickness, with the want of provisions, the original schoolroom was not built, but a smaller one, sufficient to accommodate 40 children. In the winter of 1851-52, the Bishop kindly came forward and assisted to keep the school together.

Having sown the Mission farm at the rapids, I had a good stock of grain, which enabled me to be liberal to the most needy of the settlers, and children who were attending school.

In the spring of 1852, though flood had deprived us of many of our resources, I was still able to extend sufficient help to keep the needy in their houses, and turn their attention to the cultivation of the soil.

This spring I furnished them with a liberal supply of seed wheat."

This foregoing not only depicts the problems of the times, but the dedicated, unselfish kind of man that Archdeacon Cochrane was also.

The settlement was saddened when he passed away Sun., Oct. 1st in 1865 at the age of 70 years, for surely he was the founder of the settlement and one of the leading architects of what we have today. The settlers had looked up to him for many years, not only as a clergyman but as a legal adviser, medical assistant and good farmer as well.

With the passing of Archdeacon Cochrane, the original settlers who had come with him followed the path that they knew would be most pleasing to him. These men included: Frederick Bird, Richard Favel, Thomas Anderson Sr., Peter Whitford, Henry House, Baptiste Demarais, John Inkster, Simon Whitford, William Garrioch, John Hodgson, John Anderson Sr., John Spence, John Garrioch, Charles Demarais, and Peter Garrioch.

Others who followed shortly after included: William Sutherland, William Gaddy, Charlotte Spence, James Whitford, Magnus House, Henry Anderson, David Cusitar, William McKay, Joseph Turner, David Bow, Allen McIvor, William Hodgson, James Frank, Gavin Garrioch, Henry House Jr., Robert Inkster, Magnus Whitford, William Norn, John Dougal McKay, Peter Henderson, Robert Gunn, Thomas Bow, Alexander Gaddy, John James Setter, Malcolm Cummings, Charles Cummings, Henry House Sr., Francis Whitford, Benjamin McKenzie, John Whitford, Joseph House, Philip Whitford, James Jonas, David Anderson and John Anderson Jr.

THE FIRST COUNCIL

It could be said that the first council, one of representation, was established in 1864. Archdeacon Cochrane had done very well in keeping things in line up to this time.

Members of the council were known as associate judges, and not as councillors or aldermen as they are today. Their duties consisted of learning of important needs and improvements of the community and making decisions regarding infractions of the law.

The officials took an oath of office and the system of trial by jury was instituted for the first time west of Fort Garry. The system added dignity to law enforcement and was so satisfactory that this form of local government was in existence for some time.

The first associate judges were: William Hudson, Henry Anderson, Farquhar McLean, John Garrioch, Thomas Anderson, Peter Henderson, Charles Anderson, and John Norquay.

The first constables for the community of Portage la Prairie were William Hudson, Henry Anderson and J. D. McKay.

High Bluff and Portage, both being new communities, worked closely together. Constables appointed in High Bluff were Charles and Thomas Anderson.

THE SETTLERS

The squealing, laden ox-carts
Broke the quiet of the plains,
As they slowly lumbered westward
In hot suns or drenching rains.
Settlers seemed driven
By desire to pass the test
Of pioneering on the prairies,
In the little-known wild west.
They tramped firmly in the footsteps
Of explorers none could see,
Until their eyes beheld the beauty
Of Portage la Prairie.
They have gone, but left their spirits
On land where once they trod,
Land, on which has sprung a city;
Fertile fields that once were sod.

Anne M. Collier

THE RED RIVER OX CART

For a good many years the Red River ox cart played an important role in the expansion of the frontier. It was, in the early days, the only means of land transportation, not only to bring

settlers and all their worldly goods to the prairies, but as a trading caravan and a buffalo hunting vehicle as well.

Many were the hardships our settlers endured while using this mode of travel; the mosquitoes, flies and other insects for which there was no repellent, the bumpy trails with bogs and creeks that were a part of the journey, and the utter feeling of helplessness when a loved one died, due to lack of medical attention, and had to be buried beside the trail.

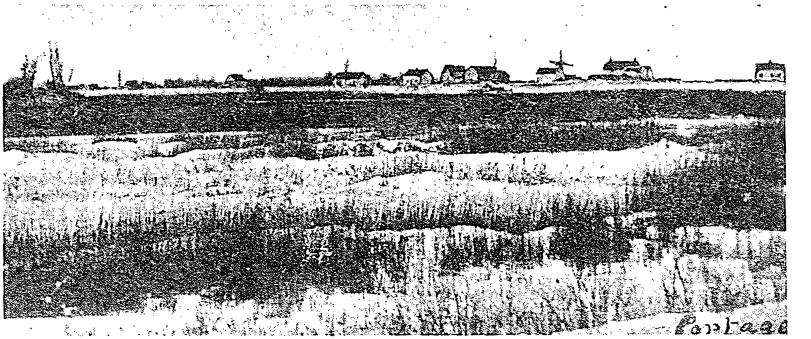
The cart was made of tough well-seasoned oak wood, throughout. There were two rough shafts, called "trams" by the settlers, each about twelve feet in length (although the length could be as great as eighteen feet). Cross pieces were then firmly morticed into the trams with the two outer cross pieces being about six feet apart. This provided the foundation of the cart. Holes were then bored into the upper surface of the trams, vertical rails were inserted into the holes, and cross bars were set across the top of the rails. Across the rear of the cart was the tail board. (Carts in a brigade were often fastened rein to tailboard.) The nave, spokes and felloes of the wheel were "dished" (curved) to give the Cart steadiness.

The most important part of the Cart was the axle and a great deal of care went into the making of it as it was imperative that it be as smooth as possible to reduce friction. The axle was lashed to the Cart with dampened "Shagganappe" (buffalo hide cut into narrow strips one half to one inch wide). This would shrink and hold the axle firmly. An ox-drawn Cart would travel twelve to fifteen miles in a day, and in three weeks, five or six axles would be needed. This is understandable when we take into consideration that the freight usually weighed eight hundred to one thousand pounds.

Lubrication of the wheels was not advisable. The sand on the trails would soon clog up the axles and impede their progress. That is why we have so many histories recording the weird sounds made by approaching Carts.

Charles Mair, a merchant and postmaster in Portage la Prairie in the 1870s, said: "The creaking of the wheels of the Red River ox cart is indescribable. It is like no sound you ever heard in all your life, and makes your blood run cold . . . To hear a thousand of these wheels groaning and creaking at the same time is a sound never to be forgotten."

If the sounds of approaching Carts were as bad as the above description, imagine how nerve-torturing it must have been for settlers who had to endure the sound for weeks on end!



Picture of Portage 1873 Courtesy of the Manitoba Archives

THE REPUBLIC OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

It was during the ox-cart days that a colorful character by the name of Thomas Spence breezed into the country. He had been a British army officer and made it known that he was a political worker and that his aim was to see to the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada. He and his wife arrived in Fort Garry in 1866.

There were a few ambitious men who had come from the east previous to that time, settled along the Red River and formed a party which they called "The Canadian Party". The aim of this party was to terminate the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly in order that the North-West could be opened to settlement. Thomas Spence became a willing worker in the "Canadian Party".

The only newspaper in the colony was the Nor' Wester with Dr. John C. Schultz as its editor. Dr. Schultz was a member of the party and Spence went to work for him soliciting subscriptions. After gaining the confidence of the settlers he claimed he had the authority to draw up legal documents and arbitrate upon and adjust disputed accounts.

No one knows why he left Fort Garry and came to Portage la Prairie. Obviously a good talker, he took the village by storm upon his arrival here and had no difficulty in convincing the local council to set up a Republic, in 1867, and have himself elected President.

The Republic became known by any one of three names: Republic of Portage la Prairie, Republic of Manitoba or Republic of Caledonia.

Spence was on shakey ground, but communications in those days were not of the instant variety and it took awhile for the Govern-

ment in Britain to answer his request for recognition of the Republic. In the meantime he set up his government and all went well until shoemaker MacPherson, of High Bluff, objected to the taxes imposed by Spence. MacPherson said he believed the taxes were being used, not to operate the Republic, but to buy whiskey for the council. There seems to be a variance of opinion as to the validity of the accusation, but more about that later.

Spence charged MacPherson with treason. Two constables were sent to the MacPherson home to serve the warrant for his arrest. It wasn't difficult to elude them at the time but they had the advantage of horses and a sleigh and he was soon overtaken and captured.

On the way back to the village, over the snow-covered prairie, they overtook another sleigh. MacPherson's spirits must have soared skyward when he recognized the other teamster as his good friend, John McLean!

Now, John McLean was a good friend, but he was also pernickety about abiding by the law, and when the prisoner leaped into his sleigh he had a few uncomfortable moments. However, he talked his friend into going along peaceably with the constables and promised him that he would have a fair trial. So, with faith in his heart, MacPherson allowed himself to be put under lock and key.

John McLean

The trial was held at night in a room dimly lit by a lamp. As he saw Spence in the Judge's seat, with his favorite pals in attendance, MacPherson must have doubted his chances of having a fair trial.

However, his spirits must have soared somewhat when peering into the gloom he saw the face of McLean, along with a few other friends.

If Spence and his men wondered why they were there they didn't have to wait long for the answer.

John McLean's usually friendly Scottish burr was a demanding growl when he explained their presence by saying, "We want to know what MacPherson is being tried for." "Treason to the laws of the Republic," Spence replied.

McLean then caused quite an uproar by shouting there were no laws, and demanding to know the name of the accuser. Upon being told it was Spence he advanced on him saying, "Come out of that, you whited sepulchre, you cannot act as judge and accuser both!"

When constables tried to remove McLean from the court room his friends sprang into action, some of them firing at the ceiling while others engaged Spence's men in fist fights. Table, lamp and stove were overturned and Spence was thrown to the floor. His men deserted him and took off into the night.

One thing Spence had never bragged about was ever having won a medal for bravery or his ridicule might have been even harder to bear! As he cowered in a corner of the darkened room he was shouting, "For God's sake, don't fire! I have a wife and family."

That was the beginning of the end of the ill-fated Republic of Portage la Prairie. Britain finally refused to grant recognition and the Republic was disbanded.

Spence left for salt spring near Lake Manitoba where he manufactured salt for a couple of years before going back to Fort Garry.

Council picture courtesy of Manitoba Archives.

When a Provisional Government was formed with Louis Riel as president, Spence was elected to the Council. He also became editor of the New Nation which had succeeded the Nor' Wester.

Later he was appointed Clerk of the Legislative Council when the Provincial Government of Manitoba was formed. Following that, he became Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and in 1881, Census Commissioner for the North West Territories, then on to California as Canadian Immigration Agent.

His last known job was in Edmonton, Alberta, where he was an assistant in a land registry office. He died in Edmonton on March 22, 1900.

It seems highly improbable that all of the stories so detrimental to Spence's character were true, in view of the fact that he held the foregoing positions of trust after leaving Portage la Prairie.

The Daily Graphic of Feb. 10, 1945, contained a speech made by Chas. E. Greenlay, M.L.A. who was seconding the speech from the throne when the legislature opened. Toward the end of the lengthy narrative we read, (Quote) — "Some of you may not be aware that history records that in the early days — 1867 — one, Thomas Spence, established a Republic within the British Empire at Portage la Prairie, and that he set up a Government and imposed a customs tariff on imports to raise funds to construct a Court House and gaol. However, Mr. Spence was accused by a quarrelsome individual of using some of the money to buy liquor!" The narrative which followed that remark is not new so we will go forward to where he said, "I might add that but for this interference, Portage la Prairie might have been the seat of government rather than Winnipeg."

One thing which seems to be pretty well accepted is that his efforts in Portage la Prairie could have contributed greatly to Manitoba's decision in 1870 to enter Confederation, so he could conceivably be called one of the "fathers" of Manitoba's Confederation.

The Portage la Prairie where Spence ruled supreme for that brief span of time, is now tempered by a stable system of government and law, enriched by the fruits of an economy that draws strength from agriculture and industry, and the fact that it is peopled by harmonious folk of many nations, many races and many creeds united here in the common endeavor to make it progress and prosper.

W. J. BODDY KEPT A JOURNAL

Yes, W. J. Boddy kept a journal. Maybe he realized that it would become more historically valuable as time went on. Maybe he wrote it with a certain faith that his descendants would enrich history by submitting his knowledge of the events that it would contain; events laboriously penned with quill and ink. His faith was justified and T. W. Boddy made it possible for us to include part of the journal in this book.

The first part of the material on hand takes in conditions abroad which we will omit. We will start quoting from where the text describes events which will be of more interest to Portagers and most Manitobans.

Mr. Boddy titled the text — "Events — Jan. 7th, 1871".

Quote — "We pass over the petty conflicts in Ireland and the United States, and come to our own homes and hearth. Canada altho' a few years ago boasted of achieving so much by Confederation, and that too, without bloodshed, without serious strife, Nova Scotia being the only dissenting province in the union and she in a short time pacified and entered into Confederation with all her might to extend British influence and British liberty for a new prosperity, attended our cause in anticipation, extension of territory and began our registration with the English government to secure the North West Territory from the Hudson's Bay Co. Our delegate was sent to England with full powers to settle with the Imperial Government if they should hand it over to the Canadian Government.

All went well until Canada sent, in the month of October, 1869, the formidable William MacDougall to assume the government of the country, his commission to take effect on the 1st day of Sept. 1870 provided that negotiations then pending would be faithfully carried out.

But no sooner than Mr. MacDougall arrived at Pembina, a port in American territory, than a portion of the settlers at the Red River known as French Half-breeds sent a party of twenty to drive him back, but by this time he had proceeded as far as the Hudson's Bay Fort at Pembina but on British soil, where he intended to lodge until he put himself in communication with the government at Red River, so that he would know what best to do in the matter. But on his arrival at the Fort, he was met by the party and ordered off British soil, which of course he refused to do. They then gave him until 9 'oclock the next day (9th of October, 1869). He remained all night at the Fort and at 9 next morning the half-breeds renewed their demands, but now with threats, so that the only course left for Mr. MacDougall was to retire into Yankee territory for safety, he not having any force with him.

Things were in a mixed manner till about 1st of December when Mr. MacDougall issued a proclamation, said at the time to be the Queen's, but in reality proved to be Mr. MacDougall's without the authority of the Queen. The proclamation was brought into the settlement by Col. Dennis, the chief of surveyors that had commenced to survey the settlement, but had to stop, being forbidden by the half-breeds with Louis Riel at the head. When the colonel arrived in the settlement with the proclamation he called for volunteers to sustain him and defend the Queen's authority, which the Canadians in the country believed it to be and turned out to sustain it.

In the town of Winnipeg, where a quantity of Government provisions was stored at the time, the Canadians turned out, I believe to a man. They armed and drilled in case that the French would come to remove the government stuff after guarding it. As they said, the French did come and take an account of Dr. Schultz's goods, and in whose house the Canadians were assembled. Dennis, it appears, was not so sanguine of success as the doctor and his associates, for on the 4th of Dec. he (the colonel) sent an order for them to come down to the Scotch settlement, fortify themselves in the Scotch church, provided they could obtain permission from Mr. Black, the minister in charge, and if they could not, then to get as strong a position as possible. Probably they could get a house owned by one Prudhomme, but which was in the lower end of the settlement (at that time). But Major Boulton who was in charge of the force (in fact he got up the force) thought differently and did not obey the order, told the men that the order was conditioned and stopped it. In the doctor's house till the 7th of Dec. when the French forced them to surrender, which they did and then without condi-

tion, were marched to Fort Garry, a distance of about 1/4 mile, where they were searched and imprisoned (about 40 of them).

The men were held in close confinement for a long time, they with difficulty could keep healthy. The course adopted to keep fit was in the shape of gymnastics. Stump speeches, comic speakers, imitations, all sorts of amusements were invented. But while they were in this state, other parts of the settlement were not idle for they soon got a move on foot to liberate them from their confinement, and in the prison a scheme was concocted and executed for the escape of the prisoners. On the night of the Lord's Day 6th of January 1870 a number of them made their escape, twelve I believe. A few got their liberty from this time. However some of those that did escape were retaken. The other movement mentioned still kept growing, till an attempt at liberation by a number from the Portage, so on Feb. 10th they started with an avowed intention not to stop until those were liberated. In the meantime other influences were brought to bear on the French. Each parish sent delegates to secure their liberation and urged strongly that if the raid from Portage had not upset their liberation, they would be successful. However, they from the Portage went down past the fort and down to the Scottish settlement, thought they would assist them, but when they arrived they found that the Scotch would not join them. However, they were successful in their object for all the prisoners were liberated. But still a great calamity befell them, for in passing the fort the French came out and took them all prisoners except a few that had left for their homes through the night. The number taken was about 50, and after passing one month all but one day, they were liberated on the 16th of March, but the most doleful of all, their work of destruction and aggravation (I might say) despoilation, yes murder, for one of Canada's bravest sons, a generous and open hearted man, was taken, courtmartialed by a drunken, debauched mob of half-breeds, shot by 5 or 6 bullets, but not fatal enough to produce instant death. He was taken inside the fort walls, inside a small course box, thrust into one of the bastions, still living and conscious, he was heard to speak of his God. The Clergyman who attended him to the end Mr. George Young, a young Weslyion Methodist, but only in broken sentences, was also heard to say "Take me out of this place for I am freezing. For God's sake kill me." About 12 o'clock at night relief came and only in a fiendlish passion. Some parties entering the fort by order of the keeper and that without challenge of the guards, for on that night Riel giving orders to his guards that parties, men with horses and cutters and sleighs would enter, but they were not to meddle with them. The guard thought it somewhat strange such extraordi-

nary order be given after such strict ones before that no parties should be allowed to enter or leave without knowing who they were. So about 12 or 1 o'clock a sleigh was heard to approach the fort. They entered, the cutter with one man inside it. They made straight for the bastion where Mr. Scott was still in agony. They entered past the guard after which he heard two reports as if from a pistol or some weapon striking heavily against something solid. The night being cold and the door to the bastion being shut, he the guard could not tell from what the noise came from or what kind of weapon caused it. He placed himself in the gatery which they would have to pass through from the fort, when immediately they started the cutter containing two men. The guard thinking to himself that surely there is the man they shot to-day. But the night being dark could not identify the driver or the horse. The sled passing out after the cutter without anything on it, except the driver. The next day a hole was dug in the fort, the box put in and covered. A sham burial for it is strongly believed that poor Scott's body was deposited in the river, which stories still confirm. However things are still in a very unsettled state. The Canadians were fearful of sad consequences if help could not soon be obtained from Canadians." (End of Quote.)

The foregoing narrative is in Mr. Boddy's own words and his own style of writing, with no changes made by the writer. She deemed it more of an honor to Mr. Boddy and more worthy of historical recognition to be so.

The Mr. Scott who suffered such a horrible fate was Col. Thomas Scott a member of the armed expedition from Portage la Prairie. He had 55 men under his command at the outbreak of the rising. Other officers commanding were Major McMillan, Capt. Shepherd and Lieut. R. C. Brown.

On May 18, 1945, veterans of the Riel rebellion met in Winnipeg to celebrate their diamond jubilee. This event was sponsored by two Winnipeg units of the Army and Navy Veterans association. R. F. McWilliams, Lieutenant Governor, opened the affair with an official reception. Part of the program was photographs taken at the Old Fort Garry gate and a memorial service in St. John's cemetery.

At that time there were 150 Riel Rebellion veterans residing in the province. Five known veterans in Portage la Prairie were C. J. Sharp, R. C. Brown, L. Eadie, L. Whitman and A. Hourie. Portagers, C. E. Ward and Simon Prout had moved to Winnipeg, and Jack Prout to Edmonton. These gentlemen would be a ripe old age when the function took place.

LOUIS RIEL

Since the time of Mr. Boddy, up until recent times, Riel was considered a villain by most historians. Prejudicial accounts of his activities imbedded an impression of justice being done when he was hanged in Regina in the manner of a common criminal. However, many modern men, studying events of those times, see him as a leader and protector of the rights of the Metis and Indians in the old Manitoba settlement of Red River. Senator George Ross of Alberta said, "When prejudice vanishes, writers will, no doubt, place him in the front rank among the most eminent of Canadian statesmen."

At the time of this writing the above prediction is beginning to prove correct. Statues are being erected perpetuating his memory and giving him an honorable place in history.

THE GROWTH OF A SETTLEMENT

According to R. B. Hill: "The growth and progress of Portage la Prairie up to the year 1871 was slow. Its beginning may be said to originate with the house built by John Hudson on the bank of the slough, at the south extremity of what is now known as Joseph or Garland Street. From this point it began to grow north and westward." (We have mentioned previously about the Hudson's Bay Company and the settlement in the west end.)

"The east end comprised Anderson and Wallace's hotel, Anderson's house on the bank of the slough, Schultz and Lossee's store, Andrew McLaren's tin shop, Joe Moule's saloon, Frank Otton's saloon, Farquhar McLean's house, Charlie House's store, William Hudson's house with the windmill close by, also Fred Bird's residence and store.

Stretching westward along Slough Road were the homes of William Gaddy, John McLean, Peter Garrioch, Mr. King, Mr. Demarais, Gavin Garrioch, William Garrioch, Mr. Franks, John Dougald McKay, Davy Halcro, Alexander Gaddy, J. J. Setter, Malcolm Cummings, and the English Church mission farm and school.

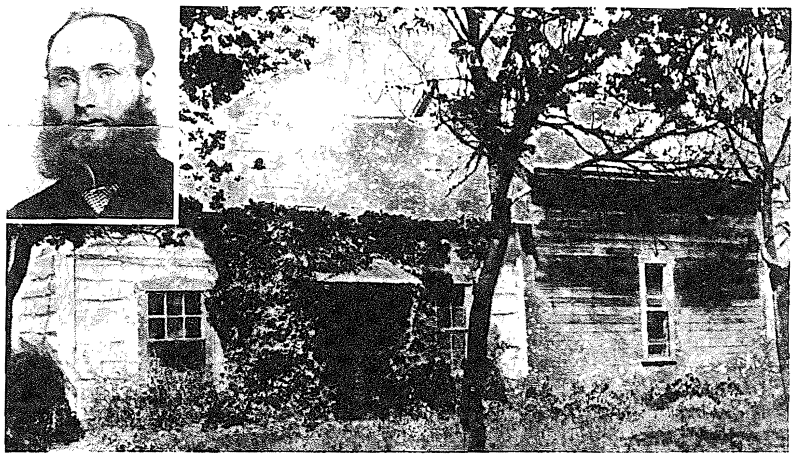
In 1871 Charles House was appointed postmaster and a regular mail service was established between Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg. In December of that year, J. J. Setter was appointed sheriff of the Central Judicial District, an office he held until 1890.

Dr. James Cowan and William Lyon erected the first sawmill in the settlement in 1871, near Pratt's Landing. In the same year,

W. M. "Billy" Smith built the first steam flour mill, at the foot of Main Street on the banks of the slough. It had a daily capacity of 40 barrels, later increased to 80.

The first hotel of any importance was the Blake and Wallace Hall, later called old Portage Hotel. Located on Portage Avenue between Garland and Main Streets, it was established prior to 1871. For a number of years court was held in the hotel and for a time it also served as the Portage post office.

No record of Portage la Prairie's history would be complete without a mention of John S. Sanderson, who holds the distinction of being the district's first pioneer to file a homestead claim.



John Sanderson and his home. Courtesy of the Manitoba Archives.

Mr. Sanderson, born at Prestonpans, East Lothian, Scotland, on Sept. 27th, 1841, came to Canada during the year of Canada's Confederation, settling first at Fergus, Ont., before coming west to Portage la Prairie in 1872.

He filed his homestead in Winnipeg before coming here. On the northeast quarter of 35-12-7 he and his wife, the former Sarah Green, built a home where they raised five children. Their last surviving child, Richard, retired in Portage la Prairie.

A provincial cairn was erected on the Delta road, a few miles north of the city, to honor Mr. Sanderson, and his descendants who are still farming land in the area.

Going back to 1870 — Thomas and Charles Logan built a flour mill in the west end of town. They later sold it to Billy Smith. Charles went farming, and Thomas went into a general store business on Main Street.

A brewery was established by William Harris and a Mr. Cairns at the north extremity of Main Street in the 1870s.

Frank Fields, who in the early part of the '70s kept a store in Portage, came back for a visit on Aug. 22, 1895. (Weekly Review paper.) He said he visited the old log building on the slough road where he used to keep store and he could not help but smile as he thought of the day when he entertained Governor Archibald, Sir John Schultz, Capt. Howard and others in that "old log house".

The first gristmill was erected on Main Street in 1874. It was a disappointing venture as that was the year of the grasshopper plague and business was impossible. The building was not used until two years later when Kenneth McKenzie, Michael Blake, Isaiah Mawhinney, Tom Garland and others formed a joint stock company to make the mill productive. Later on, Blake bought out his partners' interest and controlled it until it was purchased from him by W. J. M. Pratt.

Samuel Pockett manufactured sleighs and pumps in 1875, in shops located on Saskatchewan Avenue in the west end.

In 1876, Robert Watson erected the Marquette Mill in Portage.

J. W. and Robert Ferguson operated a general store at the west end of the settlement from 1876 to 1880.

MRS. JOHN CONNOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO HISTORY

In 1923, when Mrs. Connor was 84 years of age, she submitted an interesting story to a Winnipeg paper which contained facts of the early days in Manitoba and Portage la Prairie.

Mr. and Mrs. John Connor, whose address was given as Crescent Lake, Portage la Prairie, came to the Red River country three years before the Riel rebellion of 1870.

It was on the advice of an uncle, Frank Ogletree, that they left Ontario for the west instead of for Michigan, to which they had a mind to go. Mr. Ogletree, like many another eastern farmer in those days, had been fired with enthusiasm for the west by the glowing accounts he had read of the opportunities the new country offered the industrious settler.

"Why go and live among the Yankees when you can do as well if not better, by going to a land of promise in your own country? You go west and I'll follow as soon as I can dispose of my property here."

That was how he put it to the young couple, and upon his advice they made their decision.

Neither Mr. Connor nor his wife ever regretted taking the advice. Mr. Connor acquired property and had become a prominent man in Portage la Prairie district when death called him in 1889.

With the wonderful courage and grit characteristic of the women of pioneer days, Mrs. Connor managed the property until members of the family were old enough to relieve her of the task.

Accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Kitson (Mrs. Kitson was a sister of Mrs. Connor), Mr. and Mrs. Connor came west via Detroit and St. Cloud. At the latter point the party took "the stage". This was a glorified wagon in which the mails were carried, and was big enough to carry about a dozen passengers.

At a place in Minnesota, not far from the Canadian boundary, the party made the acquaintance of one of the most notable men in the early history of the Red River country, Dr. Schultz, the great thorn in the flesh of Louis Riel. He was very kind to the strangers and gave them words of welcome and advice that greatly cheered and heartened them.

Though tiresome, the trek to Fort Garry had its little pleasant excitements. Very often wagons would pass. Mrs. Connor reckoned that she must have seen about 800, and sometimes there were trains of wagons of great length.

Fort Garry looked strange to Mrs. Connor when she first saw it, but its grim walls made a welcome picture and created a feeling of security at a critical period in the history of the country.

Mr. and Mrs. Connor made their first home at Headingly, where they remained for a couple of years. The second year was marked by a grasshopper plague of such severity that settlers lost everything in the form of grain and vegetables.

"The 'hoppers came all at once, when everything was nice and prosperous, filled the air like a blizzard, and when they left, the whole countryside was a scene of ruin and desolation," said Mrs. Connor.

The Connors, perhaps, fared better than anybody else in the district. They had planted potatoes so deep that they were chaffed by neighbors more familiar with the productivity of the soil, but it was the depth at which they had been planted that saved them from the ravages of the all-devouring grasshoppers. The Connors' potato crop was about the only crop garnered in the district.

From Headingly Mr. Connor came to the Portage district and settled on the shores of Crescent Lake. By that time Riel had started

trouble and the country was in a state of great excitement. Scott's execution, at the order of Riel, sent a wave of indignation over the land, as did the proclamation of a republic by the rebel leader. Mr. Connor shared in the efforts made by settlers to release men whom Riel had taken as prisoners. He took charge of the arrangements for the protection of life and property in the Portage district, while a contingent from the district assisted the loyalists in their operations around Fort Garry, over which Riel had hoisted the rebel flag.

With the exception of the looting of the Hudson's Bay store at Portage by a band of Riel's men, Mrs. Connor did not recall anything very serious occurring in this neighborhood. With the arrival of Sir Garnet Wolseley's expedition at Fort Garry in 1870, Riel made a hasty retreat.

Mrs. Connor recalled that there was great jollification at Portage when the news spread that the C.P.R. was to run through the district instead of taking another route as had been originally proposed. Huge bonfires were set ablazing everywhere.

One of the successes achieved by Mr. Connor was as a pioneer in the use of threshing machinery. Buying an outfit which up to that time had not made a favorable impression on the sturdy farmers accustomed to old methods, he turned it to splendid account and placed it at the disposal of others, with excellent results for all concerned.

Mrs. John Connor, the fine pioneer lady who submitted the material on which the foregoing narrative is based, passed away in January of 1929 at the age of 90 years.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE AS I REMEMBER IT IN 1874

by Robert McDermott

"My first impression of Portage la Prairie was of a number of small houses painted red — not in the sense of a "town painted red" as described for instance by Jim Sparks, but just red houses.

My first meal there was in a hotel, probably Wallace & Blakes, the menu largely figuring in pemmican and bread made of 4X flour. This 4X flour was ground in Portage. Billy Smith was owner of the Mill and in it my father was engineer.

Another picture that sticks in my memory is of the West end of Portage, thickly dotted with tents colored white and brown or black according to age, and innumerable Red River carts drawn to one side with shafts as heels kicked high in the air, and nearby the Indian ponies tethered.

Then there was the Hudson Bay store, the "Eaton's" of a new country where dark brown sugar was 25 cents a pound, the purchaser supplying his own container. As business men, I remember the names McDugal & Hargrave, Ferguson Bros., and McQuarrie. Another name is Ross, the blacksmith, and the unforgettable keg of hazel nuts and the little hammers to which we children had right-of-way.

One of our first homes was the Wallace farm, and from there we went to the only school — on the Island — a log building presided over by Andrew Smith. To reach the school we must cross the water now known as Crescent Lake, then called "the Slough", to distinguish it from the many other sloughs we knew of. Our conveyance across the water was a dugout canoe — the paddler kneeling in the centre on a bundle of reeds.

Though few would now answer to the roll call of that school, memory holds such names as: McLean, Garrioch, Mawhinney, Carragal, Curtis, Cummings, and others as Joe, Billy and Julia McKay, the last named figuring in my first love affair. (I believe Joe McKay fired the first shot in the 1883 Rebellion)."

The gentleman who wrote the above narrative served as a reeve and was a prominent citizen of the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie.

TRANSPORTATION IN PIONEER DAYS

Mr. James Eadie who was born in Brantford, Ontario in 1863 came to Manitoba in 1880 and homesteaded until 1883 when he gave it up to become a contractor, plasterer and bricklayer. This work absorbed his time in Portage la Prairie for ten years. After that he ran an agricultural implement business here for 12 years. He appears to have had a very interesting life due to his varied experiences. Added to the above mentioned were: License Commissioner for the government of Manitoba, and Justice of the Peace at Portage la Prairie. After leaving here he was in real estate and a notary public and

conveyancer for 10 years in Vancouver, B.C. before he came back east as far as Regina, Saskatchewan where he became a Weights and Measures Inspector!

Mr. Eadie recorded his personal knowledge of transportation in pioneer days which will be best told in his own words. Quote —

"The Red River ox-cart, the shaganappy pony, and the flat-bottomed river boat with large rear paddle wheel were the only means of transportation in Western Canada prior to 1880. The old ox-cart train carried provisions and merchandise to the prairie pioneers up to 1882 when the C.P.R. reached a few towns in Manitoba, but the use of the ox and cart was about finished in 1885 on the completion of the C.P.R.

In the year 1880 there was one long ox-cart trail from Winnipeg through Manitoba and Saskatchewan which was about one thousand miles by ox-cart trail.

I am speaking from actual personal experience, as I have ridden many days in the old ox-cart, which had a railing around the top to keep you and the contents from falling overboard.

Ox-cart trains would be made up at Winnipeg of from fifty to one hundred and fifty oxen and carts — some train! One half-breed would drive and look after some five oxen and carts. This would mean some fifteen to twenty half-breeds and a manager on a shaganappy pony directing the ox-cart train. Companies were formed at Winnipeg to finance these transport trains. The supplies these ox-carts would carry included flour, salt pork, oatmeal, hard-tack, sugar, treacle, tea, coffee, tobacco, whiskey, pain-killer, blankets, overalls, etc., and came from Chicago and St. Paul to Winnipeg by ox-cart and river boats. There was no such thing as canned goods in those days, but there was some sacks of old, dried apples. There were no white collars, broadcloth shirts or silk hats in these shipments. The trasnportation charges would likely be about $5 per hundred for about 1000 miles.

These ox-cart trains would average about 20 miles per day, which would mean about two months travel from Winnipeg to Edmonton, and two months to return. This meant one round trip during the summer months. On the return trip they brought back dried pemmican and furs from the Hudson's Bay posts. The half-breed drivers had to walk half way; no place for him to ride.

Sometimes on these long trips they would have trouble getting feed and water for the oxen. The oxen only got what grass they could find along the way. No feed was carried for them, and at night they would have to camp where grass, wood and water were to be had, and you can imagine the tired travellers staying up half the night baking their bannock before a camp-fire, frying the salt pork and making their tea. Often travelling without a tent, they would just pull the ox-carts together and sleep under the carts, their only protection from rain. It was up to the rider on the pony to go ahead and select a camping place for each night.

The old ox-carts were not much good after making one of those long trips from Winnipeg and return. And the toes of the ox would get worn off and bleed from going through the sandy districts where they would grind off at the points of the hoof. Young oxen were selected for these trips. Very seldom was an ox taken out on a second trip, and many did not live to return from the first trip. Sometimes a half-breed or an ox would get sick and die on the trail and another would have to be secured. On hot summer days the oxen's tongues would be out and the oxen panting. The saliva would dampen the trail by the time the last ox-cart of the train had passed.

On these trips they had a hard time crossing the big rivers, such as the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan. This necessitated unloading each cart and taking the wheels off, putting each cart and its contents in a boat and then the half-breeds would row the boat across the river, letting the ox swim behind on the end of a rope. The ox was simply pushed into the river to swim across. He had to swim if he had never swam before. It was a case of swim ox or drown. They took only one cart at a time. Often the current of the river carried them downstream about a mile before they landed on the other side.

Many times have I forded the Assiniboine River at Smart's Landing (N.B. — Mr. Eadie might have meant Pratt's Landing and have forgotten the name) and Indian Ford at low water season when the depth of the water and the current would nearly take the old ox off his feet, his toes just touching the river bed. There was not much of the ox or cart visible above the water.

Strange to say, the first railway built west from Winnipeg to Calgary and Edmonton followed the old ox-cart trails very closely. There were no barbed wire fences or gates to let down in those days, just 1000 miles of open ox-cart trails.

It is a wonder that there was not considerable trouble with the Indians swooping down on these loaded ox-carts and seizing everything. The only protection was the few Mounted Police.

I remember on April 10th, 1880 when I was walking from Winnipeg to Portage la Prairie, I met a Scotsman on the trail who was walking to Saskatchewan. We walked along together for two and a half days from Winnipeg to Portage, nibbling at hard-tack on the way. We parted at Portage la Prairie and I have never heard of him since." (End of quote).

We are privileged to be able to revive the words penned by one of our Portage pioneers. And the information he imparted will grow even more precious as time passes.

A few unanswerable questions enter our minds when we read the last paragraph of Mr. Eadie's narrative; such as, why didn't he take the stage-coach from Winnipeg to Portage? Was the service not convenient, the ride too rough, or the fare too costly? Records show that Michael Blake established a regular stage service with Winnipeg as early as 1875.

STREAMERS ON THE ASSINIBOINE

Ninety-three years before Manitoba's Centenary the first steamboat safely navigated the Assiniboine River as far as Portage la Prairie, thereby opening an era in transportation in the west.

The steamer was the 120-ton tug Prince Rupert, owned jointly by the Kittson and Hudson's Bay Company shipping interests and operated by their joint company, Northwest Navigation.

The Prince towed three scows or flat boats loaded with cargo consigned to Pratt's Landing.

Only limited use was made of the water route that first year, but in the three succeeding years three steamers, the Marquette, the Cheyenne, and the Manitoban went into regular service on the Assiniboine travelling past Portage, and at times of high water even discharging cargo at Fort Ellice as well as in upper reaches of the Assiniboine.

This was the point in history that the famous Red River Cart, which had borne numerous settlers here, started to dwindle in numbers. Their exit was even more rapid when the steamers started

to give tri-weekly service along the Assiniboine River. Still, there were quite a few who found them a necessity to get to remote homesteads far from the water route.

W. J. Pratt, an enterprising business man of those days, erected freight sheds and warehouses on the landing at the foot of River Road, and these structures, which serviced the river traffic, were the reason that the location became known as "Pratt's Landing".

By 1877, the town of Portage la Prairie had two churches, twenty places of business, a school, and a population of three hundred. Settlers sending favorable reports to relatives and friends in the east and abroad, as well as land promoters who were eager to capitalize on a good thing, could have been the reason for the rapid growth which followed.

Alex Stintson established the Ontario Hotel on the corner of King Avenue and Main Street around 1877. It was subsequently sold to John G. Mellon and then to Harry Corrigal. (In 1882 it was taken over by James J. White, who enlarged the building to hold 100 guests and changed the name to "Queen's Hotel".)

Edwin Newell was a painter and decorator in the 1870s.

In 1878 a law office was opened in the west end by P. Vances Georgen. The same year, Charley Graban, a harness-maker by trade, came to Portage and tried his hand at store-keeping for awhile. He later went back into the leather trade along a different line (boots and shoes). Also, in 1878, Sam McIlvanie erected the first planing mill west of Winnipeg. After operating the mill for a short time, he started a chair factory down the River Road, southeast from the centre of the settlement.

The growth of the settlement got a further boost in 1879 when Edward, George and John Cook built a bank which they named "The Alloway and Champions Bank". John Duncan, a skilled carpenter and joiner, was supervising the building of the first Court House and Gaol, a Bank of Montreal, a Post Office and a Land Titles Office; H. S. Paterson went into partnership with Jas. McLenaghen (whom he later bought out) and together built up a large trade in general merchandise; J. Feake had a livery stable where the Leland Hotel was later built, and where the Gordon Motor Inn is now; John Ross

started a blacksmith shop (shoeing of oxen was still common, and shoeing of horses was a necessity); J. P. Young erected a blacksmith shop on Duke Avenue in the same year; a school was built on Crescent Road, near where the present bridge crosses to the Island; and J. D. McGregor who was later to become Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, erected a slaughterhouse near the west end.

Peter McPherson was a capable carpenter, employed by the village of Portage la Prairie, in 1879. (His son, John, was identified with the newspaper here for many years before accepting a position with the C.N.R. in Winnipeg. His son, Peter, worked in the local Land Titles Office before accepting a position with the C.P.R. in Winnipeg. His son, Ewen Alexander, was elected to the local Legislature and later to the Dominion Federal Parliament, before which, he was a barrister and City Solicitor in Portage. Another son, Ernest, ran a men's clothing store here before becoming Indian agent for the Selkirk division.)

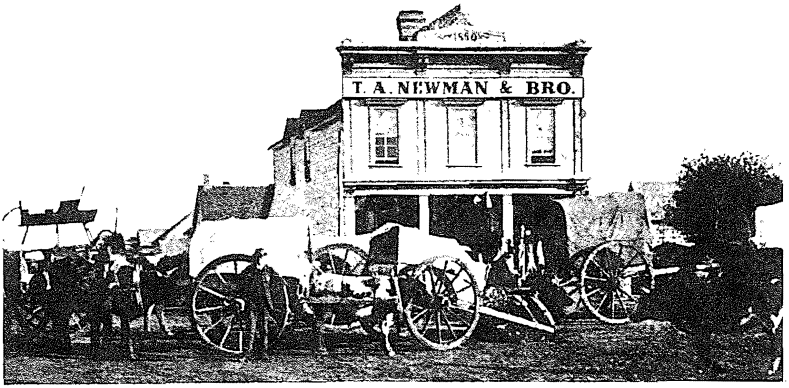
Walter Millar

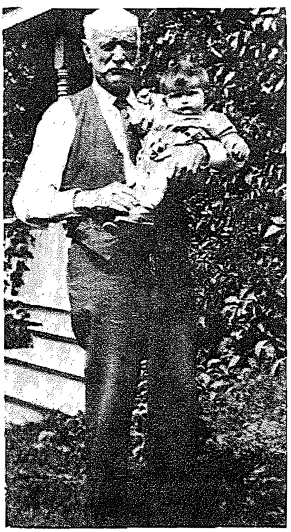
Another pioneer business, established prior to 1880, was the T.B. and Walter Millar hardware store. It was situated on the west side of Main Street at the corner of Portage Avenue.

Everyone (except the very young) will remember the Community Hall which was on the corner of Saskatchewan Ave. and Main St. and which was torn down in 1966. It was on the site of the Rossin House. Harry Adams was the proprietor of the latter establishment in the early days.

Mr. McIlvanie was again in the news, in 1880, for building a couple of sizeable structures: a new planing mill, 48 ft. by 80 ft. near the present C.P.R. depot, and a paper mill, 36 ft. by 100 ft., for the manufacture of building paper near Pratt's Landing.

T. A. Newman and his brother, F. L. Newman were doing a thriving business in 1880, in the general store shown here.





T. A. Newman with his granddaughter, Norma, who is now Mrs. N. M. Cheater of Winnipeg, Man.

This picture is of special historical interest because of the scene in the foreground. Note the oxen, covered Red River Carts and the cutter high in the left hand corner.

John Costigan and Cyprian Costigan were two business men who added to the growth of the settlement in 1880. They came from Italy where they were known as 'Costigano'.

In a strange country, with an unfamiliar language, they never asked for help or a hand-out from anyone, but showed determination to live by the sweat of their brow. They started by selling fruit from door to door, which was no easy task in the early days when buildings were scattered and the roads unpaved and rough.

Eventually they saved enough to establish a little store where they sold confectionery, fruit and tobacco. This building was destroyed by fire so they started anew. No sooner had they established on a new site than their second venture went up in flames! Such luck would have been enough to discourage most people — but not the Costigans. A third venture proved more fortunate and this building is still standing on Saskatchewan Avenue today.

John Costigan is pictured on the left, and Cyprian Costigan (nicknamed "Chippy" by his friends) is shown at right.

SPIRITS PAST AND PRESENT

Back in the late 1870s and early 1880s, which was long before prohibition, and naturally long before there was any such thing as a Government Liquor Control Commission, liquor and wine merchants did an honorable and profitable business.

Prices were reasonable as an old invoice made out to T. A. Newman & Bro. shows:

Rye, 70 cents per gallon; Rye Special, $1.30 per gallon; P. Spirit, 65 Op. $1.44 per gallon. etc., etc.

There was no such thing as a bootlegger in those days!

Most country people, who lived where chokecherries or dandelions grew profusely, made their own wines; rhubarb that was left after a taste for relish or pie had subsided, was used for the same purpose. Many an old-timer has said it was even strong enough to get "tiddly" on!

Brandy was kept on hand for weak spells, gin was good for the kidneys, rum was used with honey and hot water for bad colds and Christmas wasn't Christmas without little glasses of wine to go with the cake.

Very few old-timers abused the privilege of having cheap spirits available. Granted, there were a few who relaxed comfortably in a wagon box while the horses found their way home with no guidance, but they were in the minority. And the fellows who came right out in the open singing "Sweet Adeline" as their wives wended their way to church were in the minority too. (Not much went unnoticed by the news boys in those days!)

It is an interesting fact: while the latter few may have hit the news by a rare frivolous episode they didn't pound on the pearly portals any sooner than their more righteous brethren!

It was back in the late 1870s when Mr. Patrick Carey, in his neat black broadcloth suit and Mrs. Patrick Carey, in her long, dark, business gown hung out their sign "Liquor and Wine Merchant — Importers". (A picture of them glued in a book couldn't be removed.)

John O'Reilly

A few years later, when John O'Reilly bought their business, the shelves were lined with a good variety of imported stock. Mr. O'Reilly didn't have to advertise what was for sale in the building as a good business had been built up by the previous proprietors. His sign simply read "John O'Reilly — The Farmers Friend."

When prohibition came in in 1916 bootleggers in our country and rum-runners from across the line had a hey-day. Old papers tell of detectives touring the country trying to sniff out the brew — and very often being successful.

It was a time when even a girl who once got beery-breathed good-night kisses from her daddy was saying to a suitor, "Lips that touch liquor shall never touch mine!"

The first liquor store that opened in Portage la Prairie after prohibition ended in 1922 was on the south side of Saskatchewan Ave. beside the Leland Hotel which is where the Gordon Motor Inn is now. The store had been the previous headquarters of the North West Mounted Police. Old-timers say police were in attendance to control the crowds when it first opened!

The present, modern, orderly Liquor Control Commission building is located on the north side of Saskatchewan Avenue beside the

Simpsons-Sears building. It was built in 1951, and while the price of the stock is more than ten times what it was in the days of Patrick Carey and John O'Reilly there is no sign of the hinges on the door going rusty!

A few more men who contributed to community services in the growth of the settlement of Portage la Prairie were: Frank Otten, who built and operated a harness shop in the west end; Farres Evans, who established a "sale stable" business; A. J. and A. L. Ashdown who ran a hardware store, (Alfred Babb and a Mr. Kirkland were connected with this business later); William Bell was a mechanic, and Roger Bell assisted in building the first log church in Portage; and W. L. Lyall who came to Portage in 1880 and was a merchant tailor for nearly 40 years.

The year 1880 is most historically important because of the fact that on the 18th of November of that year Portage la Prairie became

AN INCORPORATED TOWN.

It wasn't until January of 1881 that the first council of the town was formed. Thomas Collins was elected as its first mayor, and the councillors were: Wm. M. Smith, Wm. Fulton, Robert Watson, John Conner, J. P. Young and S. McIlvanie.

THE STEAM HORSE REPLACES THE STEAM BOAT AND OX CART

The Canadian Pacific was the pioneer railway in the west and upon its completion depended the expansion of the Dominion. This company contracted with the government early in 1881 to complete the line to the Pacific coast in ten years. Engineers immediately started exploring the more difficult and less known section from the Ottawa River to and around Lake Superior. The contract and grading from St. Boniface to East Selkirk and the track laying and ballasting from St. Boniface to Rat Portage, as Kenora was then called, was secured by Jos. Whitehead, who did a great deal of construction work east of the capital. While this work was proceeding other employees of the company commenced laying the tracks from Winnipeg west. Before the end of the year 160 miles of the railway were completed west of Winnipeg.

In June, 1881, Portage la Prairie was the western terminus of the railway. The main line west was situated somewhat north of the present line and the fifty-five and a half miles run from Winnipeg

to Portage la Prairie took five hours and forty minutes, with a stop at Poplar Heights, now called Poplar Point, for refreshments. The speed with which the C.P. travels today makes a little over ten miles an hour seem very slow. But the pioneers compared this ten miles an hour with a trip of several days up the river, or an even slower journey across the land with oxen, and the train trip seemed to them a marvellously quick way of reaching their destination.

The line was not in operation to Portage la Prairie until August, 1881, and it was about this time that work farther west was started.

In spite of rocky barriers, it is an interesting fact that on Nov. 7, 1885, more than five years before the time designated by the contract for the completion of the work, the bond between ocean and ocean was united. The last spike, celebrating what was then a tremendous achievement, was driven by Donald A. Smith (later Lord Mount Stephen) at Last Spike office, "Craigelachie" via Eagle, British Columbia.

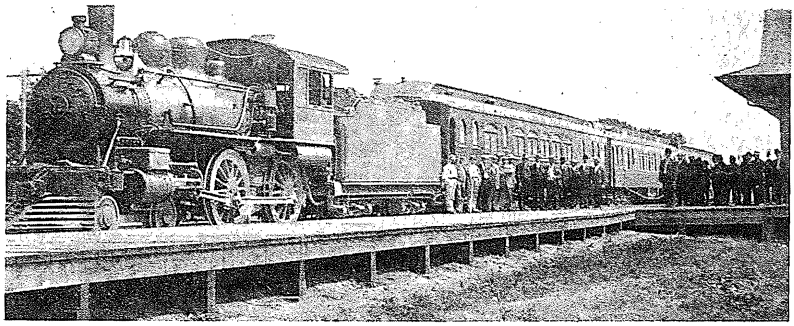
Sir Wm. C. Van Horne had charge of the actual construction of the railroad as president, and he, along with the great engineer, Sanford Fleming, was later knighted.

Transportation facilities via railroad rapidly progressed and the Winnipeg Free Press paper of June 11th, 1904, in an article written about Portage la Prairie, had this to say, (Quote) — "Splendid connection is supplied the town by both the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. lines of railway. The C.P.R. main line touches at this point and the company has large yards and buildings for the accommodation of their local traffic. They have also some repair shops for smaller work. The Northwestern branch of the C.P.R. running from Portage la Prairie to Yorkton has its terminal here.

The Canadian Northern main line passes through Portage and from this point the C.N.R. also has several branch lines. The Delta line runs to Lake Manitoba on the north, and the Rosendale extension traverses from the town in a south-westerly direction, and is being extended on up through the Carberry country.

Every effort is being made to get the Grand Trunk connection when that road is put through as it undoubtedly will be, while other C.N.R. lines are being agitated for to open up new districts which will increase the importance of this point as an agricultural centre."

Portagers got their wish, and the first passenger train to reach Portage la Prairie from the east, over the transcontinental line of the Grand Trunk Pacific, is shown here as it arrived at the Union Station July 30, 1908.



Both Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific railways were among those lines in various parts of Canada which were amalgamated in 1923 to form the present Canadian National System.

The present C.N.R. station serving Portage la Prairie was built in 1908 and the concrete platform was laid in 1929.

What a difference in appearance of the first passenger trains to the diesel trains of today! As many of the present generation have never seen such a train, and future generations will not, a few words of description might be of interest.

The engine was powered by steam. An employee of the railway had the arduous task of keeping coal in the fire box and water in the boiler to produce the steam. The first trains were known to stop at creeks and ponds to take on water before water tanks were built at various places along the route. Coal was carried in what was called a 'coal tender' behind the cab of the engine.

When livestock roamed freely over the countryside a preventative of derailment was the tiered bumper at the front of the engine. This, for some strange reason, was called a 'cow-catcher'. Actually, it just bunted animals off the railway track and not many of them lived after the bunt!

Many still remember the clear clanging of the bell, on top of the engine, as the train slid to a stop, and the shrill steam whistle blowing at 'take-off time' after a congenial conductor had shouted "A-L-L A-B-O-A-R-D", above the din of swishing steam and platform activity.

In small towns many people often gathered at station platforms to see the train come in, and most of them didn't wend their way

homeward until they heard the final faint whistle as the train passed from view along the path, like a platinum girdle that gleamed in the sunlight.

At the time of this writing (1968), the C.P.R. and C.N.R. main lines are still giving satisfactory service. A few branch lines have been abandoned.

FIRES AND BUFFALO BONES

For several years after the railroad went through, fires often raged over the prairie, and valuable hay meadows, and sometimes homes, were destroyed because of them. Many people blamed sparks from the engine for this: others blamed human carelessness, and a few reasonably assumed that a spark was purposely produced by a small splinter of wood with a substance on one end ignited by friction upon a rough surface, like the sole of a shoe.

The reason that the latter assumption seems logical is because buffalo bone-pickers found there was a market for the remains of those old settlers, and the railway was handy for transportation. Only by burning the long grass could the bones be seen. A paper of 1893 said $10.00 per carload was being paid for buffalo bones.

The Weekly Review of Sept. 27, 1894, said that over 1000 tons of hay was burned in a fire a few days previous to the printing of the article. Among the heavy losers were James McKenzie, J. B. Young, Jas. Barrett, Ed McCann, Mr. Younghusband and Mr. Humphries. The news item ended with, "Some of the losers have not a stack of hay left to feed their cattle during next winter."

If conscience didn't bother the culprit he either didn't have one or had it completely under control!

HAVE YOU HEARD OF BUFFALO STONES?

If you know about "buffalo stones" you have probably had the pleasure of seeing a few of them on the prairie, and seeing one, thoughts of thundering, hairy herds have come to your mind. If you have never heard of such stones you may be interested in knowing something about them.

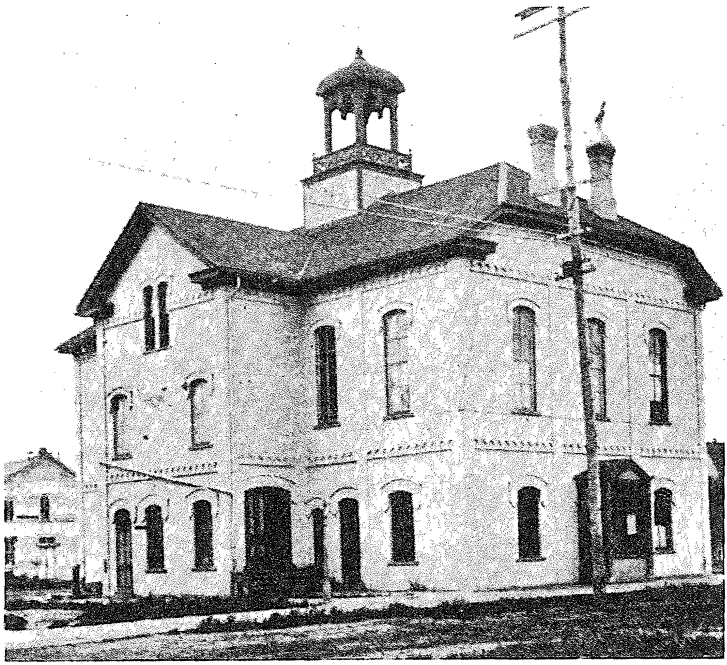
Buffalo stones are symbolic of the early history of our prairies. Most of them are large, weighing two tons and more, and buffalo used them to scrape off heavy winter fur from their forequarters. You can recognize these stones by corners that are worn smooth and

stained with oil. So far, the elements have not obliterated the tell-tale stains!

It might also interest you to know that one of these stones was shipped to Charlottetown and given a place of honor on the grounds of the Fathers of Confederation complex; a tangible link between the prairies and the birthplace of Confederation.

THE GROWTH OF A TOWN

The first City Hall, which is shown here, was an important addition to Portage in 1881. Jos. Bowes, a carpenter who settled here helped to build it as well as the Bell View Hotel (later known as the Merchants Hotel).



W. R. Black, barrister and attorney-at-law, opened a law office, and G. W. Bourne and T. Toddington were in a real estate business in 1881.

V. Straube was manufacturing tinware and copperware, while also practicing his profession as a locksmith, and J. F. Rowe was the

local photographer. Mr. Armstrong was benefitting from all the building that was being done as he was a lumber merchant at that time.

Farquhar McLean, who owned the land that the Portage General Hospital was built on, as well as a portion of the Training School Building grounds, opened a real estate office.

Ed. J. Sparling, in the early 1880s, was in the grocery business. After being burnt out twice he went into a machine business. (Two sons, Harvey D. and Clarence C., are remembered in connection with the law firm "Sparling and Sparling" of later years.)

R. B. Hill opened up a blacksmithing business in 1881. He is credited with having been a skilled mechanic and wagon-maker also. (At a later date he proved to be a notable historian.)

Oliver Humber arrived in Portage in 1881, and was said to be one of the best carpenters to come to this part of the country.

James Bray settled on the Portage Plains, where he developed dairy farming and cheese and butter making; Edward Brooks, a carpenter and contractor by trade, built what was known as the Brooks Block on Saskatchewan Avenue; and Festus Chapin was associated with the implement firms of Westbrook and Fairchild and the Massey Co. (before its amalgamation with A. Harris, Son & Company).

H. J. Foote was associated in the firm Foote & Woodside. They were in a real estate business in a building on Main Street; A. H. McIntyre had a jewelry store (which was later taken over by his stepson, Walter Garland, and is now owned and operated by John Wilson); David Johnson built the first oatmeal mill west of the Great Lakes. (He ran the mill until it was destroyed by fire in 1890, then built another one which he sold to Hon. Joseph Martin in 1892); William Henderson opened the J. & W. Henderson Hardware store on Main Street; and J. O. Cadham opened a hardware store also.

J. O. Cadham, and the Cadham Hardware have long been identified with Portage la Prairie. The first Cadham hardware store was located on Main St., the second one was on the site where the Portage Library now stands and the third and last one was built, with the help of a carpenter uncle from down east, on the north side of Saskatchewan Avenue in downtown Portage.

J. O. Cadham

From 1882 to 1950 the store was known around the country for its quality merchandise and the business ethics of its management. This store is now owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Gordon W. Snider who have earned the same good business reputation as the previous proprietors. Next time you happen to look up and see the "Snider Hardware Ltd." sign, maybe you will give a little thought to the history of this establishment. (Pictured here is Mr. J. O. Cadham.)

In the year 1882 Portage la Prairie had three banks, five loan and investment companies and nine jobbing houses.

THE PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE STREET RAILWAY COMPANY

It will be interesting news to Portagers to know that in 1882 the Manitoba Legislature passed an act to incorporate the Portage la Prairie Street Railway Company. The act is printed in Statutes of 1882.

The incorporators were N. H. Stevens, John Boultbee, E. W. Snider, F. W. Lipsett, W. R. Black, John Rankin and John A. Little, and the capital stock of the company was placed at $75,000.00 in shares of $50.00 each. Construction was to be commenced as soon as one third of the capital stock was subscribed and ten percent thereof paid up.

The act empowered the construction of double or single tracks along such highways as authorized by the city to use, to carry passengers and freight and to operate either by power or animal force. The act states that the rails should be laid flush with the streets and highways, and the rails conform with the grades of the same, to prevent impediment of ordinary traffic.

An interesting clause in the act is to the effect that the company may substitute sleighs for railway carriages during the winter months upon the route of their railway. It also provides that a passenger refusing to leave a car or carriage after being requested to do so by the conductor shall be liable to a fine of $5.00 and in default of payment to imprisonment of not more than twenty days.

This act was passed in the boom days when there was every indication that Portage would go ahead with leaps and bounds, and it is evident that the company wanted to be on the ground floor when such a utility was needed.

Probably the reason this project didn't get beyond the paper stage was due to the disappointing turn of events which occurred the following year.

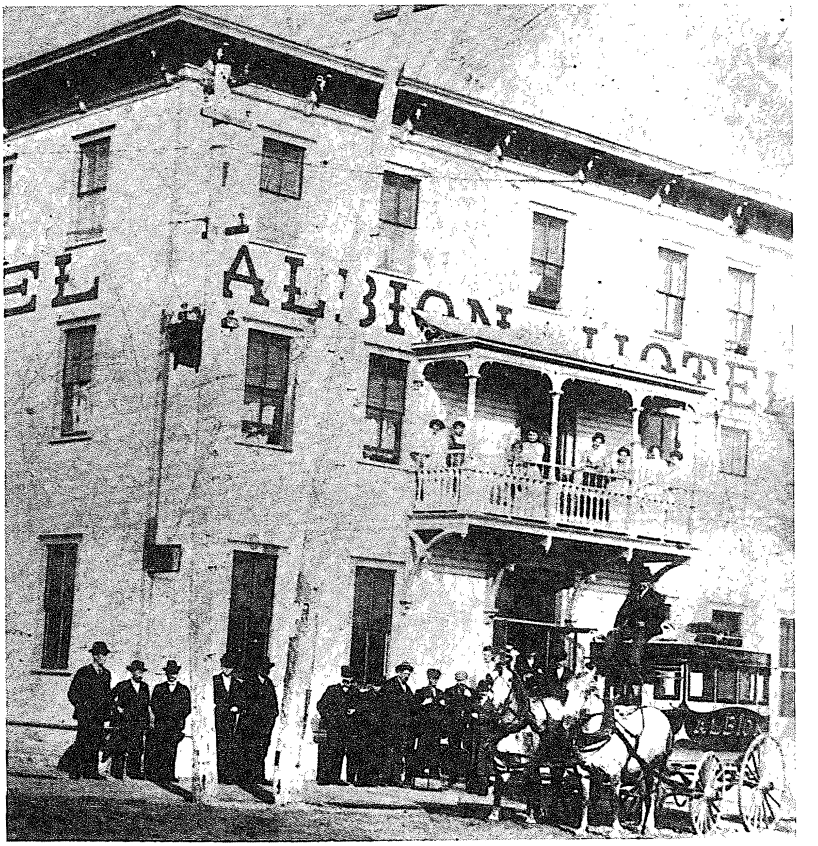
Courtesy of the Manitoba Archives.

Above is a picture of Main St. in Portage la Prairie in 1883. All the buildings cannot be identified but the names on two of them are visible: George Craig and Medical Hall, Wright & Co.

Note the board-walk, cart and buggies, also the growth of the town in ten years. (Compare this picture with the previous one shown of 1873.)

Prospects for the continuation of progress seemed rosy during the first months of 1883, so John McLeod and his brother, Angus, built the Albion Hotel, a three storey building covering a considerable area. Miraculously, they were able to carry on through the dire days that followed and for many years after. This hotel remained in family hands until 1941 when it was purchased by Mr. Hugh Clancy who sold it in 1953 to three partners who went under the name of Gateway Hotel Ltd.

The present proprietor, Mr. Robert Nicol, took over on July 1st, 1960, and at this time (1968) is planning extensive renovation, the cost of which is estimated at $75,000.



For the convenience of people arriving by train, hotels each had their horse-drawn bus. Shown here is the one owned by the Albion Hotel. The driver, sitting in the customary place on top, is Malcolm Shaw.

The three men standing on the corner have been identified as: L. to R. — Mr. Norman Livingstone, Mr. John McLeod and Mr. Joe Taylor.

Mrs. C. J. Pyefinch (nee Alice McLeod) was born in this hotel. She is shown here, in the arms of her mother, Mrs. John McLeod, at left centre on the balcony.

Floods and frost caused the boom bubble to bust and in 1883 many businessmen found it impossible to operate. Even the town was in trouble, and in 1886 the entire council resigned in an effort to avoid lawsuits.

THE FIRE BUG

This mass resignation took place the same year that the firebug broke loose. The culprit, a fellow named Sam Mirk, was finally caught and sentenced to five years in jail, but not before he had burned and destroyed the fire hall and then set fire to 75 percent of the business buildings in the east end of Portage la Prairie.

The Dodge Block, Rossin House, Queen's Hotel, London House, Lorne House, Pratt Block and many other buildings either burned to the ground or suffered heavy damage in the fires.

The man who had incited Mirk, James White, was acquitted on the grounds that he had been under the influence of liquor and was not wholly responsible for his actions.

The fires did accomplish one good thing. Previously, the Hudson's Bay Company had control of the west end and refused to sell land for building or business purposes around their trading post on the corner of the Saskatchewan Trail and 18th Street. The land between the east and west ends was all field, with only the Trail connecting them. The fires deepened and strengthened a feeling for centralization and gradually the east-west division was pushed aside and business began appearing on what was later to be called "Saskatchewan Avenue".

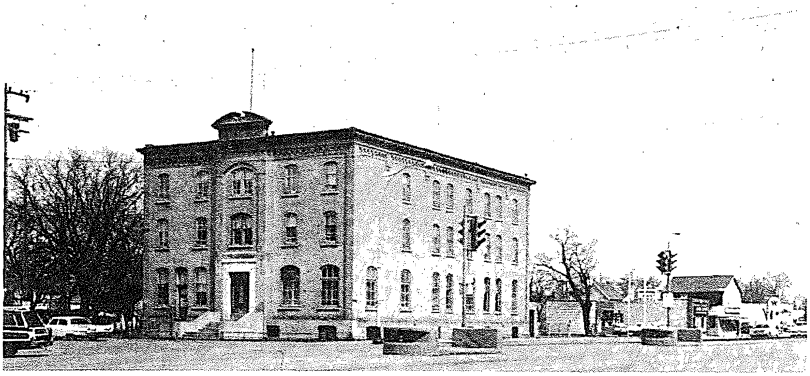
A bakery was erected, which was taken over by Paulin's Biscuits Company in 1885. It made hardtack for soldiers fighting against Riel.

Two brothers, R. and J. Watson, who had come to Portage la Prairie in 1876, established a machine shop and planing mills in 1886. (Previous to the latter date, R. Watson had built two mills, one at Portage and the other at Stonewall.)

THE COMMUNITY HALL

The date that the Community Hall, shown next page, was built, is uncertain. However, it was built after the fire on the site of the Rossin House and served Portage well until it was demolished in 1966. This was the building where Reeve and Council held their meetings and where the Rural Municipality paid their taxes for many years. In this building there was also a large room that could be rented to organizations for meetings.

A public 'Ladies Rest Room' on the main floor was an appreciated accommodation for country ladies shopping in Portage.



To date, this building has not been replaced by any other structure.

The town of Portage la Prairie had a debenture debt of $236,-757.66 in 1887 and whole blocks of property could be obtained for one dollar. It was a rock bottom situation.

It took imagination and clever culinary ability for a housewife to make meals for a family out of the scanty stock on the pantry shelves. Luckily, meat could be procured by any settler who had a gun and the wherewithall to buy a few shells for it.

A story related to those times was about a settler who decided to give his young son the chore of replenishing the larder in order that he could have more time for the farm chores. He was a man of few words and the hunting lesson was brief. Taking his boy into the woods, he walked a short distance with him until he came across rabbit tracks in the snow. Then, handing the boy the gun, he said, "See those tracks, son? Well, follow them because your dinner is at the other end."

The civic business was reorganized in 1888, however, and by the following year the town was back on the road to prosperity.

Thomas H. Metcalf and son, Charles, saw their grain and oatmeal business picking up; George Beattie opened an agency business in 1889 or 1890 and Michael Blake was hearing the doors of the old Portage Hotel swinging open more frequently. James Richmond, in his feed and livery stable business, also welcomed better times.

The veracity of the foregoing paragraph might be questioned by anyone who notices the deserted streets in this picture of part of the business section on Saskatchewan Avenue in 1890. The explanation is simple. The picture was taken on a Sabbath day and people took their religion seriously. A view of the streets where churches were located would have shown numerous buggies, democrats and even wagons that had conveyed families to their favorite places of worship.

Young people, seeing this picture, may ask, "Did they have parking meters back in those days, Grand-dad?" For those who haven't got a grandfather to answer that question we will do so here. No, those are not parking meters that you see along the outer edge of the board-walk. They are what were called 'hitching posts' which were used to tether horses while families were in stores shopping. Stores erected these at their own expense for the convenience of customers, and no shopper ever found a parking ticket peeking out from a crack on the driver's side of the buggy when he or she was ready to go home.

The Board of Trade had reason to be optimistic as the following members took office in 1892: President, Jas. McLenaghen; Vice-pres., J. G. Rutherford; Secretary, P. Whimpster; Councillors, A. P. Campbell, E. Phillip, G. C. Armstrong, G. W. Robinson, W. Forsythe, T. A. Garland, E. Brown, J. Watson, D. B. Hanna, G. B. Housser, T. B. Millar and W. P. Smith. New business advertisements started appearin the local papers:

Barristers — A. A. McLennan (Office over Hutchings and Davidson's Harness Store, Sask. Ave.), Martin & Anderson (no location given), W. J. Cooper (Office next to the Lafferty Block) and D. A. Macdonald (Next door to Jno. Giles & Son).

Dentist — W. C. Kaake, L.D.S. (Office over Laurens' Store, Corner of Main St. and Sask. Ave.)

Storekeepers — J. Macauly, J. Anderson and J. B. Henderson.

Lumber dealers — Dick Banning, Marlatt & Housser, Ed. Logan and J. M. Taylor.

Carpenters and Builders — Gray & Stables.

W. R. Bowman advertised as a "Music Dealer" and Prof. M. E. Wright opened a music studio in the Lafferty Block.

Ferguson Bros. started a wood and coal business on Saskatchewan Ave. and notified the public that they could also be called upon to move safes and pianos.

J. Pyefinch was in the watch repair business and advertised a sale of main springs for $1.00 and watches cleaned for $1.00.

George Murton (Clothier), Fairburn & Co. (Harness Dealers), and D. S. Macdonald (Auctioneer) all advertised in the papers of 1892.

The only business that was not wished prosperity, even though it was one that filled a need, was operated by R. P. Campbell & Co. who were Undertakers & Embalmers at that time.

THE STORM OF 1892

When we read of storms, cyclones and floods in other parts of the world, it is a natural tendency for people to think, "It couldn't happen here." Meaning here in Portage la Prairie.

When old-timers tell their grandchildren about the storm in 1892, they can see the expression on young faces which says, "Poor old grandpa is old, his memory may not be too good, we don't want to hurt his feelings so we will listen to another of his exaggerated stories."

It might interest many young people to know that grandpa is not exaggerating when he recalls events of the past. It might spark a speck of thinking to remember grandpa was not born old, and even though work and wind and worry may have etched a pattern on his face, his memory goes back to the time when he was young like you.

PORTAGE STORM NOTES — from the Weekly Review paper, May 4, 1892, had this to say: (Quote)

"The smoke stack of the paper mill was blown down; one of the chimneys of Knox church went with a crash through the roof of the vestry; fire started at the Albion hotel; housekeepers all over town were watching their stoves with great anxiety; two boarding cars

were blown from the track at the M. & N. station, and almost demolished; telegraph and telephone wires were blown down and communication between Winnipeg or one's neighbors was cut off; Bailey's, Carsel's, Watson's, and other smokestacks and chimneys took a tumble; a stable at the back of Newman's store was blown over and some colts injured; "Billy" Smith's machine shop was overturned . . . .

One of our prominent implement men was blown from the sidewalk into the ditch at Knox church. Considering the weight of the gentleman and the size of his feet the wind must have been blowing at a brisk rate to accomplish the feat. He lit right side up without care.

A young lady, just out from Ontario, was offered assistance to her boarding place by a strange gentleman on the street. She refused to accept the kindness, but says she never would again as the wind was terrible.

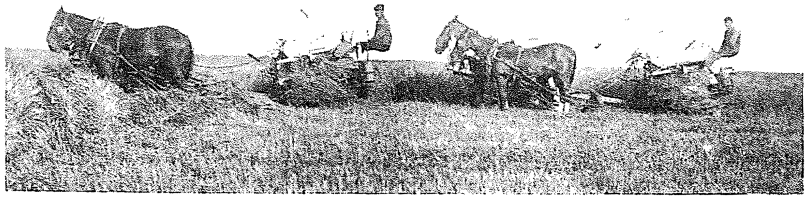
One of our well-known business men found a woman, as he puts it, "oot" on the street. Everytime she got up and took a step or two the wind whipped her clothes around her and down she went again. He escorted her home."

According to stories told (which may be true or not) this same kindly gentleman, in later years, was enjoying a ride on a country road in one of the first tin Lizzies (as Fords were nicknamed at that time). The road was narrow and his car was on a dangerous angle when he pulled over to let a larger, newer model, oncoming car go by. As they inched their way, the fellow in the big car looked disdainfully at the tin Lizzie and shouted, "What's causing all that rattle, rube?" You've got to hand it to the fast thinking of the Portager who shouted back, "That is just the money in my pocket because I didn't buy a car like yours!"

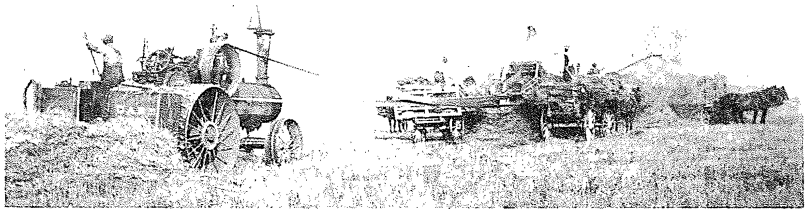
As we look back, in this Manitoba Centennial year, we are proud to say, "Portage la Prairie has never, and will never, take a back seat to any city in the Dominion of Canada when it comes to riding the bumps of adversity, whether it be war, storms, cyclones, fire or flood."

AN OVER-ALL PICTURE OF PORTAGE IN 1892

1892 was a time when great wheat fields, separated by threadlike wire fences, were chequered with rows of stooks, where the grain stood ready to be stacked when dried. Noisy binders moved around diminishing squares of standing grain. Men in the fields stooked as the sheaves fell from each binder.



That was the year that there were two million bushels of grain grown on the Plains and marketed in Portage la Prairie. Of this, the bulk was wheat, with oats and barley coming second and third respectively. Forty and fifty bushels to the acre for a whole farm was not uncommon.



The pictures shown here are self explanatory regarding the machines and method of harvesting at that time.

South of the town could be seen a line of trees — oak, ash, elm, maple, cottonwood and poplar, outlining the course of the Assiniboine River. Vast quantities of wood from these trees provided excellent cordwood for home consumption, and for export to Winnipeg and Brandon.

The outline of a prosperous town rose between the tracks and a bayou of the Assiniboine River.

The Lake of the Woods Milling Co. in Portage was rated the largest and best equipped mill west of Toronto. This firm shipped flour by the carload lots to all points west as far as the Pacific Coast.

The oatmeal mill, the pioneer of its kind in Manitoba, ran day and night in an attempt to supply the demand for that product.

Down by the Assiniboine River was the large Portage Paper Mill, which manufactured all brands of heavy wrapping and building paper. The plant of machinery originally cost $30,000. The capacity of the mill was over five tons per day.

Much building was being done and planing mills were kept constantly busy.

A couple of machine shops were doing a rushing business attending to the repairs of about 75 steam threshing outfits, worth $150,000 which were operating on the Portage Plains. Thirty tractors and portable steam engines were counted around the Watson Bros. Machine Shop one day!

Implement dealers could scarcely keep up with the demand for plows, patent stackers, seed drills, mowers and selfbinders.

All lines of business were well represented. Four banks did the business of the town and of the farming community. Two large breweries supplied the demands in that line of business, covering a large territory. A brickyard was operating east of the town. The semi-weekly Liberal, The Review and The Saturday Night were the eyes of Portage.

The registry system had divided Manitoba into four large districts, and with the introduction of the Torrens system a staff of from ten to fifteen registrars and clerks were employed in the Land Titles Office.

The big brick central school, which cost $35,000 furnished, was found to be inadequate to accommodate over 700 school children and ward schools had to be opened.

Six religious denominations had churches. The Roman Catholics were just completing a large new one, and the Methodists had erected a big brick edifice in 1891 at a cost of $13,000.

Town streets were lighted by arc lights, and over 1300 incandescent lamps were in use in public and private homes.

The telephone boasted an exchange list of 100 subscribers.

Smith Curtis and George H. Webster, C. E., prepared plans for the damming of the Assiniboine River, for the purpose of providing water-power for electric and manufacturing purposes. The scheme involved the flooding of what was known at that time as "The Slough," to convert it into a beautiful lake.

Across the river, a valuable section of country was opened up by the N.P. & M.R., and settlers were flocking into it. It was adapted to mixed farming especially, and possessed great stores of valuable wood and shelter groves, along with rich native grasses, easily cut and cured into the best of hay.

It wasn't only these things that attracted people to the Portage Plains. The whole plain was underlaid at a depth of from 8 to 20 ft. with a water-bearing strata of sand that was easily tapped by driving

down sand points, thus securing a plentiful supply of pure water. In dry seasons the sand strata supplied moisture to the black loam, and in wet seasons it gave underdrainage.

We will end the 1892 narrative with a touch of humor. A paper of that year contained an advertisement which said, "WANTED — a smart boy to be half outside and half behind the counter."

THE CLOSING OF THE ASSINIBOINE

In the Manitoba Liberal, dated Feb. 15, 1893, Mayor Newman said that Portage was a unit regarding the closing of the Assiniboine. The council was very anxious for permission to use the power. The river had not been navigated since 1882.

It was believed that the difference in cost of steam and water power was great enough to induce many new enterprises to locate. The following resolution was then passed without objection: "Moved by Mayor Newman and seconded by Mayor McDiarmid, of Brandon, that whereas the city of Winnipeg has applied for power to construct dams across the Assiniboine River without building the locks necessary for navigation, and whereas, it has been stated that the interests of the towns and country along the Assiniboine River might be prejudicially affected thereby, be it resolved that it is the opinion of this meeting that no rights would be adversely affected by the granting of permission to construct such dams without locks for navigation."

It was stated, at that time, that the Assiniboine was paralleled by railway on both sides, and the distance by water was more than three times as great as by rail. It seemed highly improbable to them that steamers would ever be used again to transport freight, and they never were.

WHAT WOULD LIFE BE WITHOUT FLOWERS

What would life be without flowers;
And petals glistening in sunlight aft' showers;
Brides who kiss them and throw them away;
Someone made happy with a birthday bouquet;
Plants, to sit on a deep window-sill
Sharing their perfume of valley and hill;
Corsages for dresses when there's dancing and fun;
A tribute to loved ones when their life's work is done;
WHAT would life be without flowers?

Anne M. Collier

W. A. Linden

Back in 1893 many boys proved they were men when they were sixteen years of age, and William Augustus Linden was one of them. When he came to Portage la Prairie, on that date, and at that tender age, his worldly possessions were a minus quantity but he had the same faith and fortitude as the older pioneers, as well as a wealth of 'plant knowledge'. Information concerning him in 1965 said, (Quote) — "Uncle started his business by growing tomato plants and went on from there. He learned it scientifically and he could run off the latin names of all the flowers like a native. He worked hard all his life, of course."

Mr. William Augustus Linden started his first greenhouse on the site that is now known as 'the girls' playground' at Victoria school. At that time there were school gardens where the present Linden Florist shop is today.

It was in 1909 that the 'school gardens land' was purchased by Mr. Linden. Building started that year and in 1910 'Linden's Flowers' became a business that has survived the passage of time.

William Augustus Linden passed away in 1941, and for five years Mrs. W. A. Linden successfully managed the business before following him. Their son, William, who was not much older than his father had been when he came to Portage la Prairie, became a florist at that time.

'Linden's Flowers' is located at 489 Saskatchewan Avenue, East.

To bring our florist history up to date, we can add that another attractive florist shop called "Mil-Jeanne Flowers", under the management of Audrey and Jim Healey, is doing business in Portage la Prairie, and is located at 219 Saskatchewan Avenue, East.

A TRIP UP LAKE MANITOBA

The Weekly Review (Portage paper) of Aug. 2, 1894, printed the following experiences and impressions of a Portager who took a trip up Lake Manitoba that year. (The name of the man who submitted the information was not given. However, we feel that the contents are historically interesting.)

Quote: "Monday: — After rigging a sail to our boat and plugging up sundry holes and cracks we made a start at four o'clock for parts unknown, or at least we thought them so.

We ran about four miles past White Mud river and camped for the night with good wet shirts, for the wind had been heavy and the waves would persist in flapping in over the sides or else our boat would take an occasional short cut through a wave instead of over it.

The beach here is low with marsh back of it for two or three miles. The principal scenery was lake flies which were so thick that they looked like clouds of smoke. They tumbled into everything they could but had a particular spite at our soft butter.

Tuesday — We sailed with a light wind to Big Point. The land is high here and the beach fine. We camped three miles further. A bad wind and rain storm came on about one o'clock which routed us out to look after our boat. We carried it up on the beach and tied it there. The beach is about six feet high and the wind raised the water over it in less than ten minutes. Some Indians had between sixty and a hundred cords of wood, piled close to the water ready for rafting, which was all washed away. The wind blew a hurricane.

Wednesday: — Calm after a storm.

Thursday: — We had a fine sail to Sandy Bay. This is a nice looking place. The land is high and the beach beautiful with deep water close in shore. There is an Indian reserve here.

The Indians all have good huts and seem comfortable. When they get hungry they set a gill net for a few hours and have all the fish they want.

We called on Mr. Spence, an old-timer, who gave us all the information we wanted about everything and had whole mountain ranges of information left. Camped six miles further on and slept in an Icelander's house. These people are settled all along from here north. They are going in for stock raising and fishing. They seem to be good, cleanly and industrious people and will do well here. They have fish in all shapes and plenty. One man had a wagon load dried and piled in a shed like cord-wood; another man had a pig which he said lived on nothing but fish. He still resembles a hog but I have my doubts about his flavor.

Friday: — Started at five in the morning and ran to Sandy Point where we met a north wind and had to land. This point is high and pleasant. There is a boulder on the beach about ten cubic feet which the people say was carried here by the ice this spring. There are lots of smaller ones which appear to have come the same way.

Saturday: — We started at noon and rowed to Kinnesota, a distance of ten miles. There is a large settlement here, mostly natives. The country is high and pleasant but like all the rest we have seen it is stony and unfit for grain raising. The people, however, have good gardens.

We stayed over Sunday with Wm. Garrioch, an old-timer who once lived in Portage and still has many relatives there. Among other stories with which he entertained us was the "Legend of Lake Manitoba" which ran thus:

"In days of old when the noble Red Man ruled the land they used to meet at the narrows to Pow-wow and eat dog meat, and close by there is a low island with loose stones all along the beach which when the surf washed over would make a sort of flip-flap, swish-swash sound. These sounds the natives said were spirits and named the island Manito-wa-pow, or spirit land, from which the lake and later the province took its name by being corrupted into Manitoba."

Started Monday noon for the narrows. Called at the H.B.Co.'s post which comprises a large dwelling house and a small store for

background. There is also quite a number of natives here. The situation is pretty and very pleasant.

Leaving there we passed numerous islands, all wooded and very stony, and reached our destination at five after a good sail. This is the most picturesque spot on the lake. The banks rising on each side to thirty feet or more and mostly covered with a thick coat of green. There is a ferry here put on by the government and worked by Mr. Sifton who seems to own most of the land on the west side. He has a fine residence here and everything around him is on a large scale; he has two stables each of which is one hundred feet long. Mr. Sifton is a jolly good natured sort of man, he is also a regular hustler, which may account for the deviation from straight in his nether limbs.

We crossed on the ferry to the east side (the distance is half a mile) and went to see the limestone quarry which has been opened. The stone is of the best quality, being far better than what comes from Stony Mountain and is in vast quantities, in fact the whole slope of half a mile appears to be solid rock.

There is a fine site here for a town should a railway ever run through. It is quite a job for one to dirty his feet even if the weather is wet.

Wednesday: — Started back with very little wind. Camped for dinner on Manito-wa-pow or Manitou Island. Towards evening a strong wind from the west sprung up as also did a thunder storm, which made us think of solid land.

We set all our sail and put out our oars, then as the Indian said, "Wa-wah, go fast boy," we did, but got a good ducking from rain and waves which would whack against our boat side and splash over, sometimes nearly half filling it. But "all's well that ends well." We got safely to land which tickled us muchly.

Thursday: — Through the kindness of Mr. Arnet who is manager of the H.B. post we were permitted to come back to Westbourne in style on their schooner which is the best sailor on the lake. She has a 50 ft. keel and is rigged to stand all weather. Her captain is a fine hearty old native and takes great pride in his boat. We made the run back in nine hours, which took us four days, and she at one time did it in five hours.

In conclusion, let me say that a trip like ours with a good boat would be very enjoyable to parties who like camping out. The scenery after you get to Big Point is really nice. The timbered

slope with here and there a settler's house showing white (for lime is cheap) makes a nice picture. And when you get tired of this you can go on shore and get chewed half to death with the blasted mosquitoes."

In 1894, D. S. Macdonald was running a stage to Lake Manitoba. It was described as a "comfortable, three seated, covered rig, with plenty of room for eight passengers." Trips were made triweekly, and Mr. Macdonald delivered mail both ways free of charge.

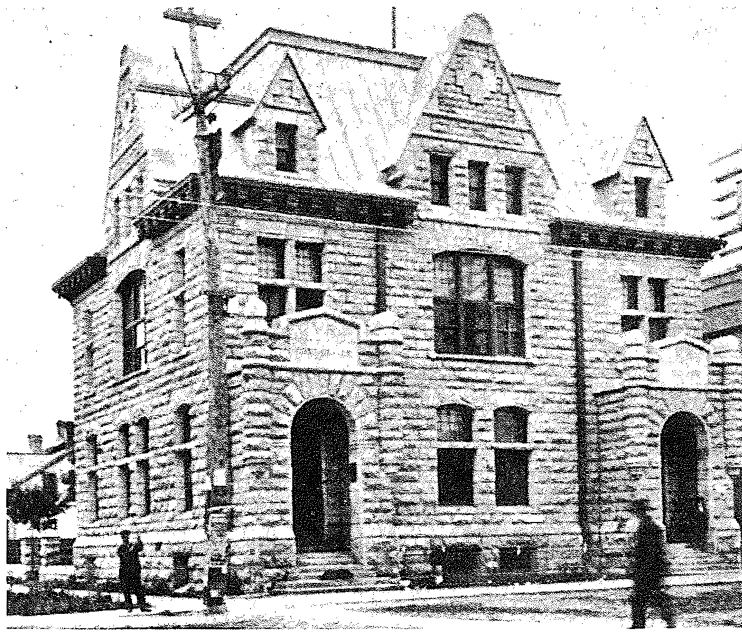
This was the man whose historically interesting advertisement appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press of June 11, 1904, which said, "The pioneer auctioneer of Manitoba, 1882 to 1904, conducts auction sales in all parts of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.

During the sale seasons, weekly sales are held at the Sale Stables on Elizabeth Street in the rear of the Town Hall, Portage la Prairie.

Last year he sold about 15,000 head throughout the Province".

THE POST OFFICE

The Tribune of July 31, 1895, published the following telegram from Ottawa: "Vian & Lachance, of Hull, Quebec, have been awarded



the contract for the erection of the new Post Office and Customs House at Portage la Prairie. The price is $25,000.00."

When we consider the architecture of this building we can't help being amazed that it could be constructed at a fraction of the cost of some of the simpler, box-like structures of today!

Another Post Office was built on Saskatchewan Ave. in 1960, and since that time the one shown here has been the Portage la Prairie City Hall.

James Richardson & Sons, grain merchants and Stocks & Bonds, opened their business in Portage la Prairie in 1895 and have served the community ever since. This firm was the first exporter of grain into the U.S.A.; from both the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards to world markets; and first via Fort Churchill. (Since 1945 they have been located in the Anderson Bldg.)

Many of the present generation will, no doubt, find a news item, taken from the Weekly Review of August 1st, 1895, amusing or amazing. Quote — "Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Secord and four children reached Portage the other day after travelling all the way from Edmonton in a wagon. They made the trip, 1,100 miles, in 35 days and had a very pleasant time. Mr. Secord thinks he has the best team in the country. They have covered 2,100 miles since April 1st."

Can you imagine 1,100 miles in a wagon with four children, during the mosquito season, being PLEASANT?!

It was nearing the turn of the century when more exciting things began to happen, one of these being the introduction of electric lights in 1896. Michael Blake was one of the original directors in this first electric light company.

Something which affected Portagers, as well as everyone in the British Empire, was the establishment of the "penny post" on December 25, 1897, which allowed a letter to be sent anywhere in the Empire for two cents.

Following that, much excitement was created in Portage and across the country by the discovery of gold in the Klondike in 1898.

Many men endured the hardship of crossing swollen streams and guiding horses and donkeys up narrow, winding mountain trails to get to the place where gold nuggets were being panned.

Tales have been told of the men and animals who dropped from the sides of cliffs en route and never reached their destination.

The men who went to the Klondike in 1898 didn't have a clue that trouble was brewing, that would result in war in South Africa the following year.

ETIQUETTE IN THE 1890s

Back in 1897 there was scarcely a settler's home that did not have a book of etiquette in it. Prof. B. G. Jeffries, M.D., Ph.D., was admired as an authority on the subject in those days, and thousands of his 508 paged, hard cover books could be found all across the country. One of these books is in a Portage la Prairie home today and has provided moments of much interesting and amusing reading. As you can well imagine, 508 pages can contain a tremendous number of "DOs and DON'Ts"! A person would have to have mighty good memory to avoid a 'faux pas' in one of the many social graces! Picking a few at random, for your interest and amusement, we quote:

"In crossing the street a lady should gracefully raise her dress a little above her ankle with one hand. To raise the dress with both hands is vulgar, except in places where the mud is very deep.

The hair should be thoroughly brushed and well kept, and the beard of men properly trimmed. Men should not let their hair grow long and shaggy. No one should appear as though he had slept in a stable. A young man's vest should always be kept buttoned in the presence of ladies.

Should you find yourself at a table where they have the old-fashioned steel forks, eat with your knife, as the others do, and do not let it be seen that you have any objection to doing so.

Should you find a worm or insect in your food, say nothing about it.

Tea, coffee, chocolate and the like are drunk from the cup and never from the saucer.

Never put bones or pits of fruit on the tablecloth. Put them on the side of your plate.

Do not hesitate to take the last piece on a dish, simply because it is the last. To do so is to directly express the fear that you would exhaust the supply.

Should you be so unfortunate as to overturn or to break anything, you would make no apology. You might let your regret appear in your face, but it would not be proper to put it in words.

Don't whistle in public places, nor inside of houses either.

Don't cleanse your nails, your nose, or your ears in public.

When walking on the street do not permit yourself to be absent-minded; do not go along reading a book or newspaper."

THE BOER WAR

On October 11, 1899, the Boer war broke out and many men from Portage la Prairie and district answered the call for help from the mother country. Some of them never returned.

The war more or less stemmed from one man's disobedience. Dr. Jameson, without authorization from Her Majesty's government, entered the Transvaal with an armed force and disobeyed a command to turn back. His actions were responsible for a feeling of enmity toward the British which grew until it erupted in war.

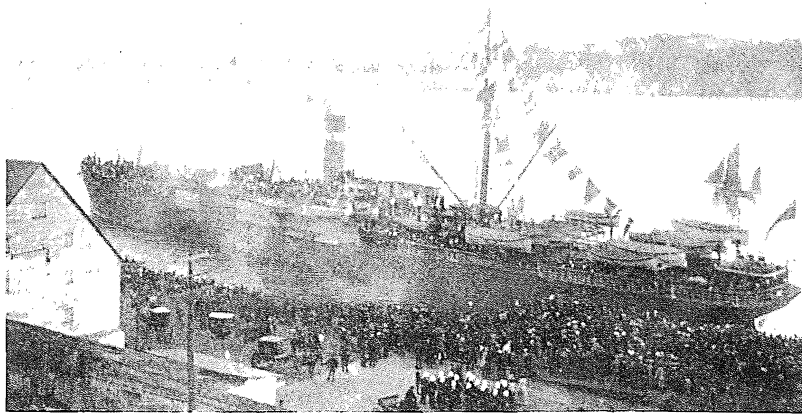
Over 7000 names of Canadian soldiers are listed among the men who fought in this war. As only number, name and rank are given, it is impossible to estimate the number that went from Portage la Prairie.

The hardships, that they endured, have been told in letters home by some of the boys who were there.

After enlisting and travelling to the east coast, the volunteers got aboard this gayly flag-decked boat which was named "The Sardinian".

Some of the fellows had had a little fighting experience in the North-west rebellion (Major Snider for one), but war in a foreign country was unfamiliar to them all. The trip east, singing songs and making friends, and bands playing and bunting flying upon their arrival, made them feel the war business was a bit of a lark.

Their first disillusionment came when they boarded the boat. They realized then, that the saying, "Outward appearances can be

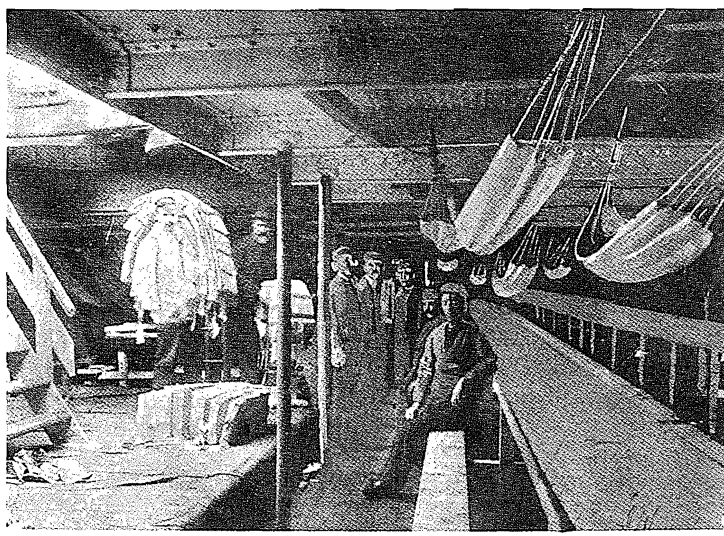


deceiving" was true. The boat that looked so colorful and appealing on the outside didn't have the comforts of a settler's cabin inside!

The picture, which follows, shows where the men ate and slept on the long, slow voyage to Cape Town, South Africa.

This was luxury in comparison to their living conditions after they disembarked!

A war picture is not, or ever has been, a pretty picture. The drenching rains in South Africa, unsuitable clothing and insufficient



blankets for sleeping outdoors, poor food rations, and beautiful horses lying wounded, are only a part of the terrible experiences of the boys who volunteered to fight in the Boer War.

Major I. R. Snider, of Portage la Prairie, saw action in the following battles: Natal; in the Transvaal east of Pretoria; at Belfast; at Lydenberr; in the Transvaal west of Pretoria; at Fredrickstad and in the Orange River Colony. In 1902 he was awarded the Queen's medal with five clasps.

(By 1914, when the first World War broke out, he had been elevated to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.)

Years immediately following the Boer War were ones of agricultural expansion and industrial development in Portage la Prairie. They were also years when shopping for stylish clothing again brought many customers to the R. S. McKenzie store in the Bailey Block on Saturday nights.

"The province of Manitoba has yet room for thousands of farmers and laborers," declared the Portage Daily News on August 27, 1903. "There are 25,000,000 acres that can be cultivated and only 3,000,000 acres are under cultivation. The livestock industry is increasing."

The total yield of Manitoba grain crops in 1902 was 100,052,-343 bushels. Wheat led the produce with a yield of 53,007,267 bushels and was followed by oats with 34,478,160, barley with 11,-848,422, flax with 564,440, rye with 49,900 and peas with 34,154 bushels.

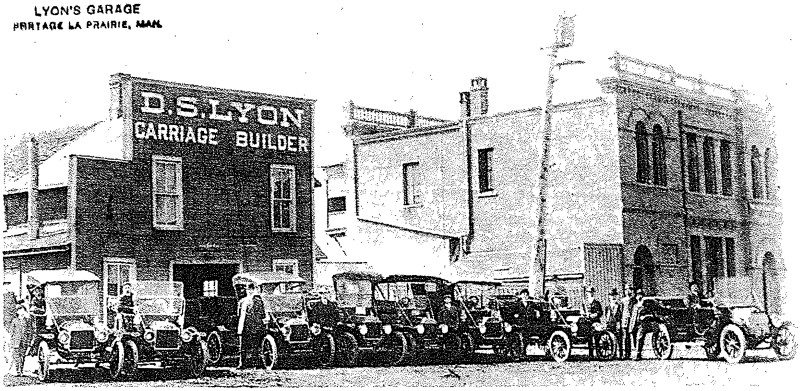
Bennett Memorials was well established by this time. In 1919 the business was purchased by Guinn and Simpson Co. Ltd. and is still operating today.

Adam Brown Sr. journeyed to Southbend, Indiana, and brought back two Studebaker cars in 1902. D. S. Lyon, six years later, opened the first garage in Portage la Prairie. The picture on the next page was taken ten years later.

Shown in the picture from left to right are: David Lyon Jr. (in car), George R. Lyon (in car), Louis Scow, Archie Lyon, ?, S. R. Cuthbert, ?, ?, W. P. Rundle, W. H. Thompson, J. H. Metcalfe, and D. S. Lyon (in car).

(The cars shown in the picture are all Fords — 1910, 1911 and 1912 models.

D. S. Lyon ran this business until 1919 when his son, Archie, took over. Archie is still the owner of the building but since 1959



D. S. Lyon's Garage.

has had it rented. Doing business there at the present time (1968) are Kenneth Belbin, Delbert Maxwell and J. A. Keddy Ltd.)

SPEAKING OF CARS

When cars first made their appearance on the streets of Portage la Prairie they were considered "things of the devil" by many.

Horses shied and ran away, tethered ones reared up (as high as possible) and their whinneying, snorting and galloping caused quite an uproar when mingled with the racket of the pioneer models. Mystified people gathered in crowds whenever they saw an approaching car, and only the most daring of women would ride in one!

Small tires seemed to constantly deflate and early drivers were forever pumping air back into them. (Hand pumps were used as there were no garages equipped with air hose in those days!)

Shortly after Mr. Brown introduced the "horseless carriage" to Portage la Prairie, W. J. Cooper, a Portage lawyer, bought a 1902 Cadillac with a one cylinder engine.

Then in 1904, D. S. Lyon purchased a two-cylinder opposed motor General, which brought the car count up to four in the city.

Came 1906 and others bought cars. T. W. Prout, an implement dealer, bought an Overland. A. C. Williams, a lawyer, purchased a McLaughlin-Buick. Joe Snider added another make to the list of others, with purchase of a one-cylinder Reo. Dr. A. E. Walkey bought a friction-drive Metz.

Until the opening of the first garage in Portage owners repaired their own cars.

It wasn't until 1908 that cars began to really appeal to the public.

Mr. Lyon obtained the Ford agency and J. K. Hill bought the first Model T Ford. Dr. Stewart was his second customer.

At that time it took six hours to motor to Winnipeg (if the roads were dry). The maximum speed was 25 miles per hour.

At first cars were not driven in the winter. Later, owners emptied the water from radiators and replaced it in the morning. By 1908 a crude form of anti-freeze was concocted by mixing alcohol and water.

In 1909, S. W. Woods, a local butcher, purchased an International high-wheel truck with hard-rubber tires. A joke of the times was that the truck travelled faster when it was being towed than it did under its own power!

Steam driven cars, at first more common than gasoline models, gradually disappeared because of the engineering skill required of the driver.

Electric models also lost popularity because the storage battery required re-charging after approximately four hours of driving.

From the original touring car (with its domed-in canvas side-curtains, which were used when the weather was wet) to the closed-in car (glass replacing side-curtains) to the sleek, streamlined, 400 horse-power vehicles of today, evolution in the automotive industry has been remarkable.

The first car's greatest attribute was being able to travel a little faster than the horse! Even though it is a treasured museum piece today we wouldn't trade it for the modern models that have power brakes, power steering, twin signals, automatic clutch, air conditioning units, electric window lifts, window washers, radios, longer wheel bases, safety seat belts, padded dashes and puncture proof tires.

Not many of us could afford to buy one of the first old-time cars today. But what would we do with it if we could?

Garages that are selling the finest lines of modern automobiles in Portage la Prairie today (1968) are: Tecza Motors (Mercury Sales Ltd.), Portage Garage Ltd. (Chrysler, Plymouth, Dodge, Valiant and Simca), Frank Dahl (Rambler and Volkswagen), Smith Motors (Ford cars and trucks) and Delta Motors (Chevrolet and Pontiac).

Snyder Brothers Brick Yard had its beginning in 1903, becoming a company in 1910. Top production was 84,000 bricks daily. (In 1945 this business was sold to Alsip Company who, at the time of this writing, are still the owners on the original location north-east of Portage la Prairie.)

Going back to where we left off in 1902, other businesses of that year should be added to the ones already mentioned.

There was P. J. Harwood's Jewelry Store; F. B. Bagshaw — Bookseller and Stationer; L. Remey — Real Estate; Cassels' Star Bakery; George W. Sparling's Photo Studio; Halstead & Co. — Bankers; McLeod and Pybus were running the Leland Hotel; T. A. Newman had two stores by this time — the grocery at the west end and a grocery and wholesale liquor dept. at the east end; T. T. Bailey had a restaurant described as "swell" in a 1902 magazine; the departmental stores of James, Edward and Adam Brown occupied front places among the business houses; Brown's Stock Exchange — where they kept a string of trotting horses that did credit to them at exhibitions, also a carriage sales room and a large implement yard; J. O. Williams' tonsorial parlors and cigar store was a busy place; and a Mr. Lurl is mentioned in connection with photography.

D. McCowan was the esteemed secretary-treasurer of the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie at that time.

The population in 1902 was 4,000.

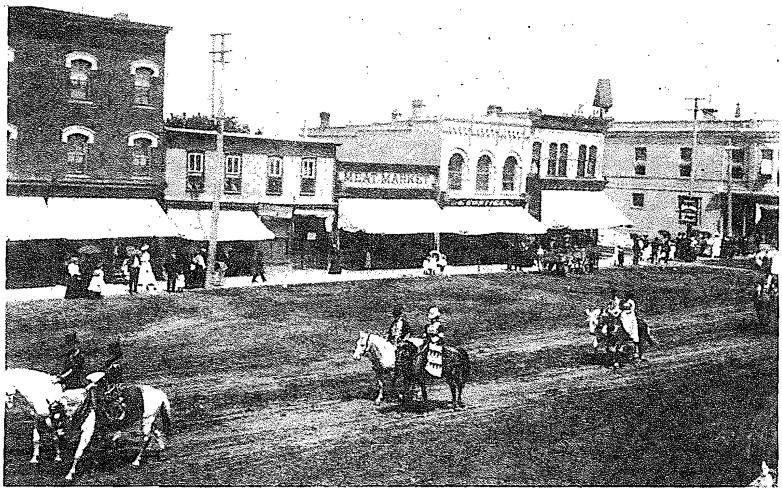
The following three pictures were taken during a day of festivities. Note the crowd watching an approaching parade.

From left to right the buildings shown in this first picture are the businesses of Graban, Todhunter, Babb and Kirkland.

Does anyone remember this parade? Note the gayly dressed ladies riding side-saddle, and note their escorts in top hats.

The buildings shown are the business establishments of: L. to R. — B. J. McCulloch, Hall's Meat Market, C. Costigan and W. Garland.

Throngs of people flocked on the streets to see the elephants in the parade.



B. J. McCulloch, Hall's Meat Market, C. Costigan and W. Garland.

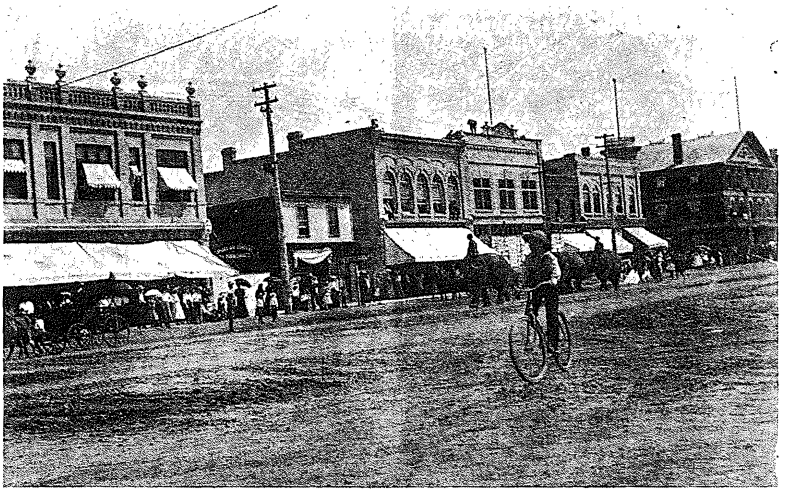
The boy on the bicycle will be an elderly gentleman if he is still living. Does he recognize himself and remember this occasion — we wonder.

George A. Bowes was the proprietor of the Manitoba Hotel in 1904. Rates were $1.50 up. His advertisement said, "Best of liquors and cigars. Everything first class and up to date".

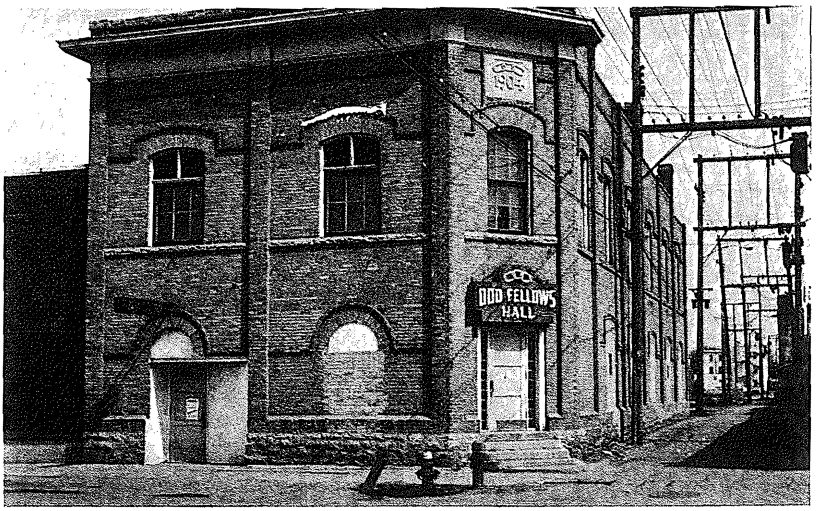
D. McKillop had a complete line of household furniture in his store, and advertised this list in the same paper: parlor chairs, rattan rockers, music cabinets, afternoon tea tables, couches, sideboards, brass and iron bedsteads etc. He was not only the proprietor of a furniture store at that time, but also an Undertaker.

A picture of the Empire Hotel doesn't mention who it was that owned or operated it.

The buildings shown — left to right — are: Hudson's Bay, Ti Fung Restaurant, Cadham's Hardware and Burley's Store.



The work of installing a complete system of WATERWORKS and SEWERAGE commenced on May 26, 1904, and the Odd Fellows Hall was built that year.



The picture of the Odd Fellows Hall, shown here, is going to bring back happy memories for many people, we think. It was located

where the Safeway parking lot is now, and was the scene of many miles of fancy foot-work before it was torn down in 1966. We can imagine the number of people that will look at this picture and say, "Gee! we used to have some good times in that old hall."

Mrs. Gladys Weber says that all the main floor, except for a kitchen, was dancing area. The upper floor was for lodges, and there was also a large dressing room there.

About 1956, a second kitchen was added to the building; this one to accommodate the Rebeccas on the upper floor.

Water mains were laid in 1905, and the following year a pumping station and water reservoir were erected on 4th Avenue, north of the tracks. The system was capable of maintaining a pressure of 145 pounds. The source of water was surface wells, 24 to 36 ft. deep. Mains were of wood, bound with wire, and most lasted for about 20 years before they were replaced.

(The original building is now occupied by Sunshine Hatcheries and the reservoir still stands.)

Padrone Cigar Company began operations here in 1906, employing 12 to 15 men. The first location was on the south side of Saskatchewan Avenue east. The company later moved to the Roland Dann Block. It ceased operations here in 1915. (Ford Lorch, who was employed at this firm, is one of the few remaining cigar makers in Manitoba.)

Around 1906, a steam laundry was established here, employing 25 to 30 men. Joseph Metcalfe was the manager and Harry Bullard was the chief engineer. The plant was closed in 1912 or 1913.

Joseph Martin opened a small bottling plant in this era, on Main Street. This business was purchased in 1907 by John McLeod, who built the present Portage Soda Water Works on Tupper Street north. A Mr. Taylor and Mr. Wasylek were employed by Mr. McLeod. (Norman McLeod was given control of the business in 1916 or 1917. His sister, Alice [now Mrs. C. J. Pyefinch], assisted him in managing it from 1918 until 1938. John McLeod passed away in 1934 and his son, Norman, in 1960. Mrs. Norman McLeod is the present owner and Robert McDermid is employed by her as manager of the business.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE BECOMES A CITY

In 1907 when Portage la Prairie became a city it had six banks, six new and commodious hotels — Portage, Leland, Albion, Mer-

chants, Empire and Rossin, and it was the only place in Canada where main lines of three transcontinental systems — Grand Trunk Pacific, Canadian Pacific and Canadian Northern Railways intersected. The Midland branch of the Great Northern also had a line out.

Testifying to the city's economic development were flour mills, oatmeal mills, brickyards, cement block works, a sash and door factory, pump factory, harness factory, Portage Soda Water Works, Washing Soda Works, candy factories, two breweries, fur, clothing and many other industries. (It is regrettable that, at this time, information is not available about all the above mentioned.)

The first mayor of the city of Portage la Prairie was Edward Brown. The first aldermen were: Wm. Armstrong, James Fairbairn, John J. Garland, Thomas Hall, E. A. McPherson and A. Ogletree. The secretary-treasurer was F. W. Clayton.

By 1908 the flour mills were producing 500,000 barrels of flour annually, oatmeal mills were turning out 50,000 barrels annually, and the brickyards were manufacturing an estimated 25 million bricks a year.

The Central Electric Company, in 1908, installed a new generator in its plant. The city took over the plant in 1911 and operated it until the early 1920s when it was sold to the province, becoming the first unit of the Manitoba Power Commission.

C. E. Cole

Mr. C. E. Cole started in the jewelry business, on Saskatchewan Ave. in 1911, and successfully operated it until he sold it to Mr. Jack Cook in 1951.

Mr. Cole deserves special recognition for his contributions in time and effort during his business years. A few of them are as follows:

He was chairman of the school board for 24 years; timer at the races for 42 years; established Collegiate sports and was 'sports timer' there for 42 years; and an active member of the Masonic Lodge for most of his life.

We are fortunate in still having him with us. Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Cole are enjoying their retirement years in their home at 114-5th St. S.E. in Portage la Prairie.

The Waterloo Company, an assembling plant for steam and gasoline engines and threshing machines, was established in Portage between 1908 and 1909. A transfer house for Western Canada, it employed 25 to 30 men. John Herron was manager from 1912 to 1913 and N. K. Weber from 1913 to 1943. It was subsequently sold to the McCallister Pea Company.

Portage Iron Works was founded in 1908-10 and purchased by Western Radiator Company in 1913, employing 50 to 60 men in this period. Taken over by Economy Foundry in 1922, it was operated until the early 1930s. It was re-opened in 1934-1935 by the Link Manufacturing Company and then purchased by Charles Astbury in 1935. All firms operated in the same building on Tupper Street north.

In 1910, an assembling plant for gasoline engines and threshing machines, the Hart Parr Company, was opened. It operated for about 10 years and was then sold to the Oliver Plow Company.

Corrugated Pipe Company was established around 1912, employing six or seven men. Here, corrugated culverts of all sizes were manufactured. Owned and operated by Thomas Cook, the plant was located just north of the Power Commission sub-station. It was sold to Western Steel in the early 1920s.

WORLD WAR I

When Archduke Francis of Austria and his wife were assassinated at Sarajevo, Bosnia, by Gavrio Prinzip on June 28, 1914, it started a chain reaction which resulted in a world war.

Austria declared war on Serbia, July 28th; Russian troops invaded Germany (August 2nd); and when the Germans invaded the neutral country of Belgium, England declared war on Germany August 4, 1914. Canada and all the British commonwealth countries were then eager to aid in the battle for freedom and justice.

Canada sent between 400,000 and 500,000 of its most physically fit young men to fight in this war. Many of them were from Portage la Prairie and surrounding districts, and many of them never returned.

It wasn't a war of equal weapons, equal chances and "may the best team win" sort of thing. It was a dirty war in which the Germans introduced poisonous gas (April 22-28, 1915) in a desperate attempt to overpower the allies.

The healthy, happy, young fellows who left Canada singing, "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag" turned out to be among the best soldiers in the fighting lines. They have received this tribute in many articles written about them.

While poisonous gas was being used and comrades were dying in agony, the remaining Canadians still held the line in battles at St. Julien and Langemark. To retreat would have meant free access for the Germans to the English Channel. Their contribution to victory is beyond human estimation.

Poisonous gas was used twice again by the Germans in two separate battles at Ypres.

Portage was the headquarters for the 18th M.R. Regiment and also the local headquarters for "A" Squadron of the same regiment whose commanding officer was Major A. C. Williams.

Lt.-Col. I. R. Snider was in command of the 99th regiment, Manitoba Rangers; Capt. F. G. Taylor of "E" Company; and Capt. A. Kitson of "D" Company.

It is impossible in a book of this size to list the names of all the boys from Portage and district who joined the fighting ranks between 1914 and 1918. However, a list of names of the first volunteers who passed the medical inspection carried out by Dr. H. J. Hassard on Aug. 13, 1914 are as follows: Fred C. Mills, Herman Hartley, Jack King, James Woods, George Robertson, Charles Rea, Charles Tarling, Sidney Bonny, John Edward Lamb, Fred Archie McKenzie, Fred Morand, Elmer Prout, Thomas Carmichael, Stanley Garrioch, Albert McDonald, Harold Garrioch, Charles Abbott, Albert Livesay, Jack Prereth, W. J. Guttridge, Francis William Mirtle, George E. Willis, Frederick Fletcher, William Baldwin, Fred Trevellen and William Pedin.

Just two weeks later, the Manitoba Liberal paper published the names of the men who entrained at Portage for Valcartier. The list was made up of: Lt.-Col. C. D. McPherson, Major D. M. Ormond, Capt. Chas. A. Ogletree, Sgt.-Major McIllwraith, Sgt. Ferguson, Sgt. Fairbairn, Ord. Sgt. Macdonald, Corp. Stewart, Corp. Douglas and 105 Privates.

Men were selected on their physical fitness, ability as shots, and training received in militia was also a factor. Unmarried men were the first selection, married men without families second and with families third. Height could not be less than five feet three inches, chest 33½ inches.

At Valcartier, Quebec, the soldiers received rigorous training before continuing on to the battle front. It was there also, that they were introduced to mother earth as a bed!

Women contributed much during the war years too. Housewives made as many sugarless recipes as possible and every cent that could be saved went toward the war effort. There wasn't an organization in Portage la Prairie that ignored the needs of comforts and necessities for the boys overseas. The work done by the Salvation Army, Red Cross and I.O.D.E. is well known.

Four Portage ladies who deserve special mention here are: Mrs. M. B. Snider, Miss Younghusband, Miss Bertha Barnes and Miss Mary Panton, the latter two being graduates of the Portage General Hospital. After war was declared they immediately offered their services to go to the front in the capacity of Red Cross nurses.

On November 7, 1918, the Daily Graphic carried big headlines — "VICTORY IS OURS" and in only slightly smaller letters — "GERMANY SURRENDERS".

At twelve minutes to twelve the city bells announced to the people of Portage la Prairie that the Allied armies had been successful and that the war was virtually at an end. The ringing of the city bells was followed by those of churches and with the din of whistles from the railway yards it was not long before people knew that the terrible war had at last come to an end, that right had triumphed over might and that all sacrifices had not been in vain.

Mayor Marlatt got out a proclamation declaring the rest of the day a half holiday, asking the business places to close and for stores and homes to be decorated and illuminated that night. "Make all the noise you want to," he said. "Make it a day long to be remembered".

The celebration was a little premature but the handwriting was on the wall by that time anyway. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and fled to Holland on November 9; World War I Armistice was signed at Senlis on November 11, 1918; and on June 28, 1919, a Peace Treaty was signed at Versailles.

Sixty thousand Canadians never lived to rejoice in the victory. Some of them were boys from Portage la Prairie and surrounding districts.

Two hundred thousand Canadians came home wounded. Some of them were from Portage la Prairie and surrounding districts too.

No-one has ever tried to estimate the number of tears that were shed by broken-hearted mothers, wives and sweethearts.

Names of the Portage boys, who made the Supreme Sacrifice for the freedom of others, are engraved on a cenotaph which was erected by the Prairie Gateway Chapter of the I.O.D.E. in the centre of the city on Saskatchewan Avenue.

The I.O.D.E. was formed November 6, 1909, with officers as follows: Mrs. E. S. Martin, Regent; Mrs. John O'Brien, Vice Regent; Miss A. Cadham, Secretary; Mrs. Alex Taylor, Treasurer; and Mrs. C. H. Weagant, Standard Bearer. The Charter was received on May 17, 1910.

Since the latter date they have been one of the leading organizations in many charitable activities in Portage, and have assisted in many national appeals. School bursaries, and laying wreaths annually on Remembrance and Decoration Days can be added to these.

Officers (1969) are as follows: Mrs. Ted Maxwell, Regent; Mrs. Vernon Garrioch and Mrs. Harold Batters, Vice Regents; Miss Jessie Frazer, Secretary; Mrs. Lindsay McDougall, Treasurer; Mrs. Tom Maxwell, Standard Bearer; Mrs. Harry Morris, Publicity and Services Home and Abroad; Mrs. H. V. Bird, Sickness and Distress, also Echoes Secretary; Mrs. J. M. Campbell, Education, also Social Convener; and Mrs. Wm. Burch, World Affairs.

NEWS NOTES (1914-1918)

During World War I, farmers were often so desperately in need of help to get their crops harvested that some soldiers were given leave from the army to assist them. For their farm assistance they received wages from the farmer as well as their regular army pay.

Reserve "Militia Rifle Teams" were organized in Portage la Prairie. Alfred Babb and J. O. Cadham, hardware merchants, loaned the rifles for practice.

On Sept. 10, 1914, the Weekly Manitoba Liberal said — "Portage is one of the first if not the first city in Western Canada to make it compulsory that all dairy cows must have a tubercular test before a license will be granted for the sale of milk."

In January, 1916, Manitoba became the first Canadian Province to enfranchise women.

The Assiniboine River assumed flood proportions in 1916. Some farmers were driven from their homes when the river rose three feet in less than two hours. Communication with the Island was cut off.

An Order-in-Council passed at Ottawa August 10, 1918, stated that burning of straw was prohibited as it was needed to conserve livestock.

Many noteworthy events occurred around 1918.

City council held a sale of all city property on which taxes were more than two years in arrears. The sale was conducted by city clerk Grieve. Only 115 of 731 parcels were sold and none brought more than the amount of taxes against it. Largest purchasers were William Richardson, Alex Bodnar, T. Rowe and J. Joyce.

T. Wishart won two second prizes, one for regular oats and one for oats in sweepstakes at International Farm competitions held in Kansas City.

Chief McIntyre had voluntarily assumed charge of all stooking gangs in the Portage area for the fall as a patriotic service. Manitoba crops were being estimated at 145 million bushels. Manpower shortage was still evident on the homefront and stookers and harvest helpers were urgently needed.

Rural council of Portage la Prairie created the new school district of Gainsborough, and also prepared to build a road to Delta, providing right of way could be obtained from the C.P.R.

Wm. M. McBeth and T. E. Scott entered into a partnership and leased the Portage Garage on Tupper Street, and opened up with a complete line of auto accessories and were prepared to do all types of auto repair work.

Announcement was made that Brown's Store's lease had been renewed for 30 years.

Prices ranged from high to low in wearing apparel. Peck's store advertised authentic wool jersey frocks (down past the calves) at $44.50, and Prior Brothers were selling ladies' suits for $5.55.

Alexander Studio re-opened in a new location next door to Arnold's Bookstore. The new studio boasted fine daylight and a violet ray lamp for persons wishing to have photographs taken in the evening.

The war was still going on with all the work, worry and hardships connected with it, when the city was saddened by the news that three Portage district youths, all recognized heroes, had been killed in action. They were Lance Cpl. Cecil G. Burton, Private George Code and Private E. S. Fushey. Three of their Portage friends, Pte. H. O. Blair, Pte. H. W. Favell and Sgt. Richard Alford were awarded Military Medals the same year.

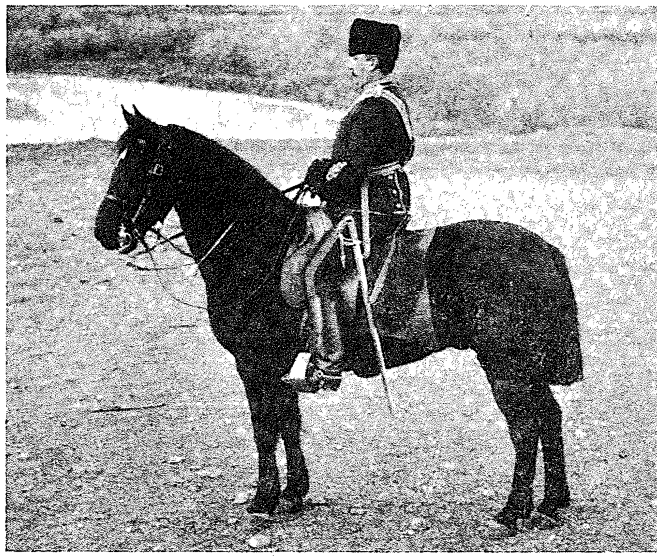
Courageous deeds of several Portage boys was part of an enlightening account given by Major Thurlow Fraser, D.D., former pastor of Knox Church who spent two years overseas. The names he mentioned were: Stewart Thomson, Sid McKay, Harry McKenzie and Sid Bradshaw.

Canada's war debt had reached a sizable figure and the Victory Loan Campaign of 1918 was aimed at striking enthusiasm everywhere. Special headquarters were opened up in the Murton Block. There were 'honor flag' buttons and display cards for all bond purchasers. Three days before the campaign was scheduled to end, Portage la Prairie went over the top exceeding its $600,000 objective by $6,850. Brown's Ltd., J. J. Garland, J. H. Waind, D. C. Stewart, T. Reynolds, James Ector and George Blight all purchased in excess of $2,000.

Portage rural land had risen in value by 1918 and farm sales at $50 per acre were advertised.

Announcement was made by the provincial government at this time that a Child Welfare station, the fourth in Manitoba, was to be located in Portage la Prairie.

There were two chapters of the I.O.D.E. in Portage in 1918, the General Sam Steele Chapter and the Prairie Gateway Chapter. As a Major, S. B. Steele was second in Command of the N.W.M. Police with the Second Canadian Contingent in the South African War.



S. B. Steele

The picture of him which is shown here, was taken at that time.

It was about 1918 that it was proposed to establish a provincial police force patterned after the Royal N.W. Mounted Police with headquarters in Winnipeg and detachment stations at strategic points in rural Manitoba. The proposal followed the withdrawal of the N.W.M.P. and the establishment of a uniformed force similar to that proposed for Manitoba in Saskatchewan.

Maybe many still living will remember the Empress Theatre and the crowds that flocked to see Mary Pickford who was the darling of the silent movies. Maybe many remember F. I. Willis who was the manager of the Portage Carnival Company at that time too. As well as putting on carnival shows at Island Park, the Company went on tours and provided entertainment in neighboring towns.

Federal aid grants for highways and education were withdrawn in 1918 due to the burden of war debt and other outlays unforeseen at the time of confederation. However, general subsidies were increased.

Tethering cattle and horses along the streets in the city or allowing horses to run at large within the city was prohibited by law and Chief McIntyre said the city bylaw would be enforced.

Magistrate Marshall imposed fines of $1.50 on two persons who allowed cattle to pasture along city streets. The fines levied carried an alternative of seven days in gaol.

Strikes are not exclusively a part of modern day problems. Fifty years ago Winnipeg postal workers were on strike, as were the C.P.R. freight handlers.

THE SPANISH "FLU" EPIDEMIC

It was 50 years ago, too, that the first case of Spanish influenza was reported in Portage la Prairie. The date was Oct. 10, 1918 and the spread was rapid due to a lack of sufficient vaccine.

Following is a brief summary of the epidemic that kept doctors, nurses and volunteer nurses working day and night, with only short snatches of sleep, in their attempts to save as many lives as possible:

Oct. 12 — Public gatherings were banned in an effort to prevent the spread of the disease. By this date there were 5 cases in the city.

Oct. 19 — there were 6 more cases.

Oct. 21 — the number rose to 20.

Oct. 24 — Portage General Hospital received some serum.

Oct. 30 — Total number of cases in Portage and municipality — 158.

Nov. 1 — 30 new cases reported.

Nov. 6 — Total cases numbered 243.

Nov. 7 — With the news that the war was virtually over every healthy person was rejoicing in various ways. Dr. S. B. Cowan was frowning heavily on celebrations that contravened the influenza quarantine.

Nov. 13 — 24 new cases.

Nov. 14 — Ban still in effect and churches remained closed. There was an urgent call for volunteer nurses. The General Hospital had reached its limit of admittance when the proprietor of the Rossin House offered his premises as an emergency hospital. Mrs. Alex Taylor supervised the necessary preparations and every Portage woman who was able to nurse, cook, clean or help in any way, volunteered her services.

Nov. 18 — 33 new cases reported.

Nov. 22 — 471 cases had been reported (390 of them in the city).

Nov. 27 — 21 new cases.

Nov. 28 — 39 new cases.

Nov. 29 — The daily paper said, "Midnight will see lifting of ban. Now it's up to the people." There were 16 new cases that day!

Nov. 30 — "Churches open tomorrow, schools on Monday."

Dec. 3 — 16 new cases reported.

The paper said, on Dec. 17, "Flu rate is not declining. 25 new cases yesterday — 15 are in children of school age."

The foregoing is enough to show how rapidly a disease can rise to epidemic proportions.

Portage was not the only place that battled this dreadful virus, and it would be safe to say that there are not many cemeteries across Canada that do not contain graves of its victims.

Since that time we were visited by the Asian "flu" in the 1950s.

The highlight of events in Portage in 1919 was the visit of the Prince of Wales, eldest son of King George V and Queen Mary. Mr. J. H. Metcalfe was mayor of the city at that time and deserves credit for the royal welcome he planned.

The following letter is one of the treasures in the Portage la Prairie City Hall.

Mr. Mayor,

I would ask you to convey to the citizens of Portage La Prairie my deep appreciation of the words of welcome which you have just read me on their behalf, and I thank you for your kind references to my modest services in the war, where my association with the Canadian Corps enabled me to serve in the field with many of the men from this town and district. My tour in the great Dominion has shewn me that the people of Canada are ready to face the problems of reconstruction, which inevitably follow every great war, with the same spirit that helped them to overcome the difficulties which confronted the British Empire during that critical period, now happily at an end.

I know, Mr. Mayor, that the future progress and development of Portage La Prairie is assured by the energy and initiative of its citizens, and I wish them all good fortune and prosperity in their future activities.

Edward P.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE.
10th October, 1919.

It isn't surprising that after the war, with the hardships and sadness connected with it, then influenza with its similar effects, people across the country adopted a new way of living in an endeavor to forget the past. The product of this popular way of thinking was an era which has gone down in history as:

"THE ROARING '20s."

No longer were fashionable women seen on the streets in long flowing gowns. No longer the braids and coils and buns that were once a lady's crowning glory. No longer the high-buttoned boots and home-knitted hosiery. There was a joy in the cool freedom of shorter skirts and no tears were shed as old gowns were packed in trunks in attics. As hair fell in heaps on beauty salon floors there was relief that the tedious chore of morning braiding and styling was over. High buttoned boots were discarded with pleasure, although a few saved the button-hooks for fastening them in case they might come back into style! Knitting needles were given a rest after serving war and home needs. And theatre, parties, dancing and sports were wholeheartedly enjoyed by all who had not suffered deep scars of bereavement.

It wasn't only the ladies who enjoyed an uplift of spirits in new styles. Off went bushy beards from men's faces and out went the moustache cups belonging to fellows who had refused to follow the trend earlier. Colorful striped blazers were seen everywhere and Steve Garland was doing a good business selling, among other things, smart tweed and leather coats, Ulster style, with or without belts. Prices for these garments ranged from $18.00 to $27.50.

A hemp factory, manufacturing binder twine and rope, was opened in 1920 with Wilson and Sons as managers. The plant employed about 20 men. One of the first farmers to grow hemp for the company was Thomas Wishart.

Also established around this time was a brick yard, by Peter Whimster. Employing 25 men, the yard had a maximum daily production of 20,000 bricks. Located west of the city, it operated for only a year.

THE CYCLONE OF 1922

Wednesday, June 21st, 1922, was a momentous day in Portage la Prairie.

Baron Byng, Governor-General of Canada, was given a rousing welcome when he arrived here to open the annual plowing match. After the official ceremonies, he left at noon for Brandon.

On the same day, Portagers were horrified as they watched the 25-year-old Metcalfe mill burn to the ground.

Citizens read about these events in The Portage Daily Graphic, which published a newspaper six columns wide and about 21 inches deep.

On June 23rd, however, the format of The Graphic had drastically changed, and so had the city itself.

The next Graphic to come out was in handbill form — four columns wide, about 15 inches deep, and printed only on one side of one page. The headlines told the reason:

"Devastation by cyclone and fire . . . . Portage la Prairie's baptism of destruction . . . . Toll of life is one child killed and minor injuries to others . . . . Premier Milling Plant and Forsythe Elevator destroyed by fire . . . . Public institutions, churches, schools, business blocks and homes damaged . . . . losses may total nearly a million dollars."

It was a time that Portagers would look back on and say, "1922 — that was the Year of the Cyclone."

The Daily Graphic printed its mini-paper for four days while it got its equipment back in working order, but the newspaper plant survived much better than many other establishments.

The storm arrived at 2.30 a.m., striking the city with a roar that was deafening. It snapped trees off as if their heavy trunks were pipe stems, chimneys were blown over, houses unroofed and buildings collapsed.

"With the wind there was hail and rain, with vivid lightning and thunder. It put the lighting system out of business and the entire city was in darkness."

Hardly had the cyclone struck when the western sky was brightly illuminated, and it was found that the big Forsythe Elevator, west of the city, was in flames.

The Daily Graphic said: "The force of the wind can be realized when it is stated that some of the freight cars, in the elevator area, were blown right into the city, while cars in the C.P.R. yard were blown east of the city and toppled over."

No record of the wind at Portage la Prairie was published, but in Winnipeg it reached 84 miles per hour, and Portage, it was reported later, was in the middle and "was hit very heavily."

The residence of Mr. and Mrs. W. Spencer, on 12th Street, collapsed under the force of the wind and their infant daughter was crushed to death. Mrs. Spencer was badly injured.

Another house was rolled over, another pushed over onto its side, while still another was moved a foot off its foundation.

Main Street and Saskatchewan Avenue were littered with bricks, lumber, tin roofing and glass. The big two-storey building of the Cockshutt Plow Company was blown in and only a part of the side and end walls left standing.

The Presbyterian and Methodist Churches both suffered heavily, both being unroofed, and at Knox Church half of the roof was lifted and the organ found a resting place in the cellar.

The roof of the Merchants Hotel was torn completely off and part of it landed a block away, in front of the post office.

Numerous garages were blown over and in some cases collapsed, burying the cars beneath them. Few houses escaped without at least some minor damage.

At 7.20 a.m. the fire bell rang again. The Premier Grain Milling Company mill was on fire. It had been struck by lightning, tearing out a part of the building, and it was believed that it caused a fire that smouldered until it burst into flames. About 30,000 bushels of grain were destroyed along with the building.

The next day reports came in on damage in the rural area: ". . . . There is hardly a farm on the Portage Plains that does not show a wrecked building of some sort," reported The Graphic.

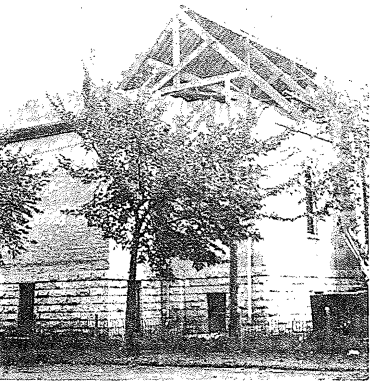
The Farmers' Mutual Insurance Company, for instance, received 300 claims for wind damage, for an estimated total of $85,000. The manager felt the claims would reach a quarter of a million dollars!

Many of the big barns north of the city were struck. The big, new barn of T. Wishart was demolished, as were the barns of A. Wishart and A. Muir.

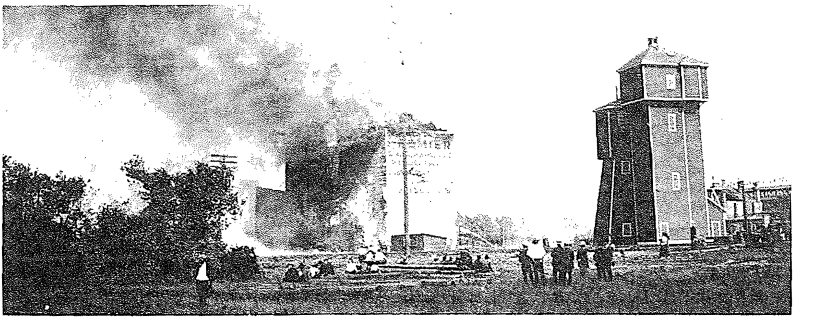
For some strange reason, most of the farm houses escaped damage.

At Poplar Point, word was received that 15 barns were hit by the wind. And there was considerable damage in the town of Oakville.

A scene on Crescent Road



Knox Church minus its roof.



The Premier Elevator as it was burning.

The pictures shown here were taken by W. J. A. Stevenson who was a night operator in the C.P.R. station at the time of the cyclone. Mr. Stevenson now resides in Austin, Man.

A report on June 30th gave a partial rundown on the damage: Fire damage — Forsythe Elevator, $160,000; Premier Plant, $200,000; Metcalfe Plant, $34,000.

Wind damage reported in the city to this date amounted to $56,000, including $12,000 to the Presbyterian Church plus $5,000 to the church's organ. Some of the other damage reports from wind: W. P. Ritchie, Card residence, $1,500; Methodist Church, $2,800; Cockshutt Building, $5,000; Merchants Hotel, $4,500; Fairbairn Block,

$300; provincial buildings, $4,000; Garland Block $1,500; Collegiate, $2,000; Curling Rink, $100; North Ward School, $2,500; West Ward School, $100; and Central School, $100.

Rev. Dr. Thurlow Fraser, a former minister at the Presbyterian Church, came from Winnipeg to inspect the damage to his old church. He was high in his praise of the brotherhood displayed by other congregations. Offers had immediately been tendered to the Presbyterians to hold their services in the Anglican, Baptist and Catholic church buildings.

"This shows that though we may differ in creeds and tenets, we are all one in Christian sympathy and brotherliness when sorrow or distress overtakes us," said Dr. Fraser.

The fact that only one life was lost in the cyclone was attributed to the fact that it struck when most persons were home asleep.

Ald. Garland and his son had a narrow escape on the sleeping balcony of their home. Mr. Garland picked up his sleeping son and had just entered the house when the chimney crashed through the roof on to the bed where they had been lying!

And C. W. Taylor was about to go to a sleeping balcony to shut a window, but his wife persuaded him not to attempt it. As he turned away, the balcony was torn from the house!

In the Hotel Portage, a group of worried people had gathered. A little girl was quoted as saying at that time, "Don't be frightened Mamma. God will look after us." Those words had a magical effect on all present, cheering them up and giving them the courage that was needed on that dreadful Wednesday of 1922.

After many months of cleaning, repairing and building Portage began to bear a semblance to the orderly, thriving city it had previously been.

Gay gatherings were resumed and autumn and winter passed pleasantly before nature sprung another surprise. This one came in the form of a flood.

THE BIG FLOOD OF 1923

A woman on 4th St. Northwest looked at her basement and saw it was flooded. The water was reaching the floor of her home.

She rushed to the front door and stepped into water she thought merely covered the sidewalk. But the water in the basement had undermind the foundation, leaving a hole in front of the door!

She went underneath the water, then surfaced and made a grab at the nearby sidewalk above water, but it broke off and was carried away. She made another grab and caught the screen door of her home. Her screams soon brought neighbors who helped her to safety.

It was Saturday, April 21st, 1923, the year of Portage la Prairie's big flood.

First word of the possibility of a flood was published on Wednesday, April 18th, when it was noted that a four ft. rise had taken place in the Assiniboine River at the Rennie Brothers' farm west of the city. This water was already above ice level, and the ice was beginning to heave.

The next day, the water had risen another two feet. Farmers in the area were quoted as saying they couldn't remember when there had been so much water covering the land.

C.P.R. passenger service was crippled west of Portage and mainline C.P.R. traffic was travelling over C.N.R. lines from Brandon to Carberry. The C.N.R. reported bad washouts between Portage and Gladstone. Country roads were in bad shape, covered by water from the melting snow.

Then, in the early hours of Saturday, April 21st, the riverbank at the Ogletree farm west of the city washed out and a large volume of water surged over the land, moving through a low cut at the cemetery and finding its way to the west end of the city.

When daylight came many city residents woke to find their homes surrounded by water, with the water still rising. Some waded out in waist-high water; others had to climb through windows.

The water backed up along the C.P.R. right-of-way and followed the grade into the heart of the city. By 6 a.m. the C.N.R. tracks were under water and the floodwater was flowing to all the side streets.

Crescent Lake overflowed and the water crept up on the houses along its banks. The bridge across to the Island had been uprooted from its pier and was sticking up in the air.

The steel bridge was intact but the south approach was washed away.

A common sight east of the city was to see a family seated in a farm wagon, with bed and bedding, and with a cow hitched on behind.

All streets from the tracks to the lake in the west end of the city were covered by water and it continued its flow along the tracks to the east end, where it spilled out on to connecting streets there.

The water poured down Main St., flooding cellars and residences on Prince Ave., Charlton and other streets. Those not hit by the floodwaters experienced difficulty with sewer backups.

The water rose up to the axles of train cars parked on the C.N.R. Tracks. Before the morning was out, stores announced they had sold all their supplies of rubber boots.

By Monday morning, the water had started to recede, but sections of the city not touched by the flood were now being bothered by surface water which came through the ground and found its way into cellars.

The streets looked like they did on the day of the cyclone in 1922! They were strewn with cord wood, barrels and anything that would float.

The bodies of chickens drowned in the flood were floating around. West of 4th St. and north of Lorne Ave., all streets were still under water, and in the low sections the water climbed up the sides of houses to a depth of several feet.

The next day, Tuesday, a half-mile of track was reported washed out one mile east of Poplar Point. The water, on its journey eastward, was reported rushing across farm land in that area to a depth of 4 feet!

The river dropped four feet at Portage la Prairie on Tuesday, but classes were cancelled at the Collegiate because water had infiltrated the furnace room. One fireman was hurt attempting to fix a pump being used to bring the water out of the school.

Mayor W. M. Burns was engaged in a heated hassle with the C.P.R. over the railroad's refusal to break its grade in order to allow surplus water to run through and follow a natural course north. But C.P.R. officials said the request came too late to be of any help, and breaking a path through the grade would cut the only main line still operating between east and west.

When it was all over, a relief committee was set up and its main task was to distribute cord wood to residents whose heating supplies had been carried away by the floodwaters.

The Daily Graphic reported that "there was no panic, people were calm and it was only by being so that no lives were lost . . ."

The flood had moved east, but it took a number of weeks before there was any sort of travel between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie. The floodwaters had washed out the main highway.

Around 1925 a milk distributing plant was established on Main St., one block north of the Forsythe Coal Yard. The manager was Alfred Mowat. The company purchased a building on Tupper St., Crescent Butter Plant, around 1932 and Mr. Mowat established his own dairy plant with milk delivery, later producing butter and ice cream. It was located on Main St. south. Alex Rey purchased the business later from Mrs. Mowat (1949). It is now operated by the Crescent Creamery Company who employ about 25 people.

In the '20s another dairy, the Willow Grove Dairy, operated by J. Henning, was also doing business in Portage. Mr. Henning sold to W. C. Donnelly who changed the name of the establishment to Maple Leaf Dairy.

The year, 1928, contained several items of interest:

Snyder Brick Company shipped two million bricks to Fort William for the construction of a paper mill there.

Alfred Babb was selling Voss electric clothes washers, ploto plane type, complete with wringers in his store.

Eaton's opened a store in a new location, the Burk and Andrich Block. E. Green of Portage was named the Portage store manager.

R. N. Rea purchased the furniture store and undertaking business of E. H. Smith.

Island Park was becoming increasingly popular and a home for the superintendent was built there.

Premier Bracken and members of his cabinet came to Portage to tour the Cordite plant.

Brown and Lowry had the agency for the new Ford Phaeton complete with five tires and wheels (the ad. said), windshield wipers and snug fitting clear vision curtains.

James Richardson ran a sale stable where carloads of horses, which he had shipped in, were auctioned off.

Crop yields were reported as excellent but farmers weren't too happy. The Canadian Cooperative Wheat Pool announced a cut from $1.00 to 85c for initial payment for No. 1 Northern wheat.

The city tax rate was set at 14 mills, a reduction of one mill from the 1927 levy. The rate for farm lands was 25 mills and the business tax set at 12½ per cent.

The Woods farm north of Portage was the scene of excitement when two airplanes landed and made ready for the last lap of an air race to Winnipeg. J. H. Hally in an Avion biplane recorded 105 mph to win the overall race from Moose Jaw to Winnipeg.

Radio broadcasting station CKY went on the air with the first radio broadcast over the Manitoba Government station CKY. Congratulations were received from Vancouver, Montreal, New York and Los Angeles. The first radio sets in homes were equipped with earphones.

The Old Age Pensions Act was proclaimed law by the government of Manitoba and approved applicants started receiving monthly cheques of $20.00. Pensions were restricted to British subjects who had resided in Canada a minimum of 20 years, and whose annual income did not exceed $365.00.

Advertisements in the early '20s were inserted in the local paper by A. L. Alton V.S., Noble Johnson (Draying, Cartage and Furniture Moving), Dawès & Treffry (the same), Irwin Bros. (Horse & Motor Cartage and Wash and Pack Ice), McKay & Lisson (Tinsmithing and Heating, Sheet Metal Work, etc.) J. W. Ramie (Plumbing & Heating), Harry Street (the same), Rabkin Bros. (Hay for Sale), Johnston's Garage, Riach & Co., Tailors and L. Remey (Hail and Fire Insurance Agent).

The 'Roaring '20s' was a happy, prosperous period in the lives of Portagers. Happy, that is, until October 24, 1929, when the bottom fell out of the stock market, which was the forerunner of dire days ahead.

Previous to this, no-one seemed to give too much thought to the reason why literally hundreds of men were seen riding in, and on top of, the box cars of long freight trains on the railroad. They were considered "Hoboes" or "Tramps". Actually they were men who were eager and willing to work, and were scouring the country anxious for an opportunity to prove it. Many of them were optimistically hoping they could earn a few dollars to send home to their families.

The general attitude of authorities in cities all across the country seems to have been the same, "Keep them moving". From our own paper, February 23, 1929, (winter-time of course, and an unpleasant time to be riding the rods) we quote:

"Men of Leisure Are Kept Moving." Police say that in spite of cold weather many are "Travelling". That was the headline, then — "Despite the cold weather, the police state that there are many tramps, or men of leisure, passing through the city, and it is only through the continuous work of the city police that more men are not seen on the streets asking for assistance. Instead they are picked up by the police before they get on the avenue, and if they do not give a satisfactory account of themselves are told to leave the confines of the city, which they always do, knowing that if they are found they will be severely dealt with.

Police state, that they feel certain that one reason the city is as free as it is from serious crime is because of the department's activities in keeping these men moving, or watching them while they are in the city".

It is a well known fact that hungry men can become desperate and dangerous, so maybe the police policy was good protection for the citizens, but what were the feelings of the men who were cold and hungry and "kept moving"?

Thus it was, that unemployment had become a serious problem even before the bottom fell out of the stock market later in the year. On that fateful day everyone was made to feel the seriousness of the situation, whether they knew anything about stock markets or not, by the effect it had on many previously wealthy men. A future without a fortune was unbearable for many distraught investors, and undertakers had a busy time fixing up the remains of the ones who either jumped from windows or blew their brains out.

Unemployment increased. Soup kitchens became a necessity. Bloody riots took place in Regina. Resentment toward the Bennett government grew to the point where thousands of indignant, hungry, rebellious men set out to march on Ottawa. Not all of them made it that far, but a few very articulate ones did. Relief camps were set up soon after, and for working on such government park projects as Wasagaming, etc., men were given three meals a day and a little pocket money.

By March of 1934, there were 105,000 people in Manitoba on relief. The number for all of Canada was staggering. Folk in the

country who couldn't afford gasoline, hitched a horse to their car and called it a "Bennett Buggy".

THE DIRTY THIRTIES

No-one travelled into southern Manitoba or west to Saskatchewan in the '30s unless they really had to, because it was in those places that "Dirty Thirties" applied most. Never before, or since, have those areas experienced such depredation. It was useless to try to fight the wind that was sending the good top soil from their farms skyward, leaving dust dunes that buried machinery and suffocated livestock. It was impossible to plant anything, even a little garden. And it was useless to leave the farm to try to find work. So it was in those places that the people suffered the greatest hardships in the 'dirty thirties'.

The Portage Plains was paradise in comparison. Grain grew, the grass was green, vegetable gardens flourished, hay for animals was plentiful, and the only hardship was in having to get along on very little money. Much of the bountiful blessings of the land in Portage was sent in carloads to the unfortunate people in the 'dust-bowl.'

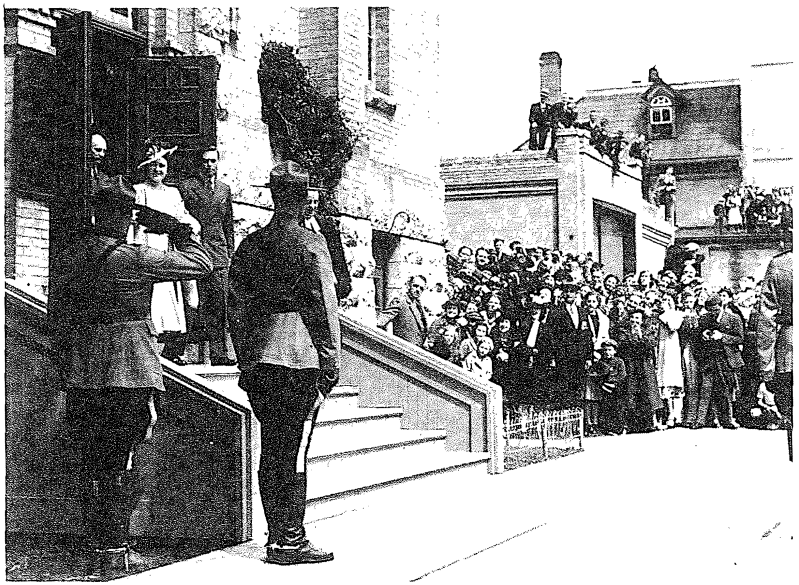
It was a time of sharing and many people look back on it, for that reason, as something precious lost. One woman said, "Everyone felt they should have cake or cookies or something sweet to serve to the pastor of their church when he called, and if it was an unexpected call one of the children was quietly sent out the back door to see if a neighbor could donate something! The favor was always returned when needed."

It was a time when patches on pants were not noticed unless for the neat stitching; when shoemakers made more money half-soling than shoe salesmen did selling; when clothing became dusters and ended their usefulness as braided mats; when 10c packages of dye brightened curtains on kitchen windows after spring cleaning; when 25c worth of steak would feed a family of five; when you could enjoy almost any entertainment in Portage for 35c, and we could go on and on. It was also a time when the word 'million' was used very rarely, and then merely to mention the germs on a $5.00 bill!

On March 20, 1939, Trans-Canada Airlines made its initial passenger flight, with a full crew aboard, from Ottawa to Sea Island in 17 hours and 20 minutes. This flight was sponsored by T.C.A. prior to inauguration of the regular passenger flights which started April 1st.

THE KING AND QUEEN VISIT PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

The happiest highlight of 1939 was when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Portage in June of that year. 15,000 admiring, loyal subjects lined the route from the train to the church where Their Majesties went to attend service. Two R.C.M.P., dressed in their colorful red tunics, sat in the front seat of the black, open-air convertible that conveyed them there. The car crept along at a snail's pace and everyone had an opportunity to see the charming Royal couple. Admiration and adoration was evident on every face. It was a day when being part of the British Empire filled hearts with pride. It was a day that put more meaning and feeling and fervor into the singing of "God Save the King" for Portagers.



The Royal couple are seen here as they were leaving Knox United Church after the service which was conducted by Rev. George W. Abernethy.

It was fitting that Rev. Abernethy was chosen to conduct the royal service, for he was born in Dundee, Angus County, the same district as Queen Elizabeth claims as her native heath. He chose for his text "Today's Need of Faith". Later in conversation with Rev. Abernethy, Her Royal Highness referred to its comforting and soothing effect "like an oasis", she said. The minister was obviously pleased when he replied, "My mother will be proud of me this day."

Mr. James D. McRae, who had been choirmaster and organist in the church for 18 years by that time, directed the choir as they sang "I to the Hills Will Lift Mine Eyes"; "God is a Spirit"; and "My Faith Looks Up to Thee".

Benediction and the National Anthem brought the half-hour service to a close.

"You will thank the choir for me, won't you?" the Queen asked Rev. Abernethy after the service. He assured Her Majesty that he would.

Among the members of the choir was Mrs. C. H. Diehl, who, as one of three singers chosen from Manitoba, sang in Westminster Abbey in London, England, during the coronation of the King and Queen. This fact was revealed to Her Majesty by Rev. Abernethy, and the Queen appeared extremely pleased.

Other members of the choir included Mrs. W. H. R. Savage, Miss Esther Galbraith, Ruth Burke, Ruth MacDonald, Rogene Morrow, Miss C. B. Cameron, Mrs. Telf Miller, Mrs. W. Logan, Mrs. Charles Greenlay, Marguerite Jones, Mrs. I. Drewitt, Mrs. H. Pillar, Mrs. E. Cooke, Miss K. Campbell, Mrs. H. Fasken, Evelyn Loyns, Marjorie Bowman, Mrs. J. Jones, Mrs. R. E. Poldon, Miss May Loyns, Mrs. C. D. Lee, Mrs. Roland Dann, Mrs. Reginald Grobb, Edith Dewar, Eileen Gair, Miss C. Wallace, Mary Ann Loyns, Doreen Jones, Miss E. Tasken, D. E. Burke, William Burke, Reginald Grobb, H. Kirkland, Dr. C. C. Simpson, Thomas Boyce, H. G. Prior, Robert Inglis, Earl Meek, Raymond Batt, Robert Wishart, Henry Pillar, William Bradley, Stan Porteous, Ralph Rea and Vernon Dunfield.

(To avoid repetition, the above talented Portage singers have been omitted from the "Music and Arts" section of this book.)

Among the crowd that jammed the street outside were a number of Indians fully arrayed in native dress.

When Their Majesties were about to board the royal train, Capt. Allan Hall, late of the Black Watch, was presented to Her Majesty by the Earl of Airlie, chamberlaine to Her Majesty and lieutenant of Angus Camby, Scotland. The Free Press said of this, "In a delightfully informal manner, the Queen chatted for several minutes with Captain Hall and referred to his military career in the Black Watch". Capt. Hall served with distinction in the ranks and was associated with Her Majesty's two brothers and a cousin.

(Allan G. Hall, who was treasurer of the Portage Mutual Insurance Co. in 1939 was a son of Capt. Hall.)

By this time, Green Manufacturing Company, that had located in Portage around 1936, was employing a staff of 50 people and doing a successful business in men's garments, on Broadway St. N. The manager was Mr. Sam Green. (Delta Apparel purchased the factory in 1944, employing 150 people, and locating on the northeast corner of Gaddy St. and Pacific Ave. The manager was Mr. Wm. Glesby. Delta Apparel was destroyed by fire in 1954.)

WORLD WAR II

If people had had television in their homes in 1939, they might have been better prepared for what was to come. Certainly, the newspapers showed pictures of Hitler's Wehrmacht goose-stepping into Austria and Czechoslovakia, and later told of the merciless shelling of defenceless Madrid. And radios did their part in trying to keep the public informed. But, seeing the cruel glint in Hitler's eyes as he screamed out speeches to fanatical followers shouting, "Heil Hitler", would have impressed people with the fact that nothing short of war would stop this man.

How sad it is that no-one except Hitler and his chiefs knew of the demoniacal plan to exterminate the Jews! Many, or all of them, might have been able to leave the country before it was too late. They stayed, not knowing the acts of extreme heinousness to which they would be subjected. Hitler seemed to have had no criteria in his extermination plan; the educated and uneducated, the rich and poor or the ill and healthy were on his list. It's an amazing fact that such a mad-man was able to fool the German people, most of them fine, kind people. Keeping his intentions and actions a secret can be the only answer.

After Madrid, and filled with a feeling of power, Poland was next on his program of death and destruction. He had gotten away with an awful lot up to this point and it must have come as a bit of a surprise when on September 3, 1939, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. On that date World War II began.

There was no more talk of unemployment.

Mr. Chas. Greenlay, M.L.A., said that the percentage of enlistments from Portage la Prairie ranked among the highest for the Province.

Located in the city and immediate vicinity were No. 3 Bombing and Gunnery School, No. 7 Air Observer School and the 100th Training Centre which later became No. 3 Conditioning Centre.

No. 7 Air Observer School was located where Southport is now, south of the city. The road was not paved from the city to the school, and in 1941 the airmen said they were weary of battling mud while travelling to and fro. Abnormal spring conditions made it worse that year. Mayor Ireland predicted that government assistance would be forthcoming.

There can be no complaints about the lovely smooth road that leads to Southport now.

The Victory Loan quota for Portage and district was placed at $447,800.00 and spirited campaigns were organized to raise this amount.

Many will remember the impressive drive in June, 1941, which featured a military parade and dedication ceremony. Four bands — Portage city, under Bandmaster Thos. Homer; Salvation Army led by Bandmaster Clarence Fawcett; the Winnipeg Sea Cadets directed by Lieut. W. A. Cramp and the Cameron Cadet band of Winnipeg furnished music for the parade. Patriotic floats entered by the Portage Collegiate, Prairie Gateway Chapter I.O.D.E., and several commercial firms of the city headed the parade. Close behind came cadets from the Collegiate, under command of Fraser Cuthbert. Military units and organizations made up the strength of over 1600. An honor flight of Tiger Moth planes which droned overhead was another highlight of the dramatic event.

A huge Empire flag with emblazoned Victory Torch set the background of an improvised platform at the Collegiate grounds from which Victory Loan speakers addressed the massive panorama of people attending.

Mayor H. A. Ireland ably acted as chairman.

Does anyone remember the "Dominion Torch for Churchill"? And were you among the admiring throng who saw it when it was placed on exhibition in the C.P.R. depot in Portage?

The Torch was constructed of distinctly Canadian materials; the base of maple, the shaft of pine, and the whole finished with 23 carat gold leaf. Inscribed on the base was "Canada's Victory Loan 1941 — Part of the Tools". After being viewed across Canada it was flown to England and presented to Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the man who did more than any other mortal in bolstering the morale of the English people when they were being peppered with German "doodle-bugs" from the air.

Food rationing and gasoline rationing were a part of the war effort in Portage as in all other parts of Canada, and the Portage branch of the Red Cross played an important role too. (Dr. W. Dalzell was serving his 14th term as President for Portage and district Red Cross in 1941.)

The war took on added meaning and horror for Portagers when casualty lists were printed and names of happy, healthy youths who had been a lifelong part of our city were included. Some gave their lives in Europe's skies, some while guarding the Atlantic life-line and some in major ground campaigns. Several Portage boys received medals for bravery, some of them posthumously.

A mighty surge of thanksgiving and rejoicing swept the country on May 7th, 1945, when the news of the unconditional surrender of Germany was broadcast. However, Japan, who had been fighting on their side, refused to give up.

On August 5, 1945, the first atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima; on August 8, 1945, a second atom bomb fell, this time on Nagasaki; and on August 14, 1945, Japan surrendered unconditionally and a ceasefire order ended fighting in World War II.

On September 2, 1945, the Japanese surrender was signed in Tokyo Bay.

EVENTS OF THE '40s

During the war (in 1943) Olie's Restaurant was destroyed by fire, and in 1945 a new one, under the same name, was officially opened by Peter Anderson. The building was described as "one of the best equipped in Western Canada" by a local paper. The restaurant was 67 ft. by 43 ft. and the building which ran to a depth of 132 ft. contained a bus depot, a bowling alley, and the offices of Adam Brown Jr., Dr. W. Dalzell, Dr. G. Elliott, J. R. Colwill, K.C., and G. H. Mann, as well as the restaurant.

The production of peas in the Portage district developed from approximately 500 acres in 1938 to more than 7,000 acres by 1944 which constituted 7/10ths of the entire Manitoba crop.

Direct relief cost the city $261.20 for the month of January in 1945. Eight heads of families and 21 dependents were enrolled. The average cost per person was $7.91. Fuel amounted to $84.20; food $171.00 and shelter $6.00.

How many people know that Portage la Prairie was the first city in Western Canada to have compulsory milk pasteurization?

The motion was made in council by Alderman Astbury the latter part of April, 1945, and was unanimously passed.

1948 began a period of time which is referred to as "The Henderson Era", for after displacing J. C. Preece as Mayor, Rev. H. L. Henderson held that position for 20 years, longer than any Mayor previous to that time.

He, with the assistance of a co-operative Council, can be credited with making many improvements in Portage la Prairie in

THE 1950s

Dust posed quite a problem, at that time, on streets that were not paved. Automatic dryers were something people just dreamed of owning some day, and clothing was often cleaner before it was washed than after it was washed and hung outside to dry! An oil treatment was given all such streets in 1951.

121 building permits had been issued in 1950, valued at $707,260.00. Two of these permits were for $298,000.00, a Hydro building and a Safeway store. During the year 1951, a total of 152 building permits were issued at a value of $441,625.00.

Mr. Dave Hunt, in The Winnipeg Tribune, January 29, 1955, said, "In 1951, on a per capita basis Portage residents had the top incomes in Manitoba — $1,413.00. Retail sales per person averaged $1,805.00, twice the provincial average. Difference in the two figures is made by influx of shoppers from outlying districts to Portage."

Along the line of Industrial Development in 1951, there was the Canadian Dutch Building Panels Ltd. Heavy machinery was used in the manufacturing of the panels, and reeds from the Delta Marsh were used as the basic material.

The manufacturers did not foresee the danger of the reeds generating heat, and a fire in 1953 was followed by another one in 1955. The Portage Fire Department capably coped with both of them. However, on May 8th, 1958, an uncontrollable fire completely destroyed this manufacturing plant. "Portage Concrete" is now located on the same site.

It was in the 1950s that the Council of the City of Portage la Prairie began modernization of the whole city, which included the extension of water and sewer facilities, a street paving program and a storm sewer program, all of which added greatly to the appearance of our city, the convenience of residents in the improved areas and the increased value of their properties if they ever wished to sell.

The Board of Works Committee was authorized to purchase a Power Sweeper, at a price of $1,870.00 to keep paved streets clean, and traffic signs, which were becoming increasingly important, were given attention too.

Parking meters were installed on the north and south sides of Saskatchewan Avenue in 1952, others followed later.

When boys returned from overseas after World War II, several of them brought brides with them, others got married after returning home, and a need for adequate housing was evident. This was taken care of when Portage entered into an agreement with the Federal Government to build what was called "war time houses". These were nicely laid out, comfortable little cottages, containing modern conveniences.

Dr. C. M. Thomas, who was school board chairman in 1955, presented a verbal picture of schooling problems at that time; this was printed in the Winnipeg Tribune, January 29, of that year. From that article we quote: "They go to school in shifts until classrooms are built." That was the heading. As those words are self explanatory we will move on to the paragraph entitled "How It Happened", and again we quote: "Last May our high school, junior high, burned down. At the same time a vote on two new elementary schools was held and passed with a small majority. However, a few people felt the machinery of the vote had been inefficient and they questioned the result.

The issue of our two new schools has been, and still is, at an impasse until the Courts are through with it.

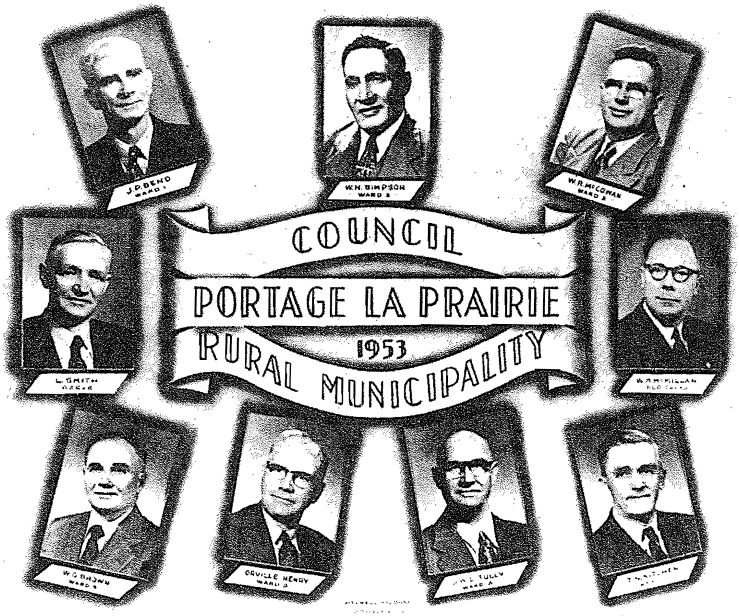
Thirdly, the overcrowding has been aggravated by a steadily rising enrolment". Dr. Thomas tosses in a spot of humor here by adding, "It is not difficult to learn where babies come from but it is a puzzle to know why so many arrive at the same time!"

The next heading is "Better Future Promised", and he says, "Despite the difficulties our 53 teachers are doing a splendid job. The 1500 children of our district can look for a brighter and better future in the way of school accommodation.

Establishment of a larger high school area here is an event we are looking forward to. Portage, together with the adjacent surrounding rural school districts, is planning a joint venture that will bring high school facilities to a large rural area for the first time. If successful it should strengthen further the bond between the local farm groups and this city."

Dr. C. M. Thomas, and the school board of that time, deserve much credit for their efforts to promote the educational facilities of today.

It is impossible in a book of this size to list all of the events, important as they may be. However, we are going to include a picture which we feel will be of interest to everyone who has known the gentlemen who are in it.



We show this picture as a tribute of respect for Mr. W. H. Simpson, who was a member of our historical committee, who didn't live to see his hopes for this Portage la Prairie publication come true.

Shown here, top row, is: J. P. Bend (ward 1), W. H. Simpson (ward 2), W. R. McCowan (ward 3); Centre: — Lawrence Smith (Reeve), deceased, and W. M. McMillan (Sec. Treas.).
Bottom row: — W. G. Brown (ward 4) deceased, Orville Henry (ward 5), J. W. Tully (ward 6) and T. N. Kitchen (ward 7).

All who have ever served our district by being a part of Rural and City Council through the years deserve a similar honor to the one afforded here. We hope, that some day, a future publication will make it possible.

THE 1960s

There are so many interesting news items printed in The Daily Graphic for this period of time that the writer is having difficulty in determining the ones which may be of the most interest to you. Picture, if you can, the number of papers that make the total! How we wish we could include all the stories about our clever young people who have gone forth from Portage la Prairie, and are a credit to their parents and our city! However, that is impossible as it would make a sizeable volume in itself! We hope that the brief accounts, which follow, will have historic meaning for you, as well as for others in years to come.

In 1962, La Verendrye Elementary School was officially opened, with Gordon Palmer, first Vice-President of La Verendrye Literary Society cutting the ribbon. The same year, West Ward School, that had served as a seat of learning for over 60 years, was demolished.

October, 1962, saw the first reading to a by-law calling for a paving program which meant 44 blocks of city streets, requiring 10,700 tons of asphalt. This was also the year that Portage la Prairie won a safety award.

During the first month of 1963, the city received a new civil defence rescue truck, loaded with a huge quantity of rescue equipment. The Daily Graphic, Jan. 16, 1963, said of it, "The best and most modern C.D. unit in Canada."

It was the same month of the same year that Command and Regimental Headquarters of 26th Field Artillery, Regiment (S.P.) R.C.A. was officially transferred from Portage la Prairie to Brandon.

A. J. Harding and Mrs. Harding visited here in July of 1963. Mr. Harding, U.K. member of Council, Kingston on Thames (near London), attended a Council meeting while in our city and "was impressed with lack of red tape". (Mrs. Harding is the former Marion Finnegan of Portage la Prairie.)

Also in July, the annual Fair was opened by Mr. C. B. Haggith, who made his first official visit from Ottawa for that purpose.

Speaking of "openings", Mrs. H. L. Henderson officially opened the Eaton's store, 149 Saskatchewan Avenue E. by cutting the ribbon in Sept. of 1963.

That was also the year that the Tupper St. N. overpass was 73% approved. Mayor H. L. Henderson said, at a Council meeting, that it had been advocated 18 years before that date!

Tupper St. Overpass.

Lester B. Pearson, leader of the Liberal party, visited Portage la Prairie and presented a trophy to juvenile hockey; and Bob Veith, veteran Indianapolis racing motorist, visited the Collegiate here, showed a film of a 500 mile race and gave a talk on "safety".

December, of 1963, was the beginning of several years of worry for the City Council; and a lagoon, which had been put northeast of the city in 1959, was the cause of it all. The monster must have sprung a leak, or something, as suits for damages were laid one after another. The B.C. Pea Growers were claimants for the largest amount. The Daily Graphic, Mar. 1st, 1966, said that claims at that time amounted to $118,762.31. We don't know why this figure wasn't presented in round numbers, and what the 31c was for. (Maybe a pet sparrow got sick after pecking peas!)

In May of 1966, the City agreed to pay the B.C. Pea Growers $100,000.00.

Then, the City and Province got together for a two-day session, and reached an agreement whereby the Province would buy the land, and the Council repair the lagoon.

On July 18, 1967, The Daily Graphic said that the City then had the power to sell the B.C. Pea Growers' land if it wished.

The Daily Graphic, Nov. 5, 1968, said, "Other persons owning land surrounding the lagoon have suits pending against the city"!

We will end the lagoon story there, confidently feeling that come what may, our Portage Council is capable of coping with it.

Noting we are ahead of ourselves date-wise here, we will go back to 1964 and acquaint you with the more pleasant happenings of that time.

Work on the Tupper St. overpass went ahead in leaps and bounds in 1964, after the contract was awarded to Commonwealth Construction Co. of St. Boniface. The picture, shown, was taken in September of that year.

A brief account, of news items in 1964, is as follows:

A new river diversion route was proposed, and a plan for a bypass was announced; the Old Dutch Mill superstructure was completed at Island Park; Prairie Textile Manufacturing Co. took over Kaplan Industry; 1964 construction neared the $2 million mark; and our paper stated that the city water processing station had processed and pumped 60 million more gallons of water in 1963 than in 1962.

April, 1965, was the year Macdonald Air Base opened its doors to refugees from the flooded Roseau Indian Reserve.

In July, of the same year, Gordie Howe fans had the pleasure of meeting him when he visited Portage la Prairie. While here, he was presented with the 39th Honorary Citizens Certificate.

Toward the middle of October, W. D. Fallis, General Manager of Manitoba Hydro, and Mayor H. L. Henderson, on behalf of the city of Portage la Prairie, turned on the lighting at the new access road, at the east end of the city.

Firemen fought a miserable 16 hour battle, on a bitterly cold night in December, 1965, while the Bus Depot was burning. It was impossible to save the building, and the loss was estimated at $50,000.00.

The Gordon Motor Inn was used as a depot until a new one was built next to a new Safeway Store, where the Arena had been located.

The new Arena, on Tupper St. N., was officially opened on May 23, 1966. Everyone who knew Mr. James G. Dark, principle of Southport School, was happy when he was awarded the Silver Acorn for especially distinguished Scouting services. The award was an-

nounced by Rt. Hon. Georges P. Vanier, Chief Scout of Canada. Mr. Dark is one of 10 scout leaders in all of Canada to receive the Silver Acorn. He served as district Commissioner of Portage la Prairie, and was also a member of Portage district council. Later he was Vice-President of the Provincial council.

Canada's Centennial year, 1967, was filled with colorful celebrations in Portage la Prairie. Added to the sporting events and annual festivities, which are described in other sections of this book, there were other interesting activities.

An unestimable number of people gathered around the City Hall, and thronged along Saskatchewan Avenue to see "The Pony Express" arrive with a message, which was going across Canada in the fashion of the olden days, and was to become the property of Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth. Mayor H. L. Henderson, dressed in appropriate (for the occasion) style, and mounted on a spirited horse, greeted the riders in front of the City Hall. The Indian Glee Club couldn't sing the Canada song with more spirit than they did that day! The day ended with an evening of entertainment in the Arena.

The "Voyageurs" added a lot of color to the local scene when they arrived the latter part of June. They spent a day in Portage la Prairie, tented overnight at Island Park, and continued their journey eastward, on the Assiniboine River on June 27th, 1967.

There was also the Centennial train, with its interior vividly depicting 100 years of Canadian history, that all Portagers will long remember.

We should have mentioned sooner, that Brenda Joan Hodgins, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hodgins, 613 Tupper St., was born 18 minutes after Canada's Centennial year began. (This might be an item of interest to descendents, many years hence.)

The Local Council of Women celebrated their 50th anniversary that year with a Centennial banquet. Mr. D. L. Campbell, M.L.A. was the guest speaker.

The Salvation Army was marking 100 years of service in 1967, and a new Citadel was built.

Long Plains Indians held a three-day pow-wow, which drew 500 participants to the area, in August; and the Centennial Museum attracted 200 at opening ceremonies in November of 1967.

If time and space allowed, much more could be told about Canada's Centennial year. May it suffice to say that Portagers were

proud to play a part in celebrating our wonderful country's anniversary.

The Prince Charles school, which had been opened Sept. 4, 1950, was partially destroyed by fire in April of 1968. Arson was suspected. The same month of the same year, Mayor Linden laid the cornerstone for the Portage Credit Union building, which had its official opening June 8, 1968.

Ruth Rebecca Lodge marked 107 years of active membership in 1968. Mrs. Norman Weber (a member since 1912), and Mrs. Charles Cole (a member since 1917) were presented with life memberships.

Portage la Prairie lost one of its old-timers in May, 1968, when Mrs. Pascula Geeregat, 217 Allison Ave. passed away at the age of 102 years; and the Red Knight, Capt. John A. Reid of Perdue, Sask. died the same month when his plane crashed near the Canadian Forces Base.

A twinning ceremony in 1967 brought happiness and enlightenment to both Portage la Prairie and Joliette, Quebec, and in June of 1968, four of their dignitaries visited our city: Mayor and Mrs. Camille Roussin, and Sec. Treas. J. A. Desormiers and Mrs. Desormiers. Flags of Joliette and Quebec were raised at City Hall.

Dr. George Friesen was appointed manager of the Agricultural Research Station, located southeast of Portage la Prairie (½ mi. S. of the Curtis school), which is concentrating mainly on products for control of weeds, insect pests and plant diseases. The official opening was on Sept. 11, 1968.

Another official opening took place on Sept. 18, 1968, when the Portage la Prairie Lions Club had the pleasure of seeing the playground, 9th St. N.W., opened for the enjoyment of youngsters in that area. It has been especially appreciated because of the fact that it is the first playground in the extreme northwest of the city.

New schools are under construction, adding to the ones that are already here, and the children of Portage la Prairie, regardless of how many, will always have the opportunity to receive a good education.

By the middle of year 1968, building permits were up almost $400,000.00 over 1967! Which, of course, is an indication that our city continues to progress.

A tax prepayment plan was instituted in 1968; water meters were installed in the fall of the same year, with the actual metering not starting until the beginning of 1969.

Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who later became our prime minister, and Robert Stanfield, Conservative leader, visited Portage la Prairie during 1968.

We should tell you here about the oversized ditch that has already cut a swath through the Delta Marshes and is now being opened up rapidly toward the Assiniboine River.

Government engineers call it the Portage Diversion. To Portage la Prairie residents, who have at times fought against it with vigour, it represents many things, including the gobbling up of many acres of good farmland. Yet to residents along the Assiniboine between Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg it represents the final step in a flood control program that will make their homes safe even during the highest floodwaters.

Now estimated to cost $16.7 million, the project includes a $5.6 million inlet structure and dam three miles west of Portage la Prairie.

While we know we have one of the most beautiful little cities (and even maybe the Most beautiful), we are also aware of the fact, that for some unknown reason, we have not, so far, been able to gain 'designated status', which is very important to us. Lack of designation is seriously deterring the industrial commercial development of our city and area.

A brief presented to the Hon. C. M. Drury, Minister of Industry, federal government, shouted the situation loud and clear. Mayor Linden of Portage la Prairie and the City Council pointed out that 16 major designated areas had per capita incomes higher than Portage la Prairie. A study of 88 cities across Canada revealed that Portage was the lowest in per capita income.

A little revenue might be added to the city coffers by inviting a few to a "NO HAT" picnic at our beautiful Island Park during the woodpecker season!

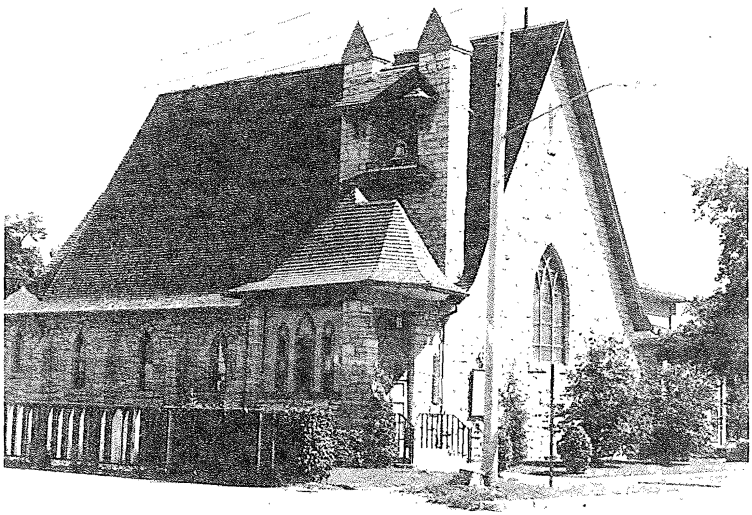
To add to your interest in this book and a fuller appreciation of the history of our fair city, we will now give you — Historical Facts About Various Subjects.

Churches, Schools, Health

CHURCHES IN PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

When the principles of Christianity are strong in a community there is no need to fear its future. Since the days of Archdeacon Cochrane and the first white settlement to the present time, the performance of devotional acts in honor of the Supreme Being, in the form of prayer, thanksgiving, confession and church services, have been an accepted and appreciated part of life in Portage la Prairie. There are edifices, consecrated and dedicated to religious worship, for every faith in our harmonious community.

It is regrettable that a history of all Portage churches is not included in this book. Probably due to procrastination or missing a publicized request in our Daily Graphic, information was not submitted for all of them. We hope that the few we are able to include in this narrative will be of interest to all.



St. Mary's la Prairie Church.

As we have mentioned previously, Archdeacon Cochrane was the force behind the first St. Mary's la Prairie church here.

The Anglican Church, shown in this picture, still bears the name chosen by him. It is located on Second Street S.W. At the present time, Rev. P. V. Lee, B.A., L.Th., is the Rector.

The interesting architecture and beautiful interior of this church are a credit to the old-timers of 1899 who built it about that time.

Actually this was the third St. Mary's la Prairie Church built here. The second one was a frame building, erected in 1882, and had a seating capacity of four hundred people. It was declared unsafe after fifteen years of service and was replaced by the one we have today.

In 1913 the Parish Hall was built, and it has always been a centre of community as well as church activity. For many years the hall was a popular place for concerts, plays and operettas, and many people throughout the Dominion have happy memories of evenings spent in this Hall.

During World War II, the Church took an active part in providing social activities for the local troops and in looking after comforts for the men overseas.

Besides the Sunday School and various church organizations, St. Mary's Hall has been home to innumerable Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides. It is still in demand for public meetings, and because of the excellent accoustics it is used every spring at Musical Festival time.

Since the days of Archdeacon Cochrane to our Manitoba Centennial year of 1970, St. Mary's la Prairie Anglican Church has shown a steadfast influence on lives in the community.

ST. ANNE'S CHURCH

(Located at Poplar Point)

In this day and age when churches are erected by trained construction crews, it might be of interest to many to read the history of St. Anne's Church, and the method of procedure, and materials used in building such an edifice in pioneer days.

The history of this wonderful old church was written by Wilfred (Billie) Hallet of Poplar Point, and was published in the Portage Daily Graphic on March 9th, 1929. We quote the following in Mr. Hallet's own words:

"Over 70 years ago, when Manitoba was in its infancy, a number of Red River settlers drove their creaking ox carts along the trail and settled at a place now called Poplar Point. Here they settled along what later became known as the Portage highway, then a winding narrow trail.

It was not long before the settlers felt the need of a place of worship. Thus, they decided on building a church, each family promising to give a certain number of logs. These were cut and hauled to the spot that was picked as the most central location, some being rafted down the river, others being drawn by ox and cart.

When all materials were ready the settlers gathered together and built a log building which they latticed with willows from the bush. The lime used in the plaster was limestone picked up on the prairie and burned on a lime kiln, especially made for the purpose. The lumber used for the ceiling, floor and outer siding, was all "whip-sawn" and piled in piles in such a manner that fires were built under them to dry the lumber. Even the shingles were sawn by these settlers. In addition, each family supplied material to build their own pew.

The chancel was carved by knife by one of the settlers. Around the top of the chancel this man carved approximately two hundred crosses. These clearly show that they are hand worked, but we must remember they were carved in oak.

A baptismal font was placed at the entrance. A large bell, which was donated by the Hudson's Bay Co., and brought from York Factory, was placed in the tower.

Our church was completed. It was consecrated by Bishop Anderson and given the name of St. Anne's.

This church was built under the supervision of Archdeacon Cochrane and is now the second oldest church west of the great lakes. So here it stands, a few hundred yards from the dusty, busy, bustling highway, a fitting monument to those who lie buried in its churchyard — the pioneers of our west".

CHURCH NEWS (1904)

The Free Press Evening News, June 11, 1904, had this to say about churches in Portage la Prairie: Quote —

"Churches are represented as follows: The Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, Salvation Army and Roman Catholic. Within a very few years five of these denominations have erected beautiful structures of handsome architectural design.

The Presbyterian edifice, which was built at a cost of over $25,000.00 four years ago, is this year being enlarged and a costly new pipe organ has been ordered and will be placed in the church during the summer. Its pastor is Rev. G. Arnold, and the congregation is one of the strongest and largest of that denomination in the West.

The Methodists occupy a fine House of Worship on Campbell St. and the congregation is in a flourishing condition under the able charge of W. L. Armstrong as pastor.

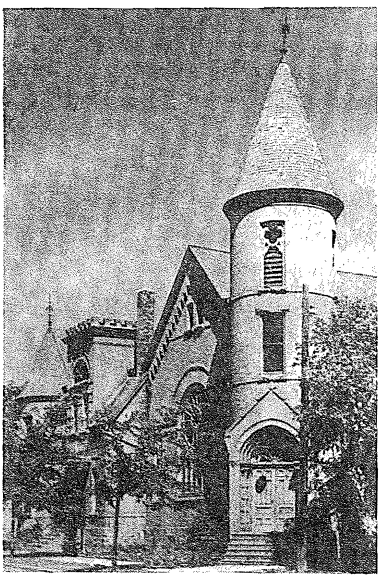
The Baptist church is located a few yards south of the post office, and it is regarded as one of the leading congregations of that denomination in the West. The bright young pastor, Rev. Neil Herman, has done a great deal towards adding to the membership of this church.

The Episcopalians, with Rev. S. MacMorine as rector, have a large following in the town and district. They occupy a beautiful stone church on Anne Street.

The latest of the fine church buildings to be erected in the town was that of the Disciples of Christ, who in February completed a costly building, thoroughly equipped in a modern manner. Under Rev. J. A. L. Romig this church continues to make marked advances.

The Salvation Army has spacious quarters on Tupper St., and have at all times continued to put forth great efforts in behalf of the cause they hold so dear.

Rev. Father Viens, who is deservedly popular, not only among his own flock but with the general public, has charge of St. Cuthbert's Roman Catholic church." End of Quote.



The Baptist Church — 1881

On May 5th, 1881, Alfred Pickering, Robert Merrell, Festus Chapin, Wm. Cooper and Rev. A. C. Turner met at the home of Festus Chapin for the purpose of organizing a Regular Baptist Church. Rev. A. C. Turner was invited to be the first pastor of the frame building, 24' by 36' which was subsequently erected at a cost of $750.00. An organ added $150.00 to the above cost.

Later Baptist services were held in the building at 63 Royal Road South, which is now the home of Mrs. Laura Middlemass.

By July, 1884, membership had grown to 94 and in 1895 plans were drawn up for the edifice that was named First Baptist Church. The completed building cost was $13,706.00.

To test the strength of the walls, before the big windows were put in place, seven men stood in a row on each window sill!

This church, situated on the corner of Royal Road South and Duke Avenue served the Baptist congregation well, until Aug. of 1967 when it was vacated and soon demolished by the Manitoba Telephone Co. who erected a building to suit their purpose.

The members of First Baptist Church bought lots on the corner of 3rd St. S.E. and Dufferin Ave. and a new church was built on this site, and was dedicated on Sunday, December 1st, 1968.

First Baptist Church — 1968

The new church, which is shown here, will be compared, with interest, by architects, with the design of the one shown on the previous page.

Rev. John A. Harvey has been the pastor during the time of building the new structure to the present time (1969).

Mr. Dmytro Jakymeczko, in a brochure titled "A History of the Ukrainian Community of Portage la Prairie" deserves credit for recording church history which is interesting as well as edifying. It is regretable that, due to time and space, we must confine the information relevant to churches to the most important parts of submitted material.

The "Introduction" in the brochure, by Marion Makarchuk, says, "From the village of Hleschava, province of Ternopilh, came the first Ukrainian pioneer to the Portage area, Mr. Peter Goodz, in 1899."

Shortly after the arrival of Mr. Goodz, more Ukrainian families came here, and one, Dmytro Olynyk, has the honor of having the first Mass held in his home on Second Street. He was also the gentleman who donated lots on which the first church was built.

Mr. Jakymeczko says, "A Parish was organized and the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was built, 1905-1907, on Second St. where Prosvita Hall now stands. The Parish consisted of about 15 families, and the organizer was Father Mathew Hura.

Church founders were Theodor Zaroski, Dmytro Olynyk, Nicholas Greskiw, Makary Melnyk, Harry Piloski, Steve Sadoway, Alex Shtykalo, Michael Firman and Theodor Samels."

The text doesn't say whether the above mentioned edifice was torn down or burned down, but mentions that "Under the direction of architect Father Philip Rhu, an Oblate Father, the present Church was built, 1927-1930." The Church Building Committee, headed by D. Priemski, included G. Michalczyshyn, M. Hewko and M. Horbal. On July 20, 1930, Consecration of the new church was carried out by Bishop Vasili Ladyka.

Living quarters were built in the rear part of the Church, and a Chapel for winter use in the basement, 1941-1945. The Parish priest at that time was Father W. Dzurman, and on the Church committee were John Pollock and Mr. J. Chornenko.

In 1936, Sisters of Service opened St. Anthony Monastery at 1st St. and 7th Ave. They took charge of Ukrainian language classes, catechism and various religious and cultural activities connected with the Church. Sister St. Josapha was in charge, and was assisted by Sisters Tetiana, Irene and Martha. In 1941, they leased their property and moved to Winnipeg. (This property, 9 lots, was purchased by the Parish, in 1961, for $9,000.00). A Ukrainian Language School is now carried on weekly in La Verendrye school under the direction of Mary Kohut.

To the present time, the parish has had three cantors: Mr. Krushelewsky, George Michalczyshyn and Marko Kish, (who is choir leader also) and two young men, Fr. Walter Firman and Fr. John Sholdak have entered the priesthood.

Shown is the beautiful Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the location of which is 620-1st St. N.W.

Organizations of the Parish are: Ukrainian Catholic Women's League, Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood and Ukrainian Catholic Youth.

Ukrainian people have contributed much, in many ways, since they came to Canada; and while they are all now Canadians, we are happy and grateful that we can call some of them Portagers."

Father Anthony Luhovy is the present priest.

As it has been with most religious denominations, that services were originally held in homes, so it was with the people of the Jewish faith. The first days of worship go back to 1915 when a house located on Royal Road North was used. Next, there was a dwelling on Tupper St. (1930); and finally, in 1951, the Beth David Synagogue on 3rd St. S.E. that we have today. Divine guidance through the years has been given by university students and lay members.

McKenzie Church Archivist, Gladys Weber, submitted interesting history pertaining to this institution. We regret that her text must be abbreviated.

About 72 years ago, the late Mr. Angus Grant established a Sunday School in a private house in the then thinly populated and beautifully treed west end of Portage la Prairie. After his departure from Portage, a Mr. Gordon and a Miss Ormond carried on the Sunday School in a terrace on 12th St. N.W.

Mr. Jas. McKenzie succeeded Miss Ormond in 1900, and in 1903 the new location chosen was on the corner of Lorne Ave. and 11th St. West. This school became known as "McKenzie Mission", honoring the devoted services of Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie.

Although the mission was built by the Presbyterian congregation, it was in reality a united church project with teachers coming from both the Methodist and Anglican churches.

Many of the workers of the United Church received their Christian education in McKenzie Mission; among them were the Misses Maud and Annie Bowman, Mrs. Raymond Batt and Miss Minnie Johnston.

Following Mr. McKenzie's long regime, a Mrs. Moggey conducted the affairs of the school for some time.

Others who should be mentioned as having given time and assistance are: Miss Helen Duncan, the Souter family, the Crewson family, Mrs. Ann Grobb, Mr. Neil McKillop, Mrs. J Bagrie and Mrs. Ivan Wilson. (There are probably many others.)

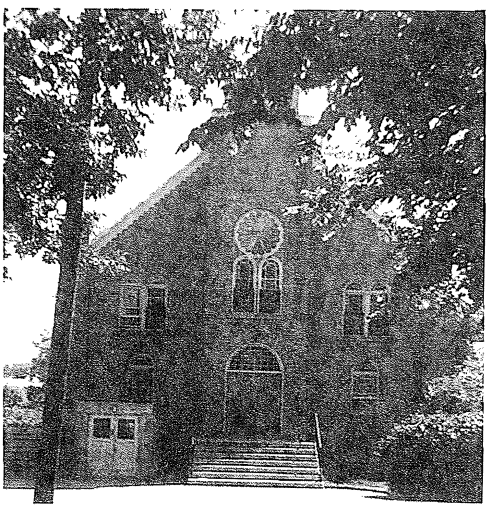
On June 1st, 1957, Presbytery's consent was given to build an edifice adequate to answer the growing needs of an increasing population. A building program, in three stages, was put into action — a basement large enough to meet the immediate needs, a manse, and a sanctuary upon the basement.

On Sunday, May 5th, 1958, a service was held to mark the opening of the new building. Rev. Bowman conducted the service, assisted by Rev. C. L. Barbour, Rev. W. W. Harland and Rev. G. A. Colpitts.

During the year of 1962 a sanctuary was built on the basement foundation, and in 1967 a manse was purchased and furnished for the minister, Rev. Howard Gibson.

Choirs have been a delight and inspirational part of services in McKenzie Church. Organists and (or) choir leaders credited with contributing toward this worthy cause are: Mrs. Raymond Batt, Miss Helen Duncan, Mrs. Violet Galbraith, Mrs. Jack Hill, Mrs. Curwen and Miss A. Cameron.

In 1961, McKenzie Church played its part in the building of a Presbytery church camp at Lynch's Point, Lake Manitoba. It was given the name "Totogan". It will serve the youth of our churches for many years to come.



St. John's Parish.

A program for the youth of McKenzie Church is carried on each week. In 1967, the C.G.-I.T. had a membership of 30, with Mrs. Joyce Adamson, Mrs. Grace Street and Mrs. Ruby Gorin as leaders; the Explorers, a membership of 14, with Mrs. Cougal as their leader; the Scouts, a membership of 28, under the leadership of Scout Masters Stanley Johnston and Archie Kitson; and the Cubs, a membership of 53, with their Cubmasters, Herbert Jamieson and Phil Nicholson.

(The Scouts and Cubs had their Charter presented to them in 1958, with Mr. Ed. Morris as chairman, and Mrs. Ted Ek, secretary.)

The Roman Catholic Church could be called the earliest church to become established in Portage la Prairie. In about 1749, before Archdeacon Cochrane and the first white settlement, there was a Roman Catholic Mission on the Island. It is said that La Verendrye erected a chapel at Fort La Reine during his time there also. No trace of their existence is visible today of course.

In the year 1894, land was purchased for St. Cuthbert's Church, but it wasn't until 1899 that the two-storey frame church was completed and ready for services. Father J. Vien was the first pastor. The church was located on Duke Avenue. It, and the rectory were destroyed by fire a few years later.

In 1914, St. John's Parish, was built on the St. Cuthbert site.

Rev. A. R. Hall and his assistant, S. Cahill are in charge of this Parish at the present time.

St. Hyacinth R.C. Church had its origin in 1913, a few months after St. Cuthbert's Mission Church burned down. Mr. John Zywina and Mr. John Ziubrak called a meeting at the home of the former for March 7th of that year for the purpose of planning the building of a church. John Zywina, Simon Charchala, Michael Gardyi and Dominic Pelechaty were given permission to proceed to Winnipeg to interview the Rev. Father Kowalski o.m.i. pastor of the Holy Ghost Church there, concerning what proper action should be taken in order to build a church. The location had been previously selected on the corner of Elizabeth and Fifth Ave.

The Polish delegation, together with Rev. Father Kowalski, went to His Grace, Archibishop Beliveau of St. Boniface, to get the necessary permission, which was granted during the interview. His Grace also contributed $200.00 toward the building fund.

Plans for the church were that it should be 64' x 32' with a belfry and a sacristy, using as much of the salvaged lumber from the old St. Cuthbert's Church as possible. The plot was blessed by Father Nandzik on July 8th, 1913, and immediately thereafter building began. The cornerstone was laid by Msgr. Dugas of St. Boniface, assisted by Rev. Fathers Prudhomme, Shult and Kowalski.

A sermon was delivered in both Polish and English, even though English was very rarely used at that time.

His Grace Archbishop Beliveau blessed the new church, which took the name of "St. Hyacinth" (a Saint of Polish descent), and Father Kowalski said the first mass. Father Francis Stronski became the first pastor.

During the year 1952, the St. Hyacinth Parish was changed from a Polish speaking church into an English speaking one. Father Mark Nelissen, a Capuchin of Flemish descent was the first parish priest to establish this change.

Father Mark Nelissen had his residence in the basement of the Church until 1958 when a house across the street was purchased as a rectory. Father Bernard Robert, who succeeded him, sold the building and had a rectory built next to the Church sometime between 1959 and 1962.

Rev. Father Anacletus Mennen has been the pastor of St. Hyacinth since 1964.

This Church, as it is today, is a parish where different people of several nationalities combine in a spirit of brotherhood as "Canadians", working together for the benefit of their church, and hoping to see the same prosperity and unity for our great country.

The Church of Christ was formed in 1871 and Mr. A. McLarty had the foresight at that time to realize the importance of recording events that led up to it. It is possible that very few people have seen this precious document, which is said to be the first account written, so we will quote it verbatim for you.

"Thinking a brief account of the rise and progress of the establishing of the Christian Church in the Province of Manitoba might in after years be interesting and edifying, I will state in as full a manner as possible and with brevity also, the rise and progress.

The first Christian disciples that came to this country were John Conner and his wife, Elizabeth Conner (formerly Sissons) and sister Anna Kitson (also Sissons). This was about May, the year of 1867, although no church organization took place for a long time afterwards.

In 1868 T. H. Boddy followed to this country, although no Province was then created. The former person (T.H.B.) returned the same fall, probably in November or December of same year to Ontario, the birth place of all the above disciples. In the following March he returned with F. Ogletree to Red River settlement as it was then called, arriving on the 28th of April, 1869, and in the

month of July Mr. Ogletree returned to Ontario to bring out his family, consisting of wife and five girls and two boys. Of the family, there were Sister Janet Ogletree (wife of Mr. Ogletree) a disciple, and eldest daughter Annabella also a disciple. Up to that date there being only six members of the Church of Christ in all this vast territory.

In the fall of 1871, Thomas Sissons and family also came to Manitoba, then a Province. There were in this company, Elder A. McLarty, his daughter Marg (afterwards Mrs. F. Ogletree) with Br. T. Sissons, who being a deacon in the Ridge Town congregation of disciples, Sister Ellen Sissons (wife of T. Sissons), William and Alexandria Ellen, both daughters of Tom Sissons, making six more disciples when a congregation was formed. After a year or so Elder McLarty returned to Ontario when we ceased to meet for a time and on commencing to meet we broke the loaf.

About the year 1878, Br. Isaac and William Henry McLarty, both disciples came out and joined us, this addition making all that came to this Province. Fourteen, of which one member had died. Then Sister Annabelle Ogletree and Br. John McLarty came out the next Spring and for awhile met with us, afterwards withdrew from us."

At the bottom of the above submitted material was written, Quote — "This is the only authentic record of all disciples known in this region who long for a return to the ancient order of things regarding the church", and it is signed Alex M. Smith.

It is reasonable to assume, that with such few members, services would be held in homes in those days. At the present time adherents of this faith attend services in an attractive church on Second St. S.W.

The history of the Lutheran Church in Manitoba goes back to a time before Manitoba became a Province. History records that the first Lutheran Pastor to minister and conduct a service in Manitoba, and in all of Canada, was the Rev. Rasmus Jensen who accompanied the Jens Munck expedition to Churchill in 1619-20.

When Icelandic Lutheran settlers arrived in Gimli in 1875, German Lutherans had preceded them to the Poplar Point area by three years. It is that same church body which came to this Lutheran settlement in the 1870s that has continued its services to the present in the now established Redeemer Lutheran Church of Portage la Prairie. Its historical relevance to our city, therefore, cannot be denied, as it is the first Lutheran mission station in

Western Canada established at Poplar Point that has gradually wound its way through the years into Portage la Prairie. Its existence is no longer there, it is here.

Families by the name of Neumann, Schoening and Wagner were prominent in the founding of the settlement and the Lutheran Church here. The entrance of the Lutheran Church into Western Canada was largely due to the effort and zeal of the latter gentleman. Mr. Oscar Neumann, youngest son of the above mentioned Neumann still lives at Poplar Point.

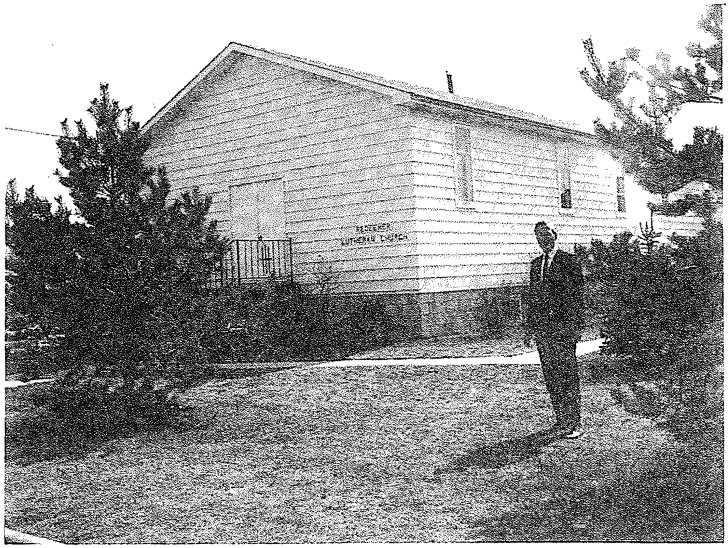
In the '80s a setback seemed to occur when another migration took place, this time out of the settlement instead of into it. Pastors became increasingly hard to get, and itinerant missionaries played an important part in keeping the faith alive.

When an influx of immigrants came to our area from Germany around 1928, and when families moved here from further west during the distress of the 'dry years', the number of people of Lutheran faith increased. These people could no longer bind themselves together in a settlement, and took homes wherever an opportunity for livelihood presented itself. Thus it was, that a central location to administer to the spiritual needs of families in Rossendale, Edwin, Westbourne, Poplar Point etc. became important. An arrangement was made with First Presbyterian Church of Portage la Prairie for the use of their building on Sunday afternoons. This afforded the opportunity for people of the Lutheran faith within the city to attend also. Official organization of a Lutheran congregation in Portage la Prairie took place under the direction of Rev. E. H. Schmiege. Such organization of Redeemer Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, was effected on April 20, 1953, at the home of E. Yarchau.

In June of that year, land was purchased on the corner of 12th Street N.W. and Gigot Avenue. In January, 1958, an additional purchase of land was made and the serious business of erecting a chapel took place. Dedication of the structure took place in September of the same year.

On Sept. 25, 1960, the Rev. L. A. Koehler was installed as the resident Pastor, thereby becoming the first Lutheran clergyman to reside in the city. A parsonage was built in 1961. Following his arrival, progress in the growth of the parish in many dimensions is noted in the records.

Lutheran Kindergarten, Sunday School, Adult Bible Class instruction, and a Women's Missionary Society are only a few of the worth-



Redeemer Lutheran Church and Rev. Koehler.

while activities of Redeemer Lutheran Church. It encourages good citizenship and seeks to identify itself with the community in which it is situated, including their projects and services that are in agreement with its faith.

The comfortable, cottage-like simplicity of the Redeemer Lutheran Church, set in lovely surroundings, is shown in the picture here. Rev. L. A. Koehler, Pastor of the church, is the gentleman standing on the lawn.

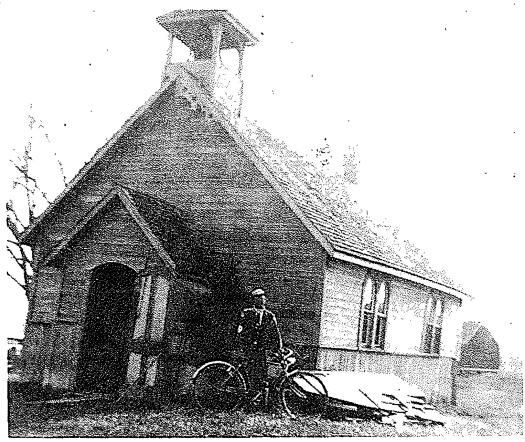
In 1947, Dr. C. H. Best, Supt. of Home Missions for the Conference of Manitoba, was guest speaker at the United Church in Portage la Prairie at both services on Sunday, November 2nd. On that occasion some interesting church history was narrated, which we will quote here.

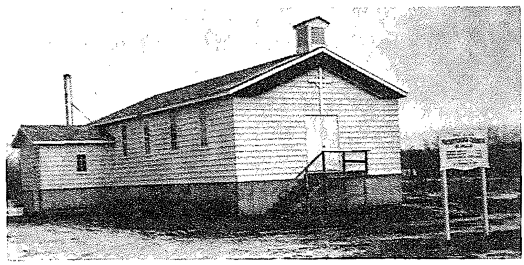
"The present building was erected in 1897, the first service being held in January, 1898. The roots of the present United Church go much deeper than that, however.

Rev. Mr. Fletcher held Presbyterian services in Portage in 1862, and Rev. Alexander Mathewson took up the work in 1867, and in 1873 a congregation was officially organized with Roderick McLeod and James O. Fraser as Elders.

In 1874 Rev. Alan Bell was called and inducted to the Presbyterian Church. He remained for 13 years and was succeeded by Dr. Peter Wright, for the years 1888 to 1899. At the turn of the century, Rev. George Arnold became minister and served until 1904. He was followed by Rev. Thurlow Fraser who served from 1905 to 1911. Then, Rev. G. Watt Smith became the pastor from 1912 to 1917, and he as followed by Dr. Peter Scott who served from 1918 to 1925.

The Presbyterian Church, which was built in Sioux Village in 1899, was the place of worship for Indian families for many years. The architecture was the same as could be seen in many small town churches across Canada. The picture, shown here, was taken after a flood, and the damage to the building is obvious. It was torn down in 1957 and a new edifice (also shown here) was erected.





Rev. Harry Crump who was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Sioux Village from 1950 to 1961 has an album of pictures, taken during that time, which he treasures. Many are of Indian families that he knew and loved by his association with them.

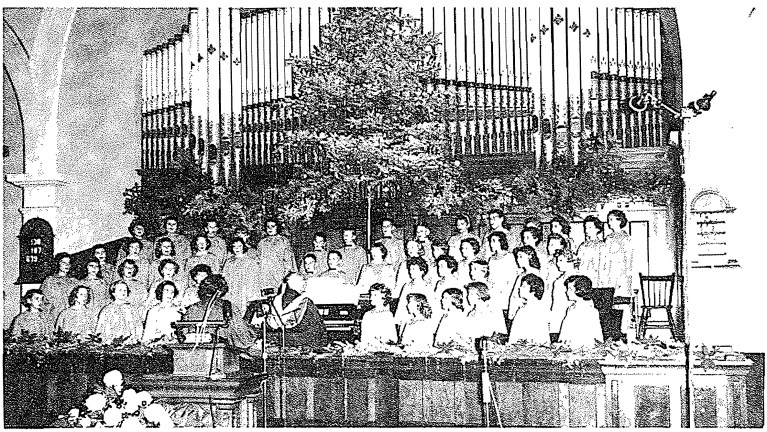
Rev. Crump is now retired and living in Portage la Prairie. It is due to his courtesy that we are able to show you these pictures, and also preserve them for posterity.

The Methodist Church was established in Portage la Prairie in 1872 with Rev. Michael Fawcett as pastor. Some of the early ministers included Rev. Wm. Halstead, Rev. J. Hewitt and Rev. James

Woodworth. Services were held in the parlor of the parsonage, which was built in 1873; the church was built the following year. A second, larger church was built on Tupper St. (it was sold after a time); then, a third church was built on Saskatchewan Avenue. In 1888 a fourth church was built on Royal Road North, and because it was partly destroyed by fire in 1890, the cornerstone for Grace Church was laid in 1891. The same cornerstone was later inserted in the prescent United Church building.

In 1925, the Methodists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians across Canada united to form The United Church of Canada, but for ten years the Knox and Grace congregations continued to function in their respective churches as separate congregations. However, in 1935, these two churches amalgamated. Rev. Hyslop Dickson succeeded Rev. J. W. Cruikshank who was Knox minister for the first ten years of Union. Rev. George Abernethy was the minister from 1938 to 1943 when he was succeeded by Rev. Allan Martin, who was a product of United Church College and joined the United Church".

At the time of the above quoted narration, Knox Church was celebrating its 50th anniversary.



We show first, the Children's Sunday School Choir with Mrs. Bill Burk directing, and Mr. J. D. McRae at the organ.

Front row, left to right: Sandra McKay, Joan Johnston, Nancy Ellwood, Anne-Marie Russell, Shirley Mackey, Sylvia Darling, Paula Bradshaw, Cynthia Guinn, Patricia Forsythe, Joy Simpson.

Second row: Pam Earl, Rosemary Bonnett, Kathi Rickey, Melanie Tufford, Brenda Elliott, Leanna Smith, Wendy McMillan, Jo-Anne MacDonald, Beverly Darling. Maureen Batters.

Third row: Laurel Green, Faye Douglas, Susan Wall, Roselyn Anderson, Linda Parrott, Ian McMillan, Tom Burk, Barbara Muirhead, Kathy Armstrong, Pat Pettit, Debbie Ryder, Beth McKay, Karen Tufford and Gayle McKay.

Back row: Barbara Harris, Linda Bish, Karen McKay, Barbara Fraser, Marion Taylor, Richard Parrott, Bob Anderson, Harry Robinson, Donald McPherson, Dory Donnelly, Marilyn McLeod, — "?" —, Judy Gibb, Alma Lamont and Carol Tufford.

While there are several church choirs in Portage la Prairie, two Trinity United Church choirs were the only pictures submitted for this book. We show them here for the purpose of depicting the interest taken, and the participation in, church services by our young people. And we print their names for the future reminiscences of each of them. Maybe, some day, some youngster will proudly point at one of these faces, and say to a friend, "There's grandma, she used to sing in a choir". We regret that all the names of members of these choirs could not be remembered by the lady who kindly gave the pictures to us. Our apologies are extended to anyone whose name is omitted, through no-one's fault.

The next picture is of the Trinity United Church Junior Choir with Mr. Bill Burk directing. The church was beautifully decorated for Christmas, as you can see, when both pictures were taken. Rev. N. T. Quigley is the pastor of this church.

Left side, left to right, Front row: Bobby Zimmerman, Arlene Garven, Jean Simmons, Linda Clark, — "?" —, Ackerman, and Linda Young.

Second row: — "?" —, Betty Ann Roy, Donna Mae Sherritt, Donna Strong, — "?" —, Lynn Kroeker.

Third row: — "?" —, Marion Stobie, Susan Coates, Jane Rutherford, Elizabeth Sherritt, Joanne Rutherford, Betty Jean Grobb, Nyall Ross and Donna Zimmerman.

Centre, Second row: Kathleen Ruth Burk, Patricia Carter and — "?" —.

L. Fourth row: — "?" —, Joy Henry, Sandra Bruce, Lana Hughes, — "?" —, and Elizabeth Burk.

Right side, right to left, Front row: — "?" —, Dianne Cumberland, — "?"—, Joan White, Bea Ackerman, and Colleen Armstrong.

Second row: Zandra Metcalfe, Sally Cousins, Carol Goodale, Myrna MacKay and — "?" —.

Third row: Mark Ellwood, — "?" —, Jackie MacMillan, Vivian Owens and Laurin Patterson.

Fourth row: Jim Jordon, Ethel Anne Goral, — "?" —, Leslie Patterson, Leslie Parrott, Lois MacLachlan and — "?" —.

Rev. H. L. Henderson

First Presbyterian Church

Reams could be written about the Presbyterian Church, but to honor one church above another could, and justly so, mean losing the respect of all. Because of that we are forced to condense the interesting history submitted by Rev. H. L. Henderson.

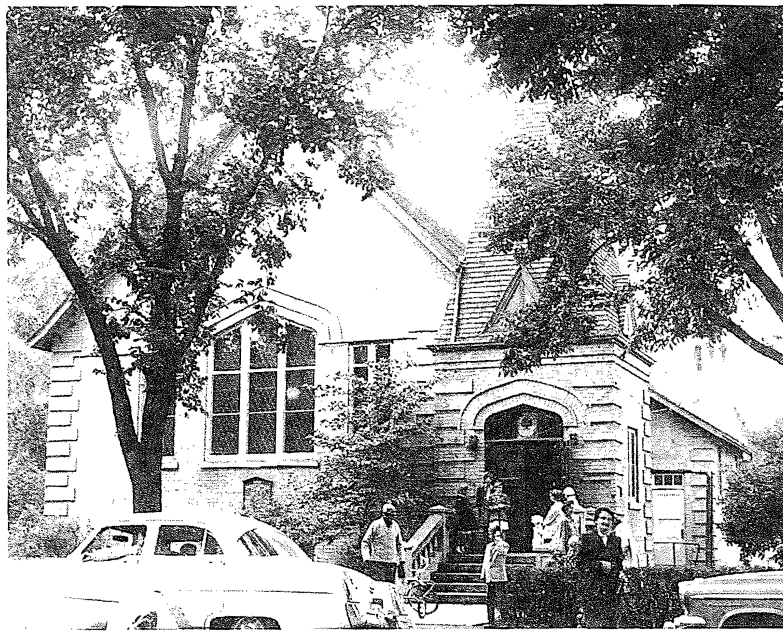
In 1862, Mr. Kenneth McBain and Mr. John McLean, with their families, settled within the limits of the present city of Portage la Prairie. Due to their efforts a church was established with Rev. Wm. Fletcher as pastor, in 1863. (He conducted his first service in the home of Mr. McBain on the banks of Crescent Lake near the present Manitoba Home for boys.)

Rev. Fletcher was followed, in 1867 by Rev. Alexander Matheson who was succeeded by Rev. Allan Bell, mentioned previously in this book.

Rev. Bell remained in Portage la Prairie until 1888, and during his time here a "kirk" was built at the foot of Campbell St. on the banks of Crescent Lake. (Campbell St. is now Royal Road.)

In 1876, a log church was erected near where the Hotel Portage now stands. Soon this church was too small and work started on a new church. In the meantime, the congregation made arrangements for the use of the court room in the Court House.

On July 1st, 1881, the cornerstone of a new church, on the corner of what is now Royal Rd. S. and Dufferin Ave., was laid. It was opened for worship in 1882, and destroyed by fire in 1885.



The picture, shown here, is the Frist Presbyterian Church as it is today.

Presbyterians then worshipped in the City Hall, Pratt's Opera House and in the Federal Post Office until Rev. Allan Bell enlisted the financial aid of friends in eastern Canada which permitted building a new church; this one located on the southwest corner of Sask. Ave. and Campbell St.

In 1897, a beautiful new church was built on Tupper St. S. and given the name Knox Presbyterian. The mortgage was cleared in 1922, the year the cyclone struck the city, destroying the pipe organ and the greater part of the church! However, the church was repaired, the pipe organ put into shape again and services were renewed. But by the Church Union Act of 1925, this property was given to the United Church of Canada. Since then, the property has ceased to exist as the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

A group who wished to be faithful to the church of their fathers and who wished to become a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada reorganized a congregation. From 1925 to 1927 services were held in the Community Hall and in the Odd Fellows Hall.

On July the 28th, exactly 46 years after laying the original cornerstone (1881) and with the original cornerstone, as well as a new cornerstone, a new church building was begun. In December of 1927 this church was opened and dedicated. Rev. William Bell was the pastor at that time.

Rev. H. L. Henderson has been the pastor of First Presbyterian Church since 1943.

Presbyterian North Side Mission

North Side Mission or as it is now sometimes referred to "World Wide Mission" began with children and youth in mind. This is still the main objective. At the present time there are 135 children enrolled in various youth programs.

The Sunday School meets each week, summer and winter, for study, worship and recreation. There are also mid-week groups which meet for special purposes, including toboggan rides, sleigh rides, swimming and films.

First meetings were held in the Labor Temple Hall. Later the Prosvita Hall was rented. Here on Sunday the Sunday School meets. There is a Day Kindergarten for the 5 year old children. This has grown from 5 the first year (1962) to 35 in 1969.

Rev. H. L. Henderson was the first minister to serve the Mission, beginning work there in 1943. The Rev. Michael Fesenko of the Ukrainian Church in Toronto made a complete survey of the area and recommended building a Church for the Mission.

Some of the persons who served this Mission have gone forward to high positions. Mr. David Tan (Now Rev. Professor David Tan) is a professor in a theological College in Formosa. Mr. (now Reverend) Wen-Chi-Kim now serves the Korean Church in Japan. Mr. Andrew Zelinski has an important teaching position in British Columbia. Mr. (Now Reverend) Walter Kutcher is presently minister of the Ukrainian Congregation in Hamilton, Ontario. Others who served this mission include: Miss Kreviazuk, Miss Gladys Dickson, Mr. (now Reverend) Robert Allison of Trail B.C., Mr. L. Sukut, Mr. Cornel Hodowanski and Mr. Desmond McConnell.

A man with great and varied Christian experience, who served the North Side Mission was the Reverend Wasyl Winiausky. Mr. Winiausky served the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Galicia and the West Ukraine, 1932 to 1940. He then served in the camps of displaced persons from 1946 to 1951. He came to the Mission in 1953 and was received as a Minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

It was during his ministry 1953-1956 that the message was taken to the adults as well as to the children and the young folks of Ukrainian parentage.

St. Andrew's Crescent Heights Presbyterian Church, Mr. W. Logi, Pastor

St. Andrew's Crescent Heights Presbyterian Church began with surveys conducted during 1956 and 1957. It would seem to have had a real Biblical beginning; the first services were held in a large tent and even the tent was a borrowed one.

In March, 1957, The General Board of Missions of The Presbyterian Church in Canada appointed Mr. Robert C. Culley as a student minister. The early work consisted of visitation in the general area of the west end of the City of Portage La Prairie.

The first organized work was a Church Vacation School held during the summer of 1957, conducted by Mr. Culley under the Interim Moderatorship of Rev. H. L. Henderson.

The work proceeded rapidly and with excellent response. At the turning of the "first sod", Mrs. S. E. Simpson represented the ladies of the congregation while Mr. Harvey Tarr, a member of the Kirk Session of First Presbyterian Church, represented the congregation as an "assessor" elder.

The new building, constructed by Mr. J. E. Johnson of Minnedosa was moved to the site at 17th Street S.W. and Saskatchewan Avenue. The service of dedication was held on the opening day Sunday December 1, 1957. Rev. Rex Krepps represented the Presbytery of Brandon at the Dedication. Mr. E. C. Mellen and Mr. Harvey Tarr represented the Board of Trustees. Others taking part in the ceremony included; Rev. H. Crump reading from First Kings Chapter 8; Mr. D. Mitchell reading Ephesians Chapter 2 verses 13 to 22; Rev. E. Seress (who at the time was minister of St. Stephens Hungarian Congregation in Portage la Prairie) read from St. Matthew's Gospel chapter 1 verses 12 to 16; and Rev. H. L. Henderson who represented the Church Extension Committee as Chairman was overseer of the project.

As soon as the building was dedicated, many people presented gifts; a Baptismal Font, Communion Table, Hymn Books, Light Fixtures, Pulpit Bible, Pulpit Desk, Bibles for the pews, Concrete sidewalks, Electric Chimes, chairs and pews and numerous other gifts.

St. Andrew's Crescent Heights gave its name to the whole area of the west end of the City of Portage la Prairie, beginning at 12th Street and extending to the west limits of the City. It is situated in a district which is growing at a very quick rate.

At the present time, only the "first" unit of the Church has been constructed to serve later as the Church Hall and to service the youth organizations. Later plans call for a Modern Sanctuary.

This congregation has many active groups and organizations all taking their part in serving Crescent Heights Community; Girl Guides, Brownie Pack, Wolf Cubs, Explorers, Ladies Circle, Sunday School and many others.

The historical picture, shown here, is of Mr. Harvey Tarr and Mrs. S. E. Simpson at the 'turning of the sod' ceremony.

CHURCHES

For the benefit of newcomers to our city, we will print the names and addresses of all known denominations, with regrets that more information is not available. If one of the following churches is the one of your choice, we will be happy to have played a part in directing you to it.

Portage Alliance Church
89 - 13th St. N.W.

Portage Pentecostal Church
58 - 5th St. N.W.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
30 - 18th St. N.W.

Trinity United Church
Tupper St. S. at Saskatchewan Ave.

Westview Mennonite Brethren Church
Saskatchewan Ave. at 19th St.

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church
553 - 6th St. N.W.

Bible Baptist Church
791 Saskatchewan Ave. W.

Evangelical Mennonite Church
502 - 5th Ave. W.

Gospel Hall
102 - 1st St. N.W.

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses
1116 Crescent Rd. W.

Northside Church of Christ
600 - 3rd St. N.E.

There were days when walking wasn't easy, and when there wasn't much to eat in the lunch pail, and when they shivered during class hours, and when they trudged through snow banks on the path to the outhouse . . . . . Regardless of the hardships, ask any old-timer about his most cherished memories and you will find that many of them centre around —

RURAL SCHOOLS

The Little Red School House, once a familiar and necessary structure, is reluctantly becoming as legendary as the roaming buffalo. Only the occasional glimpse of a forlorn and deserted rural school remains to evoke memories of the past.

Education in the days of our pioneer forefathers was as important to their children as it now is to their descendants. Therefore, as new farming areas were opened up, the necessity for schools arose.

Basically, they were built to serve a number of families living in an area some three miles wide by four miles long. These distances seem trivial by present standards, but in those early days they were significant, for transportation was more difficult.

The more fortunate travelled by horse; others, by foot. At times the older boys rode two-year-old steers, these animals later being used to till the fields. One farmer plowed a furrow from home to school, through the long Prairie grain, so that his children would not lose their way.

Classes were held in homes until rude log structures were erected. Desks and seats were long rough wooden trestle tables and benches. Gradually the Little Red School House evolved and structurally and architecturally they were the same throughout the district.

The site, covering one or two acres, contained the school; a tall flag pole with the Union Jack flying from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; a barn,

with cord wood stacked against it; and the two essential outhouses, well stocked with catalogues.

Inside, the classroom boasted a raised platform at the front on which stood the teacher's desk and chair, flanked on one side by a globe and on the other by a Webster's Dictionary located on a metal or wooden stand. On the front wall a blackboard was featured, with a picture of the reigning monarch hanging above it.

There were six rows of desks, each with a seat attached to the front on it. On the desks were a pencil groove and a sunken ink-well and, before many years, well carved initials of its changing occupants.

At the back of the room stood the heating system — a monstrous black, pot-bellied stove that roasted the pupils near it but never threw enough heat to warm those in the front of the classroom. This monster, with its ravenous appetite, consumed a meal of wood every hour on the hour throughout the school day.

A water pail on a chair accompanied by one enamel cup, completed the picture.

The school years in those early days of the 1870s began on the first day of May and ended the last day of October. Grades 1-8 were taught by one teacher whose salary was the princely sum of $150 for the six-month period. Not only was this teacher called upon to teach the Three R's but was also responsible for playground supervision during the noonhour period, for none of the students went home for lunch.

The Little Red School House was also used as a community centre, being transformed from a classroom Friday into a dance hall for Saturday, then converted into a church for Sunday services whenever a minister visited the district.

Many of the names chosen for these schools reflect the memories of the pioneers of the homes they left behind — Oakville, for instance. Others were named for events of historical significance in the taming of the Prairies. One in particular points out the hardships of the day. A Mr. Maulatt was asked what he would name his farm. His reply: "Prospect . . . prospects are we'll all starve to death. . ." And Prospect the district has been called since.

Now with consolidation, unification and escalation, we once more enter a pioneer era of education, but in the transition, we may be losing the togetherness that marked the spirit of the Little Red School House.

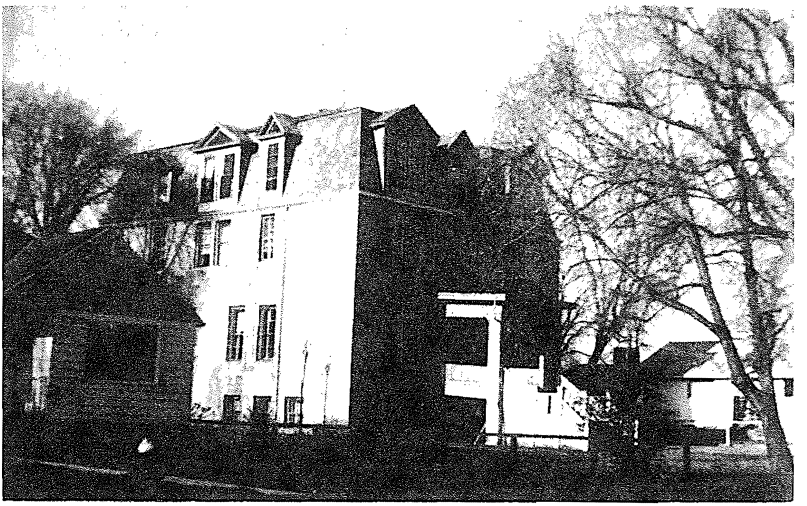
A HISTORY OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE'S SCHOOL SYSTEM

In 1854, the Venerable Archdeacon William Cochrane of the Anglican Church was responsible for the founding of the first school in what is now the City of Portage la Prairie.

Archdeacon Cochrane's home served as a temporary location for the school until a log building was erected nearby on the north side of the river road, close by the present St. Mary's Cemetery.

Although the Archdeacon and his good wife actively engaged in the education of the young, the first teacher of this school was Peter Garrioch, who was followed by Henry Laronde, Benjamin McKenzie, and then by the Archdeacon's son, the Rev. Thomas Cochrane, during whose regime (1862-63) the log building became too small, and a new and larger structure was erected near the centre of the village.

In 1870, with the creation of the Province of Manitoba, the church parish school gave way to the public school system. By 1872, students were attending school in another log building on the Island. In 1883, this old school house became the property of the Agricultural Society and was used as an exhibition hall.



Lansdowne College (shown here) was the first in Manitoba to offer instruction in free drawing. The first art teacher was a Miss Freeman.

In 1883, the Trustees of Portage la Prairie School District No. 10 erected the Central School, one of the finest in the Province, at a cost of $40,000. In this ten-room building, instruction at all levels was provided until the first Collegiate was constructed. The grand

old Central School gave wonderful service until it was demolished in 1949 to make way for the recently enlarged Prince Charles School which housed Grades One to Eight, and, with its twenty-five classrooms and spacious auditorium-gymnasium, served the children of the central part of our City, until 1968 when fire destroyed all but the annex.

The financial crisis of 1886 caused the School Board to resign, and its duties were performed by a committee of citizens who kept the schools running until June 30, 1887, by voluntary payment of assessments.

About this time, a new contender for educational recognition came into the field for Portage la Prairie — Lansdowne College, a much publicized institution.

In 1888, Portage la Prairie public schools had been re-opened on a sound financial basis. Lansdowne College, its building today known as the Villa Court, had affiliated with the Arts Department of the University of Manitoba.

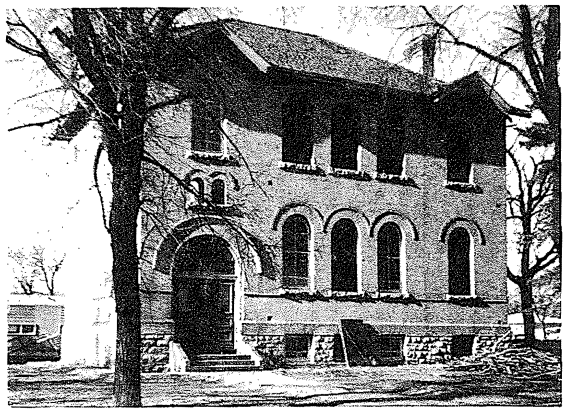
Although the cornerstone for the first Portage Collegiate Institute was laid in 1904, it was not until February, 1905, that classes were moved from the second floor of the Central School across the street into the new Collegiate. In the new eight-room school, built at a cost of $21,408 by contractors F. G. Humber and W. J. Simmons, the first teaching staff numbered five, under the principalship of Mr. George Young.

The present North Ward School, built in 1910, had for many years provided the educational requirements for the first four grades to children residing in the northern part of Portage la Prairie. More recently North Memorial and La Verendrye Schools have been erected in this area to serve more adequately the educational needs of the children to the end of Grade Six.

On December 28, 1915, the East Ward School was destroyed by fire. After some delay, a fine up-to-date ten-room school, planned by Architect F. R. Evans, was built at a cost of approximately $65,000. This school, now known as Victoria School, with an addition of eight classrooms and an auditorium-gymnasium, continues to cater to the elementary and junior high school needs of our children residing in the eastern part of the City.

In the western part of Portage la Prairie, Fort la Reine School was built in 1955 and gradually replaced the old West Ward School, a two-room solid brick structure, which was demolished in 1963. To

serve this area of our City whose school population has increased very rapidly in the last ten years, additions to the Fort la Reine School have expanded this school from six classrooms in 1956 to twenty classrooms in 1967.



The old west Ward School.

In 1920-21, four rooms were added to the original Portage Collegiate by Contractor Ritchie. Previous to that time, the Junior high grades of Seven and Eight were housed in the Central and Victoria Schools. On the completion of the extra rooms, those grades were moved to the Collegiate, only to be returned to the elementary schools again when the Collegiate became overcrowded.

For a two year period, from 1921 to 1923, Home Economics and Manual Training departments were in operation in the Collegiate. Although discontinued for many years, these courses were restored to the curriculum in 1941.

For twenty-seven years, the popular First Year Arts University Course was given to the Collegiate students who preferred this course to the regular Grade XII.

On May 26, 1954, fire of unknown origin, completely destroyed the Collegiate building and its contents. However, by May, 1956, students and teachers were occupying a fine new school erected on the old site. In 1958, and again in 1960, a total of twelve classrooms and a large well-equipped auditorium-gymnasium were added to the new Collegiate building.

In the meantime, a very important change in school administration had taken place. In 1955, eighteen surrounding rural school districts united with Portage la Prairie to form the Portage la Prairie Secondary School Area No. 1, completely separated from Portage la Prairie School District No. 10, and whose trustee board was responsible for providing the best possible secondary education for the young people of the designated area. In April, 1958, this secondary school

area became part of a much larger region to be known as Portage la Prairie School Division No. 24.

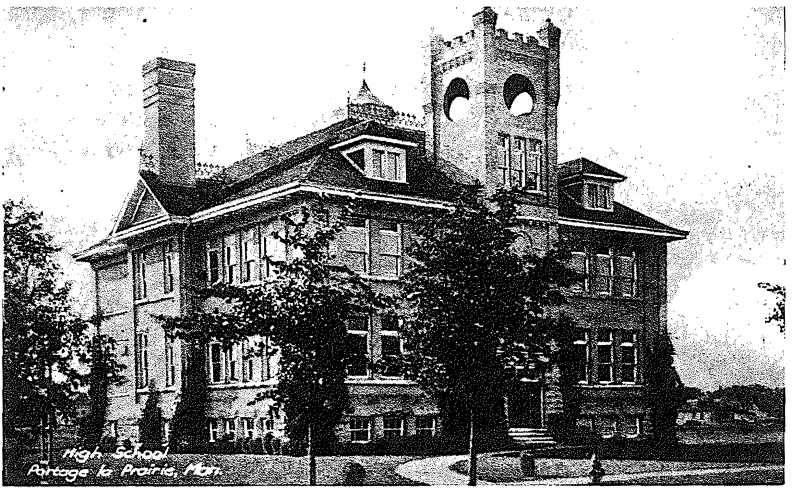
In 1965, because of the increased high school population and to provide better for the many changes being made in the curriculum, a fine new Arthur Meighen High School was opened to serve the eastern part of our City and the surrounding rural area.

In 1967, residents of the area voted to establish a new school division that gives one board the supervision of all schools from kindergarten up to the highest levels of the secondary schools.

Many of Portage la Prairie's finest citizens devoted their best years to the School Board in the interests of better education. Outstanding among these is Charles E. Cole, who served for twenty-four years on the Board, twenty-two years of which were as Chairman. Also, the late Mrs. W. E. Metcalfe, who gave twenty-two years, and Norman K. Weber, who served twenty years, are certainly worthy of praise for their faithful and untiring efforts.

Teachers who are still actively engaged in our schools and have served with distinction and dedication and the students of this community for more than three decades, and, in some cases, for four decades, are Edith MacDonald, Ellen Cook, Etta Crewson, Agnes Souter, Violet Graham, Winifred Morton, Kalista Robb, William Taylor, and Ferris Metcalfe.

The picture of this High School, built in 1904, will bring back memories for many Portagers.



High School (Portage)

On November 28, 1886, the Winnipeg Free Press reported that there were 352 pupils enrolled in the public schools in Portage la Prairie, and the average daily attendance at these schools was 223. At the end of December, 1966, 3343 pupils were enrolled in the Portage la Prairie School System, 2206 pupils in the elementary schools and 1137 pupils in the two high schools. On staff were 138 teachers under the supervision of A. L. Stevens, appointed Superintendent of Schools on August 1, 1966.

The architectural design of the building is not adopted by contractors today. This school was destroyed by fire after serving as a solid seat of learning for over 50 years.

Health, Welfare, And Organizations Connected With Them Are Very Important In Portage la Prairie.

DOCTORS

A fellow, upon being asked by a psychiatrist who he considered the most important person in the world, 'hemmed and hawed' and then named an illustrious personage. The psychiatrist said, "No. You are the most important person in the world to yourself. You don't feel a pin prick in a President or any misfortune that may befall him, but you yell, "Ouch," or sob when similar things happen to yourself. Now, who do you consider next in importance to yourself?"

The patient, not wanting to be wrong a second time, made rapid, anxious guesses, "My mother? My father? My sister? My brother?" "No," said the psychiatrist, "but your guesses are logical when you have never known a serious illness."

For anyone who has ever had the misfortune to have had a serious ailment there is no hesitation in answering the second question. The answer is, of course, your own special doctor; the man who keeps you ticking so that you can be number one on your own mental totem pole.

Portage la Prairie has been, and still is, blessed by the services of conscientious medical men; several of them having had many years of experience in medicine and surgery.

It is only fitting that these men, who brought many Portagers into the world and who have saved the lives of many who are with us today, should have a special place in the history of our community. It is regrettable that space and time doesn't allow a story on each of their interesting lives, but recording their names for posterity is our historical salute to them.

Dr. Joseph Lynch and Dr. Jacques came to Portage la Prairie when settlers were pitting their skill against the wilderness. This area was spoken of as the "last outpost" at that time and when Dr. James Cowan came from the Red River settlement, which offered comparative safety, to buy them out in 1871, they (at the Settlement) considered him foolish to say the least. "Long Gone" they would call it today! However, he became a dominant figure in Portage la Prairie's history.

He and Dr. Lyons were the only doctors west of Winnipeg, and often had to plough through shrieking blizzards for distances of 40 to 60 miles. Dr. Cowan was so devoted to his profession that he never seemed to think of himself, but only of the welfare of those who constituted his huge practice. His unselfishness made him widely loved by everyone. He retired when he was 63 years of age, passing on his practice to his son, Samuel.

Dr. Cowan

Dr. Cowan represented Portage in the Manitoba Legislature from 1871 to 1884, as a supporter of the Conservative party, and is also credited with having brought the first sawmill into Manitoba.

He passed away in 1910 at the age of 79 years, after winning an honored spot in the memory of old-timers.

Dr. D. J. M. Hagarty was another pioneer in medicine in Portage la Prairie. An early paper says of him, "He practiced his profession when the white population was small and most of his patients were Indians."

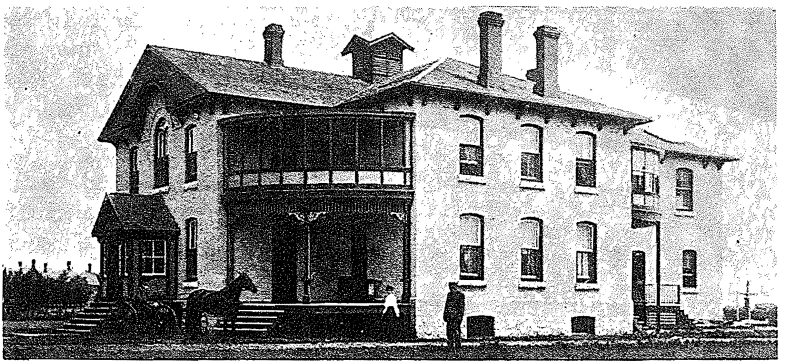
A Dr. Macklin is also mentioned in a paper of the times, as being here in 1881.

The Lundy name is well-known in Portage. Dr. Frank Lundy was so loved by everyone that a public fountain was erected after his death to perpetuate his memory. Dr. E. J. Lundy, respected and remembered, was here at

the same time. Picture of these two gentlemen are shown in the 'nurses and doctors' group which follows later. Dr. Frank Lundy Jr. followed in his father's professional footsteps in Portage.

To bring the list of Portage General Hospital doctors up to date several more names can be added: Dr. G. E. Bayfield, Dr. S. B. Cowan, Dr. (?) Milroy, Dr. F. S. Keele, Dr. W. E. Metcalfe, Dr. R. B. McQuay, Dr. R. W. McQuay, Dr. W. H. Clark, Dr. R. H. Robertson, Dr. (?) McKinnon, Dr. W. H. Rennie, Dr. C. C. Simpson, Dr. George Hassard, Dr. H. A. Gordon, Dr. H. J. Hassard, Dr. G. P. Armstrong, Dr. J. C. Rennie, Dr. G. H. Hamlin, Dr. J. W. Kettlewell, Dr. G. C. Fairfield, Dr. C. M. Thomas, Dr. David Sharpe, Dr. Edwin Ford, Dr. Donald Rae, Dr. Kenneth Collier, Dr. George Black and Dr. Istvan Varga. "(?)" is used where initials are unknown.

PORTAGE GENERAL HOSPITAL



Portage General Hospital in 1899.

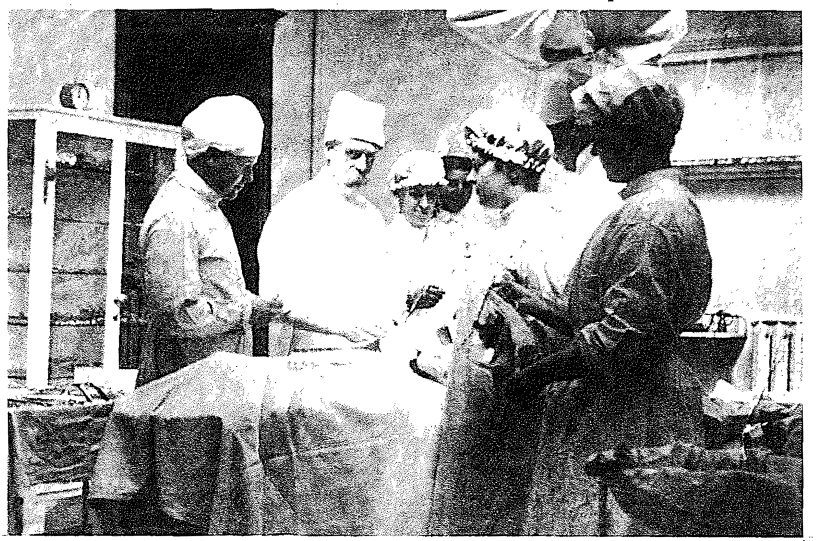
In the Autumn of 1956, sixty-one years after the first hospital committee held its inaugural meeting, the people of Portage la Prairie and district officially opened a modern hospital building.

The original building, used until the new one was opened, was built in 1879-1880 for use as a Court House. For a time it was used as a hostel for immigrants.

In the late 1880s a man was taken from the train too ill from an infectious disease to travel further. There was no place to care for the patient. The women of the town asked the rural council for the use of the Court House which happened to be empty at the time. They collected food, furniture and bedding and set up a hospital there.

In October 1895 a committee was formed to put the hospital's affairs on a permanent footing. In 1896 it was incorporated by the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The Portage General Hospital officially opened on Sept. 7th, 1899. A Board of Directors was elected that year to replace the committee which had administered the affairs of the hospital since 1895.



From left to right are: Dr. (?) Tod, Winnipeg Man.; Dr. (?) Blanchard, Winnipeg, Man.; Miss (?) Black; Miss Mable Waite; Miss (?) Summerfeld; and Miss Anne Drummond. ("?" is used where the name is unknown.)

Several additions were made to the building as the needs arose.

The picture shown here, taken in the operating room, will be of interest to doctors and nurses of today who are blessed with more modern surroundings.

On Feburary 9th, 1929, the north wing of this hospital was badly damaged by a fire which started between the walls and floors, near the south end of the north wing, and reached the attic or roof at this point.

There was no panic even though most of the 45 patients had to be carried out on stretchers. Some were taken to the Nurses Home, some to nearby homes, and one or two taken to their own homes. The Training School boys and staff, doctors and nurses, all worked at top speed to accomplish this necessary service in the shortest possible time.

After the removal of the patients, records, beds, bedding and other articles which would be effected by water were removed from the building.

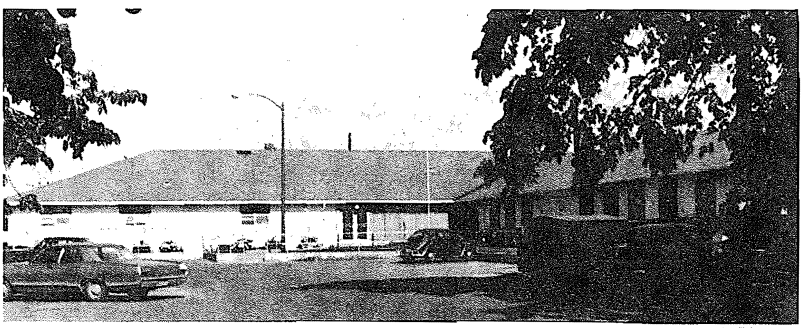
Miss Purvis was the lady superintendent at that time.

Nurses and doctors of the Portage General Hospital posed for this picture about 1908.

Front row: L. to R. — Dr. E. J. Lundy, Dr. Frank Lundy, Dr. W. E. Metcalfe and Dr. S. B. Cowan.

Mid. row: Miss Jennie Hogan, Miss (?) McAusland, Miss C. M., Miss Jean Rinn.

Back row: Miss Anne Drummond, Miss Mable Waite, Miss Loretta Linton, Miss Edith Franks, Miss Sara Gettinby, Miss Sarah Williams, Dr. H. A. Gordon and Dr. (?) McKinnon.



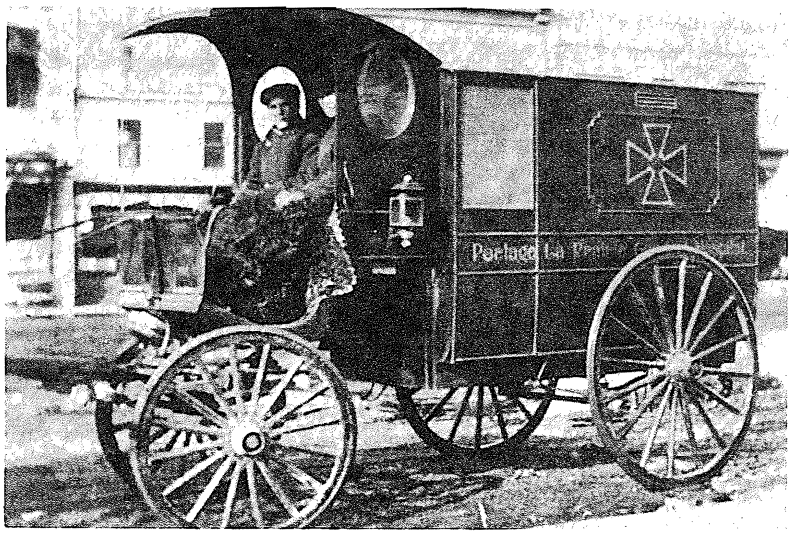
The Portage General Hospital which opened in the autumn of 1956.

None of these people enjoyed the conveniences of the type of hospital we have at the present time; most duties were performed under difficult circumstances; and wages for services were very small.

Flower beds and paved driveways add to the exterior appearance of the present hospital, and our present good doctors and nurses continue to give confidence to patients.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

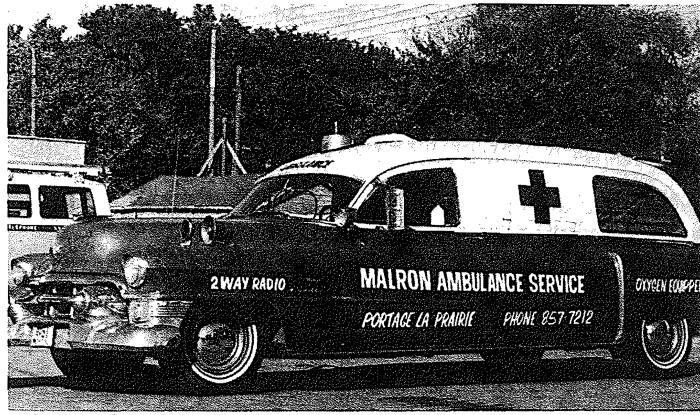
An indispensable service through the years has been the one provided by the ambulances. The first vehicles were horse-drawn of course and what a bumpy ride patients must have had with no rubber on the wheels to lessen the jolts!



The one shown here was donated to the Portage la Prairie General Hospital by the Prairie Gateway Chapter of the I.O.D.E. Good fast pacing horses were a necessity, as was a capable teamster. It is regrettable that we do not have the names of the men shown in this picture.

With the passing of time, and as motorized vehicles became available, patients benefited by speedier and more comfortable transportation.

The present ambulance service (1968) is capably operated by partners, Malcolm J. Stanley and Ronald K. Moffit. The name of the ambulance "Malron" was decided upon by combining the first three letters of each of their first names.



This ambulance is equipped with a two-way radio, oxygen and resuscitator, and gives 24 hour emergency service.

PORTAGE GENERAL HOSPITAL NURSES ALUMNAE

Mrs. Harold Wilkinson, as a member of the Nurses Alumnae, contributed much interesting information regarding it. She said, (Q[illegible] –

52 due to the lack of trained personnel (a direct result of World War Two) the training school was forced to close. With the hope of re-establishing a school of nursing it was decided to form an Alumnae.

Over the years, 239 graduates were located and the first reunion was held in conjunction with the opening of the new hospital. Mrs. A. L. Lyon presided.

With the new hospital, the old order changed. No longer do nurses rush to boil fomentations or rubber tubing as in the "good old days".

It never failed, whenever a nurse left to do some small chore she was detained by another patient. She would return, not quite running for running was a sin, to find the service room full of smoke and the pungent odor of burning wool or rubber, and the Matron right on her heels! How the Matron always arrived at that precise moment is a mystery to all except past Matrons!

Other changes evident are the absence of the smell of anaesthetics, Oil of Wintergreen and Lysol that used to permeate the spacious

halls and wide corridors and offend those entering the 'modern' portals.

The Alumnae has set up, and awarded, a nursing bursary each year. In 1965, President Mrs. Orval Troop was killed in an accident; a fetuscope, in her memory, was presented to the hospital. A bursary, donated by her husband, was awarded by the Alumnae.

A plaque was placed in the hospital in memory of the graduates of the Portage General Hospital, 1901 to 1952. A news letter is sent to each graduate biennially.

We are fortunate in being able to obtain this picture which shows a few of the nurses who took their training in the Portage General Hospital.

The picture will have special historical interest for young nurses of today who enjoy the freedom of short skirts and uniforms minus uncomfortable, stiffly starched collars and long cuffs.

Only two of these girls cannot be identified. From left to right, and with the year of their class in brackets, they are as follows:

Front row: Miss Flossie Birdsell (1913), Miss Alice Dunn (1912), Miss Sara Gettinby (1910).
Mid. row: Miss Mary Panton (1914), Miss Ellen Grummett (1914), Miss Bertha Barnes (1914).
Back row: Miss "?", Miss Loretta Linton (1910), Miss "?", and Miss Marion Robinson (1911).

The hope of a training school has not yet materialized, but those who graduated from the Portage la Prairie General Hospital will always have a feeling of pride and appreciation, not only for their professional learning but also for the friendships made and kept." (End of 'Quote')

The first executive of the P.G.H. Alumnae (1956) were: Miss L. Seale and Mrs. J. Thomas, Honorary Presidents; Mrs. Madge Lyon, President; Mrs. Francis Young, Vice-President; Mrs. Noreen McPhedran, Secretary; Mrs. Audrey Wilkinson, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. Jean Swanson, Treasurer; Mrs. Margaret White, Miss Margaret Stephens and Mrs. Jean Young, By-laws Committee; Mrs. Shirley McCullough and Mrs. Allison Garland, Entertainment Committee; Mrs. Laura Adams and Mrs. Gladys Paterson, Refreshment Committee; and Mrs. Winnifred Reynolds and Miss Margaret Stewart, Sick and Visiting Committee.

THE REGISTERED NURSES ASSOCIATION

The Registered Nurses Association was formed in 1938 with Mrs. Richard Munger, nee Elizabeth Thomson, as president. The aims of the organization were to promote fellowship, education and the training of nurses. In 1941, because of the extra tasks imposed on everyone, it was forced to disband.

In 1951, with the atomic bomb in existence and a knowledge of the suffering and devastation that it could impose on the population in the event of another war, a civil defence meeting was called. Mrs. Frank McPhedran, Mrs. Gardner Young and Mrs. Harold Wilkinson were asked to form an organization which would be responsible for contacting every available nurse in an emergency. Thus, the Registered Nurses Assen. was revived. Mrs. A. H. Bryson was elected president.

Nurses who have trained in hospitals all over the world have enriched the organization. With a membership of forty, about eighty nurses attend the annual meeting.

Many have never heard of the registered Nurses Association in Portage and many who have heard of them ask, "What do they do?" The reason for this is that they are not a money-making organization.

They work quietly in the background, providing helpful services when needed, with no thoughts of recompense or recognition. They have served the community by manning health clinics, such as 'the blood donors', oral polio vaccine and the T.B. Survey. They assist at the Retardate Assen. and Hospital Aid teas. They taught Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance home nursing, thus enabling the St. John's Ambulance Brigade to be formed. And they have probably made many other worthwhile contributions to the community that we are not aware of.

Our tribute to this noble organization is to record a few of their good deeds in this book.

At the present time, Mrs. C. R. Fraser is the President.

THE HOSPITAL LADIES' AID

The importance of the Hospital Ladies' Aid cannot be over-emphasized. From the days when the Court House was used as an emergency hospital to the present time, a group going under the above name has worked for the benefit of the hospital and the comfort of its patients.

Many student nurses must have pleasant memories of the social events and graduation exercises which were sponsored by them as well.

The ladies in the beginning sewed all the linens, also supplied wool blankets, gowns, slippers and bed throws. Today they purchase small and large equipment for the care of the patient. Electric dish-washer, electric dryer, meal mobile, 60 quart food mixer, stainless steel equipment for every room and Hi-lo beds are a few of the larger items.

The average active membership is around 30 and the Aid meets on the fourth Friday of each month in the Elks Hall.

Although helping to make the patient's stay more comfortable is the primary objective, the Aid also helps with the Cancer Fund Drive, Senior Citizens and the National Hospital Day.

Funds are raised through the generosity of the community with a Tag Day, Spring Tea and Domestic Table, and with the help of the Lions Club, a Rag Drive.

A rose is put on every patient's bed table and a toy is given to every child in the hospital on Christmas day.

In 1960, a travelling cart was sponsored by the ladies and they hope to continue this as long as it is needed. In this, they are helped by other ladies' organizations.

While doctors and staff are being thanked by patients in newspaper columns, the Hospital Ladies' Aid are working quietly and kindly in the background, wanting nothing more than the nice taste they have in their hearts because of their efforts.

THE NORTH SIDE LADIES' HOSPITAL GUILD

In 1954, there was a conscious effort put forth, to have ladies of the northern section of the city participate in some way with the local hospital's charitable and volunteer work.

Mrs. Myrtle Barbour, supervisor at the Portage General Hospital, along with Mrs. Sadye Hill, Pres. and Mrs. Louise Wilson, Sec. of the Ladies' Aid, were instrumental in holding a meeting at the Church of Assumption Parish Hall on May 5, 1955.

The first executive elected were: Mrs. Fern White, Pres., Mrs. Pearl Stebeleski, Vice-Pres., Mrs. Jessie Atchison, Sec., and Mrs. Irene Ross, Treasurer.

Other ladies at this organizational meeting were: Mrs. Ada Ellwood, Mrs. Anna Michaels, Mrs. Anna Strutt, Mrs. Ellen Webb and Helen Zurkan.

The name "North Side Ladies' Hospital Guild" was decided upon by this group.

Since their inception they have contributed much to the hospital: 3 wheel chairs, 6 folding chairs, 4 inhalators, 1 chrome crib, 6 folding chairs, a butter slicer, a potato peeler, 1 doz. stainless steel kidney bowls, 32 nighties and a cheque of $385.00 for special operating equipment. The foregoing only lists their most important contributions, there are many smaller ones.

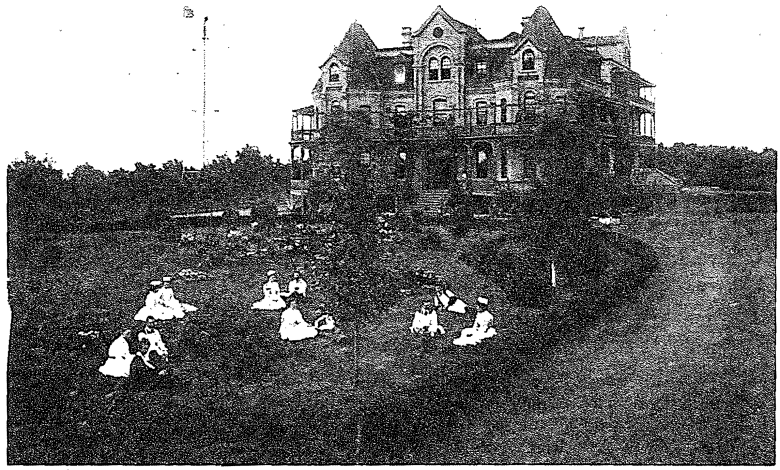
Working for the benefit of mankind, this group has performed several services, canvassing for C.N.I.B., the Heart Fund, Cancer Society and Red Shield are some of them.

Names of officers submitted for this history in 1967 were: Mrs. A. Strutt, Pres., Mrs. M. Karmazyn, Vice-pres., Mrs. E. Nick, R. Sec., Mrs. A. Ellwood, Corr. Sec., Mrs. M. Connelly, Treas., Mrs. J. Nagribianko, Pub. and Mrs. W. Billingham, Sunshine.

THE MANITOBA HOME

In 1889-90 when the Institution shown here was built, it was given the unattractive name "Home of Incurables."

On Feb. 18, 1898, when Dr. Thos. M. Milroy sent in his annual report to Hon. J. W. Sifton, Inspector of Public Institutions, Winnipeg, Man., he described the building, conditions, and forms of disease of the inmates. (By this time an addition was being made to the Institution.)



The report states that the number of patients at that time was 57. Total attendance for the year had been 68. Nine had died during the year. Causes of death were given as: three of exhaustion, one of convulsions, one of cerebral softening, one of pneumonia, one of acute bronchitis, one of cerebral haemorrhage and one of Bright's disease.

An interesting sentence in the report states, "You will observe that most of the deaths were aged patients, only one patient being under forty-three years of age." This would lead one to believe that anyone who exceeded the age of 43 years, in those days, was considered 'aged'!

Dr. Milroy described the new addition as he saw it thusly: "The new addition is a very creditable building, being well constructed and every attention having been paid to sanitary detail. The addition makes the Home a much more complete Institution and will add to the comfort of the patients and very materially assist in the management. The construction and arrangement of the old building in many

features was very imperfect. But we now have an Institution which in regard to construction and equipment is one of the best in the Province.

The old system of closets was abominable, but the new system is as nearly perfect as possible, especially in a locality where it is so difficult to obtain sufficient fall for sewage.

I am pleased to note that you have provided two isolated wards. The location is a novel one, on top of the building, but ensures perfect isolation and could not be located to better advantage. We will now be better prepared should contagious disease break out among the patients.

The refractory ward is also a useful room and will be of much assistance in controlling unruly patients.

Special care has been taken in regard to ventilation, a great improvement over the old arrangement.

The large tank on the top of the building ensures a constant supply of water and is well located for fire protection purposes.

As the attendance increases, it will be necessary, from time to time to increase the number of attendants; there have been some changes of late in the staff attendants, but the present staff perform their work conscientiously and well.

The patients, as a rule, are contented and resigned to their lot. The internal working of the Institution, and the relations existing between the officials and those associated with them, have been most satisfactory."

J. P. Young, who was Superintendent and Bursar that same year, sent in an interesting report also. Quote — "I am able to report everything in good working order, around the Institution, but there are still some repairs required in the old part of the building. The stairs are getting badly worn, and will soon have to be renovated, and the building should be kalsomined throughout. We have been doing this ourselves, but I think it should be gone over by an experienced workman, and the hallways painted say about four feet from the floor, so that they could be washed.

The additional land purchased for the use of the Institution this year will enable us to have pasture for the stock and also allow us to raise a great deal of our own feed for stock, as well as all vegetables for the patients.

On account of the very dry season, our garden did not give very large returns this year. Attached hereto is a list of products, etc.

Our thanks are due the ministers, Salvation Army and ladies of the town for services during the year. Some of the Sunday School choirs have held song service which was very pleasing to the patients."

While every effort was made to make patients as comfortable as possible in the old "Home of Incurables", nothing seems to have been done to improve their twisted limbs or train them to make the most use of any faculties they might possess. It seems they were regarded as incurable and that was that!

We have come a long way since those days, and the name "Home of Incurables" is heard no more. The "Manitoba Home", as it is now called, is accomplishing things that would have been thought impossible then.

Mr. Don Rennie, who visited the Home to gain first hand information, had a series of articles published in the Daily Graphic, Aug. 1968, which were both interesting and enlightening. It is regrettable that space and time does not allow us to print the entire text. The following information, condensed, was obtained from his articles.

Three psychologists, Miss Dale Lowther, Miss Judy Hutton and Miss Joyce Beckta are employed at the Home. These girls perform a very valuable service in determining a retardate's I.Q., which enables each individual to receive the most effective treatment. Retardation varies. Some are severely retarded, some less retarded and many can reach a grade four level, which means they can be trained to be self supporting outside the Home.

To prepare them for such an eventuality five cottages have been built on the grounds. These resemble attractive homes where they live and learn to do many things that could be required of them later in life.

In the Institution there is an occupational training ward where retardates that are capable of learning are taught such things as mosaics, needlework and ironing, to name a few.

Male retardates are benefiting from the farm training they receive.

Mr. Dwight Peden has had the responsible position of running the dairy farm there for 22 years. Mr. Rennie says, "In total, the Holstein farm under Mr. Peden's wing is some 700 acres, including

an estimated 35 acres of gardens on the school property, and 325 acres of cereal grain land. The remainder is pasture land for roughly 180 head of cattle on the farm."

240 gallons of milk, which the herd supplies each day, is homogenized on the grounds and used to feed the 1,200 mentally retarded residents and the 600 or so Manitoba School staff members.

The head dairyman, an institution veteran, is Bill Garnham.

Mildly and moderately retarded males help in the various aspects of farming, such as plowing, seeding and harvesting. Many have been rehabilitated due to this training, and the Institution has sometimes had a shortage of help.

As Mr. Peden said to Mr. Rennie, "Farming is a great way to build a guy into a man".

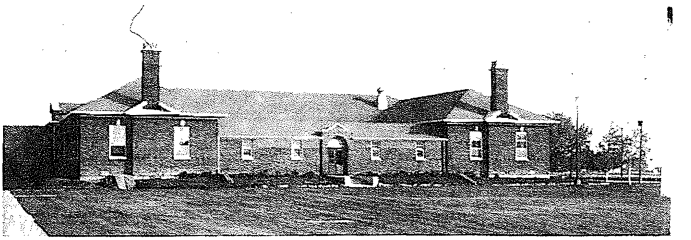
The Manitoba Home, or the Manitoba School for Retardates, as it is also called, is a big place, and it is impossible in a book of this size to describe it adequately and relate all the worthwhile work that is being done there. For instance, the physical therapy ward, where kind, patient people spend their days limbering up twisted limbs and crippled bodies.

The kitchen workers, the maintenance men, the laundry staff and the administration personnel all deserve praise for their parts in keeping the Institution running smoothly. Mrs. Josie McDonald, Miss Doreen Buchanan, Mrs. Della Gibson, Mr. Laurie Sproule and Mr. Ron Horner were mentioned, in one of the articles by Mr. Rennie, as having particularly responsible positions. The staggering statistics show that 56,000 pounds of laundry is washed every week, and one and a half million meals are dished out yearly!

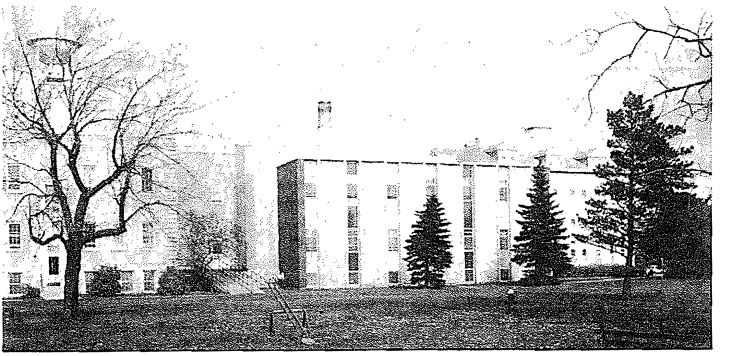
Many people remember and praise Dr. Harry Atkinson for the forward strides made at the Home, beginning in the 1930s and continuing on in the '60s. He was absent from 1940 to 1946 due to the war, during which time Dr. Morval Bristow replaced him. Returning in 1946 he resumed his work at the home until the time of his tragic death in the mid '60s.

At the present time, Dr. Glen Lowther is the medical superintendent. Mr. Aimie Omichinski is assistant director of nursing services. And Rev. Sid Walmsley is the chaplain at the Manitoba Home.

Someone once said, "A picture is worth a thousand words". The pictures, which follow, will be of interest for the sake of comparison with the original structure. Note the attractive names given to the various buildings.

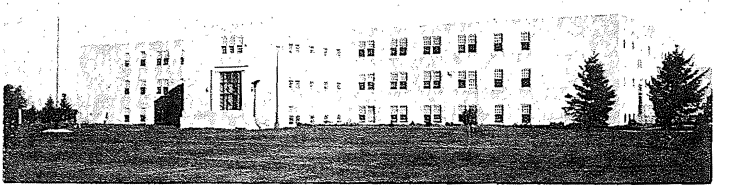


Southgrove — Main Building

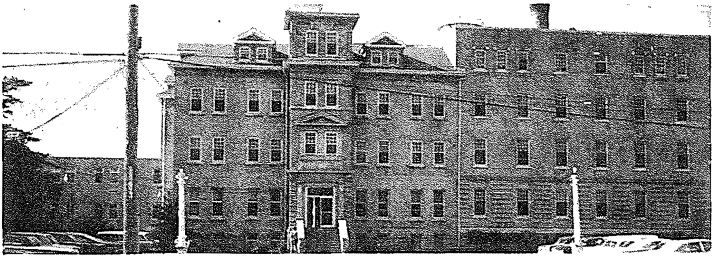


Southgrove — New extension

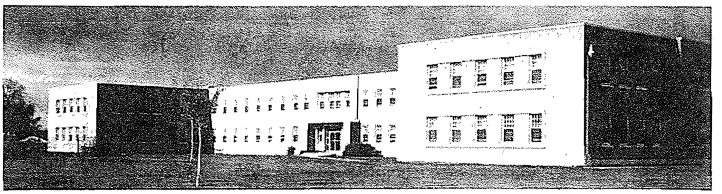
Nurses' Residence



Northgrove — Atkinson Building



Eastgrove



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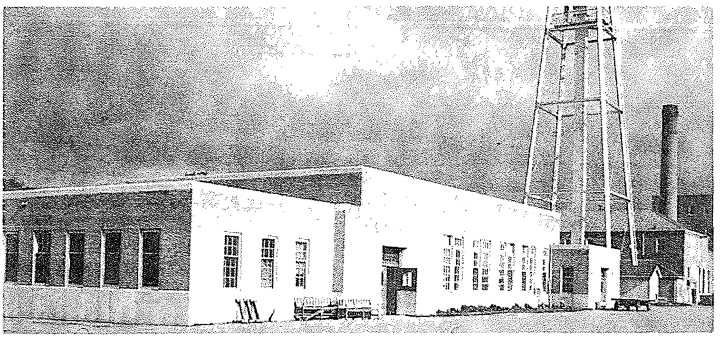
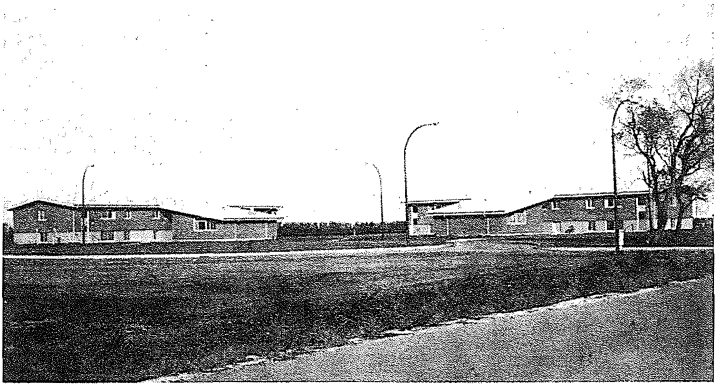


Backgrove — Laundry and Power-house



Lilac and Cedar Cottages

THE PSYCHIATRIC NURSES' ASSOCIATION

The concept of an organization for Graduate staff of psychiatric institutions in Manitoba is not new, going back to the postwar era and possibly beyond. However, it is only in the past decade, as more graduate staff appeared, that anything concrete developed. In the mid-fifties similar organizations were established in the three Western Provinces and in 1959 it was Manitoba's turn.

It started in Portage la Prairie in May of that year. A large number of the Graduate Staff of the Manitoba School gathered together under the Chairmanship of Mr. Aimie Omichinski, the then President, of Portage Unit of the Government Employees Association. At this meeting, Doctor Atkinson, the Medical Superintendent outlined the administration's viewpoint and strongly recommended that the formation of a professional body be seriously considered. After much discussion, it was agreed that the idea was favored and a slate of officers was elected to look after this business.

This slate was based on the executive of the Provincial council of Alberta and the officers were as follows: President — Miss Rose Skirupski; First Vice — Mr. Leon Baart; Secretary — Mr. Jack Devaney; Treasurer — Miss Fern Dryden; Registrar — Mr. Garth Cook; and Council Member — Mr. Peter Klamut.

During the remainder of 1959 and early 1960 the above group acted as a steering committee working closely with similar committees in Brandon and Selkirk to lay the groundwork of our Provincial organization.

In the Spring of 1960, the Legislature of Manitoba passed two bills. The Psychiatric Nurses' Training Act (Bill 66) and the Psychiatric Nurses' Association Act (Bill 86). The first to set out educational standards and policies on a Provincial basis. The second Act was probably the greatest milestone in history of the organization. Not only did it allow for organizing an association, but a truly professional group, in that power was given to license psychiatric nurses and also to discipline such people, even though they possibly were not members.

In May 1960 the Portage officers, together with similar groups from Brandon and Selkirk, gathered in Portage to hold the first Provincial Council Meeting under the terms of the Act.

At this meeting basic guidelines were established and a slate of Provincial Officers elected as laid out in the Act. Two officers from

each institutional group were chosen. Those from Portage were: Mr. Garth Cook — 2nd Vice President and Miss Rose Skirupski — Treasurer.

In October of the same year another Council meeting was held. Here were established classes of membership fees, etc. This was very important as it allowed for proceeding with the vital first step of organization of the general membership, Registration and Licensing.

In January of 1961 the first draft of Bylaws was discussed by the Council, also the form of license. Two months later the final draft of Bylaws was approved by Council and sent to the Lieut. Governor for approval. In June the Bylaws were officially sanctioned and Council proceeded to have these published in booklet form (the Blue Book) for members. In Novemebr one thousand copies were received from the printers and distributed to all registered members at that time.

Also, in November the first annual meeting of the Portage District was held at the Rec. Hall of the Manitoba School. This was a well attended and enthusiastic meeting. Considerable local progress was reported. Portage had the best record of registration amongst the three districts with only a handful of potential members not in.

It should be noted at this time that in the fall of 1960 representatives of The Association were appointed to the Education Advisory Committee under the terms of the training Act. The representative here was Mrs. Elinor Samels.

On February 28th, 1962 another milestone was passed. The first annual meeting of the Provincial Association was held in Portage. Since then regular Annual Meetings have been held each year in a different district, in order to allow as full a participation by the general membership as possible. This meeting was well attended and saw a delegation from nurses working in General Hospitals in Winnipeg, asking that a separate district be set up for them. The Council subsequently approved the idea and later that year the Metro District came into being. Though small, this group has been very active and useful. Not only does it do a great deal of work but brings a non institutional outlook to discussions and deliberations.

At the District Annual Meeting in 1961 Mr. Jack Devaney was elected President and held the position for one year. In November of 1962 he was succeeded by Mr. John Kellie who recently had come

from England. Mr. Kellie held this position until January of 1967. Also he served for several years on the Provincial Council, and in 1966 was elected President of the National Association.

The year 1963 was one of ever increasing activity and saw several significant events take place. In 1961 a competition had been held to secure an emblem for the organization. The winning entry came by a combined effort of a patient and staff member from the Selkirk Mental Hospital. Basically, it depicted an open door symbolic of the ever increasing number of open wards in our institutions. In June of 1963, a committee was set up to consider pins and buttons for members. Three designs incorporating the emblem were submitted to the annual meeting of 1964 and one was chosen, which subsequently turned into a rather attractive lapel pin which was issued to the original members at nominal cost. In 1965, the cost was taken out of registration dues for new members of that date.

A very important milestone occurred in the fall of 1963, the writing of the first Provincial Certificate exam. This was the climax of the new training program set up under the Training Act of 1960. This was a comprehensive exam over two days, divided into four parts. The writing of this exam not only enhanced the status of graduates but paved the way for the introduction of a new classification in the Government Service. Previously the graduates had been classified as Attendants and Institutional Nurses, but in early 1964 the new classification was implemented combining both these groups into one known simply as "Nurse."

In October of 1964, an accompanying pay scale was implemented more in keeping with the professional nature of the work.

The fall of 1963 also saw a change at the local level. Up to this time, graduation banquets had been put on separately by the men and women. Now the district took over this function and the first combined banquet was held in the Elks Hall with the Hon. Gurney Evans, then Minister of Industry and Commerce as guest speaker. Also, this was the first banquet to which graduates were allowed to bring guests. Since then this has become an annual event with ever increasing success.

In 1964, a local Psychiatric Nurses' Award was established, one for a man and one for a woman. This is given to a graduate of the previous year who has shown aptitude and diligence in actual practice, as well as having been a good student.

On January 27th the sixth annual meeting of the Portage District was held with the following officers and Councillors elected:

President — Mr. Raymond Knischesky; 1st Vice President — Mr. Bert Kilbourne; 2nd Vice President — Mrs. Elinor Samels; Secretary — Mrs. Margaret Tully; Treasurer — Mr. William Rusk.

Council members for two years: Mr. Robert Macaulay and Mrs. Nita Stevens.

Council members with one year to serve: Mr. John Kellie, Mrs. Elinor Samels and Mr. Raymond Knischesky.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN

The Association for Retarded Children opened their school on Sept. 4, 1962, with Mrs. Max Wilton as President and Mrs. Lottie Watson as Sec.-Treas. The bank account amounted to $24.00 at that time.

The school opened with seven pupils and with Mrs. Wilma Smith as teacher. The kind thoughtfulness of the Orange Lodge, who have allowed classes to be held in the L.O.B. Bldg. on 2nd St. N.W., rent free, is certainly a credit to their organization.

During the time that the school has been in operation, presidents up to 1967 have been: the late S. Hargreaves, Mrs. Max Wilton, Dr. Jas. Menzies, F/Lt. Gibbs and T. N. Metheral. Mrs. Lottie Watson has served continuously on the executive since the Association was formed, and Mrs. Jean Malby is listed as the treasurer in 1967.

Teachers have been Mrs. Lillian Gorski and Mrs. Marie Buchanan.

The Association have never put a drive on for funds, but have held a tag day and a yearly tea. Grants are received from the City and Rural Council, who contribute $7.50 per month per pupil. A grant is also received from the Provincial Government.

After the Government stated, that starting on Sept. 1, 1967 schools for retarded children would be operated by the Dept. of Education, the Association decided to start another much needed project, an adult retardate home.

THE 'KIN GLEN' HOME

The Association for Retarded Children got in touch with Dr. Glen Lowther and stated the beneficial aspects of an adult retardate home, and he, knowing the reputation established by Kinsmen for

work in this area, suggested this as a priority project. This was in the Spring of 1966.

The Kinsmen Club of Portage la Prairie, shortly after, assumed the responsibility of paying the sum of $7,000 required to purchase a home at 104 - 3rd St. N.W. This, being a two storey, five bedroom, older home, required extensive renovations. The local Mental Retardate Association with the assistance of other charitable organizations and clubs, supplied the materials and the Kinsmen undertook the physical renovations of the home.

During the period of six months, fifty-three work parties were held, involving 795 work hours, and approximately $3,000 extra was spent.

The Kinettes deserve praise for the part they played in this project. They undertook and finished the complete furnishing of one of the rooms in the home.

It was with a sense of relief and pride that this home was turned over to the Association for Retarded Children, who now administer it. Ten young, moderately retarded adults moved into Kin Glen on March 15th, 1968, under the supervision of house mother, Mrs. Dorothy Frie.

The name 'Kin Glen' embraces the first three letters of 'Kinsmen' in recognition of the club as sponsors of the project, and 'Glen' in honor of Dr. Glen Lowther, who was the driving force in getting the project off the ground.

PORTAGE HEALTH UNIT

The Portage la Prairie Health Unit was officially opened on January 19, 1946, with Dr. Morley Elliott, then Deputy Minister of Health, as the guest speaker.

During the first few months, the work of the Health Unit was promoted by Dr. Chas. Manly who was the first Medical Director; by Howard Daniels, Sanitary Inspector; and by the nursing staff, Misses Ethel Elder, Phyllis Hadland, Della Robertson, and Miss I. Pearson. These members of Staff spoke at many meetings to introduce the policies of the Unit. The first stenographer was Miss Mary Gordon of this city.

The following is a list of Medical Directors of the Portage Health Unit since its commencement in 1946:

	Commenced	*Terminated*
Manly, Charles	1.1.46	31.5.50
Eadie, John A.	1.7.50	30.11.54
Gonty, Dr. Joseph	1.12.54	17.5.56
Hurley, Dr. Thomas	17.5.56	1.8.57
Sicotte, Jules	22.7.57	30.11.57
Snell, Dr. E.	15.10.57	30.4.59
Hall, Dr. Dorothy	1.8.59	8.7.60
Battershill, Dr. J.	1.7.60	30.6.61
Elias, John C.	1.10.61	31.8.63
Wood, Dr. Wm. J.	29.8.63	5.6.64
Elias, John C.	1.6.64	31.12.64
Isitt, Dr. Cyril	5.4.65	30.6.65
Cheng, Dr. Huo	1.7.65	

The areas covered at the commencement of the Portage Health Unit consisted of the City of Portage la Prairie, Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie and the Rural Municipality of North Norfolk. However, over the past years there has been a great expansion. The Portage Health Unit now covers the three above mentioned areas as well as the Village of MacGregor, the Rural Municipality of Grey, Village of St. Claude, Town of Carberry, Rural Municipality of North Cypress, Rural Municipality of Cartier and the Rural Municipality of St. Francois Xavier.

The Portage Health Unit is located at 170 Saskatchewan Avenue West, the building constructed in 1950.

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF CENTRAL MANITOBA

Born out of need, and the concern of private individuals for the welfare of neglected children, the CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF CENTRAL MANITOBA was formed May 31st, 1934. The first directorate consisted of J. H. Metcalfe, as president, Henry Pillar, Allan McCallister, J. C. Miller, R. C. Brown, A. B. Fallis, Rev. H. Atkinson, Mrs. H. Stephens, Mrs. A. B. H. Baker, Mrs. T. H. McCarthy, Mrs. J. Gosman, Mrs. H. Pillar, Mrs. H. Dickson, Mrs. J. Goodale, Portage la Prairie; R. H. Fusee, Mrs. Baroni, Mrs. Gee-Curtis, Neepawa; Mrs. W. Morton, Mrs. Duncan Broadfoot, Hugh Connolly, Gladstone; J. L. Cowle, R. A. Garland, Carberry; Mrs. A. McKinnon, Mrs. George Hay, MacGregor; Duncan Campbell, Austin; Reeve Wilfred Metcalfe, Mrs. George Blight, Oakville and Mrs. Robert McDermott, Edwin. Monthly Board meetings were held, plus an annual meeting reviewing the year's work.

In those early days the aim of the Society was to provide care, attention and protection for neglected children and to improve home conditions in which many children lived. With one social worker and a stenographer in a small office in the Portage la Prairie Court House, work began in 13 municipalities, which increased shortly after to take in all the Central Manitoba area north of the Assiniboine River.

In 1938 the Society took on the care of unmarried mothers at the request of the Department of Health and Public Welfare. Changes in the Child Welfare Act broadened the scope and effectiveness of the Society and in 1942 the Society was declared the sole agency to provide adoption service in the area. That same year, the area served was extended to include south of the Assiniboine River in Central Manitoba.

In the beginning, the Board members took an active part in the handling of the caseload and were consulted by the caseworker. In this way they were acquainted with most of the children in care. To protect a child's individuality, it evolved that only the professional staff of the Society would be familiar with the clients and all files and correspondence would be confidential. From a small beginning, the Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba has grown to encompass a four-fold service of protecting children, foster home care, adoption services, and counselling of unmarried parents.

The Board of Directors of the Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba consists of 50 community-minded men and women, selected from the Central Manitoba area. It is a private agency not a government department.

While the Provincial Government is the Society's main source of revenue, a substantial portion of the Society's funds are raised by public subscription. This is done by way of a campaign each fall. With a private agency, there is more personal involvement with the children in care, and also with Board members in each key centre of the area, the Society has a direct link with every district.

Since its formation in 1934, the Society has seen many changes . . . many advancements. Now located in their own building on Main Street South in Portage la Prairie, the Society looks ahead to its newest project, "Group Foster Homes," which will provide a positive living experience for those who cannot identify with foster families but who do not need expensive institutional treatment.

While changes have come to fill the need, the aim of the Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba is still the same, to look after the overall welfare of children and to protect them from neglect.

THE INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

The Portage la Prairie and district committee of the Canadian Institute for the Blind was formed on April 24, 1945. The aim of this committee was to give help to the blind of Portage and district by visiting them, investigating and finding new cases and assisting them as much as possible. During the C.N.I.B. drives for funds this Portage group play an important part canvassing.

The following will give a partial picture of a few of their other appreciated activities:

A dinner for the blind is held at Christmas, prepared and served, in the Elks Hall, by the ladies of the Royal Purple. At this dinner a member of each organization who has canvassed for funds during the Drive is invited to attend in order to meet and get acquainted with the blind. Members of the Business and Professional Women distribute baskets of fruit and candy.

In the summer, a picnic in the form of a dinner is held in the Elks Hall. This is prepared, served and donated by the Ladies of the Royal Purple.

Books in braille and records are arranged for the blind through the Winnipeg office of the organization. School books have been prepared for the students who are so afflicted to help them in their studies.

A few of the known charter members are: Mr. C. W. Beese, Mrs. Hugh Moran, Mr. H. G. Prior, Mrs. Gerry Elliott and Mrs. Jack Bates.

PHARMACIES IN PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

As every new community gets its start and grows various industries and business firms move in to play their part in the life of the village. So it was in Portage la Prairie, as with every pioneer settlement, and among the most important businesses of the day was the drug store. Portage has had the services of a thriving drug business for 88 years.

The Marquette Drug Store established in 1881 and located at the south extremity of Main Street is described as one of the first pharmacies in the Portage settlement. It was operated as Lakeman & Company. Doctor Macklin who had arrived in the district about that time, associated with Mr. Lakeman. Mr. Lakeman withdrew from the company the following year and the business was continued as Macklin & Co. No further information is given regarding this firm.

Other early stores were established by Joseph Taylor, B. M. Canniff and Dr. Cowan.

Following the great Portage fires which destroyed Mr. Taylor's pharmacy and many other buildings of the settlement along Main Street he moved to the Pratt Block on Saskatchewan Avenue in 1883. It has been said that this building was not too sound structurally, and when a dance was in progress above it was a problem to prevent bottles from falling off the shelves!

In 1904 Mr. Taylor disposed of the business to W. A. Vrooman who operated it as the Red Cross Pharmacy.

W. A. Vrooman sold to J. A. Dunkin in 1907. Mr. Dunkin was a qualified optometrist and conducted both drug and optical business.

In 1918 Mr. Dunkin disposed of his drug business to J. K. Hill and continued his optical practice. (In 1920 he moved to Brandon and conducted an optical practice there until he retired. He passed away April 18, 1954.)

J. K. Hill

Mr. J. K. Hill was a well established druggist in Portage la Prairie long before the purchase of Mr. Dunkin's business, having built what we know as Hills East Drug Store in 1901. A brother, A. D. Hill came later and was also associated with the business in this building.

When Mr. Hill purchased Mr. Dunkin's business he moved the stock to his own store and Dr. S. B. Cowan, who had previously been in business in the west end, moved into the Dunkin store in the Pratt Block.

Mr. Frank Ingram and Mr. Harry Rungay have been mentioned as having operated the Cowan drug store from 1914 to 1916.

Dr. Cowan sold this business to J. R. Macdonald in 1922 and it was known as the Portage Pharmacy until 1938 when W. J. Ripley bought it and changed the name to Ripley's Drug Store. The name

was changed again in 1959 when Mr. Stewart Hargreaves became the owner. Since that time it has been known as Hargreaves Portage Drug Store Ltd. (Since Mr. Hargreaves' tragic death in 1962 Mrs. Hargreaves has carried on the business with Mr. Orville Wagner as manager.)

B. M. Canniff came to Portage from Ontario where he was in business before coming west. He operated two stores here about 1878.

This enterprising man took an active interest in the Pharmaceutical Association and served as president in 1888-1890. In the history of Manitoba pharmaceutical education reference has been made many times to his progressive thinking and to his contributions in that field.

Around 1920 R. L. Davidson purchased one of the Canniff stores which was located in the Fairbairn Block, a few doors east of the old Merchants Hotel. In 1927 the Fairbairn Block and the business of Mr. Davidson was purchased by Hills. George K. Hill became manager.

The following year the store was destroyed by fire together with the Merchants Hotel which was situated on the corner. The store was rebuilt. Later the property where the hotel was located was purchased and the Mayfair Hotel was built, in which was located Hill's West Drug Store, owned and operated by George K. Hill. (James Hamilton, whom many will remember, was the contractor hired by Mr. Hill to build this attractive and useful addition to the city.) Charles Oliver and Clifford Bagrie who have been identified with Hill's West Drug Store for several years are now in charge of the business.

Another drug store doing a thriving business in Portage la Prairie at the present time is the Portage Pharmacy. It is located at 220 Saskatchewan Avenue west and its manager is J. A. Miller.

Hill's East Drug Store was well built by J. K. Hill in 1901. It still stands straight and strong on a solid foundation, and has never passed out of family hands. His son, Frank S. Hill ran the business for many years and now gives help and advice when needed to J. K.'s grandson, Jack C., who is carrying on the long-established, family business.

DENTISTRY AND DENTISTS

A pair of crude pincers seems to have been the only necessary piece of equipment that was required by dentists in the early days! 'Freezing' was unknown, and many a pioneer submitted to the

torture of extraction in preference to the pain of a toothache. Travelling dentists were common, and because of the competition many of them had a sideline. One such man was Dr. True.

Dr. True managed to collect quite a crowd every evening for two weeks, in September, 1894, on the Leland Hotel corner (where the Gordon Motor Inn is now). He had with him a colored gentleman who amused the crowd with songs while the doctor interspersed jokes and puns as he told of the recuperative powers of the medicines he was selling. He pulled teeth free of charge for all who needed this service.

The doctor paid the Council $25.00 for a transient trader's license to do business in Portage la Prairie for the above period of time.

When a child got a tooth cavity it didn't cause too much concern in those days. Rushing him (or her) to a 'filling station' was impossible. The door knob was used for more than opening a door! A stout string tied around the tooth, attached to the knob of an open door, a quick slam and the problem was ended without expense or too much inconvenience.

It is reasonable to assume that a dread of dental treatment stems from those long-gone days.

We have come a long way since those times. Instead of sitting on a vinegar barrel on a street corner, with an audience observing every painful grimace, we can relax in a comfortable chair in a dentist's office, and, due to progress in science, have our dental work done without pain.

The names of dentists through the years are not available. However, Dr. H. H. Smith, whom many have relied on for capable dental service for more years than we know, and who is still practicing, gave us the names of a few dentists to record here. There was Dr. Norm. Bailey (deceased) who practiced in Portage before the second World War, and served the forces during that time. There was also Dr. Fred Garvin (deceased), Dr. Joe Merril, Dr. Jim Menzies (who now resides in Penticton, B.C.), and Dr. Walter Dalzell who retired to Vancouver, B.C. Dr. William Shiels, who is no longer living here, had an office at 29 Royal Road N. in more recent times.

In compiling history, many years hence, it might be helpful if we record the names and office addresses of our present day dentists, which are as follows: Dr. William G. Hetherington, 203 Bell Bldg.; Dr. Frederick W. Parrott, 150 Cochrane St.; Dr. H. H. Smith, 14

Sask. Ave. E.; Dr. W. C. Smith, 102-32 Tupper St. N.; Dr. J. N. Stasiuk, 41 Royal Road N.; and Dr. Garry M. Winters, 29 Royal Road N.

Denturists are Carley, Barry & Spinak, Alex., 29 Royal Road N. (Sth off.)

OPTOMETRISTS

Many old-timers will remember the small ovals of glass framed with a very narrow rim of metal, which were called 'eye-glasses'. Wire earlugs had little loops twisted to hold a piece of string that was tied behind the head. What a difference to the attractive glasses being sold today! However, there was a difference in price too. In 1892, the unattractive models could be purchased for 25c! They could be obtained in a hardware store at the same time as a shopping trip for a rake or a hoe, and an eye test was deemed unnecessary. Many of the glasses seem to have been magnifying glasses with varying degrees of magnification, and a shopper merely tried them on and selected the ones most suitable.

When optometrists first opened offices in Portage la Prairie is not known; also their names and methods of determining visual defects. We are happy to be able to say, that in this day and age, we have three skillful optometrists who capably attend to the requirements of our citizens. They are as follows: E. R. George, 11 Saskatchewan Ave. E.; Ralph Logan, 101-32 Tupper St. N.; and Dr. K. E. MacDonald, 29 Royal Road N.

CHIROPRACTORS

From back in the early days to the present time people have had faith in the therapeutic results of chiropractics, and certainly before men made a career by study and training. The word was derived from the Greeks: "cheir" meaning "hand", and "praktikos" meaning "practical". With no training it is quite possible that massage and exercise resulted in relief from minor annoying ailments. At the present time, as we understand it, it is a method of manipulation of the joints and spinal column for the relief of pressure caused by impingement of a bone or cartilage on a nerve.

The name "Elliott" has long been associated with this method of treatment in Portage la Prairie. The number of satisfied patients who go to the offices of Dr. M. G. Elliott, 612 Saskatchewan Ave.

E., and Dr. L. E. Asselstine, 72 Tupper St. S., are indicative of the need for this service in our city and the worthwhile duties that these men are performing.

VETERINARY SURGEONS

Praise is long overdue veterinary surgeons. We don't have all the names of the ones who practised in our midst, and who each deserve a bouquet for the necessary and valuable services performed by them. We do know, however, that livestock and pets have always played an important part in our lives, and that, without veterinaries, we would have suffered loss in one way or another.

Dr. Andy Alton was one of the pioneer veterinary surgeons. During his time he travelled over bad roads, in all kinds of weather, in a cutter, buggy, and later in one of the first model cars, to care for animals on farms in out-of-the-way places. Cold barns were his operating theatres, a dim lantern was his only light, and the owner of the animal was his only assistant.

We are now in an age of better roads, and more comfortable and speedier modes of transportation, and the old coal-oil lanterns have taken their places among the relics of by-gone days. However, as it was in the olden days, so it is today, that veterinary surgeons must go to their patients at any time of the day or night and in all kinds of weather. The time has not yet come when these doctors can demand that a cow or a horse be brought to an office for an examination!

Many will remember Dr. John Arbuthnott who came to Portage la Prairie in 1941 and resided here until just a few years ago. He was a man, dedicated to his profession, who understood the problems of livestock owners who were trying to get back on their feet after the 'dirty thirties'.

Dr. J. S. Thomson, 62 Royal Road North, and Dr. George A. Schwesinger, 1000 Saskatchewan Ave. West, are our present capable veterinary surgeons.

PORTAGE ROTARY HOUSING LTD.

There comes a time in latter days of man
When years add up to near a life-time's span;
Still active though he may appear to be,
He dreams of peace, rest, and security.
Peace from the shrieking sounds of busy life;

Rest from the riotous rush of work and strife;
Security, the nice, contented, cozy feel
Of a tax-free home, with comforts that are real.
Just a dream you say; it can't come true,
A vision with too much the rosy hue!
Rotary now proves, beneath the sky's big dome,
There's such a spot folks love and call their home.

Anne M. Collier

Presently Rotary Housing consists of three large buildings located on 9th Street S.E. The total number of suites in the three buildings is 34; consisting of 16 doubles and 18 singles. The first unit was finished in June 1962; the second in May, 1964; and the third in Sept., 1965.

The total cost of the buildings was over $210,000.00 Each building has a C.M.H.C. mortgage which is being paid by the operation of the complex. The three buildings were each given an outright grant by the Provincial Government. The remaining amount of money was raised by the Portage Rotary Club through various fund raising steps, such as the annual "Rotary Minstrel Show", etc.

It is now in the early planning stages to progress further with additional units of suites to offer even more opportunity to the senior citizens of this area in Manitoba, to share in the comfortable and communal idea of senior citizen living.

Even at the time of the completion of the first unit of suites, the Portage Rotary Club were deserving of being historically recorded for their foresight, initiative, and Christian-like endeavor to promote the happiness of others.

Have you ever stopped to think what life would be like without music, and song, and pictures, and poetry? It is our pleasure to praise a few Portagers who have contributed to a joy of living by sharing their talents.

Music and Arts

The most illustrious vocalist to come out of Portage la Prairie was Miss Edith Miller, daughter of W. W. Miller who was a postmaster here for many years.

Her musical career began at Westminster Ladies' College, Toronto Ontario, where she won the gold medal at the Toronto Conservatory of Music.

Mrs. Colyer-Fergusson, nee Edith Miller shown here.

Coming west to Winnipeg, she continued her studies, then moved to Europe where she progressed in her chosen field in London and Paris. In the latter city she was a pupil of the famous Madame Marchesi and was contralto soloist in St. Bartholomew's Church, New York, and Tompkins Avenue Church, Brooklyn, later on.

On her second visit to England she gave her first concert under the patronage of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra.

She prepared for Grand Opera under the tutelage of the world-famous tenor, M. Jean de Reszke, and made her operatic debut at Covent Garden, London, in 1913, in the role of Maddalena in Verdi's "Rigoletto".

It was also in 1913 that she married Max Colyer-Fergusson in a colorful ceremony at St. George's Church, Hanover-Square. (She was living in Kensington Palace Mansions at that time.) W. W. Miller had passed away before this date, and she entered the church on the arm of Lord Strathcona. There were upwards from one hundred guests at the reception.

This lovely, talented Portager passed away on June 18, 1936.

Dorothy (Dolly) Toye, who received her education in Portage, also made headlines in the musical world by being accepted in the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York. Her unusual talent of being able to sing soprano and tenor equally well added to her popularity.

Another Portager who became a national musical figure as a soloist was Edith Lever-Hawes. Her husband was a pianist and often acted as her accompanist. She studied in England, and was soloist in Grace Church in Winnipeg for some time.

Two sisters, Lila and Mae Mawhinney, both contraltos, are also credited with having been exceptionally fine vocalists.

Redfern and Percy Hollingshead were active in musical circles too; Redfern, as director of a choir, and Percy as a tenor.

There was an English fellow, Charles B. Burlay, who was in charge of the Baptist choir around 1905. He is remembered as having an admirable tenor voice also.

In the early 1900s many names appear on the Portage roster of vocalists. It is regrettable that detailed information about each one is not available. Even some of the first names are missing! They were Mrs. Ditchfield, Mrs. Campbell Miller, Vera Sparling Hullett, Mr. Nelson, A. Williams, Mr. McIntyre, Mr. Evans and probably many more.

Mrs. R. Johnson, a registered music teacher, organist and choir leader contributed a great deal toward musical appreciation from 1906 to 1944; and the name of Fred Whitely, who came from England in 1906 and stayed in Portage until 1912, has been mentioned by old-timers as having been a talented music booster.

Musical history would be very incomplete if we did not record the achievements of a talented Portager, James D. McRae, son of

Rev. Dr. Farquhar McRae and Mrs. McRae who administered to the spiritual needs of settlers in rural areas.

At an early age, James evinced interest in music, favoring violin and piano, and directing the Burnside Presbyterian Choir 1908-1909. Later moving to Portage, he took up serious study in organ, piano and theory. To further his musical knowledge he later went to Winnipeg where he studied under eminent teachers.

By 1914 he was ready for his first major appointment and went to Brandon where he took over the duties of organist and Director of First United Church and Grace Methodist Church respectively.

When his services were needed in Portage in 1920, he returned here and has been organist and Director in the Knox Presbyterian Church (which is now the United Church) ever since.

Mr. James D. McRae has over 30 compositions to his credit, sixteen of which have been published. These include vocal solos (sacred and secular), organ, violin and piano; also anthems, and Cantata — "The Passion of Christ", a work hailed by eminent critics highly. All the published compositions have been used in Canada and the U.S.A., and some were even performed in England.

Mr. McRae is a Music Bachelor and an Associate of the Royal Canadian College of Organists, each secured by examinations. He has taught singing, organ and theory for many years in this area and is still active.

Portage has certainly been enriched by the presence of this clever musician through the years that he has been with us.

From the days of the early settlers, when house parties shortened long, lonely, winter evenings and dancers stepped in tempo to tunes played on a 'fiddle', a 'mouth-organ' or a comb wrapped in tissue-paper through which someone hummed a tune, Portage has been blessed with musicians. Each in their own way, and each to a greater or lesser degree, have contributed to the social life, entertainment and musical edification of Portagers.

The first brass band west of Winnipeg was organized and directed by Edwy William Snider, whose musical family formed the major portion, in 1880. Upon hearing this band, the public were instantly interested in seeing it succeed and also enlarged. Anyone with any talent and band ambition was encouraged to go to Edwy Snider for tutelage, and later attend band practice. These practice periods took place in the Snider home. It became almost a regular

occurrence for freighters going into Winnipeg to have included in their load on the trip back a trumpet, trombone, or a big horn of some sort.

Indoors the practice periods must have rattled the rafters, and Mrs. Snider must have had nerves of steel, or have been as keenly interested in the band as her husband.

The band grew in size and popularity and played an important part at sports days, ball games, picnics and other occasions. When the railroad got within a few miles of Portage in 1880, this band went out to the end of the steel and played a concert at a huge community picnic.

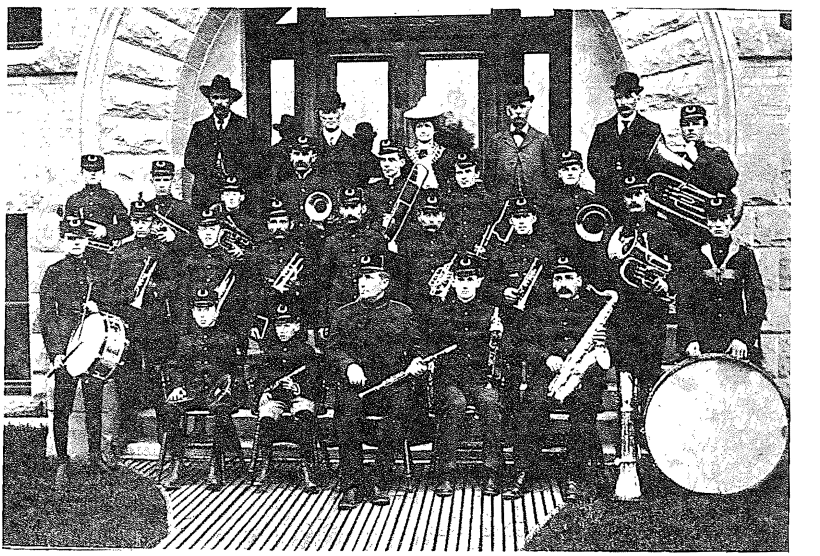
We do not know if the picture which we show here is the Snider band or one that succeeded it, or if any of the original band are in it. We do know however, that it is a very old picture and that the latter supposition is possible.

The names on the back of this picture were blurred, and some obliterated with age. A few that are faintly discernable are: Murphy, Purvis, Bailey, Black, Dodimead, Campbell, Williams and Walker. Does anyone recognize a grandfather or great-grandfather here?

At a time when history wasn't important to many people, Portage was best known as the home of "The Band". For miles around this band spelled success for any festivity planned. They were much in demand at Twelfth of July celebrations in Brandon and travelled to such 'far away places' by train.

The band made strolling in the evening a pleasure for most Portagers as they played selections at the old band-stand. The ra-ta-ta-tat of the drums gladdened hearts, smartened the step, and might even have contributed to the longevity of a few!

For some time there has been no band in Portage. However, at the present time two capable instructors, Cpl. Frank Chouinard and Mr. Bill Cromarty, are in the midst of remedying the situation. Maybe, once again, due to the efforts of these men, Portage will be known, among other things, as "The Home of THE BAND".



The picture of the band, shown here, was taken on the steps of the Court House. To make the picture of more interest to you we will name as many of the band members as possible.

Back row, left to right: (Committee) — Fred L. Newman, R. S. Thomson, Mrs. Chas. Graban, and Thos. Stockdale.

2nd row: Geo. Snider, Joe Mills, —?—, Lorne Munn, and Dick Johnston.

3rd row: no names.

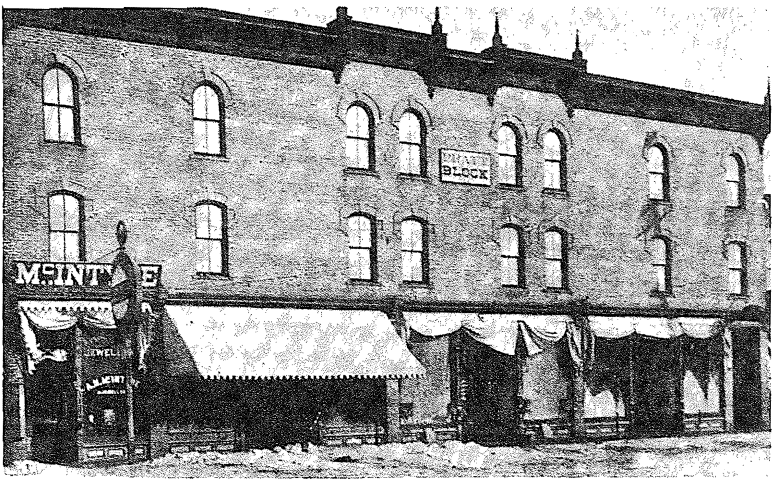
4th row: — McKenzie, Norm Sharp, —?—, Jack Stewart, Charles Robinson, Frank Pierce and James Gosman.

Front row: The two Parks boys, Bandmaster Joe Parks, Wm. White and Joe Brownridge.

The Pratt Block was situated between the east section of the town, which comprised Main St. and the principal business area, and the western section where the Hudson's Bay store and a number of other business places were located. Now, however, the same location is the heart of the city. The building was originally erected

by the Methodist Church. The ground floor was later converted into stores. The second and third floors accommodated the church auditorium and the gallery. When the building passed out of church hands, it was converted into an opera house.

As an opera house it became known far and wide. Theatrical groups, which were very popular before and for a few years after the turn of the century, engaged the building weeks ahead of a



Courtesy of the Manitoba Archives.

performance. These groups came from as far east as Toronto and stopped at leading centres to entertain residents. Old papers tell of different plays being held over due to the large audiences that couldn't be seated in the Pratt Opera House in one evening, even though it was a large building.

Dances were held in this building too, and many people still remember the Pierce orchestra.

PORTAGE AND DISTRICT MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL

Music Festivals in earlier years were sponsored by the Women's Institute. Some of the ladies who were instrumental in making it a success at that time were: the late Mrs. D. Fairbairn, Mrs. Middlemas, Mrs. Guinn and Miss M. Paul.

The Festivals were discontinued in the late '20s and revived by the Beta Sigma Phi thirty years later under the presiding of Mr. C. Rhind.

The Festival has since been expanded to include: Piano and Instrumental, Choral Speech, Poetry, Public Speaking, Dancing, and was one of the first Festivals to include French classes.

The Festival, now in its 11th year has grown from under 500 entries to almost 900, involving over 2,500 children and adults. It is held for 3 full days, ten days after the Easter holidays.

The present executive is headed by Mrs. Gordon Snider, President, and Mrs. Jack Hill, Secretary.

We don't have all the names of Portage musicians through the years. In fact we have very few.

John Nickless, who studied in Torrington's College of Music in Toronto, and also took lessons from Prof. Nugler in Turin, Italy, became a Portager in 1894 and opened a classroom where he gave instruction on the violin. He also started an orchestra that was in much demand at that time.

Prof. C. F. Nidd came several years later and taught piano, organ and voice.

Mr. Gordon P. Watson.

Mr. Gordon P. Watson, son of Mr. Percy L. Watson who is one of the few living, original members of the world renowned Huddlesfield Choral Society (their recording of Handel's Messiah, conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent, is classed amongst the world's great per-

formances of that work), naturally acquired a love for music at an early age.

He (Gordon) was born in Winnipeg and began his musical training there in 1929 under the tutelage of Mr. F. Douglas Bull. In 1936 he left Winnipeg as a piano scholarship student and went to the Royal Academy of London where he studied for 4½ years. While there he won the coveted Blakiston Memorial prize for "outstanding musicianship" and the certificate of merit; also his L.R.A.M. diploma.

When he left the Academy, he was approached by the Canadian Club in London to form an orchestra, which he did. He conducted its debut performance at Grosvenor House in 1940. He also has the distinction of being employed by the B.B.C. for a time.

During the war years he toured with E.N.S.A., with various shows, revues and concert parties, and has had the honor of serving as accompanist for many well-known concert stars such as Gracie Fields, etc.; as well as the honor of touring with London Ballet and London Festival groups.

Mr. Gordon P. Watson is a clever composer as well as a pianist. Three of his compositions were chosen by the Manitoba Music Educators Association to be heard at a concert in Tache Hall, University of Manitoba, on January 13th, 1967. Later, a new composition was added to his list of accomplishments and "Canada We Praise Thee" was accepted by the Centennial Commission of Canada as a Canadian Centennial song. It was presented by the Winnipeg Girls' Choir in the Centennial Concert Hall in Winnipeg, May 15, 1968, and since that time has gained in popularity. Canadian poetess, Miss Mae MacInnes wrote the words to this appealing composition.

We are fortunate in having this talented man in our midst as Music Supervisor for Portage schools, a position he has held here since 1952.

The desire of young Portagers for musical knowledge is evident by the numbers who have taken, or who are now taking lessons from music teachers here. Ladies who deserve credit for such instructional ability are Mrs. Tom Sherritt, Mrs. Howard Roberts, Mrs. H. R. Rosenthal, Mrs. Gordon Cox and Miss Anne Kerr. The two latter ladies received their training from Mrs. R. (Dick) Johnson, mentioned previously.

(Our apologies are extended to anyone whose name has been omitted due to lack of information).

THE SWEET AND LOW SINGERS

This group started in 1949 with Mr. Doug Shackell as director. Their first concert was held in the Playhouse Theatre in Portage, with the proceeds going to 'Winnipeg Flood Relief'. From that time until they disbanded in 1967 their concerts not only provided enjoy-

Back row (left to right): Gordon Watson, Rose Parrott, Maxine Owens, Verna Solmundson, Audrey Muirhead, Aulda McMillan, Lois Fry and Doug Shackell.
Front row (left to right): Jackie Atkins, Clarice Brown, Peggy Carter, Kathleen Wales, Wanda Ryder, Ruth Burk, Bev. Higgins, Irene Ross, Jean Vopni, Lois Stewart, Laura Farr, Kay Thompson and Mary Kohut.

able entertainment for many people but also served as benevolent fund-raising projects.

During the time that they were active they filled many out-of-town engagements in the surrounding districts, and in Winnipeg in various places such as Pool Elevators conventions, Eastern Star convention, Princess Elizabeth and King Edward Hospitals, Holy Family Home and the Uptown Theatre (in aid of the Fresh Air Fund). In addition they had several engagements with C.B.C. radio program "Parade of Choirs" and one T.V. program.

The Dorcas Society, who are practically synonymous with the word 'Christmas', have reason to appreciate the efforts of the Sweet

and Low Singers, as do many other organizations in Portage la Prairie.

Because of the worthwhile contributions, in time, effort and expense, of this group, we feel it fitting to include their picture in this book.

BARBERSHOP SINGERS

One of the most popular of entertaining groups in Portage la Prairie has always been the Barbershop Singers who are a large organization in this city. Each quartet is worthy of mention and it's regrettable that we do not have the names of all of them. However, information on one group, the Portageaires, has been submitted. Ken Ross, Jack Hall, Doug Watson and Lloyd Hyde have participated in many Barbershop competitions in Manitoba and the United States.

It seems fitting that Terry Lee should be born when Island Park was ringing with the sound of music, dancers were dancing, and competition in various fields was keen.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Lee, who lived a few miles west of Poplar Point, came to Portage la Prairie to enjoy the Fair on the 12th of

Terry Lee with medals and trophies.

July, 1956. They were having a good time amidst all the gaiety when Terry decided he wanted to see what was going on in the world! Mrs. Lee was taken to the Portage General Hospital, and it wasn't very long before Dr. G. H. Hamlin was announcing the safe arrival of a healthy baby boy. The proud parents named him 'Terry'. Neither doctor or parents realized, at that time, that they were getting the first glimpse of a boy who was destined to become a world celebrity! Terry's grandmothers, Mrs. Bert Bend and Mrs. J. A. Lee, like all grandmothers, probably had visions of things great and wonderful in his future, and they have both lived to see their dreams come true.

Terry came by his love of music and dancing naturally. Mrs. J. A. Lee says his great-grandfather was a champion piper and dancer; and a grandmother, on his mother's side was a dancer.

The Wallace Lee family moved to Surrey, B.C., where Terry proceeded to make great progress in dancing and music.

His big day came when he stood before 30,000 cheering Scottish people and shook hands with Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth, at Scotland's Highland Games after successfully dancing to his world highland dancing title, and winning the coveted Braemar Shield for the second consecutive year. He is the only person outside of the British Isles to win the Shield.

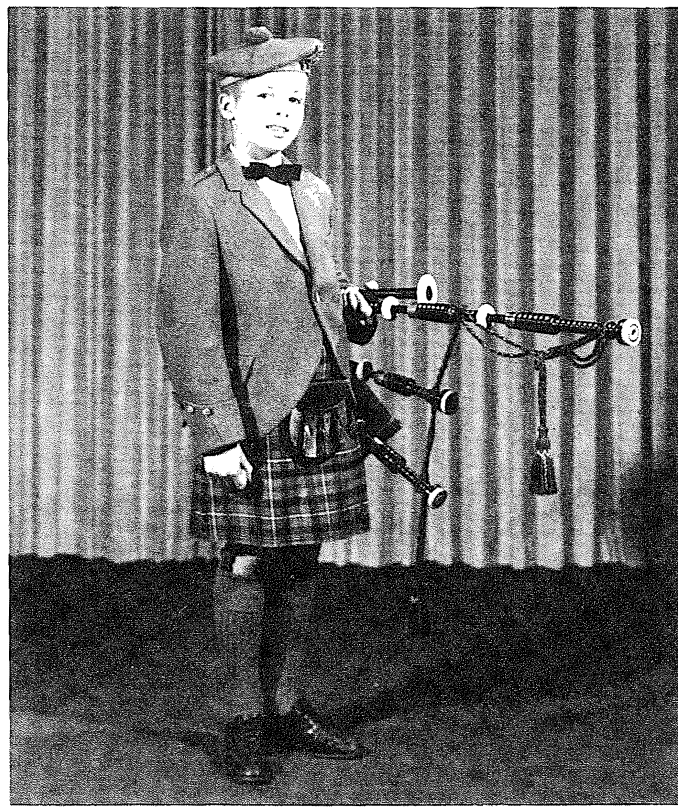
The Queen presenting the trophy to Terry Lee.

Some of the Royal Family can be seen in the background of this presentation picture.

Terry, an unspoiled, refreshingly natural boy, is shown here with the medals and trophies he has won. Each one will always be a reminder of an occasion; and each one has been the result of hours of practice, a love of dancing and the ability to do it well. This year, 1969, he plans on trying for a piping championship in B.C.

Terry's young brother, Jack, also saw the light of day for the first time in the Portage la Prairie General Hospital, and was ushered into the world by the same doctor, Dr. G. H. Hamlin. He is considered a talented piper and accompanies Terry at various entertainments. He was forbidden this privilege at the Highland Games, due to his age.

A sister, Maureen, 7 or 8 years of age, is also a dancer.



Jackie Lee with pipes.

Portagers are eagerly anticipating seeing the performance of this talented little trio during "Old Home Week" in Manitoba's Centennial Year of 1970. Relatives in Poplar Point and Portage will have an added reason to be proud that day.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE ARTISTS

Everyone is familiar with the friendly, smiling face of Jellicoe La Freniere, either by seeing him on the street or behind the counter in the Manitoba Liquor Commission store. What many may not know is that he is an accomplished musician and dancer; one who is helping to keep the pioneer style of jig-dancing and fiddle-playing alive. His grandfather, Isdore Zastre, was the winner of both "fiddling" and Red River Jig trophies in the Western Canada competitions in 1928 and taught Jellicoe the art of both.

When Mr. Zastre was nearing the final days of his musical life he gave his grandson his precious violin and said, "Carry on boy; don't let up until you have become a champion in what I have taught you". Those remembered words spurred Jellicoe on, and combined with his love of music and dancing he was trophy material from the start. In 1930 he won the Western Canada Red River Jig trophy. In 1951 he fulfilled his grandfather's dream by winning both Red River Jig and "fiddling" in Western Canada competitions.

Jellicoe La Freniere is a man we proudly claim as a Portager and Poplar Point proudly claims as one of their own, so he is doubly blessed. His home is in Poplar Point but his work days are spent here.

Mr. A. E. McGee, of Portage, became quite famous as a portrait painter back in 1892. Miss Freeman, who was the art teacher in Lansdowne college here, can be credited with recognizing and encouraging this man's talent.

At the first opportunity he went to study in Illinois Art School at Rockford. His next move was to the Buffalo Art Academy where for a year and a half he studied and sketched from life. He then went to New York city where he accepted a good position with the New York Portrait Supply Co.

When he came back to visit his parents in Portage, in March of 1892, he was so overwhelmed with portrait orders that he stayed a month longer than he had intended to stay, rather than disappoint

Portagers. A portrait of Postmaster Miller was on display in Mr. Rowe's gallery for a time and was greatly admired by all. Mr. McGee painted with both oils and water colors.

Another Portage artist of the early days was James R. Bryson. The Chicago British-American, in a paper of 1893, had this to say about him: Quote — "Among the rising artists of Chicago none has come more prominently to the front in recent years than Mr. J. Ross Bryson, whose studio is now located in the Central Music Hall building. A Canadian by birth, Mr. Bryson had from his early childhood a love for the pencil and brush. At 17 years of age he was apprenticed to the house and sign painting business, and in a short time became an expert in the technique of the trade. His desires constantly went out after something higher, and after a time he went to study art in Montreal. From there he went to the United States and continued his studies in various cities.

Mr. Bryson has achieved great fame as a portrait painter, and among the fine works of art to be seen in his studio are portraits of James G. Blaine, Booth and Barrett, the great actors; the Rev. Dr. Herrick Johnson, the noted Presbyterian divine, and "tim" Scanlan, of City Hall and sidewalk fame. These portraits are masterpieces of the painter's skill. Mr. Bryson has also in his studio many fine marine, landscape and figure studies that display a delicacy of touch and beauty of coloring that at once arrests the attention and awakes the warmest appreciation of the connoisseur".

James E. Collier, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Collier, was born in Vancouver, B.C. but came to Portage la Prairie with his parents when he was one year old. He received his education here and showed signs of artistic ability at an early age. People who have saved copies of the school yearbook, "The Tattler", have evidence of this, as the cover for several years was designed by him.

Jimmie (as everyone called him) started his art training in Detroit, U.S.A. in 1935, and after two years received a position with McKims Advertising Agency in Toronto. Working his way up in this organization, he attained the position of art director.

In 1940 he went overseas with the R.C.A.F. and served as a fighter-pilot through the war years, during which time he was awarded the D.F.C. He returned to Canada in 1945 and took up where he left off in art work.

Shortly after his return, he and two partners started what is now nationally known as A.D.S. (Art Design Studios) in Toronto, Ontario.

This business is now one of the largest of its kind, handling T.V. and all types of commercial advertising.

Lynn Sissons is an artist of whom Portage la Prairie is extremely proud. From the time she was a child, on the farm first established by her grandfather in 1871 near Portage, she showed an appreciation for trees, streams and prairie scenes that later became evident in many of her artistic works.

Her ambition to be an artist was encouraged by her parents who sent her to the Winnipeg Art School in the former Industrial Bureau on south Main Street. A desire for a lengthier period of training prompted her to take day employment and take art school classes at night. Her teachers during this time were Frank Johnston, who belonged to the Group of Seven and Walter J. Phillips, an artist who later went to Victoria, B.C. and was noted for water colors and wood block prints.

Miss Sissons shows artistic ability, and appreciation for the talents of others, in various ways. Old family chairs are seated with needlepoint of her own design and workmanship; most of her attractive hats are made by herself; and in her home she has a portrait of C. N. Bell by Grandmaison, a pastel prairie scene by Lemoine FitzGerald, a pottery bowl by Marie Guest, a ceramic of a Dutch woman in an apron by Leo Mol, and a number of other Canadian works.

She has been a long time member of the Winnipeg Poetry Society, and treasurer of it, as well as for Manitoba Society of Artists and the Winnipeg Sketch Club. She has painted scenery for theatre productions and did sets for Juno and the Paycock and Among the Maples.

In March of 1963, Miss Sissons was invited by Winnipeg Art Gallery to present a one-man show. It was held in the Gallery's FitzGerald Room. Previously her work had been shown along with that of Georgie Wilcox, Alison Newton, Marie Guest, Jean Eyden, and A. P. Hunter.

William Longdon was a blacksmith whom everyone could depend on to have a job well done in the early days. He was respected as an honest man, but he was also pitied because he was illiterate. No-one knew how he kept his business records, and no-one actually cared because there was never any reason for complaint. Charge accounts were always tallied accurately, with no questions asked by a customer about how the total was obtained.

Not wishing to cause embarrassment to descendants of anyone, we will eliminate the name of a man who tried to take advantage of

Wm. Longdon by refusing to pay an $80.00 bill. The debtor's reasoning was that, without proof, he couldn't be forced to make payment.

Without hesitation, Longdon took the case to court, and the shyster not only had to pay his bill but had the embarrassment of a few jibes from the townspeople.

The court case brought out something that was not known. William Longdon was an artist. The excellent facsimilies he sketched of work he had done, along with almost a photographic likeness of his customer, proved as good as any other evidence he might have produced had he been literate.

While this man never aspired for fame, it is with pride that we record him here as one of our Portage artists.

CHARLES MAIR

Charles Mair was the son of Jas. Mair, a native of Scotland, who, coming to Canada, became one of the pioneers of the timber trade on the Ottawa River. He (Charles) was born at Lanark, Ontario, Sept. 21, 1840, educated at Perth Grammar School and at Queen's University, Kingston, studied medicine for a time and was an early contributor to the press on general subjects.

In 1868 he published a book entitled "Dreamland, and other Poems".

In the early 1870's he came to Portage la Prairie and became a postmaster and also a general merchant. However, he became better known by his writings than for his business enterprises.

In 1886 he wrote his second volume, "Tecumseh, a Drama". This was considered a contribution to the right understanding of the Indian Character and W. D. Le Sueur said "the most important addition which had been made for some years to Canadian letters".

Other books followed: "The Last Bison", "The Fountain of Bemini" and "The Conquest of Canada".

Mr. Mair was an active participant in the first and second Riel Rebellions, on the loyal side. He was also one of the founders of the "Canada First" party in 1870.

In 1896 his address was Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

PORTAGE ALLIED ARTS

Until 1957 there was no opportunity to study creative art in Portage. When Mrs. Edythe Holden took up residence here, and it was learned of her excellent qualifications, she was approached to instruct painting classes.

The first classes started in September, 1951, and were held in the basement of the Victoria School. The name 'Brush and Palette Club' was chosen. A year and a half later quarters were rented upstairs in the Krindle Block. At this time the club was fortunate in acquiring Les Paine as additional instructor, and classes in sculpture were added.

Early in 1960, the opportunity of a larger studio on the third floor of the City Hall became available. As well as creative painting, creative pottery was then introduced by Mrs. Lorraine Rae. Later, with the addition of the necessary equipment, wheel pottery was begun.

Other classes offered have been: leather craft, mosaics, wood-finishing and upholstering, millinery, flower arranging, art appreciation, conversational French and interior decorating.

With the variety of arts and crafts being offered, the club was renamed 'Portage Allied Arts'.

Children's classes in painting and clay were instituted shortly after the organization began, with Mrs. Lorraine Rae and Mrs. Peg Chubb as instructors. Ballet classes have also been held and subsidized when enough interest has been shown. Teenagers have been encouraged with special classes, and they have always been welcomed at the adult classes. One, Lawrence Harrison, who had early contact with the group, went on to graduate from the Winnipeg School of Art, University of Manitoba, and is now professionally engaged in Fine Arts at the University of Wisconsin.

Among the volunteer and community projects have been mural painting at the Manitoba School, as well as some classes being given there. The mural in the pediatrics ward in the Portage General Hospital was another project. Backdrops have been painted for Little Theatre, Children's Theatre, S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Lions Club, and Southport's Timmy Dance. In 1963, Allied Arts assisted in the revival of Little Theatre in Portage. Assistance has also been given in the making of floats for Santa Claus Parades and more recently the Winter Fun Festival, when ice sculpture was sponsored.

Travelling exhibits from the Winnipeg Art Galley, as well as lectures, have been obtained. Members have attended workshops at the Winnipeg Art Gallery and at Clear Lake.

Currently, Mr. Jack Hassard is ably instructing painting classes, and mention must also be made of Prof. Elliason of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Manitoba, for his interest and guidance.

Each year an Open House is presented to the public where Portagers are invited to see a display of work, and to register for the following term. An exhibit is held at the Portage Fair, and members have also shown their work at the Manitoba Artists' Exhibit in Polo Park.

Leisure time is a growing thing and people have need of the opportunity to learn to use it productively. During the years since 1957 many hundreds of residents of Portage and surrounding area have taken advantage of the numerous educational services offered by the Portage Allied Arts.

Directors of this worthwhile organization are: Mr. Jack Hassard, Mrs. Grace Hamlin and Mrs. Wanda Ryder.

ENTERTAINMENT

Harvey D. Sparling, in his earlier years, made quite a name for himself in the entertainment field. His presence was in demand over many parts of the Province, and seldom was a concert program or amateur theatrical in the city or wide surrounding district complete without his contribution.

After the Armistice in 1918 in France, he was drafted from his unit to a Canadian concert party called "The Dumbells", and he played in theatres in many parts of Belgium, France and England, including Brussels, Paris and London.

He was in large part responsible for organizing the first Portage Little Theatre under the name of "The Portage Permanent Players". For several years this organization functioned successfully under his directorship and with his participation. The profits from performances were donated to the Christmas Cheer Fund for the underprivileged of the city.

After the introduction of radio, Mr. Sparling participted in several radio programs from Winnipeg and Brandon.

The Portage Theatre Guild entertained the public with two very successful productions, "Come Blow Your Horn" and "Tunnel of Love" during 1968.

Many of the happy memories of old-timers are centred around the various sports they participated in playing; and as it will likely be ever thus, we hope you will enjoy this section on —

Sports

CURLING

Curling has been one of the leading winter sports in Portage la Prairie since the 1880s. From the first Manitoba Provincial Bonspiel in Winnipeg in 1889 up to the early 1900s Portage had more than its share of the best curlers in the province. Many trophies from the provincial bonspiel came here in that era, and enthusiasm for the game has continued with considerable success ever since.

An early curling rink in Portage was situated just north of Saskatchewan Ave. on the west side of Gaddy St. The next rink was located north of Duke Avenue, where the Columbus Hall now stands. The present site, also just north of Saskatchewan Ave. on Main St., affords excellent facilities with artificial ice.

Portagers who have won provincial fame in curling are: W. H. Sparling and I W. Thompson (1890), W. H. Sparling and G. Bolton (1909), W. A. Sparling and W. Drummond (1912), who were the proud winners of the Tuckett Trophy. The William White Cup was won by W. L. Lyall in 1899. A. McKillop was the winner of the Grand Points Competition in 1903. The Purity Flour Challenge Cup was won in 1916 by W. H. Sparling. Two Portagers won the Ganong Trophy — S. M. MacDonald in 1931 and J. Wishart in 1949. The Alfred Doidge International Cup was won by W. H. Sparling in 1892, the Royal Caledonian Tankard by I. W. Thompson in 1900, the McMillan Cup by A. McKillop in 1909, the Free Press Trophy by S. M. MacDonald in 1930 and the Hudson's Bay Trophy by Don Brownridge in 1962.

In recent years one or two local rinks have done well in The British Consols playdowns, the winner of which represents the Province in the MacDonald Brier which establishes the Dominion Champion. In the year 1961 the Barry Greenslade rink was runner-up in a hard fought final of this competition.

A highlight in curling developed for Portage in 1932 when a rink, composed half of Portagers, won the Olympic Championship of the world at Lake Placid. The winning rink was: W. H. Burns — Skip (M.P. from Portage), Third — J. L. Bowman (M.P. original-

ly from Portage), Second — R. B. Pow, from the Lakehead and Lead — Errick F. Willis (later Lieut.-Governor of Manitoba).

For their services to the game of curling in the Province, and as officers of the Provincial Association the following Portagers have been recognized over the years by the award of Honorary Life Membership in the Manitoba Curling Association:
1913 — W. H. Sparling, 1927 — Isaac W. Thompson, 1933 — S. M. MacDonald, 1950 — Alex Waddell, and 1953 — Harvey D. Sparling, Q.C.

For the past several years, James W. Wishart, of this city, has undertaken the monumental responsibility of Drawmaster for the Provincial Bonspiel in Winnipeg, which is usually rated as the largest in the world!

CRICKET

Believe it or not, Portage also had its cricket teams around the turn of the century, and later. The cricket grounds (pitch) were located just north of the railway tracks and east of Main St.

A game between Portage and Winnipeg (when the two teams were vieing for the championship) was recorded in 1895. The score was 170 to 150 in favor of Portage. The newspaper article says, "Mr. C. P. Wilson won the distinction of being the first to have his name engraved on the Allan cup by making 101 and not out. The next time he scores 100 the cup will become his own property."

ROWING

Portage had one of the top Rowing clubs of the Province of Manitoba during the first quarter of the Century. It was strongest before the first World War. The Club House which housed all of the sculls and equipment, with a dance floor on the second storey, was situated just west of the Crescent Lake bridge on the Island, looking out over the lake. Later, in the 1920s it was moved to the golf course and became the first Golf Club House.

There were also private boat houses built out into the water on the east side of the bridge on both the north and south sides of the lake. Row boats, canoes and sailboats, including racing dinghies from Toronto Bay on Lake Ontario, plied the waters of Crescent Lake for several years. Portage la Prairie even had its own boat builders!

The Lake, today, is a delight for the photographer who wants to capture scenic beauty. Canada geese and wild ducks seem to

sense that they have sanctuary there, as they float like plastic toys in a giant bath tub, unmindful of the colorful canoes and sailboats that are a part of the scene.

TENNIS

Tennis flourished in Portage in the first quarter of the Century, with many private grass courts on home grounds, and splendid clubcourts attached to the Grace Methodist Church grounds (where the Safeway Store is now situated) and the old Presbyterian Church grounds to the west side of the present United Church.

After the First World War, the present well-kept tennis courts were established on Island Park. Since that time several Portagers have achieved Provincial fame as champions; Connie Ioanides won it one year; Jim Ioanides, several years; Cameron Hoover, one year and Addy Ryngach, two years. Gordon Hoover, although he never won the title, was championship material and nearly always reached the finals in provincial junior tournaments.

While trophies were being presented, a man stood smiling proudly in the background. He was the man who played tennis with them and coached them to victory. He was a man who did it for the sheer joy of participation. And he is a Portager of whom we can be very proud. His name is Ralph Rowley.

Another Portage tennis coach of whom we can be very proud is James Preece who is known to have managed the courts single handed as well as coach for at least five years. Unfortunately the author has not been given material on this period so there is not much that can be added. However, it is known that Bruce Miller (who is now a lawyer) and Charles Sing (who is now a lawyer also) were paired with two outside players and did credit to the coaching of James Preece by winning Provincial Championships in doubles competitions.

In 1966, Addy Ryngach not only won the Manitoba Singles Trophy for 18 years and under in tennis, but also the Prairie Regional Singles Title in her age group.

Gordon Hoover and Addy Ryngach both won awards for being the best tennis players attending the University of Manitoba in 1968.

GOLF

The game of golf was first established in Portage la Prairie in 1922. A group of local citizens got together and decided to rent

the present site of the Golf Club, which was then a pasture field. Parts of it were used as a dumping ground at that time. There were two narrow sloughs running through it as well. Only optimistic, enthusiastic golfers could foresee a future for such a site!

A lease for five years was arranged and the Club was formed with H. M. Dunham as its first president, H. D. Sparling its first secretary and a board of governors of sixteen members.

A great part of the original work was done by the members. The course opened with the first ball being driven by W. H. Burns. Needless to say, the course was very primitive in its first years. The capital to build it and maintain it was exceedingly meagre. However, interest grew in the game and in 1925 the property was purchased and the Club was incorporated as the Portage Golf Club Limited, together with the issue of shares.

The Rowing Club House was purchased and moved along the Lake to become the first Golf Club House.

Gradually, all of the scrap iron and debris was covered and grass planted over it. The small sloughs were drained and hundreds of trees were planted. Next came beautiful grass greens, a water system and a new, impressive Club House.

In recent years a golf professional has been attached to the Club and the membership has grown to between 400 and 500.

The Portage la Prairie golf course is considered to be one of the best and most picturesque nine hole courses in the Province and is one of the city's finest recreational assets.

Although the Portage Club has not produced any individual Provincial winners, it has produced many top notch golfers, and from time to time they have performed well in various tournaments and have won several inter-club team competitions. The Club's annual tournament, for many years, was contested by the top golfers of the Province.

The local Club established the first and only left-handers tournament in the Province, known annually as "The Canadian Left Handers Tournament" and it has often been described as the largest in Canada.

Several local members have served on the Provincial Governing Body known as The Manitoba Golf Association. The Portage Club was honored in 1957 by the awarding of one of the few honorary

life memberships in the Provincial Association to Harvey D. Sparling in recognition of his services to the game of golf locally and provincially.

Of interest to golfers is something Harvey D. Sparling doesn't brag about, even though he COULD! In the golfing game, he got a hole in one in Flin Flon and had the same success TWICE on the Portage course!

Mrs. Don Clark may be the girl to make female golf history in Portage la Prairie. In 1966 she scored a hole in one, which is something no woman has done before (or since) on the local golf course.

ICE RACING

For some years prior to, and during, the first World War, horse racing in winter on Crescent Lake was a keen sport. When the weather was not too severe fair crowds attended. However, this sport never became popular enough to endure for many years.

From time to time ice boats used the lake for iceboating, but aside from a few locally owned ice boats this sport did not materialize.

Snowshoeing was widely indulged in until shortly after the first World War, and snowshoe parties were common events put on by most of the churches and other organizations, as well as by numerous individuals.

Organized sleigh rides were also very common and were thoroughly enjoyed by young people.

BASEBALL

Until the 1930s Portage was one of the most enthusiastic baseball centres of Manitoba and always boasted a strong club, even in competition with Winnipeg. Despite the keen interest in the game, the only time that Portage ever won the Senior Baseball Championship of Manitoba was 1886. The engraved trophy is still in existence in this city. The battery for this team was W. H. Sparling, pitcher, and E. J. Sparling, catcher. (An interesting sidelight is that W. H. Sparling was offered $2,000.00, a large sum of money in those days, to pitch for Chicago. He turned it down for business and family reasons.)

The local baseball diamond, at that time, was on the south west corner of Saskatchewan Ave. and Main St., where Smith Motors, Cobbes Plumbing & Heating, etc. are now located.

PAN-AMERICAN BASEBALL

As the shout, "Play ball", rang out on Tuesday, July 25, 1967, a proud bunch of Portagers watched the Mexico and United States players take their places on the ball field. To outsiders who came to see the game it was an evening of excitement; to dyed-in-the-wool ball fans it had the added attraction of seeing a ball park second to none in Canada; and to Portagers it was a dream come true.

A few skeptics thought a ball park suitable for Pan-American games couldn't be built in such a short time. Certainly the land was available in a lovely setting on Island Park. But the land! Wasn't it just a rough little field full of holes? Also, how could work be done on it if it didn't stop raining? And whoever heard of such an elaborate project being completed in only 56 days?! "Can't be done. Can't be done", they said.

Fortunately, the Pan-Am Baseball Committee was made up of members who didn't believe in the word 'can't.'

Rev. H. L. Henderson became Chairman of the committees; Ald. A. R. Barrett was appointed Assistant General Chairman and Mr. D. D. Stevenson as Executive Director. Others who took on responsible positions in this determined group were:

Grounds & Facilities — Gerald Cobbe, Fritz Theil, Jack Forsythe, F. A. Dalzell, Glen Ellwood, Ald. A. Omichinski, Ald. R. E. Burk and Stuart Sharpe.

Finance: D. G. Rodger and Ald. W. A. Linden.

Tickets: Harry Foxton.

Publicity: Ian A. McKenzie, H. L. Empey, Webster Burton, and Mayer Rabkin.

Ceremonial, Decorations & Music: S/L Jack Coates

Communications, P. A., etc.: Bert Pilgrim and Keith Pickell.

Schedule, Umpires, Programmes: David Greenberg, John Vopni, W. Hendricks and F/O C. C. Patterson.

Reception and Hospitality: Reeve Robert Adrian and W. H. Vopni.

Traffic Control & Security: Sgt. W. S. Munn, Ald. E. C. Brooker and Ald. F. W. Cuthbert.

Personnel Committee: Vern Watson, R. Hooper and C. Clifford.

Of course the first step in the work project was the surveying of the ten acres of land. This was done by Stuart Sharpe. The ensuing steps (briefly) are as follows:

(As recorded by Mr. D. D. Stevenson.) — (Quote) —

"May 6th As the entire area had to be leveled, this was the day we moved in the heavy earth-moving equipment and went to work. Literally thousands of yards of earth had to be moved to do this job.

May 15th By this time the entire area inside the race track had been completely leveled and mulched, and this was the day we spread a ton of fertilizer over the entire area.

May 16th This was the day that we started the seeding operation, seeding a ton of special grass seed recommended by the University of Manitoba.

May 19th Through the generosity of many of the local market gardeners we had been able to borrow irrigation equipment which went into action on this day.

May 30th This was the day that we could see the first spears of grass coming up. This was 24 days after the start of the operation.

June 8th This was a night to be remembered: around 65 men, women, boys and girls arrived on the scene with paint rollers, paint pots and paint brushes, and painted the entire seating of the Grandstand and stairways in 1 hour and 28 minutes.

June 17th This was the day that the sodding of the infield was started.

June 21st Back stop framework was set into place.

June 23rd The entire playing field was fenced."

By July 18th the Pan-American Baseball facilities were nearing completion, but there were still a few time-consuming jobs to be done.

On July 23rd, the bleachers and Press box were made ready — with only two days left until games' time!

July 25th. The BIG day! Flags go up, Mr. A. Moffat placed the "home-plate" and everything was in perfect shape for the opening game at 5.30 p.m.

The games played in the Portage la Prairie, Pan-American inspired ball park were:

Mexico vs United States, United States vs Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico vs Cuba, Mexico vs United States, Cuba vs Mexico, Canada vs United States and the play-off game — in that order.

With Canada's Centennial celebrations still fresh in the minds of everyone it might not seem of importance to have elaborated on the Portage ball park. However, in 2067, a date none of us will see, Portagers may refer to this narrative and get inspiration from the admirable community effort which it depicts.

LITTLE LEAGUE BALL PARK

The area directly north of the Rotary Park, the Senior Citizens Housing Project, has been developed for a Rotary Little League Ball Park. The idea was first conceived in 1963, but nothing was really accomplished until the fall of 1965 and the summer of 1966.

To date the grounds have been completely levelled, graded and re-seeded and the backstop and base line fences have been erected. The installation of dugouts, the erection of metal bleachers and the gravelling of the parking area are planned for this spring (1969). The Rotary Club estimate the approximate cost of this park at $3,500.00.

The ball park is intended primarily for use for Little League Baseball but the grounds will be available for use by the Men's Central Manitoba Fast Ball League when not required by the Little League. The feasibility of erecting lights for night games is under consideration as a future possibility.

SKATING

When the Kil-Kare skating club was formed in 1923, Mrs. Gladys Weber was one of its first members and has continued her membership through the years. She remembers the first executive: Honorary Pres., Mrs. B. L. Davidson; Vice-Pres., Mrs. A. West; Secretary-Treas., Mrs. S. M. Stephens; and Social Committee, Mrs. E. Burk, Mrs. Parmenter, Mrs. Joe Bell and Mrs. Bonny.

The purpose of the Club was for women of all ages to get together for enjoyable afternoons of healthful exercise. It was made more enjoyable by the excellent music provided for the skaters.

Mrs. Weber said, "During the hey-day of the club, the 'guest evenings,' which were held once a month, were gala affairs, with the city band supplying the music, popular entertainment and lunch."

During Canada's Centennial year, the officers were as follows: President, Mrs. Leslie Poole; Vice-Pres., Mrs. Harry Semrick; Secre-

tary, Mrs. C. D. Eakin; Treasurer, Mrs. Robert Doty; Lunch Conveners, Mrs. Allan Preston and Mrs. Nick Pliska; Entertainment Mrs. George Dahl and Mrs. Mervin Owens.

THE PORTAGE HORSE CLUB

Horse-back riding was a necessity as well as a sport from the time of the earliest settlers. Rounding up stock was the necessity, racing was the sport. Proper driving technique, with well-groomed horses harnessed to vehicles, has given enjoyment at fairs all over the country through the years.

In 1961, The Portage Horse Club was formed, with Howard Gillam as President; Stanley Wylde as Vice-President; Nancy Kerman as secretary and Mrs. R. D. (Verna) Lyttle as Treasurer.

The Club provides an opportunity for members to learn handling, grooming, training, riding, driving and the art of showmanship. Membership is open to anyone who owns any kind of a horse or ponies, light or heavy horses and to anyone contemplating the purchase of a horse, or anyone who is simply interested in horses.

A Show is held each year, when competition is keen for the large Portage la Prairie Co-operative Ltd. trophy. Ted Bray, of Oakville, has won it twice. Other winners have been Brian Sloik, Garry Sloik (of Portage) and Jack Bray, of Oakville.

The Club also derives much pleasure from various activities, such as social evenings, horse shows, overnight trail rides, etc. There was also the Sunday morning, they all remember, when they held a mounted Church Parade in Portage la Prairie. The service was conducted by Rev. H. L. Henderson who was also mounted.

By the year 1967 there was a total of 78 members in the Club.

DUPLICATE CONTRACT BRIDGE

George W. Beynon, who was born in Portage la Prairie in 1864, was known all over the North American continent as "The Grand Old Man of Duplicate Contract Bridge." He was over 100 years of age when he passed away in Florida, U.S.A. a few years ago.

He was the great promoter of the large Contract Tournaments, became the top American Contract Bridge League Tourney Director, edited the A.C.B.L. Bulletin and wrote the Manual now consistently used by all Duplicate Bridge Directors in North America and else-

where. (It might be of interest to many to know that he also played pro-hockey and lacrosse, and that he conducted symphony orchestras throughout Canada, Europe and the U.S.A.)

Portage organized a Duplicate Bridge Club in 1959, affiliated with the American Contract Bridge League, of New York, which controls all Duplicate Bridge Clubs in North America. The local Club has had great success and some of its members have distinguished themselves throughout the Province as well as in Saskatchewan, North Dakota and Minnesota. Its annual tournament, for the Sparling trophy, brings into competition the best bridge players in the Province, as well as players from outside.

LACROSSE

A game that was popular in Portage la Prairie for the first quarter of the 20th Century was lacrosse. Teams from this city competed in Winnipeg and other centres. There are no teams here at the present time and there does not seem to be much interest in reviving the game.

Lacrosse Champions of Manitoba in 1891.

Front row, left to right: Robt. Baker, John Shepherd and W. Hunter.
2nd row: Wes Bride, Archie Ogletree, J. Grassie, W. Young and O. W. Humber.
Back row: Sel McDonald, Bert St. John, Geo. W. Beynon, W. A. Crisp, F. St. John and Robt. Gillis.

BOWLING

The first large bowling alleys were established in Portage la Prairie after the first World War. They were located on the second floor of the Brown's Limited Building on the north-west corner of

the intersection of Saskatchewan Ave. and Royal Road. Thos. J. Kernahan is credited with introducing the game to the city.

Ten pins was the popular game and teams from Portage frequently competed in Winnipeg, very often winning impressive victories. Mr. Kernahan, himself, was one of the best bowlers in the Province. He had more than one perfect game of 300. He also competed successfully in Chicago and Minneapolis.

After the Brown's Block burned down in 1940, alleys were established elsewhere: the upper storey of Prior's store, which was where the Hollinsworth store is now (minus the upper storey), and later in the Anderson Block on the south side of Saskatchewan Ave. The latter block, also, burned down in 1943.

Plans were announced in March of 1961 that a $140,000 shopping centre was planned, the site to be between 21st and 22nd Streets. The 320 ft. by 72 ft. structure was completed the same year, and while a large part of the buiilding was occupied by the grocery and food business there was also enough space for the installation of a 12-lane bowling alley. This alley named "Prairie Lanes" is completely automatic and Mr. John D. McCowan has owned and operated it since the date of its opening. An ardent bowler himself, he is an ideal man for the business.

John Harrison with trophy.

Mr. McCowan loaned us a bowling scrapbook (of latter years) which he has added to as events occurred. It was our intention to list the names of all Portage trophy winners. However, upon perusing the thick volume that he has preserved, we find it is impossible to do so in limited space. There are literally hundreds of names which would have to be included. Add to that explanatory words on the various events and you will have an idea of the space that would be consumed! Therefore, it is necessary to confine the bowling history to a few of the highlights.

In 1960, John Harrison (shown in picture) won the five-pins championship of the West. He was then automatically invited to compete in the Masters tourney at Toronto where he captured the Canadian championship.

Iris Kushner won the Manitoba High School (Singles) championship in 1960 also.

Another champion was Terry Green who won the Western singles.

Freddie Burnick and Mrs. Dot McLennan headed the Central Manitoba Bowling Association Roll-Off on Jan. 31, 1962. It was the second straight CMBA crown for Dot.

Connie Wyatt's name was added to the championship list in 1968 when she won the Manitoba and N.W. Ontario laurel in singles competition.

Ten-pin bowling is enjoyed by many people at Delta Lanes, 11-2nd St. N.E. Mr. Zen Glesby is the manager of this sporting establishment.

A book on the bowling activities in our city could easily be written. Suffice it to say it is one of the most popular pastimes, where all age groups are welcome and enjoy a fellowship that is part of the joy of living in Portage la Prairie.

SOCCER

Soccer Team, 1910

Back row, left to right: Roy McKay, E. Middleditch, Geo. Atkinson and Lorne Wild.

Middle row: Clarence McLarty, Ed Humphries, "?", James Shearer and W. Clayton Lowry.

Front row: A. J. (Fred) Webb and "?".

(Where "?" appears, identity was unknown.)

Soccer was a very popular game at one time and in 1910 Portage had 5 or 6 teams. The picture shown is self explanatory — the team that won the city cup.

Soccer flourished until the beginning of the 2nd World War, actually, and it was within the past few years that it has become popular again.

Back row, left to right: C. B. Astbury, J. H. Humber, J. Peden, C. R. Rogers, E. A. Middleditch, H. G. Ellwood, R. McKie and T. R. Campbell.
Middle row: A. Gibson, Major F. G. Taylor, D.S.O., B. R. Maddams, C. J. Sharp and E. Eammons.
Front row: H. Peden, W. S. Smith, J. Benzie and J. R. Walker.

A Portage Football Club who were winners of the Portage and District League Cup and also the Armstrong Cup in 1924.

BASKETBALL

Whenever the topic of basketball is brought up, Ralph Rowley's name is bound to be mentioned. He started coaching the Portage "Pats" team in 1940, and continued through the 1941 season. The team then were deprived of his coaching services until he was released from the Air Force in 1945. Since that time to the present day he has been a Coach that we are all proud to call a Portager. He has always stressed good sportsmanship and has been commended many times for the courteousness of the players on his teams through the years.

During Ralph's first years of coaching, the only place they had to practice was a small, low-ceilinged, under regulation size gym. in the old collegiate. Then he obtained permission to use the Drill Hall (in the vicinity of the Arthur Meighen High School) for one season. Both Coach and the team walked to all the practices.

MacDonald Airport officials were very co-operative, the following year, in offering their gymnasium for use once a week, as well as for some games through the season. This privilege was very much appreciated for two years. Then South Port built their new recreation centre, with its large gymnasium, and granted permission to have games played there. Being closer to the city, it was more convenient for the Coach and team.

After the Prince Charles school was officially opened in 1950, weekly practices and games were held there. (This was the school that burned to the ground on April 14, 1968).

Until 1950, the team only had one or two competitive games per season. From 1950 to 1953 things were looking up and they were getting 5 - 7 games.

1953 marks the "Pats" first year in a Provincial tournament. Since that time, they have been in the Manitoba tourney about a dozen times. Although they have not yet won a Provincial "A" title they have, most years, made a creditable showing. They have won the "B" title three times and were "A" finalists one year.

Dorothy Prior won an award for the outstanding girl player at the Manitoba tournament held in Winnipeg in 1959, and Addy Ryngach had the honor of being named the outstanding player in the Provincial tournament held in Brandon in 1966.

The Collegiate got its first Athletic Director, Stanley Floyd, in 1960 or 1961, and was first in a basketball league with both boys and girls teams. Since that time the Athletic Director has arranged all games, both league and exhibition, and the trips have been made by bus.

In recent years, Ralph Rowley has been able to run a grade 8 girls' league in Prince Charles gym. one night a week. This has been helpful in forming a good "Pats" team.

A remarkable man, Ralph Rowley! Although he appreciated the honor of receiving awards from the Portage and District Chamber of Commerce, and the Portage Kinsmen Club, for his work through the years, he in no way looked for, or expected, any special recognition.

His wife says, "He feels that the enjoyment he gets out of coaching, and the appreciation his basketball teams have always shown for his efforts, and his interest in them, has been ample reward without any special awards being given to him."

Addy Ryngach and Ralph Rowley.

The picture shown here was taken at the Sports Banquet in 1966, when Ralph Rowley was presenting Addy Ryngach with his trophy for most valuable player in basketball that season.

In that season, her last in high school, she had averaged 23 points per game in 18 games. In the Provincial Tournament that year, in the three games she played, she outdistanced her closest rival by 32 points!

Before sending our manuscript to the publishers we feel we should take the time to add some extra news of interest which appeared in the Daily Graphic on April 22, 1969. Quote: "Miss Addy Ryngach, 21, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mickey Ryngach, of Portage, is one of three girls selected from Manitoba to attend training camp for Canada's national women's basketball team.

The women's development project camp is pointed towards the 1971 Pan-American Games to be held in Cali, Colombia".

THE PLOWING MATCH (and Lord and Lady Byng)

The highlight of any plowing match held on the Portage Plains must be the one of June 21, 1922, when the Honorable Lord Byng, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., M.V.O., Her Excellency Lady Byng, and members of their staff came to Portage la Prairie.

Mayor Burns and the Reeve of the municipality, along with other public representatives, met the train and conducted the party, via Main St. and Saskatchewan Ave., to the City Hall square, where the returned soldiers and Scouts were inspected, and the address of

welcome read to His Excellency by city clerk Grieve, and presented by Mayor Burns.

Cars then took as many people as possible out to the Rutledge farm, where the plowing match was opened by His Excellency and the ground inspected by the party. Following this, the Governor made an address and was afterwards introduced to as many of those present as possible.

A luncheon was prepared by the ladies of the Prospect Missionary Society and guests were entertained on the Rutledge grounds.

The distinguished visitors were visibly pleased with the activities of the afternoon; and it was the refreshing, Portage la Prairie way of acquainting them with REAL farmers who could raise more than their eyebrows or their hats!

An interesting conjecture might be that too much expense goes into an unappreciated 'ties and tails' entertainment, in many places, for celebrities that might be bored with the repetition, and would enjoy something 'down to earth,' like a plowing match, more!

Plowing matches actually began shortly after the turn of the century; Mr. A. M. Brownridge thinks it was about 1902. He was at the first event, which was held on the Tom Sissons farm, but didn't compete until the next year.

Pioneer farmers took great pride in their plowing ability, and as horses inched their way forward pulling the hand-plows, which were guided by the owners, large crowds gathered to watch them, some speculating on who the winner would be. The straightest furrow and the best weed coverage was the ambition of every competitor.

Through the years, this sporting event has never waned in popularity; actually, it has grown considerably. Horses have been replaced by tractors, of course, and many extras have been added such as: tillage demonstrations, demonstrations (in tents) by home economists, films on the vegetable industry, a tent enclosing displays on weed and insect control and soil fertility (with qualified men to answer questions), demonstrations by machine companies, competitions for amateur welders, etc.

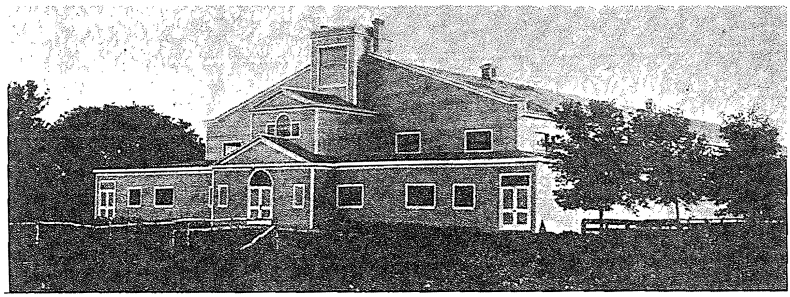
You can almost feel the spirit of camaraderie in the air at this yearly event, as old-timers group together to talk of "the way it used to be", and marvel at the progress that has been made in machinery and technique since THEIR soil-tilling days!

Provincial and Western Canadian Championship trials have been held on the Portage plains many times, and competitors from the district have won on several occasions.

We don't have a list of winners through the years, but we can mention a few of the latest ones: Gerald Lyttle won the Manitoba and Western Canada trophies (1968), and the same year Dan Werbiski, Leslie Watson, Jim Moorehouse and W. A. (Bim) Smith were also in the winners' circle.

HOCKEY

Before ice arenas were built, settlers' families learned to skate on frozen ponds and creeks and clearings on the Slough. Then,



Portage Arena, Skating and Hockey Rink, 1902

open-air skating rinks, with caretakers shovelling off the snow after storms and pouring multi tanks of water on them, became popular places for skating parties, and also for hockey games.

The picture of a Portage arena, shown here, was taken in 1902 and must have been either built that year or some time prior to that. It is quite possible that it was Portage's first 'closed-in rink'. Maybe this was the rink that the boys, who won the championship of the West practiced in. The location has been given as S. of Dufferin Ave. between Royal Rd. and Tupper St.

It was back in 1893 that the Portage Juniors first covered themselves with glory by winning this championship, defeating the "Victorias". The score was 10 to 1 in their favor! Records don't show the first names of the players; they are listed thusly: Lawrence, Hunter, D. Macdonald, Ellis, Merritt, Grassie and S. Macdonald.

The Manitoba Liberal of Feb. 8, 1893, gives an account of another hockey game: "The first match between the Portage hockey

club and an outside one was played on Saturday evening. The visitors were the Grain Exchange club team of Winnipeg, who came up here with all the prestige of one of Winnipeg's crack teams. They were entertained at the Albion by the Portage club.

The match was a lively one, and the Portagers soon showed that they were worthy opponents by taking the first and second goals, Snider and Beattie doing the scoring. The game ended five to two in favor of Portage." Other boys mentioned as playing on the team that night were: J. Sheppard, D. G. Macdonald, ? Stanley, C. Grassie and S. Macdonald. A. J. Bell was the umpire.

Back in those same 'good old days' of seven-man hockey, when games were played 30 minutes each way before a rest period was called, a team brought Portage an Intermediate Championship (1897-1898). The team was made up of A. Cleaver, J. Irvine, W. Pitblado, D. G. Macdonald, W. N. Roxburgh, S. M. Macdonald, W. A. Young and T. Weaver.

E. A. Gilroy was the manager of a team that brought the second Intermediate Hockey title to Portage in March of 1905. It is regrettable that we can't be certain of the names of the boys who were on this team. However, some of them are thought to have been R. Charlton, Art Serviss, E. Day, F. B. Thomson and C. B. Graban.

The All Professional Club was formed in 1907, 1908 or 1909, and was financed by the sale of shares to local citizens. Several of the greatest hockey players of that era were members of this team. Old-timers who were hockey enthusiasts at that time will remember 'Newsy' Lalonde, 'Cyclone' Taylor, Dubeau, Smith (of Smith Falls), 'Skinner' Poulin etc. Roy Charlton, who was the youngest Pro-Hockey Player of the West was also a member, as was Art Service. (The latter boy might be the same one mentioned previously, and whose name is misspelled either here or formerly, which is due to information submitted by different people.) At that time, Portage had the largest ice surface of any rink in Western Canada!

Little bits and pieces of notes are too interesting to be discarded simply because there is no follow-up of information. One says, "Jack O'Reilly coached a Western team for several years (I'm not sure if it was The Trail Smoke-eaters) and took them to the Olympics in Europe representing Canada". (Jack O'Reilly was a Portager.)

Another says, "A Portage boy, Jim Glennie, coached and played for one of the leading teams in England for some years. He also made quite a name for himself in golf".

As hockey has been one of the most popular sports through the years, from the days of the pioneers to the present time, it is impossible in a book of this size to cover it completely, or even adequately. We can merely share with you some of the highlights, and the ones of which we are not aware must necessarily be omitted.

Going forward to the 1930s, Portage had reason to be proud of their Terriers when they won the Manitoba championship (1934-1935).

Portage Terriers, 1934-1935.

Shown in the picture here they are, from left to right:
Back row: Manager L. J. McDougall, A. Kuly (defence), and Ade Johnson (Coach).
2nd row: Lindsay McDougall (Centre), S. Wilkinson, (Defence Sub.), Jim Collier (R. Wing), Geo. Crewson (Defence), W. Osborne (L. Wing), Peter Anderson (Wing Sub.).
Front row: L. Kennedy (Goal Sub.), K. Ellwood (L. Wing Sub.), J. Lang (Centre Sub.), N. Poliski (R. Wing Sub.) and R. King (Goal).
Seated on the floor in front is Craig Stewart (Mascot).

Long before this game, a new rink was built in Portage on the site where the new Safeway Store now stands. The building, shown in this text, was destroyed by an arsonist.

We are fortunate in being able to also include among our list of winners, the P.C.I. Hockey Team, who came out on top in the Manitoba League 1935-1936.

Portage Collegiate Institute Hockey Team—Shown here from left to right are:
Back row: L. McDougall, Asst. Manager; W. C. Byas, Manager; F. Kennedy, Trainer; Ade. Johnson, Coach; G. Jones, Pres. Portage Hockey Club.
Second row: J. McCullough (R. Wing), A. Smart, (L. Wing), B. Osborne (L. Wing), L. McDougall (Centre), J. Collier (R. Wing), M. Pecket (L. Wing), and G. Crewson (Defence).
Front row: A. Winchuk (Defence), L. Kennedy (Utility Goalkeeper), Fred Bowman (L. Wing [Capt.]); Ross King (Goal) and J. Stewart (Defence).
Craig Stewart, seated on the floor, was mascot for this team also.

To anyone not living in Portage, this might be just another hockey picture, but a few extra words might be of interest to you: Ade Johnson played hockey in the Major Leagues; J. Stewart, or "Black Jack Stewart" as he was nicknamed, played for many years with the Detroit Red Wings; Craig Stewart, the little mascot, is today a member of parliament for Minnedosa; and all of these boys served in one or other of the armed services during World War II.

The Winnipeg Tribune, January 29, 1955, contains a picture of Mr. Harry Foxton and beneath it is the following: "MAHA PREXY: Harry Foxton has long headed the Manitoba Amateur Hockey Association and is just one of those wondering when his city will make a successful comeback into the realms of good-brand hockey."

Since the time that was written interest in the game has built up, and with the talent shown by young players today we feel it

may not be very long before a team will once again be making headlines.

The most thrilling event in hockey history took place in 1941-1942 when the Portage Juniors won the Dominion Championship. Shown in the picture here, they are, from left to right:

Front row: Don Campbell, Jack O'Reilly, Bill Heindl, Bud Ritchie, Lloyd Smith and Bryan Bell (mascot).

Second row: Executives Ed Calder, Sam Greene, Gordon Grigg; Bert Wynne (Vice-Pres.) Lindsay McDougall (Trainer), Jim W. Cook (executive) and James Hamilton (executive.)

Third row: Jack P. Bend (Manager), George Jones (Pres.), and Addie Bell (Coach).

Back row: Bill Gooden, Wally Stefinew, Capt. J. McDonald, Gordon Bell, Joe Bell, Lin Bend and Bobby Love.

SOUTH SIDE CENTRE

Hurray! for youth in open air,
With skates on feet, and ne'er a care
But to drink deep of sporting lore,
With joy in every final score.
Win or lose, it must be fun,
From the moment that a game's begun,
To skim o'er ice with speedy strides
And be one of the team, besides!

Anne M. Collier

We should add an extra "Hurray" for Mr. and Mrs. Addie Bell whose dream culminated in South Side Centre, 111-4th St. S.E.

Mr. Bell, who was an avid sports enthusiast, was a guard at the jail. He was a kind man, and no doubt pitied the prisoners who hadn't had the opportunity, in their formative years, of partaking in healthy outdoor sports, the most important of which, to him, was hockey. A fellow who couldn't skate was as pathetic as a duck that couldn't swim!

With the welfare of the young people of Portage uppermost in his mind, he decided to make a rink in the garden behind his home. Mrs. Bell was whole-heartedly in agreement with her husband's plan, and in 1929 flooding began. With our present day methods this sounds simple, but it wasn't so, at that time, for the Bells. It was a cold winter, and the back door of their home was kept partly open for hours on end to allow a hose, connected to a kitchen tap, to pass through to the "rink".

Even though Mrs. Bell was suffering from an ailment which is usually the worse for chill, she never complained when the wintry winds were sweeping through her kitchen. Nothing should stop the worthwhile project, or dampen her husband's spirits, while it was in progress! We all know the size of a tap and how long it must have taken for such a small stream of water to make a good build-up of ice on the Bell rink.

Two friends of the Bells, Jim Cook and Joe Collier, pitched in to help with the flooding, and later snow shovelling. Prisoners from the jail enjoyed a few outings by helping occasionally too.

When the ice was the desired thickness, and reasonably smooth, the rink was thrown open to the young people of Portage. The numbers that arrived (as many as 100!) exceeded the expectations of Mr. Bell! Obliging man that he was, he offered them the use of the kitchen to put on and take off their skates; and obliging lady that Mrs. Bell was, she permitted it. So, the temperature in the kitchen never rose very high all that winter!

It was obvious that a larger rink was needed, and a big vacant lot behind the Bell garden was the answer. Mr. Mike Greenberg moved his big wood piles from it, and a little shack was moved onto it.

Two or three years later, the C.P.R. donated an old boxcar, the moving of which caused many funny stories to be told later. One of them concerned the actual moving of the monstrous thing a distance

of only a few feet when it got stuck on the tracks. Joe Hourie's horses, that were noted for their size and strength, tugged for all their worth; Addie Bell, Jim Cook and Joe Collier, who were self-appointed engineers of the project, were slightly disconcerted by the fact that all rail traffic was tied up; and disgruntled train passengers certainly weren't viewing the 'pride and joy of Southside' as a thing of beauty!

South Side Pee Wee Hockey Team, 1968-'69.

Back row, left to right: Kim Barnes, Mitch White, Stanley Sharp, Jim Brands, Scott Follett and Edzo Kok.
Centre row: Bernie Narvey, Ron Horner (Coach), Robbie Earl, Mitch Cook and Stanley Charette.
Front row: Telford Delorme, Knowlson McDermid and Ron White.

It was with feelings of relief that the workers finally saw the boxcar sitting safe and solid on the "South Side Centre" rink, as the new one was called. Two donated stoves made it reasonably comfortable and it served its purpose for several years.

Eventually, it was replaced by a building which was moved from South Airport, and is still being used. It contains all conveniences and receives most of its financial support from various activities.

It is impossible to estimate the number of children that have learned to skate and have been made healthier and happier citizens since South Side Centre had its humble beginning in the Bell garden.

Mr. Addie Bell has passed away. His good deeds live on to perpetuate his memory. No greater tribute could be paid to any man.

The picture shown on the previous page was taken when the South Side Pee Wees won the city Pee Wee title (1968-1969). It is indicative of the sports minded groups of boys, of which there are several, that we have in our city. Some day, if they move far away, they may look at this picture, think of their team-mates and recall their happy hours at Southside.

THE WEST END COMMUNITY CLUB

Today the West End Community Club is a thriving organization serving this part of the city in recreational activities for its young people. Many volunteers make up the club working in varied capacities.

In 1949, the club was first formed by a few ambitious persons. The first clubhouse was a freight car located on 9th St. S.W. and the club operated as a skating rink, with a few hockey teams. The first Pres. was Ray Dawes of the West End Athletic Club, as it was then called. The club was later strengthened, in 1951, by the ladies auxiliary who elected Dorothy Taylor as their leader.

Big changes were underway in 1951. The location was moved by the city council to its present 12th St. S.W. site. Things looked bleak, as the old freight car was still the clubhouse. Heating facilities consisted of one, very old, unreliable wood furnace. The outdoor plumbing was of pioneer construction.

Improvements came slowly. In 1954, interest began to pick up when a building fund was established to erect a new clubhouse, and in the Fall of 1958 construction began. It was completed by the volunteer workers in 1959.

Among the many volunteer workers over the years, mention should be made of the numerous armed forces personnel who have contributed so much in community club work.

Club presidents through the years have been: Ray Dawes, Frank Gehlen, Peter Dewis, Bill Greenlay, Vic Frost, Ray Clayton, Chester Cairns, Reg Tomalin, Louis Laramee, Fred Gunnlaugson, John Schroeder, Bill McLean and Omar Pappas. (From information submitted in 1967.)

Today, the modern building is gas heated. There is excellent rink lighting and a host of activities for youngsters. Minor hockey, figure skating and square dancing are part of the recreational program.

SPORTS — 1968

Mr. Larry Shepherd, who was hired as Recreation Director for Portage in 1968, submitted information re sporting activities of the year. It is regrettable that space and time does not allow the listing of all games played, along with the names of winners of each.

The main recreational events featured hockey, baseball, fastball, softball, football, curling and golf.

The Portage and District Terriers Junior Hockey Club, that participated in Central Manitoba Junior Hockey League, had Cliff Kool as President; John Vopni as Coach; Lin Bend as Assistant-Coach; and Gord Pankhurst as Manager.

Portage and District Terriers Juvenile Hockey Club were not in the league but played numerous exhibition games. Cliff Lafreniere was the Coach of this team, and Ken ("Bing") Irwin the Manager.

Also playing exhibition games was the Portage and District Bantam "A" Hockey team. We do not have the names of officials of this team.

Participating in tournaments during the hockey season were: West End Community Club, Southside Paperweight "A" team, West End Community Club Pee Wees, and Northside Athletic Club.

Added to the names of teams should be the Southport team that won the championship in the Paperweight "A" division. (Southside won the Paperweight "B" division, also the Tom Thumb division.)

Under "Inter-Section Hockey" we note that the R.C.M.P. won the League pennant.

Baseball during the season took in Little League, Pony League, Midget League, Junior League, and Senior Men's League.

Girls' Softball and Linament League Softball provided much entertainment for players and spectators alike.

A major sporting activitity in Portage, as in other places, is curling. Here, Ladies', Men's and Mixed Curling are providing many hours of recreation for those who are interested in participating.

A noteworthy event of 1968 was the winning of the Canadian Lefthanded Golfers Championship by Bill Campbell, which was held at the Portage Golf Club.

A touch football league was organized during 1968, with games being played at the Island Park Stadium.

Other recreational activities, which we should mention, are: bowling, skating, billiards, badminton, baton twirling, weight training, streamlining, bridge lessons, ceramics, painting classes and square dancing.

As you can see, for the sports minded, there is something of interest for everyone in Portage la Prairie.

GARY NEAULT

The sports section of this book would not be complete if we failed to mention Gary Neault, a native of Portage who is now residing in Winnipeg, Man.

We mention Gary, not only for the honors that have been bestowed on him, but also because of the inspiration he is to others who are similarly afflicted.

Gary was a healthy young man when he went to work at Thompson, Manitoba. In 1965, when he was trapped under 8 tons of ore, he must have wondered if he would ever see sunlight again. Being rescued was the important thing, and maybe he never doubted that he would be able to work and move around normally if he was fortunate enough to survive.

We are happy to say that Gary was rescued and survived. We are sad to say that since that time he has been a paraplegic.

This courageous young man has since proven that a handicap can sometimes be just a frame of mind. Would you believe that he won a gold medal and smashed the record in a freestyle swim event at Edmonton, Alberta. He also took the gold medal for best paraplegic basketball player, and captured the silver and bronze in other events!

In November of 1968, he went to Tel Aviv, Israel, and won a silver medal for the "club throw" and a bronze medallion as a special souvenir, at the Para-Olympic Games.

The morale of the above story is that "sometimes a handicap can be a stepping stone".

PORTAGE'S DAY

Even old-timers can't recall the date of the first 24th of May celebration, but for many years Portage was the centre of attractions on that date. Provincially it was Portage's day, and before the common use of the automobile as many as four and five trains would arrive in the morning, loaded with Bands, athletes and spectators. The Bands would play on their way to Island Park, and during the day baseball tournaments, football tournaments, and lacrosse tournaments would all be taking place at the same time inside the race track. Later there was harness racing; and all the while concession rides, side shows and refreshment booths would play their part on the gala-day.

Fireworks usually ended the festivities on the Island. Old folks went home to rest after a full and exciting day, while the younger set added a few extra hours of fun by attending dances downtown.

Similar celebrations were yearly events in Portage until the early 1950s when they were discontinued. With so many sporting activities and various entertainments taking place all the time, 24th of May celebrations are now merely memories. Among the 'special' days now are the ones called: Crazy Days, Portage Fair and Fun Festival.

CRAZY DAYS

This is a time when everyone, from the very young to the aged, can have a lot of fun; a time when you can 'let your hair down' and cast your cares to the winds. You can dress any way you care to dress, and do anything you care to do (within the law, of course).

In 1968, the Crazy Days were May 31st and June 1st, and from the moment you reached Saskatchewan Avenue until you left to go home again, you just had to be smiling!

The two-day fun-fest of '68 was based on a Gay Nineties theme which was very much in evidence in all the business establishments in the city, as well as at all the street stalls where merchants were selling their wares. Hoop-skirted ladies with gay bonnets and gentlemen resplendent in top hats and suits worn in the '90s turned back the pages of time for many an old-timer. We saw a few ladies, dressed in old-fashioned house-dresses, with dust bonnets on their heads; and there was a fellow meandering through the crowd with a goat on a leash! Seeing someone having a shave in the middle of the Avenue was good for a few laughs too.

To give a verbal picture of the fun-filled days is difficult. Picture, if you can, a merry-go-round, ferris wheel, chair-o-plane and ponies all laden with excited, laughing, squealing, happy youngsters; booths and refreshment stands outdoors along the avenue; art displays; a fashion show; a 'Pig and Whistle'; bingo games; a penny arcade; a pie-throwing contest; our Indian Glee Club playing their records; and later, in the evening, the street filled with visitors mingling with Portagers enjoying an old-fashioned jitney dance.

Crazy Days was organized by the retail section of the Portage la Prairie Chamber of Commerce to stimulate interest in the community and emphasize our city's potential as a great shopping centre. Mr. Laverne Hebner was one of the driving forces behind the scheme.

Plans are being made to hold similar scintillating activities on May 30th and 31st of 1969; and you can be pretty sure of your money if you bet that Crazy Days will be even bigger, better and more colorful in Manitoba's Centennial Year of 1970!

The Portage Fair, which takes place around the middle of July and lasts for three days, is a popular annual event which is enjoyed by crowds of people from far and near. It is mentioned in another section of this book.

THE WINTER FUN FESTIVAL

Next to Christmas, with Santa Claus Parade, and all the joy, love and excitement that goes with it, we rate the Winter Fun Festival as a highlight in winter events. The title is descriptive, as it truly is a fun festival.

Crescent Lake and Island Park take on a festive air for three wonderful days of sports on snow and ice. Carnival booths, food booths, novelty fishing derby, broom ball, jam pail curling, smoosh races, tug-of-war, snow shoe races, skating races, Indian pow-wows, power toboggan races, puppet shows, snow dances, snow-ball throwing contests, Indian tea making, 'fly-in' by private planes, and 'fly-past' by C.F.B. Portage are a part of it.

For several weeks before the date set for the Winter Fun Festival, many males, who are old enough to grow beards, have made it obvious that they are entrants in the beard growing contest. (One fellow said he put his razor in a dark deep closet on a high top shelf so he wouldn't be tempted to shave at the first feel of itchy stubble!)

Preparing pets to please judges in the mutt show is something a lot of children enjoy. They also enjoy dressing in costumes and being judged themselves.

Events are varied and numerous: a pancake breakfast, Queen Parade, Parade of Lights, Fun Festival Parade, Teen Club Open House, Fashion Queen Contest, Indian Handicraft Display Contest, Snow Sculpture, Toboggan Rides, Hay Rides, Dances, Hockey, etc. The Canadian Forces Band has also been an appreciated part of the entertainment.

It is regrettable that time and space do not allow a detailed description of the three eventful days.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PORTAGE FAIR

The first Portage Fair was held on a site in the neighborhood of 18th Street West on October 16, 1872. It was an unqualified success. Portage had a population of 300; it had a stage coach service to Winnipeg and was beginning to feel its importance as a new centre of activity, in a Dominion of Canada only five years old.

Kenneth McKenzie to whom the community is indebted for much of its early enterprise, was President. Chas. Mair, later known for his literary talents, was secretary.

There was never any doubt about the survival of the Portage Show. From the beginning it reflected the determination of its pioneers, who, before long were operating a provincial exhibition known as the Marquette Agricultural Society. The pioneer Winnipeg newspaper, "The Manitoban", predecessor of the Winnipeg Free Press, commented — "There were 400 entries at a fair that far surpassed expectations, although it is the first year in the country for many settlers, the results are such as would reflect credit upon an older Ontario county." Editorial comment on the first Portage show included the following — "We congratulate the people of Marquette County on the success of their efforts, and trust that this fair may be the first in a long line of such. Our only regret is that the hesitating and skeptical of other areas were not there to see."

Portage la Prairie had two advantages from the beginning. The soil was good and the men and women who settled it had imagination.

The first Manitoba fair mirrored the personalities of such leaders as its president, Kenneth McKenzie, pioneer agriculturists and stock men — John McLean, Hugh Grant, Frances Ogletree, the Garriochs, Walter Lynch, Andrew Spence, Donald Stewart and John Smith. The fair might well have been called McKenzie Fair, because Kenneth McKenzie, conscientious president that he was, had an entry in almost

every class of competition. He was the leader and the driving force. To him must go much of the credit for the first successful Western Canadian Agricultural Exhibition.

Judges at the first fair included Donald A. Smith, later Lord Strathcona; J. W. Taylor, resident American Consul, prominent Winnipeger A. G. B. Bannatyne and John Norquay, later premier of the young Province.

And thus was born the first Manitoba fair. Its humble beginning has now become an event of historical interest. The contrast between that far distant first fair and today's makes interesting study. In most phases of its operation, the routine followed has changed very little. The most striking feature of the present day Portage Fair is its site, at beautiful Island Park. Tourists say the Portage grounds with those of Woodstock, N.B. rank among the most attractive fair settings in Canada. Other notable features of this better B. class fair, are its well-kept tree-shaded judging ring — its spacious lift-slab fireproof grandstand and its naturally beautiful race track and infield.

For over ninety years, Portage Fair has consistently presented a high standard of program designed for —

A. The promotion and improvement of the livestock industry.

B. The demonstration of the handicrafts of home-cooking and needlework.

C. The display of industrial products.

D. The promotion of the arts and other cultural pursuits.

In recent years the inclusion of 4H or junior activities has been its most creditable achievement, and what undertaking could be more worthy than this nationwide training of our youth for the responsibilities of home-making and citizenship.

The race track was given its charter in 1891 and is considered by racing men to be one of the best on the North American Continent. These men bring their horses to the Portage track to test them out before placing them in the Grand Circuit across the line. Much knowledge, work and care has been credited with maintaining its popularity.

When the track was first started, carloads of Kentucky soil were brought here and spread over the course. The soil, reputed to be ideal for racing tracks because of its draining ability and non-drifting

characteristics, proved itself and has been guarded with extreme care ever since. Each year after the fair, manure and straw is spread over the soil to protect it. The manure is broken down and worked into the soil to add to the springiness. The straw acts as protection from the elements. It is taken off each time the track is in use. Laying of the straw every two years helps restore the turf to the track.

An ever present plentiful supply of water is pumped from sand-points sunk 12 feet into the sandy soil on nearby grounds. The water is the purest because of the filtering action of the sand. Harness racing men bringing their horses and lodging them in the barns have no fear of a lack of water. Also, their horses can graze off the luscious supply of grass and will not be disturbed by passing traffic.

The race track at Island Park has long been a hot-spot of harness racing. The track is springy and fast and holds a Canadian half-mile record of 2.02¾ set in 1940 by Dan Gratton, owned by Sime Hawley, Storm Lake Iowa and driven by Clayton Annia of Regina.

Truly, the pioneer directors built better than they knew. But best of all, their spirit and enterprise is still alive and strong, as manifested in their sons and grandsons who today act as Directors of the Portage Fair.

LAW AND ORDER

From an old paper of 1884 comes this story:

"A gentleman residing here has in his employ an aged negro whose early life was spent south of Mason and Dixon's line, and as a chattel or property. The gentleman is a keen observer of human nature and, enjoying a good thing, has drawn the old negro out on many important questions of theology, law and logic."

In conversation some time ago he said to him, "Sam, I have heard that all colored people will steal. Is it so?"

"No, 'taint so, 'tis a lie."

"Well," said the gentleman, "when you were a slave, didn't you sometimes take a chicken or a turkey from your master, and eat it?"

"Yes," said Sam, "sometimes I took a chicken, or a duck, or a turkey, but, Lord bless you that wasn't stealin'."

"Why not?" he was asked.

"Well, I tell you, dat chicken he was property, I was property, and if property took property to support property dat wasn't stealin', d'ye see?"

It would be interesting to know how some of our early law-men would view that type of logic when they were establishing a system of law and order.

It was in 1864 that concern seemed to have been first shown for a systematic means of establishing law and order. (See — The First Council.) And it is logical to assume that it was in 1882 that the Province, in setting up its legal subdivisions, made Portage la Prairie the Central Judicial District. The 15th annual report which was sent to Hon. J. W. Sifton on January 15th, 1898, leads us to believe the latter statement to be correct.

The report, mentioned above, was written by Daniel McLean, Jailor, C. J. D. and will be of interest to those who have a yen for history along the legal line, being descriptive of those times. We quote —

"It is a matter to be regretted that the number of persons committed to this jail has increased from 47 in 1896 to 101 in 1897, an increase of over 100%: the enlargement of the district was responsible for 10% of the commitments during the year 1897.

An examination of the report shews that nearly 20% of the persons admitted during the year were boys and young men under the age of 20 years, many of them being charged with serious offences.

During the summer a number of professional tramps were incarcerated for short periods. These men, as a rule, are a filthy, wicked, hardened class, who seldom express a desire to lead a better life, and who make it their boast that the prisons of the continent have been their temporary homes for the greater part of their lives. This class should if possible, never be confined in the same Institution with our ordinary prisoners, as they seem to delight in sowing the seeds of wickedness and crime, and frequently destroy all reformatory efforts made on behalf of the other prisoners. How to deal with this class is a grave problem, but my opinion, based upon some knowledge of their habits, is that the magistrates should be empowered to sentence such offenders upon conviction to a short period of hard labor with a ball and chain attached, on the public streets of the nearest city, town or village. If this system were generally adopted, it would, I am convinced, rid our Province of this undesirable element.

. . . . . : good conduct is rewarded by distinction of clothing, and these methods, have in nearly every instance, produced good results.

A number of alterations and permanent improvements were made in connection with the Jail and Court House last season, all being done by prison labor. The old boundary fence was replaced by a new and more substantial structure. Sidewalks were constructed to the Jail and Court House, a new winter porch and coal shed erected, new well dug, and a number of changes and repairs made in the interior of the Jail.

A number of prisoners were also placed at the disposal of the officials of the Home of Incurables, doing work and needed repairs in and around the Home; altogether there were 476 days work performed there.

For garden purposes a plot of ground was rented, adjacent to the Jail and cultivated by the prisoners and a good supply of vegetables was provided for the Institution . . . . . ."

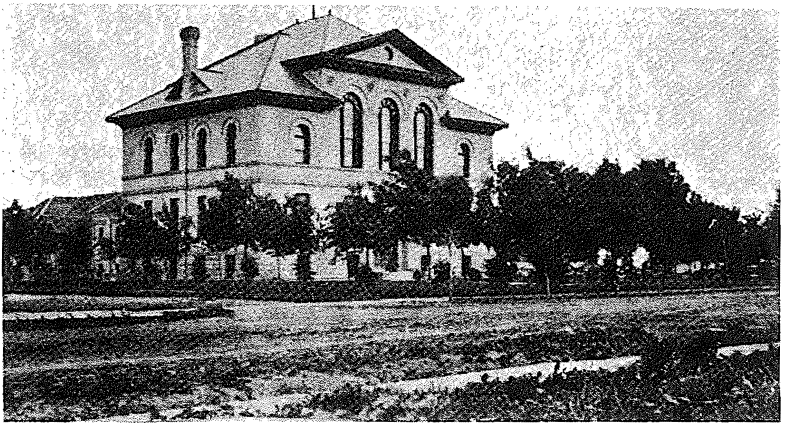
The report sent in the following year stated that there were 68 committed during the year, and only a few crimes were of a serious nature. By the end of the year only six prisoners remained in custody.

Officials at the Jail in 1898 were: Daniel McLean, Gaoler; I. W. Thomson, Head Turnkey; G. O. C. Gowler, Turnkey; Mrs. Gowler, Matron; and Frank B. Lundy, M.D., Physician.

Back in the 1880s (about 1884) a Central Judicial Board, composed of Edward McDonald, Mathew Ferris, Dr. T. W. Gilbert, J. J. Hamilton and George Claxton, was appointed. Part of their duties was to provide suitable and adequate housing for the courts. A Court House was built, around that time, on the site of the present hospital. This building later became the Portage General Hospital when a newer Court House was erected.

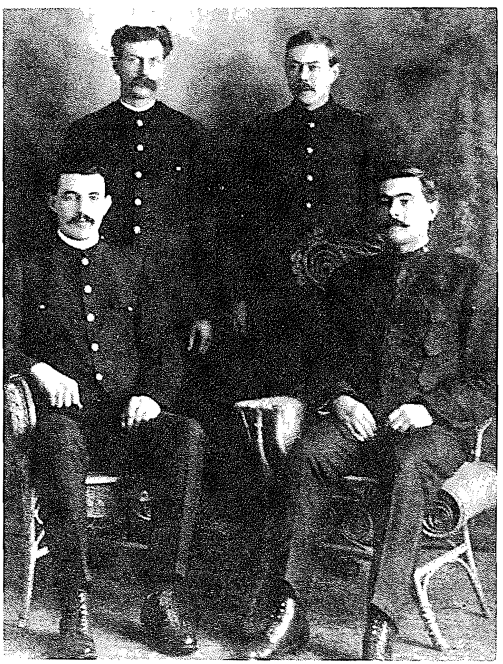
In June, 1894, Mr. T. M. Beamish, Brandon, was awarded the contract for the erection of the Court House shown on next page, which included an addition to the jail. The contract price was $22,-544.00. The work was completed in November of the same year. The building is still structurally strong and is still being used as a Court House.

The jail, which can partially be seen in the background of the picture, had another addition made to it in 1930 - 31, in order to provide space to permit the inclusion of women. Mr. H. G. Ellwood was chief foreman on this project. The women were moved from



Court House built in 1894

Vaughan St. Gaol, Winnipeg, to Portage la Prairie about May 1, 1932. Mr. R. H. Home was the Governor at that time. In the women's section, there was a staff of five.



Portage law-men 1905-6 or 7.

In the fall of 1944, the men were transferred to Headingly, and the building has been used exclusively for women since that time.

Miss Jessie MacPherson retired in 1969 after acting as Superintendent at the Institution for 21 years.

Mr. Roy Webster, Q.C. says the picture of the Portage law-men, shown here, was taken in either 1905-6 or 7. From left to right — seated are Sergeant Bridle and Chief McIntyre, and standing are Constable Thompson and Constable McPherson.

The police Court was first housed in the old City Hall. At the present time it is in the remodelled old post office which is the City Hall at this time. The Juvenile Court also operates from there and the Judge is also the Magistrate.

The Queen's Bench Court, the County Court, the Surrogate Court and their clerks and the Sheriff occupy the Court House.

Through the years law enforcement has been in the hands of the village, town, city, and since 1942 the R.C.M.P., always with the help of the Provincial Police up to 1932, when the R.C.M.P. took over the policing of the Province.

Retired Magistrate R. W. Webster says, "Serious crimes have been few, and the most predominant cases belong in the offences against the Highway Traffic Act and the Liquor Act. When there are around 400,000 vehicles registered in the Province, and with the flourishing business under the Liquor Act, one can account for the many cases under these Acts.

Certainly, with all these courts and so much law available, the influence of all this must contribute to the law abiding nature of our citizens. An R.C.M.P. report to the City Council for 1968 shows that while crime may be on the upswing in many parts of Canada, this is not the case in Portage la Prairie. Which still indicated that it is a real dandy place in which to live."

R. W. Webster, Q.C.

R. W. Webster, Q.C. was a law student in Portage in 1914, went overseas in 1915 during the war, and returned to Portage in 1917. He was called to the bar in 1922 and was made Q.C. in 1955.

From Jan. 1931 to June 1957 he was the Police Magistrate and Juvenile Court Judge.

Mr. Webster is now retired in Portage, where his heart and home have always been. His friendly personality is a joy to all who know him, and very few don't.

In 1958 he was honored with the "Better Portage Award", which was presented to him by the Chamber of Commerce.

The picture shown was taken shortly before his retirement.

Harvey D. Sparling.

Harvey D. Sparling, Q.C. was articled to Justice Fawcett G. Taylor in 1913. He served in the first World War from 1916 to 1919, returning to Portage that year.

He was called to the bar in 1920, and practiced law in the civil and criminal courts until 1957 when he was appointed to the bench as a Provincial Magistrate and Juvenile Court Judge. In 1958 he was appointed Q.C.

While on the bench he had the distinction of never having had any of his judgments or decisions reversed or altered by appeal. On his retirement, due to failing health, in 1962, the Government expressed the view that "he had brought to the bench compassion, dignity and a judicial approach which marked his all too short career as a distinguished one indeed".

He assisted in the formation of the Central Manitoba Bar Assoc. and was its first President. He is an honorary life member of this organization.

Mr. Sparling was presented with "The Better Portage Award" by the Chamber of Commerce in 1963.

Magistrate Bruce P. McDonald, son of W. W. McDonald who taught mathematics in the Portage collegiate from 1908 until 1929, was born here. He was called to the bar in 1945 and practiced law in Winnipeg for 16 years before coming back to Portage to take over from Harvey D. Sparling, Q.C. when the latter retired.

Two Judges who spent a considerable number of years in Portage la Prairie were Judge Gregory Barrett, who came from Carberry Man., and Judge S. H. Fahrni, who came from Gladstone, Man. The

latter gentleman resided in Portage for about 21 years and is now retired in B.C. J. R. Colwill, K.C., who had his office in the Anderson Block, deserves mention here too. It is regrettable that information on their careers has not been submitted, and all we can do to honor them is preserve their names for posterity in this book.

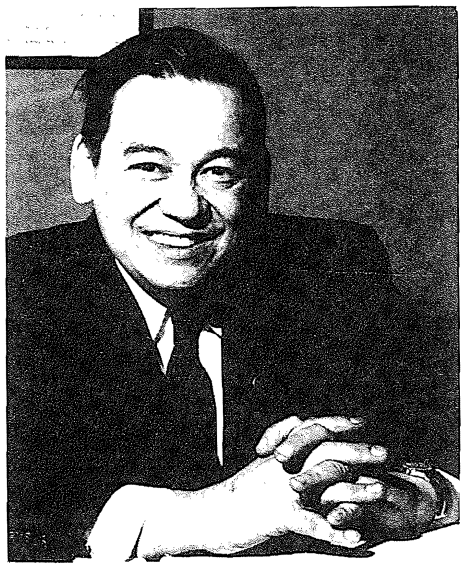
Rex A. Gilroy, Q.C. was born in Portage la Prairie on February 6, 1914, and except for 3½ years in the army during World War II, has lived here all of his life. He obtained his education in the local schools, Brandon College, and the Manitoba Law School.

He articled as a Student-at-Law with the late Everett George Porter, Q.C., and was called to the Bar of Manitoba in 1939. In 1967 he was appointed Q.C.

Mr. Gilroy has held the position of Crown Attorney for the Central Judicial District since January 1, 1946. He has also practiced Civil Law and was associated with the firms of McPherson & Porter, Porter & Diehl, Porter & Gilroy, and Gilroy & Martin. At the present time he carries on the practice of law alone.

Mr. Gilroy married the former Hazel Martha Meyer of Gilbert Plains, Manitoba, in 1941 and is the father of three children.

Many remember Rex A. Gilroy's father, A. E. Gilroy who was in the wholesale tobacco business in Portage, and who was very well-known in hockey circles.



C. W. Sing, Q.C.

Charles W. Sing, Q.C., B.A., LL.B. was born in Portage la Prairie, Sept. 4, 1913. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Chan Sing, who enjoyed a world-wide reputation as purveyors of steaks, must have been delighted at that time to see that their newly-born son showed signs of appreciating their culinary art. Charles was born with two teeth! Whether this was also a sign of rapid mental maturity is impossible to ascertain, but it is a fact that he made rapid strides toward success in any field he ventured into.

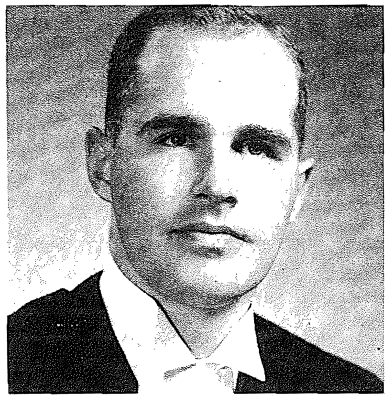
Mr. Sing received his basic education in Portage, where in Grade 9 and 10 he won proficiency trophies, and in Grade 11 the Isbister Scholarship. He furthered his educational ambitions by going to Wesley College and the University of Manitoba for his B.A. The next step toward his climb for a successful career was as a student of law under C. C. Miller, Q.C., and he graduated as an LL.B. without attendance at Law School in 1940. He was called to the Bar and admitted as solicitor the same year. On Dec. 28, 1960, he had the honor of being appointed Q.C. He was Acting Crown Attorney of the C.J.D. 1958-59.

During World War II, Charles W. Sing served our country well as a Flying Officer, and records of his contributions to sports, education, health and welfare, and St. Mary's la Prairie Anglican Church since that time are too numerous to mention. However, a few should be mentioned for historical records:

He has been Patrol Leader, Troop Leader, Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Group Committee Chairman, District Commissioner, Assistant Provincial Commissioner (South-East Manitoba), member of Manitoba and North-West Ontario Provincial Council and Canadian General Council, and Boy Scouts Association. He is a King's Scout, and is the proud possessor of a long service medal with two bars, as well as a medal of merit; he is past president and honorary Solicitor of the Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba; he is past President of the Portage la Prairie Branch, and a member of the Provincial Council St. John Ambulance, and was admitted by Her Majesty the Queen as serving brother Order of St. John on May 27, 1959. In 1966 he was promoted to Officer; he is past Secretary-Treasurer and trustee of the Portage School Board and also was Secretary-Treasurer of Manitoba Urban School Trustees Association on formation; he is past President of St. Mary's Bible class and A.Y.P.A. and is a member of the Vestry, St. Mary's la Prairie Anglican Church. Many more things could be added, such as his participation in sports, etc.

Mr. Sing married a former school-mate and is the father of two children, a boy and a girl.

Bruce Miller, Q.C., LL.B. was born in Portage la Prairie, December 3rd, 1930, and was educated here through to junior matriculation. When in Grade XI he had the honor of winning the Governor General's medal for proficiency. For Senior Matriculation he went to Port Hope, Ontario, in 1949; then on to university in United College, Winnipeg, in the Spring of 1950.

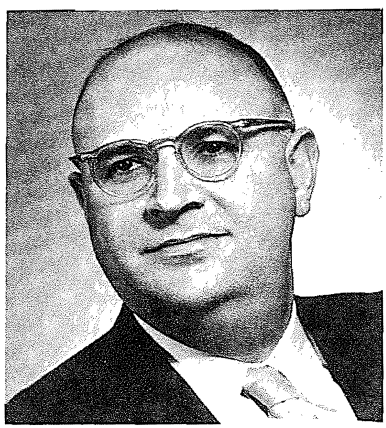


Bruce Miller, Q.C., LL.B.

Mr. Miller attended Manitoba Law School, and graduated with honors in the Spring of 1954. (That was also the year that he was elected Manitoba President of Young Conservatives.) He was called to the Bar in June, 1955, and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1965. Since 1954 he has practiced law with the firm of Miller, Miller & Miller.

Mr. Miller's pleasing personality, as well as his active participation and membership in the Anglican Church, Rotary International, Manitoba Bar Association and Canadian Bar Association (of which he is an executive member), and the B.P.O. Elks of Canada, has been conducive to his popularity here and across the country. He is married and has two children, a boy and a girl.

Israel Hyner Greenberg, Q.C. has been a resident of Portage la Prairie all of his life; received his education in our local schools and went on to the University of Manitoba and the Manitoba Law School, where he graduated with an LL.B. degree in 1940. He is the proud possessor of several medals: General Proficiency, Governor General's medal and the Isbister Scholarship at the Portage Collegiate, and the Isbister Scholarship in Law School.



Israel Hyner Greenberg, Q.C., LL.B.

Before graduating in Law, Mr. Greenberg was a sports writer for the Daily Graphic and for the Winnipeg Free Press.

He has been very active in many local organizations and is Past Pres. of the Boy Scout Association, St. John Ambulance and the Portage Hebrew Association; has been Past Exalted Ruler of the Elks Lodge, and was Chairman of the first Recreation Commission in Portage la Prairie.

In sports, he has always been keenly interested, and active, in tennis, golf, curling and Bridge. He is a member of the Blue Bomber Football Club, past President of the local Curling Club,

and a life member of both the Portage Curling Club and the Manitoba Curling Association.

In his chosen profession, he is a Bencher of the Law Society and is currently Honorary Secretary of the Law Society; is a past President of the Central Bar Association, a member of the Manitoba Bar Association and Canadian Bar Association and is the founder and Chairman of the Annual Manitoba Bar Association Bonspiel.

Mr. Greenberg is married and one son, David, is in partnership with him in the law practice; another son, Barry, is presently attending the University of Manitoba.

Joseph Charles Miller, Q.C. was born August 17th, 1894, at Portage la Prairie and received his basic education here.

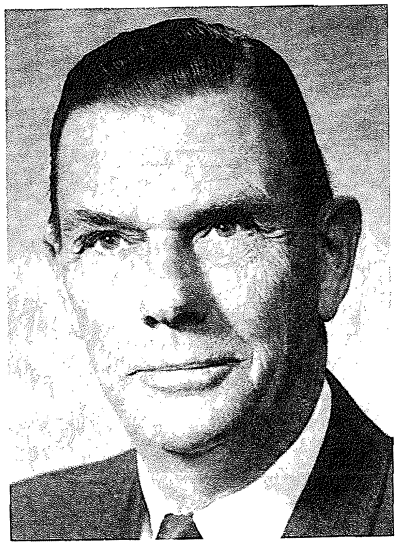
After studying law, he was called to the Bar of Manitoba on July 3rd, 1918, and was appointed K.C. in 1931.

Mr. Miller is President of the Portage la Prairie Mutual Insurance Company, and held the position of director of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation for a time. He has also been associated with the Public Utilities Board for Manitoba, and is Past President of Portage Industrial Exhibition Association.

Joseph C. Miller, Q.C.

In the '30s, Mr. Miller contributed a valuable service to the city as a member of the City Council, and also as Mayor of Portage la Prairie. He is a member of the firm of Miller, Miller & Miller;

Masonic Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge, Manitoba Bar Association, Canadian Bar Association and the United Church.



J. J. Hassard

From 1884 to the present time, Sheriffs for the C.J.D. and Bailiffs for the County Court of Portage la Prairie have been as follows: John Setter, John McRobbie, Daniel McLean, George Muir, Richard Butler, Hugh R. Jolly, Robt. H. Home, Ed Calder and J. J. Hassard.

Mr. Jack J. Hassard, whose picture appears here, is a native of Portage la Prairie. Many people remember his father, Dr. Harvey J. Hassard, M.D., C.M., FACS, who was a dedicated practitioner when facilities were far from modern. His mother was the former Helena Rose West, who was a talented artist. The beautiful murals, that she did, are still mentioned by old-timers who knew her.

Sheriff J. J. Hassard was educated in Portage la Prairie, St. John's College, Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba and the Winnipeg School of Art. Because of natural talent and the latter training he has been contributing much to guidance, along that line, in Portage la Prairie.

He has been a member of Council of the Manitoba Historical Society (1967 and 1968); member of the Manitoba Arts Council (1968 and 1969); and served as a member of the School Board for four years during the 1950s.

Mr. Hassard, as a Lieutenant (Cavalry, Cdn Militia), gave service to our country.

After World War II was over, he was employed by the T. Eaton Co. Ltd. and Vopni Press Ltd. before being appointed Sheriff and Bailiff in 1958, and in April, 1959, Justice of the Peace in and for the Province of Manitoba at Portage la Prairie.

Mr. Hassard married Claire Isabel Millar in 1941, and the union was blessed with a daughter, Christine.

The judiciary in Manitoba has been particularly blessed with the high calibre of men of law who have called Portage la Prairie their home.

JUDGE JOSEPH RYAN

Hon. Joseph Ryan

Hon. Joseph Ryan was born in Ontario on Dec. 18th, 1841. He received his education at Regiopolis College, Kingston, Ontario.

In 1869 he was called to the Ontario Bar. That was also the year that he married Mary Helena Collins, niece of P. Macmanamin of Kingston, Ontario. (From this union there were four sons and two daughters.)

He edited the Kingston "British American Reform" for a short period of time before coming west to Portage la Prairie (1874) where he commenced to make many valuable contributions to the community by his presence. He was the first solicitor for the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie, and was one of the organizers and the first President of the Urban Mutual Fire Insurance Co. which was later absorbed by the Portage la Prairie Mutual Insurance Co. From 1874 to 1885 he represented the constituency of Marquette in the Liberal interest. Prior to the latter date in (1879) he was elected Vice-President of the Dominion Law Society.

In 1885 he had the honor of becoming the first Judge of the County Court for the Central Judicial District of Manitoba; a commissioner to investigate the affairs of the town of Portage la Prairie in 1887; a commissioner to investigate the affairs of the town of Minnedosa in 1888; and a R.O. in 1894 under the E.F. Act.

At the age of 76 years Judge Ryan retired from public life. Stories of his kindly, understanding nature have been passed down through the years.

CHIEF JUSTICE EWEN McPHERSON

Chief Justice McPherson was born in Worth Country County, Missouri, on Jan. 27th, 1879, and came to Portage at an early age with his parents, Peter and Ellen McPherson. He received his elementary and high school education here and earned his law degree at the Manitoba Law School.

Chief Justice Ewen A. McPherson.

After getting his law degree he went into partnership with E. G. (Gus) Porter from 1917 to 1937 under the firm name of "McPherson and Porter." During this period he served as a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1914 to 1921, and as a member of the House of Commons from 1926 to 1930. In the election of 1926 he achieved the distinction of defeating Arthur Meighen at the polls.

In 1932 he was appointed Provincial Treasurer after he was elected member for Rupert's Land in the deferred election of that year.

Ewen A. McPherson was a Bencher of the Manitoba Law Society from 1915 to 1937, and was chairman of the Portage la Prairie Hospital Board from 1917 to 1936.

In 1937 he was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, and in 1944 was elevated to the Court of Appeal where he served as Chief Justice until the time of his death in 1954.

EDWARD ANDERSON, K.C.

Mr. Anderson came to Manitoba as a boy in 1879 and was one of the first to pass the examinations of the law society, when that organization was in its infancy.

For several years he practised his profession in Portage la Prairie and for a time acted as crown prosecutor for the judicial district. He went to Winnipeg in 1906.

In 1929 Mr. Anderson was appointed President and General Manager of the Winnipeg Electric Company.

MR. JUSTICE D. A. MacDONALD

Not much history concerning Mr. Justice D. A. MacDonald is available. However, a Daily Graphic paper of April 3, 1922, says he practised law in Portage la Prairie as early as 1888 and that he rose to a position of Supreme Court Judge.

HON. JOSEPH MARTIN, Q.C.

Joseph Martin was educated in Toronto, Ontario, and after coming west he practised law in Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg. He was called to the Bar in Manitoba, 1882, in B.C., 1897 (Q.C. 1899). A Liberal in politics, he represented Portage la Prairie in the Manitoba legislature, 1883-1892. He served as attorney general in the Greenway administration, 1888-1891, and introduced the measure abolishing separate schools in Manitoba.

Entering federal politics, he sat for Winnipeg in the Canadian House of Commons from 1893 until he was defeated in 1896.

In 1897 he moved to Vancouver, where he practised law until 1908 and edited and published the Vancouver Guardian (1907).

He represented Vancouver in the provincial legislature, 1898-1903, and served as attorney general in the Semlin administration, 1898-99. On March 1, 1900, he became Premier of B.C. This position was of short duration through no fault of his own.

He moved to England in 1908 and represented East St. Pancras in the British House of Commons, 1910-1918.

Hon. Joseph Martin had thus the unusual, if not unique, distinction of having been a member of four different legislative bodies in the course of his political career.

HON. T. G. MATHERS

Hon. T. G. Mathers was born in Lucknow, Ontario, in 1859 and came to Portage la Prairie in 1883; he edited the Manitoba Liberal the same year.

He took up the study of law in 1884 and was called to the Bar of Manitoba in 1890. From 1895 to 1898 he was in partnership

with Hon. Joseph Martin. On the latter date, he moved to Winnipeg where he served as an alderman for a year.

In 1905, he was appointed Puisne Judge of the court of King's bench for Manitoba, and was promoted to Chief Justice on Feb. 7th, 1910.

RT. HON. ARTHUR MEIGHEN

Arthur Meighen was born on a farm near St. Mary's, Ontario, June 16th, 1874. He came to Portage la Prairie in 1902 to open a law practice, and on Oct. 26th, 1908, was elected as the Conservative member of parliament for the constituency of Portage la Prairie.

Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen

On Sept. 25th, 1911, he was appointed solicitor-general, and in 1919 became secretary-of-state in Sir Robert Borden's government. A short time later he was named minister of the interior.

When Sir Robert Borden retired from the prime ministership of Canada on July 10th, 1920, Mr. Meighen stepped into his shoes. He served two short terms as prime minister, in 1920 and again in 1926. He was a member of the Senate from 1932-1942, when he resigned to again become leader of the Conservative party. Upon his subsequent defeat in a by-election, he gave up the party leadership and retired from politics.

Mr. Meighen served 28 years in both houses of Parliament, a long time in anyone's life! Sixteen of those years were as leader of his party in one House or the other.

He was a man noted for his keen memory, and on his frequent visits to Portage la Prairie enjoyed walking up and down the streets, shaking hands with the many that he could greet by name, and reminiscing about the happy years he spent in our midst when he was a young lawyer.

Mr. Arthur Meighen passed away on Aug. 7th, 1960. He was buried in Ontario, a few miles from his birthplace.

JUSTICE THOMAS LLEWELLYN METCALFE

Justice T. L. Metcalfe was born in 1870 and came to the Oakland district with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Metcalfe who took up a homestead there, when he was six years of age.

Young Thomas helped in all the "chores" of the homestead until he was about 18 years of age, but from the first he had made up his mind to be a lawyer. To that end he directed his school studies and availed himself of the help of a French-Canadian fisherman, who lived on the shore of Lake Manitoba, to teach him the French he required to pass his matriculation preliminary to starting in the study of law.

He first followed these studies at Portage la Prairie in the office of D. A. Macdonald. His terms of articles were carried on in successive stages under the law firm of Aikins, Culver and McClennegan at Winnipeg; the Honorable Joseph Martin, at Portage and later at the same place under the firm of P. V. Georgean.

He was called to the bar of Manitoba in 1894 and started a law partnership with R. A. Bonnar under the title of Bonnar & Metcalfe. This connection was discontinued in 1907 to form a partnership with E. E. Sharpe, an association that was maintained until Mr. Metcalfe was elevated to the judgeship in the court of king's bench in 1909, which made him one of the youngest judges to attain this position in Canada.

In 1921 he was further promoted to judge of appeal in the province of Manitoba.

On April 2, 1922 Justice Thomas Llewellyn Metcalfe passed away at the age of 52 years.

(Dr. W. E. Metcalfe and Charles Metcalfe of Portage, and George A. Metcalfe and J. A. Metcalfe of Winnipeg were brothers.)

HON. JAMES OSBORNE McLENAGHEN

The late Hon. James McLenaghen, Q.C., like so many others, migrated to Portage la Prairie with his parents and sisters about 1904, being then 12 years of age. Having completed his elementary and secondary education in the Portage schools, (Victoria and Portage Collegiate Institute), he studied at Manitoba College, Winnipeg, graduating as a Bachelor of Arts in 1914. He thereupon served as a student-at-law at Portage la Prairie under articles to the late Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen.

Hon. James O. McLenaghen

After being called to the Bar in 1918 he married a Portage girl, Katherine Newman. Mr. McLenaghen commenced the practice of law in Selkirk, Manitoba, in 1919. He was first elected to the Manitoba Legislature in 1927 as the member for Kildonan-St. Andrews and represented that riding continuously for 33 years until his death in 1950. Upon the formation of a Coalition Government under the Premiership of the Hon. Stuart Garson, Mr. McLenaghen was named Minister of Health and Public Welfare and subsequently Attorney-General which latter portfolio he occupied at the time of his death.

The late Hon. James McLenaghen and Mrs. McLenaghen have three children T. Newman McLenaghen, Toronto, Ontario, Elspeth, the wife of William Wright, Vancouver, British Columbia, and Jean, wife of Dr. Kenneth McRae of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

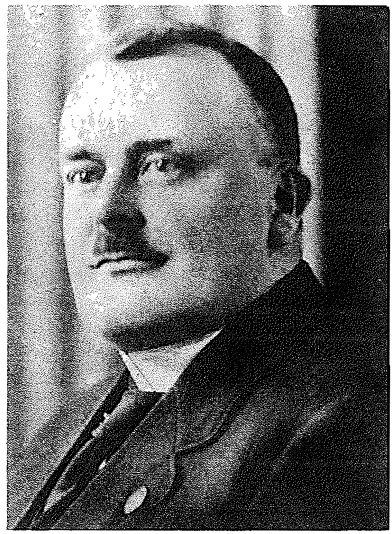
JUSTICE FAWCETT GOWLER TAYLOR

Fawcett Gowler Taylor was born in Meadow Lea, Manitoba, on April 29, 1878, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Taylor, and one of eight children. He received his public and high school education in Winnipeg.

He read law with W. J. Cooper and upon being called to the bar in 1902 practised in partnership with him until 1904. In 1906 he formed a partnership with Colonel H. J. Cowan and in 1910 J. Roy Colwill joined him in the practise of law under the firm of Taylor and Colwill. He was appointed King's Counsel in 1913.

Fawcett G. Taylor was a Captain in the 99th Manitoba Rangers when the First World War broke out and in 1915 he was promoted to Major. In the same year he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces for service overseas. He was awarded the D.S.O. in June 1917 while serving in France and in December of the same year was twice mentioned in dispatches. When the war ended he had attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

F. G. Taylor took an active interest in civic affairs having



Justice Fawcett Gowler Taylor

served three years as alderman on city council and three years as mayor. He resigned as Mayor to go overseas in 1915. He was defeated in the election of 1915 but was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1920 and re-elected in 1922, 1927 and 1932. He was chosen leader of the Conservative Party in April 1922 and led his group in the House for 10 years. He resigned in 1933 upon his appointment to the Court of Queen's Bench.

Mr. Justice Taylor, was a devoted Mason, having served as Past Master of Lodge No. 7, A.F. & A.M., and was a member of Keystone Chapter Royal Arch Masons.

He married Mabel Agnes Dykeman on December 31, 1901 and there were no children born of the marriage.

Mr. Justice F. G. Taylor died on January 2, 1940 at age 61.

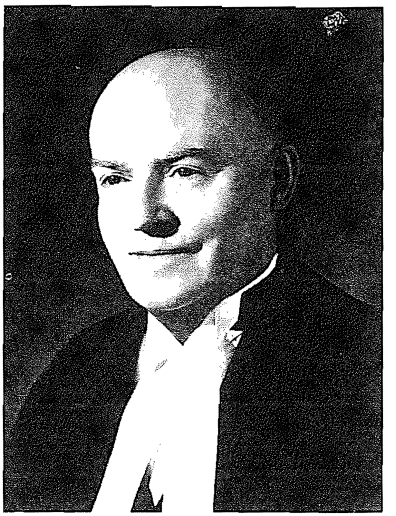
In 1937 a lasting memorial to him took the form of a change of name for the Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 65 Club Room, located at the corner of Duke Avenue and Main Street. This building was torn down in 1959 and its basement roofed and used as a club room until a hall above it was completed later in the year.

In 1968 the club room was converted into a cocktail room, described as "one of the best in Manitoba". Mr. E. G. Webb, the only Charter Member still living, cut the ribbon for the official opening on August 24, 1968. Mr. Hugh Rea presented the history of the Branch since its inception.

This building, one of which Portagers can be proud, will always bear the name of a man, respectfully esteemed by all who knew him, Major Fawcett Taylor.

CHIEF JUSTICE CALVERT CHARLTON MILLER

Calvert Charlton Miller was born Sept. 3rd, 1899, to Andrew and Lydia (Charlton) Miller, who were among the earliest arrivals to the Portage district.



Chief Justice Calvert Charlton Miller

He received his education in Portage la Prairie, and in 1916 his scholastic achievements were rewarded when he received the third Governor-General's medal to be awarded.

He served with the R.C.F.C. in the first World War, and in the second World War attained the rank of Captain with the Manitoba Mounted Rifles.

Calvert C. Miller read law with Meighen and Sexsmith and was called to the bar in 1921.

From 1921 to 1959 he practiced in partnership with his brother, Joseph C. Miller, under the firm name of "Miller and Miller". His sons, Bruce and Clive, later joined the firm and carried on the partnership with their uncle.

C. C. Miller always took a keen interest in his city and the wider community, and his work was recognized when he was elected president of the Manitoba Associated Boards of Trade from 1943 to 1945.

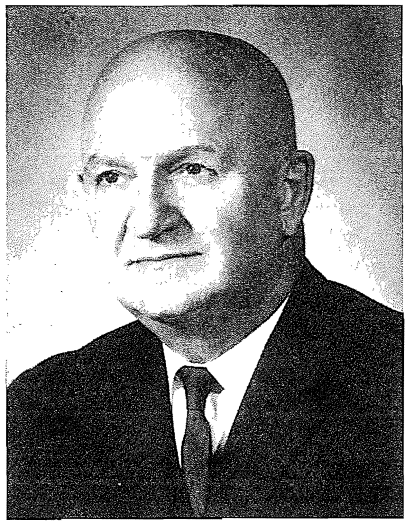
In 1946 he won election in the constituency of Portage la Prairie, and served in the House of Commons until 1949.

In February of 1959 he was appointed to the Court of Queen's Bench, and in October of that year was elevated to the Court of Appeal.

In March of 1961 he became Chief Justice of Manitoba.

JUDGE FRANK WRIGHT NEWMAN

Frank Wright Newman, presently Judge of the County Courts and Surrogate Court of the Central Judicial District, was born in Portage la Prairie, August 26th 1900, son of Thomas Alexander and Christina Newman, pioneer citizens of Portage. Thomas A. Newman came to Portage in 1877, originally as a representative of the Hudson's Bay Company, and from 1880 until his death in 1923 carried on business in Portage la Prairie.



Judge Frank Wright Newman

Frank W. Newman attended the old Central School and subsequently Portage Collegiate Institute, winning the Governor-General's Medal at the latter hall of learning in 1917. Proceeding to the University of Manitoba he obtained his Bachelor of Arts in 1921, then enrolled in the Manitoba Law School from which he graduated and was called to the Bar in 1925. As a student-at-law he served under Articles of Clerkship to the late Hon. James McLenaghen with whom he practised law at Selkirk Manitoba, until the latter's death in 1950.

In 1919 Mr. McLenaghen had married Katherine Newman, so that they were not only partners in law but also brothers-in-law.

Judge Newman in 1927 married Mary Overton of Selkirk, and they are the parents of two daughters, Mrs. R. Scott Scroggins of Galt, Ontario, and Mrs. Arthur Foster of St. James, Manitoba.

In November 1962 Mr. Newman was named to the Bench and prior to moving to Portage la Prairie in February 1965 to succeed Judge S. H. Fahrni, was the presiding Judge of the Northern Judicial District, with residence at Minnedosa, Manitoba.

Judge Newman is a dedicated Rotarian. He was charter member of the Selkirk Club and is now an active member of the Portage Club. He is also a member of the local Chamber of Commerce and the Carlton Club. He has long been an avid sportsman, but is now only active at golf as a member of the Portage Golf Club.

MR. JUSTICE CHARLES RHODES SMITH

Charles Rhodes Smith was born in Portage la Prairie in 1896, the son of Richard Henry and Marion Sarah Smith. He attended public schools in Winnipeg, earned his B.A. at the University of Manitoba, his LL.B. at the Manitoba Law School and his Master's at Oxford.

Mr. Justice Charles Rhodes Smith

He married Luella Gertrude Lick of Davidson, Saskatchewan on July 24, 1924 and there were born of the marriage two sons, Clifford Rhodes Smith and Murray Rhodes Smith.

From 1916 to 1919 he served with distinction in the First World War. He was called to the Bar in 1923 and entered private practice in 1924 in partnership under the firm name of Broad and Smith. He took a keen interest in legal education and many lawyers will remember him as an accomplished lecturer at The Manitoba Law School.

Mr. Justice C. Rhodes Smith started his varied political career as an alderman of the City of Winnipeg and he served in that capacity from 1935 to 1941. In 1941 he was elected to the Legislative Assembly where he quickly showed his ability. He served as Minister of Labour from 1946 to 1948, as Minister of Education from 1948 to 1950 and as Attorney General from 1950 to 1952.

In 1952 he again responded to the call of public service and accepted the chairmanship of The Restrictive Trade Practises Commission.

Mr. Justice C. Rhodes Smith was appointed to the Court of Queen's Bench in 1963 and was elevated to the Court of Appeal in 1966.

HON. STERLING RUFUS LYON, Q.C.

Hon. Sterling Lyon was born in Portage la Prairie and received his public and high school education here. He is well known and remembered by many. His professional education was obtained in Winnipeg.

He was elected to the Manitoba Legislature in 1958 and again in 1959 and 1962. (Previous to 1958 he had been Crown Attorney for the Province of Manitoba for 4 years.) He was Attorney-General

for a time, Minister of Public Utilities (1961-1963) and appointed Attorney-General and Minister of Tourism and Recreation July 22, 1966 and Nov. 27, 1967.

We are honored to have Mrs. Rufus Lyon, Hon. Sterling Lyon's Mother, still with us in Portage la Prairie.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL D. ORMOND

From the Daily Graphic, April 3, 1922, we learn something noteworthy about another Portager. It says, Quote — "Authoritative private despatches from Ottawa state that Brigadier-General Dan Ormond of Portage la Prairie, has been scheduled to succeed Commissioner A. Bowen Perry as Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police."

Daniel M. Ormond came west to make his home in Portage la Prairie in 1888 and was employed in the Land Titles Office for some time.

MANITOBA HOME FOR BOYS

Industrial Training School

The present large three-storey school building and the former large Institutional Building were built about 1899. The school building housed a normal school for teacher training for a short period of time. The main building housed some old men and many mentally retarded boys, some "juvenile delinquents", and a number of destitute foundlings, and Children's Aid wards.

From 1910 to 1912 the Superintendent was Rev. Wellington Bridgeman who received a monthly salary of $100.00. On his staff were an Assistant Superintendent, a Matron and an assistant, two teachers, a clerk, two guards, two engineers, a gardener, a carpenter with four assistants, a blacksmith, a tailor, a seamstress, a laundress, a housemaid, a dairymaid, a cook, a farmer and two assistants. Twenty seven people for a boy count varying from 63 to 146. As an industrial training school, they had a tailor shop, shoemaker shop, instructors for gardening, power-house foreman, carpentry, blacksmithing, baking, cooking, farming and sewing. Mr. W. H. Rutledge was farm instructor in 1912.

Mr. John Weir was Superintendent from 1912 to 1916. The salary had gone up to $150.00 per month by this time. A contract

physician was receiving $75.00 and teachers $35.00. In 1914, a new barn was built and a brass band reported.

Mr. F. W. McKinnon was apparently Superintendent from 1916 - 1923. In 1921, a bugle band reported, and Wilfred Donaldson was on staff as a guard, supervisor and a cadet officer.

Mr. H. D. Commings was Superintendent from 1923 - 1924, then Mr. Edgar Wood was acting Superintendent from 1925 - 1926.

Reverend Harry Atkinson, 1926 - 1948, came from 10 years working with young people in the north end of Winnipeg. At that time there seems to have been some 110 boys and about 40 of them mentally retarded. The latter group were soon transferred to the Home for mental defectives in Portage.

After tours and studies, the Institution tried to keep up with the times and as a result three new buildings were built about 1931 - the present Administration Building and "B" and "C" Cottages. It was at this time that the name "Manitoba Home for Boys" was adopted.

With the outbreak of the second World War in 1939, the Institution was given two weeks to vacate the present property at Portage for the Army, and they had to move to an old relief bush camp at Rennie.

In 1941, they picked up tar-paper shacks, all but a kitchen (described as "filthy") and moved to Carman, where the boys helped to construct temporary buildings and landscaped the grounds. Many of the permanent staff enlisted and the Institution went through difficult times. Names of some of the staff who carried on at that time were Mr. George James, Gardener, Mr. Cox, Farmer, Mr. Glenie, Powerhouse, Mr. Stan Steiman, School Principal, and Mr. Fred Creasey, Bursar. Mr. Charlie King and Mr. Lou Ellett, presently on staff, commenced their services then. Mr. Wilf Donaldson resigned to serve with the army.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Lynch were long-term house-parents.

After the Army cleaned up at Portage, the Institution was moved back here, in the final moments of Mr. Atkinson's tenure as Superintendent. Records show that Mr. H. Atkinson's 22 years' program at the Manitoba Home for Boys appears to have been in the forefront of Canadian Juvenile Corrections, for that era.

During the latter part of the Army's tenure at Portage, the large multi-purpose building was destroyed by fire. Mr. B. D. Jones,

the new Superintendent from Feb. 2, 1948 to Sept. 4, 1967, took over 46 boys and the well worn, depleted site at Portage. The burning of the large cattle barn in the spring of 1948 added to his problems.

Manitoba Special Air Service Cadet Corps 745 started in 1949 and made quite a name for itself across Canada. From this sprung a 25 piece brass band, originally under the direction of Mr. Lorne Chappel and later under Mr. B. D. Jones, the Superintendent. Close liaison was maintained with the Canadian Forces Regular Cadet Camp at Rivers, Man. and was a regular part of the yearly program. After Mr. W. Donaldson's retirement, Mr. N. Plizska took over the Cadet Corps.

The Fourth Portage Scout Troop revived scouting at the Home with Scouter Mr. George Faulkner.

"A" Cottage was built in 1953 and "D" Cottage in 1957. Another fire, in 1967, removed the drill hall used as a gymnasium.

Just prior to 1967 and a change of Administrators, the population of the Home for Boys had grown from 46 to 130. Ideas of treatment were undergoing changes. The Probation Service was expanding and improving their effectiveness. Therefore, committals to the Home appears to have been those boys who had established a delinquent pattern of behaviour.

When R. G. Atkinson, M.S.W., son of the Reverend Harry Atkinson, was appointed Superintendent on Sept. 4, 1967, the boy population had dropped to 46 again.

In addition to appointing a social worker as Superintendent, the Attorney-General's Department launched an inservice training program based on social work lines to again attempt to bring more emphasis on treatment.

There have been quite a number of run-aways in the last few years, maybe for no more reason than that the boys seek a change of scenery for a spell, as some of them return voluntarily.

IN PRAISE OF PEOPLE WITH GREEN THUMBS . . . . .

HORTICULTURE

Portage has boasted a very fine and dedicated Horticultural Society for many years and the local gardens, flower beds and trees are partially due to them. Its annual shows are highlights of the keen interest taken by local citizens in making their grounds a thing of beauty in the growing seasons.

Dr. G. M. Black has won Provincial fame by winning more than once the 'Provincial Championship for Home Grounds' in Manitoba.

Mr. H. D. Sparling has always been a keen lover and student of nature, and his rose garden and fruit orchards have been a source of amazement and inspiration to many visitors from near and far. He has contributed articles to the Canadian Rose Society, The Prairie Garden and other horticultural yearbooks. He is continually experimenting with fruit trees, grafting and budding etc., and has proven that quality fruit can be grown in Manitoba. (Around Portage anyway!)

Many will be interested in knowing the variety of fruit grown in Mr. Sparling's orchards. There are several varieties of pears, several varieties of large apples, several varieties of plums, five varieties of apricots, as well as cherries, grapes and all kinds of berries.

In the years 1965, 1966, 1967 and 1968 Mr. Sparling was the overall Fruit Champion of Manitoba, and has been awarded 22 Provincial Championship Trophies since 1960, as well as 135 first prizes for his fruit at the Provincial Fruit Shows. At a banquet tendered by the Manitoba Horticultural Society in 1968 he was honored for his services to fruit growing in Manitoba.

We have dealt more on the fruit than we have on the roses which are a little harder to describe. Picture, if you can, a beautiful rose garden with 85 to 90 varieties of beautiful roses in bloom!

Because Mr. Sparling's contributions to horticulture have been so outstanding, we have chosen to use the foregoing information in the hopes that it will inspire many others to follow in his footsteps.

Mr. H. Doherty, who lives just outside our city, should be mentioned here. He has spent 40 years experimenting in fruit growing locally, and the results have been very gratifying. He is pictured in the Daily Graphic (October 5, 1968) holding a box of red McIntosh apples and blue Concord grapes. The paper says, "His apples are round, red and evenly ripened, the produce of a four-year-old tree that winters without any particular precautions. The grapes are simply tressled off the ground and the roots are straw-covered for winter. Mr. Doherty has two peach trees which he expects to bear fruit next year".

Crabapple trees and plum trees are particularly noticeable in many back yards in Portage la Prairie in the Spring. Their beauti-

ful blossoms add much to the overall appearance of our attractive little city.

In 1968, in the annual Horticultural Society's home grounds competition for grounds over 66 feet, the winners were: 1st — Dr. G. M. Black, 2nd — Mrs. J. W. Sherritt and 3rd — Mrs. W. Crealock.

For grounds under 66 feet, the winners were: Dr. D. Sharpe, L. J. McDougall and Mrs. L. Tait, in that order.

For flower gardens, the winners were: Dr. D. Sharpe, Mrs. J. W. Sherritt, L. J. McDougall and J. Hilland.

Winner of the vegetable garden competition was L. J. McDougall with J. Hilland, J. L. Smith, J. H. Burtonshaw and Mrs. N. McLeary the runners up.

L. J. McDougall also captured first prize for his lawn. Other winners in the lawn competition were Mrs. Glen McDougall, Z. Brazauska, J. Hilland and J. Bobick.

Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Gould of Edwin won the farm home grounds competition. Runners up were Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Thomson of rural route 3, and Mr. and Mrs. G. Patterson of Edwin.

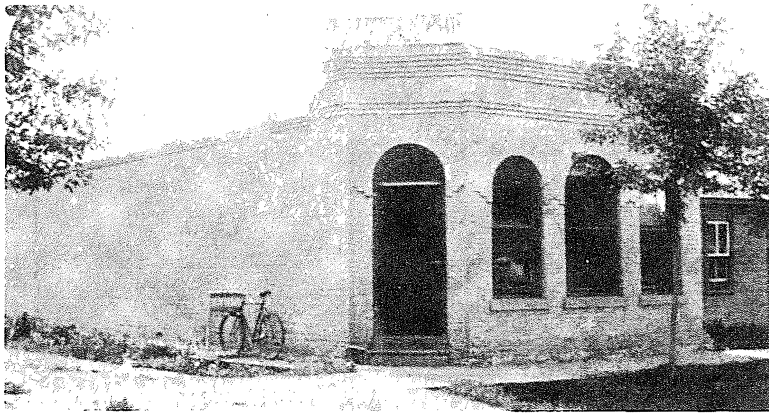
The Horticultural Society's competitions, along with the names of the winners, are mentioned here because in each class the winner must have shown exceptional ability to produce winning results. Homes that do not have well-kept lawns and a few flowers are in the minority.

NEWSPAPERS THROUGH THE YEARS

The history of publishing a newspaper in Portage la Prairie goes back to 1876, when the few pioneers who had settled here eagerly awaited the weekly publication.

The Marquette Review was founded at that time by Thomas Collins, who later became the first mayor of the town of Portage la Prairie.

During the 1800s we see a variety of names at the top of the newspapers: Marquette Review & Portage Times; Weekly Tribune & Marquette Review; The Weekly Review; The Manitoba Liberal; The Evening Item (Published by the Liberal Printing Co. in 1895); and The Daily Graphic. (There could be more, of which we are uninformed.)



The Daily Graphic Office.

By 1895, everyone had the pleasure of reading daily news; and if you were strongly inclined toward politics, you could subscribe to the paper of your choice, which was printed by the Grits and Tories. In other words — you had a choice of three papers at one time.

Nearing election times, if someone were to blindfold you and read to you, you would have no trouble in naming the paper from which the news was read! Each party had no qualms about slamming the opposing party, in what they must have considered direct, effective, and understandable language! With no radios or television sets at that time, it was their way of informing the public of the bad habits and ulterior motives of the opposite party, and implying that anyone who didn't heed their words of wisdom was a nincompoop. Politicians can say very much the same things on radio and television today, and their words can be forgotten with a flick of the switch, but the printed words in newspapers live on in archives and in books.

With the founding of the Marquette Review by Thomas Collins, Portage la Prairie holds the distinction of having the first newspaper west of Winnipeg. This paper was independent in policy, holding to neither of the two major political parties, until it was purchased by a syndicate (for $11,000.00) in 1882. It then developed into an organ for the defence of the Norquay administration in the Conservative interests.

Publication of The Review continued during the first two decades of the present century, and many a newspaperman and printer got his first taste of the trade in its offices, latterly on what is now Royal Road South, where Rey's drycleaning establishment is today. The picture shown here, of The Daily Graphic office, was taken in 1902 at the same location.

The Daily Graphic has provided continuous publications for Portagers since July 2, 1895. Through the years it has recorded the day-by-day happenings in Portage when it was a town, and since it has been a city.

Mr. W. H. Vopni says, "The Weekly Manitoba Liberal began publishing in 1905, a part of the Graphic-Liberal Printing Co., owned by C. D. McPherson. The Daily Graphic served the town, the Liberal served the surrounding rural communities.

In 1922, The Daily Graphic and The Weekly Manitoba Liberal changed hands again, and the late Norman S. Smith took over the management from Mr. McPherson. Mr. Smith and his wife, the late Maude Hawley Smith, continued the two-newspaper operation until the death of the former in 1946.

The present firm of Vopni Press Ltd., with Wilfred H. Vopni as publisher, assumed the newspapers and commercial printing plants on June 1, 1946 and continues the daily and weekly newspaper publications to the present time.

We are very proud of our paper "The Daily Graphic". It has a sort of 'human touch' that can't be completely captured for print in larger cities. By that, we mean news of the little fellows, who may never win any medals, but are important to us in the human race, of which Portage la Prairie and surrounding districts are a part. Vopni Press, publishers of the Daily Graphic, is now located on Saskatchewan Ave. East.

'The Portage la Prairie Enterprise' had its beginning in 1946, when Mr. Carl F. Janaway, who served our country, in the R.C.A.F., during the second World War, started a commercial printing plant, upstairs in the Bailey Block on Saskatchewan Ave.

After four successful years, Mr. Janaway built a modern building on Tupper St. North, where he added to his services to the public, a weekly newspaper, which was called "The Portage la Prairie Enterprise". This paper had the honor of winning the Manitoba Weekly Newspaper Award on one or two occasions during the time it was in circulation. It was discontinued in 1960.

In 1967, Mr. Janaway sold the Enterprise Printing Press business to Mr. Murray Grigg and Mr. Don. G. Owens, who formed a Limited Co. and are capably carrying on a commercial printing business at this time.

RADIO STATION CFRY

There weren't many people in Portage la Prairie that didn't dial 1570 on their radios at 12:30 P.M. on Oct. 18, 1956, the day CFRY went on the air and Portage could boast a station of its own. It operated on a power of 250 watts, which gave it a range of about 60 miles, and had studios in the Portage Hotel. Mr. R. D. Hughes of Dauphin, Man. was (and still is) owner and President, with Mr. John Bohonos as Production Manager and Mr. Jim Brandt as Commercial Manager.

The station was officially opened by W. G. Weir, M.P. for Portage-Neepawa, and messages were heard from Mayor H. L. Henderson, Reeve Lawrence Smith of the Rural Municipality, and Premier D. L. Campbell.

The opening broadcast featured Portage pianist — Gordon Watson, Soloist — Garry Cooper, Brooker's Bombshells, The Bandits — dance band, and a Western Group known as the Meseyton Mix-Masters.

Priority in programming was given to local talent but there was also a variety of programs such as Family Theatre, Michael Shane, Smith's in Hollywood, Playhouse of Favourites, Modern Adventures of Casanova, Bob Hope Show, Passing Parade and Dennis Day, for extra listening pleasure.

In the 12 years since the people of Portage first tuned in to CFRY appreciation for the station has grown. Portagers receive local news, clearly enunciated by announcers Gerry Firman, Alex Docking, Clare Eliuk and Phil Coleman, promptly. Farm and market news are ably presented by Howard Barker. This doesn't mean that local news dominates broadcasting in Portage. World news is always well covered. Records by popular platter-makers, and a variety of entertainment have their places too.

CFRY is now located at 1500 Saskatchewan Ave. W., and the Production Manager is Mr. Vic Edwards. Mr. Jack Follett is the Commercial Manager.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Reuben Roxburgh (shown here) was called the Dean of City Employees. He, with a rope, pulled the first fire engine to come to Portage from the railway to the fire station which was located at that time on Dufferin Avenue. He had command in fighting some of the fires which destroyed the landmarks of the early site of Portage.

Mr. Reuben Roxburgh.

During the years he was connected with the city, he saw many changes take place, not only in conditions generally, but in the equipment; from a horse-drawn fire engine to motor equipment throughout.

Mr. Roxburgh walked westward from Rat Portage (Kenora) in 1877 and went as far west as Minnedosa. In 1879 he came to Portage la Prairie where he entered the blacksmith business with Jas. Hossack. He gave up this line of work to become Fire Chief in 1890.

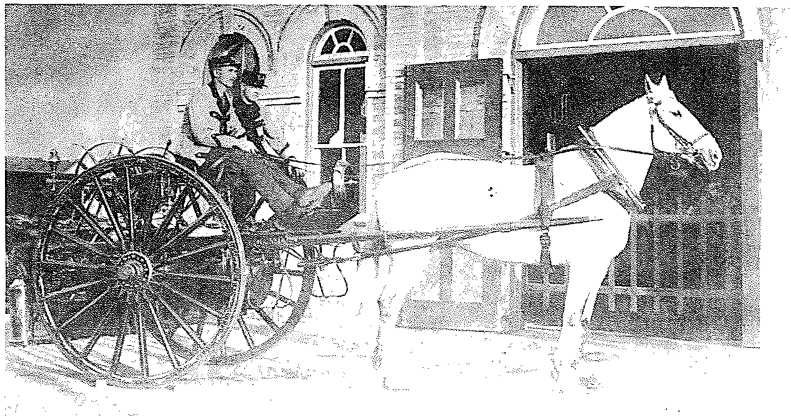
Even though he left to operate a farm for a short time, his heart seems to have been in city service and in the fire department, to which he returned.

In 1919 he accepted the position of city weighmaster and market superintendent, which position he held until he passed away in 1929.

When we speak of 'firsts' in the city fire department we should mention Charlie — the first city owned horse, who played an important part in many a fire-fighting manoeuvre. Fireman, George Burns, is the driver in the picture shown here.

Many people never consider the importance of the City Fire Department until they are in the unfortunate position of having to call for help.

The firemen's business has always been to save buildings, homes and lives, often at the risk of their own. They have always been soldiers on the home front; soldiers who are constantly on the alert



Charles—the first city owned horse.

to fight the enemy — FIRE; soldiers who know there is a lifetime of battles ahead of them.

From the time the first fire brigade was organized these men have been ever ready, at any time of the day or night, to quickly answer calls for assistance. The most profuse praise for the services they render would still be inadequate.

Fire Brigade of 1892.

Front row: Jack Campbell, Tom Rushbrooke, Jim Grassie, George Burns and Bill Balsom.

Centre row: Jim Beatty, Billy Young, Ike Thompson, Charlie Ward, Jack Little and Billy Ross.

Back row: Bob Ferguson, Gordie Zimmerman, Al Humber, Archie Campbell, Cecil Woodside, Fred St. John and Bert St. John.

We are fortunate in being able to procure a picture of a gallant brigade of 1892, and to be able to preserve their names for posterity.

A meeting held in the Fire Hall on December 8, 1890, with Mr. R. Watson, M.P. in the chair, ended with an agreement to organize a brigade of fifteen members on a voluntary basis. However, they agreed that $2.00 per hour should be paid for each fire they attended and 50c for each practice. Mr. Roxburgh was elected as chief at that meeting. His salary was to be $150.00 per year.

Fire Chiefs through the years have been as follows:

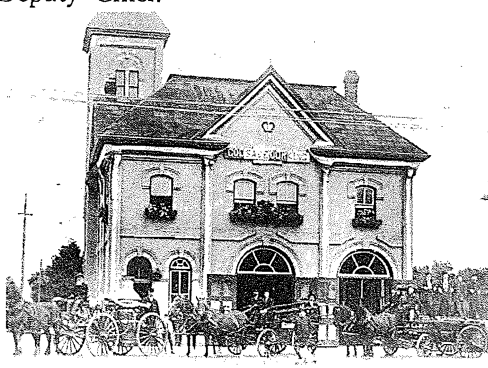
Chief R. Roxburgh (1890-1892), Chief I. W. Thompson (1892-1893), Chief J. Beattie (1893-1895), Chief O. W. Humber (1895-1896), Chief R. Roxburgh (1896-1909).

Chief Kilkerny assumed charge in 1909 when the City reorganized as a Fire Department and appointed J. Woods and W. Bell as permanent employees with 8 volunteers. Later, in the same year, Chief Kilkerny resigned and Chas. Dennison was appointed 'acting chief', until the next month when he officially became Chief.

Chief R. Roxburgh came back into the picture again in 1910 and served until 1919. He was followed by Chas. E. Jenner (1919-1927), Geo. Spriggs (1927-1963), Assist. Chief F. A. Fish (who started with the Fire Dept. in 1920) served as Chief for one month in 1963 before retiring.

The present fire chief, Harold Braden, has an admirable record of fire fighting experience. He started with the Department in 1947, was promoted to Assistant Chief in 1963 and to Chief in 1964.

Roy Watson, who started with the Department in 1948 was promoted to Assistant Chief in 1964 and now holds the position of Deputy Chief.



Fire Hall of 1901. Three teams drawing equipment.

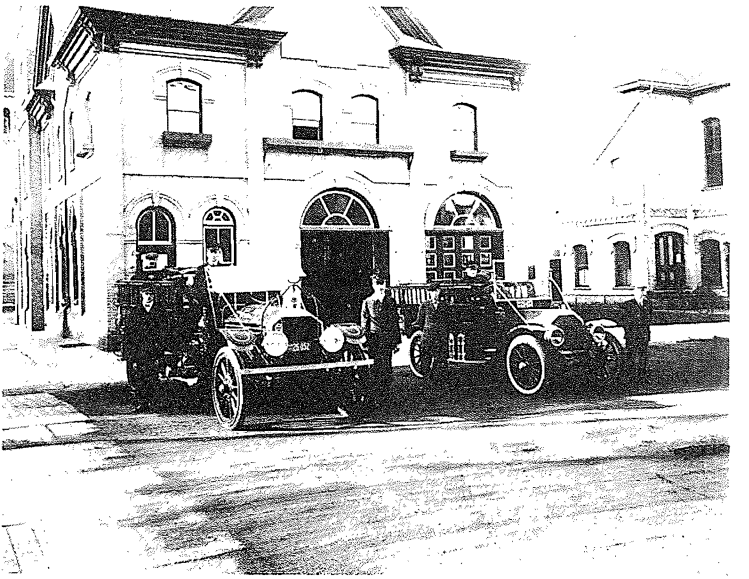
The 2½ storey Fire Hall shown here was located on the corner of Tupper Street and Saskatchewan Avenue. The official opening of this building took place on Oct. 7, 1893.

This picture was taken in 1901 and shows it decorated for the occasion of the coronation of King Edward VII.

The three teams of horses shown are drawing a 'steamer fire pumper', chemical and ladder carrier and a hose wagon.

This Fire Hall was vacated on Sept. 24, 1959 when it was torn down.

The Fire Department felt they had come a long way when they replaced horse power with cars. A 1914 McLaughlin Buick, bought from S. J. Newman was turned into a hose carrier and a Cadillac was also put into service.



First Cars for Fire Brigade

Horse-drawn vehicles, rapidly racing to the scene of a fire, and often turning corners on two wheels in an urgency to get there, was soon nothing more than a memory. The picture shown here was taken in 1922. Firemen L. to R. are: F. A. Fish, Harry Russel, Frank Weatherly, Charles Jenner and Stewart Carmichael.

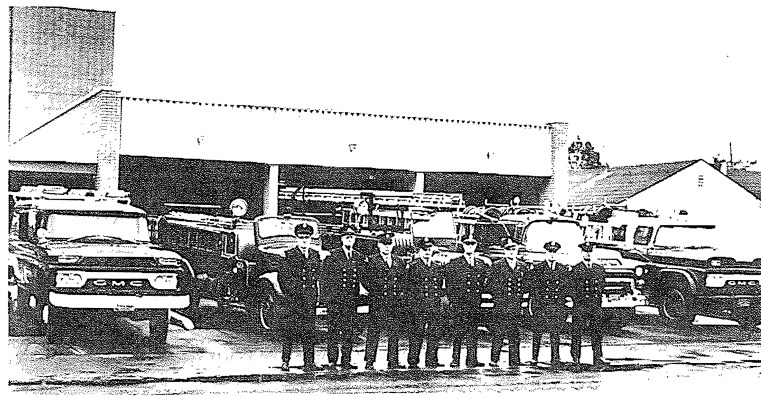
A brief history of equipment might be of interest to many.

In 1921 the American Lafrance triple combination fire pumper, 500 gals. per minute water delivery at 120 lbs. per square inch on the pump, was purchased. It operated until 1956. It is now in the Manitoba Agricultural Museum at Austin.

The present day fire trucks consist of 1931 Seagren 500 gal. per minute single stage 120 P.S.I. Carries 1800 to 2000 ft. of 2½" hose,

3 ladders, one of which is a 45 ft. aluminum ladder; a 1937 Chevrolet Booster pumper, 240 gal. capacity pump carrying 230 gals. of water, driven by a power take off the transmission; a 1956 G.M.C. American Marsh pumper, 500 G.P.M. at 150 P.S.I. carrying 500 gals. of water and a 200 G.P.M. portable pump; a 1961 G.M.C. American Marsh pumper, 500 G.P.M. at 150 P.S.I. carrying 500 gals. of water and a 200 G.P.M. portable pump; and a 1 ton 1963 G.M.C. 4 wheel drive, front mount 4 ton winch rescue truck.

On Sept. 24, 1959, the same day as the old fire hall was vacated, firemen and equipment were moved into a new building located on Main Street north. The picture which follows will prove interesting for the sake of comparison. Note the uniforms and equipment.



New Fire Hall, Men and Equipment.

From left to right: A. R. McDonald, F. C. Lundy, M. LaPointe, J. F. Grassie, C. H. Braden (Fire Chief), R. H. Watson (Deputy Fire Chief), A. J. P. Fries and A. Smith.

There were 21 volunteer firemen associated with department at this time. An extra item of interest is that there is $9,000.00 worth of equipment on the rescue unit alone.

THE DAYS WITHOUT POWER

We could say that the advent of electricity has been one of our greatest blessings. Consider the weekly wash-day of yesteryear!

Wash boilers were filled with water which had to be pumped from a well, or carried in buckets from a river or creek, and then warmed on top of a wood-burning stove. Home-made soap was chipped into the water, and when the temperature was considered right for the job it was dumped into a wash tub where muscle power and

a wash board (a square piece of corrugated metal set in a frame of wood) was used to get clothing clean. An extra tub was filled with rinse water; and the wash boiler filled again and allowed to boil, to further whiten the white articles that were washed and rinsed. (Dashing from the washboard to the wood-box, to keep the fire in the stove burning, was a part of the exercise.) Add to that the starching and hanging; and then add the ironing, with irons that had to be heated on top of the same wood-burning stove, and you will have a picture of a pioneer housewife's wash day!

Later came washing machines of various makes. These either had a lever that had to be pushed back and forth by hand, or a crank that had to be turned by hand, both demanding time and energy.

Noisy, smelly gasoline washers came next and were considered a real boon, in that the lady of the house had a few minutes now and then to punch down the bread dough or darn a few socks.

With no electric refrigerators, ice boxes and root cellars had to suffice.

With no milking machines, a little stool, which was moved from cow to cow, prevented getting the knees of britches dirty from kneeling while tugging on the fleshy faucets which female bovine are endowd with on their nether quarters. Cantankerous cows sometimes objected to sharing their wealth with humans, and many a milk pail was kicked over, giving the milkman a cream and milk foot bath!

At first, pails of milk were allowed to sit until the cream rose to the top and could be skimmed off. Then came cream separators which had to be cranked by hand.

Sewing machines were operated by foot pedals, which may account for most pioneer women having slim ankles.

Many still remember the candles, and then the coal-oil lamps, the chimneys of which were held over a steaming kettle to moisten the soot. Old newspapers were used for cleaning and polishing them. The base had to be filled with oil each day and the wick, which hung down into it, had to be trimmed at the top.

Next came gasoline lamps, a better light, but hissing scary things, with little sacks which lit up and were called "mantles".

When recipes, in the time of the early settlers, said, "beat lightly", it was, no doubt, with an understanding that housewives were too tired to crank the old handbeater any other way!

Because of electrical power, even the old broom is becoming obsolete! It can now be seen occasionally sweeping off a doorstep

after a snowfall, however. At one time they were a necessity, and were used (with cloths wrapped around the brush) for dusting walls, and beating carpets, as well as sweeping floors. They usually ended their usefulness as scarecrows in a corn patch. Electrically powered cleaning machines do a better and faster job which allows more leisure time for the housewife.

At one time people yearned for hours of leisure. Now it is a problem how to waste hours wisely!

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE POWER

Portage la Prairie was the first municipality to make application for power to the newly formed Manitoba Power Commission, and immediately, maps, plans, etc. for this line were prepared. Construction began August 4, 1919, but was stopped again November 4th; the contractor refusing to continue because of added cost due to severe weather conditions. The Commission, under pressure from the members of the Council of the City of Portage la Prairie, took over the contractor's outfit, organized a construction gang and recommenced construction about the middle of November. The line began at the City of Winnipeg substation located at the corner of Stafford Street and Scotland Avenue, and ran to a terminal station built by the Commission on Saskatchewan Avenue at the City Limits of Portage la Prairie. Galvanized steel towers were specified with steel foundations, the general design being three spans supported on a flexible frame tower, and the fourth supported by a square tower. Anchor towers were placed every two miles. Special towers were designed for railway crossings, transmission line crossings and trunk telephone line crossings. Steel footings were used except inside the City Limits, where special latticed poles with solid concrete foundations were used.

By the middle of March, 1920, the construction of the line was almost completed when a sleet storm with a high wind caused the failure of the steel foundations and part of the line was blown down, inflicting much damage to towers, insulators, etc. The effect of this experience caused a decision to concrete all footings.

A contract was entered into with the City of Winnipeg for the supply of electrical energy, and on the night of August 17, 1920, full voltage of 66,000 was applied to the line. The line was energized for two days and then the distribution system of Portage la Prairie was connected to the Commission's terminal.

On July 1, 1922, the Portage line was subjected to wind of cyclonic proportion and some two and one-half miles failed to withstand the storm, service being interrupted for a period of about one week, the time required to build a temporary wooden line.

In 1926 while a number of applications were received by the Commission the only extension completed and placed in operation was the Portage la Prairie to High Bluff line. This line served the Village of High Bluff and a limited number of farmers en route.

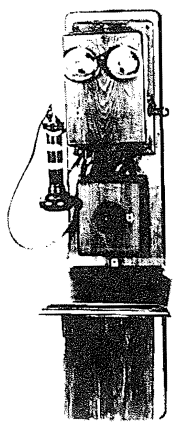
The intensified Farm Electrification Program following World War II resulted in power being made available throughout the entire municipality.

Today Portage la Prairie is recognized throughout Canada as an outstanding example of well-lit thoroughfares providing safety for its residents and a warm welcome for visitors.

THE TELEPHONE IN PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

A wonderful world of words with neighbors was made possible by the telephone. "Hello Central, give me . . . . ."

The party line, and the oft' used admonition, "Hush! I think someone is listening." How many remember? Probably many who have a telephone.



The first telephones arrived in the then thriving little community of Portage la Prairie in 1882, when the Bell Telephone Company established an exchange here under the supervision of Major H. J. Woodside. The office was located on the upper floor of the old Laffarty Block on Saskatchewan Avenue one door east of where the Portage Hotel now stands. The exchange was of a primitive nature and the service, no doubt, of the same standard.

On the retirement of Mr. Woodside, the exchange was placed under the supervision of Mr. H. J. Foote. He in turn was succeeded by Mr. Norman Snider.

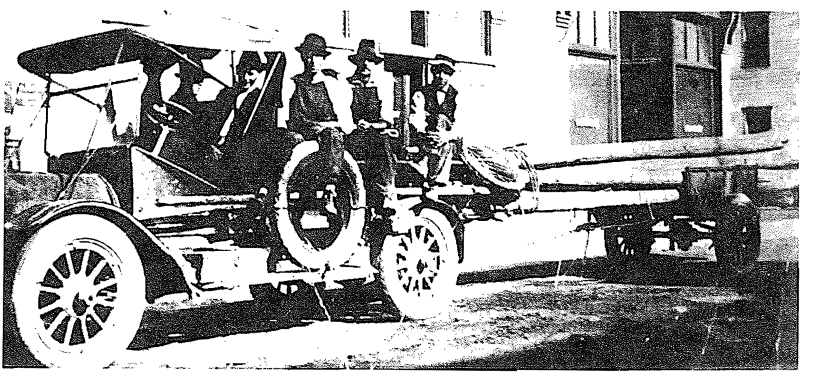
Mr. Snider held the position of Local Agent until about 1888 or 1889 at which date the town was rebuilt. Mr. V. G. O'Brien then took over the exchange, moving the equipment to his private residence on the corner of Campbell (now Royal Road) and Duke Streets.

Some of the early telephones installed in Portage were the "Blake" type. The talking current was supplied by a wet battery and every few months the telephone man, driving a horse and buggy, would come around to keep the liquid in the tank filled. To the horror of the housewife, quite often acid dripped down onto the carpet during the process.

Telephone lines in those early days were all "open wiring" with fences and roof-tops providing support. Poles were used only when the telephone people ran out of roofs. After a heavy wind, the telephone agent would parade down the streets armed with a long pole to clear the crossed and tangled wires. The pole would sometimes slip, accidentally of course, striking dangerously near a bedroom window. Many a resident was jarred out of bed at dawn by the telephone man "innocently" performing his duties.

The first long distance line between Portage and Winnipeg was opened for service in 1900 and proved a great boon to the businessman. Mr. O'Brien's premises soon became too small to accommodate the growing exchange so the equipment was moved in 1905 to the building now occupied by Rey's Tailoring and Cleaning.

Following Mr. O'Brien's retirement, Mr. Frank Burbridge was put in charge. After a few years he retired due to ill health. He was followed by J. B. Carter who was in charge until 1910, when District Superintendent R. C. Brown was transferred from Dauphin to Portage la Prairie.



An MTS work-crew. (Picture taken in 1919)
Left to right: E. Smith, Dick Adams, V. McKenzie, J. Graham and Bill Letwin.

It was during 1910 that the present telephone exchange on Royal Road was erected by the Manitoba Telephone System. Conveniently situated in the business centre of the city, this exchange served the community well until continued growth and the advent of dial operation in this area necessitated extension of the premises. A two-storey addition was completed in the fall of 1953. Up-to-date telephone equipment was installed and local residents received dial service November 27, 1954.

Telephone statistics tell a story. In 1884, Portage la Prairie had 18 telephones. Today there are several hundred over the 6,000 mark. The population, growth and economic development of this community are truly reflected by the tremendous increase in telephone usage.

The spirit of service is traditional in the communications industry resulting in long, interesting telephone careers. When the following picture was taken in 1961, the combined service of these four dedicated MTS employees in the Portage la Prairie Commerical Office totalled 175 years!

Pictured left to right are: Mazie Miller (42 years service), Lottie Sparks (45 years service), Mary Smith (48 years service) and Betty Sylvester (40 years service).

Miss Miller who retired in June, 1967, had completed 48 years with the Telephone System.

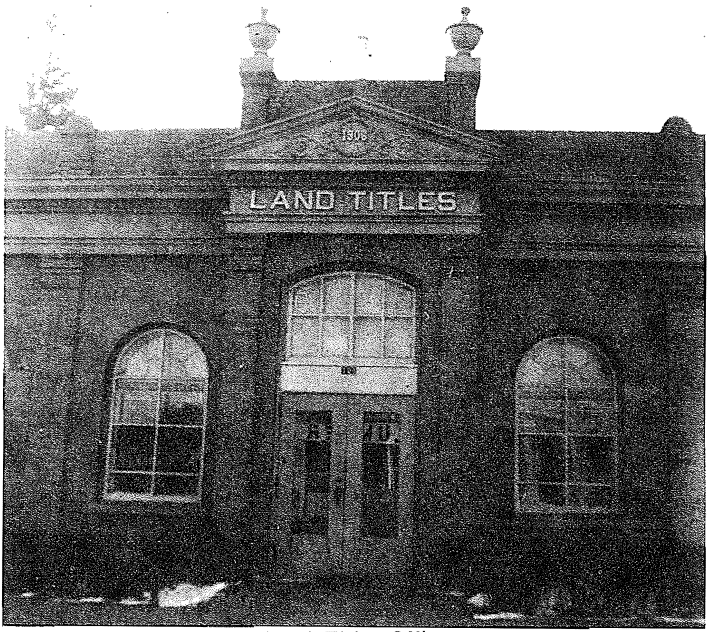
It is regrettable we do not have the names of all long-service telephone employees. We extend our apologies to those whose names are not included.

Added to the names of gentlemen employees already mentioned, we are at least able to mention four more: Walter Logan, George Dewar, Cal. Paisley and Joe E. Collier.

At the time of this writing (1968), a new MTS building, situated on the site of the old Baptist Church is nearing completion.

A BRIEF 'LAND TITLES' HISTORY

Shortly after 1870 the Registrar General of Manitoba appointed W. J. James as District Registrar for the Portage la Prairie area. Until that time the Hudson's Bay Company Factors were charged with the responsibility of recording title to land. Mr. James held office until 1878.



Land Titles Office.

The first application for a title under the Real Property Act of 1885 was made by the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, covering Sections 8 and 26 of Township 10 and Range 7 West of the Principal Meridian in Manitoba.

The Real Property Act of 1889 replaced the Act of 1885, and Title No. 1 issued under the 1889 Act to The Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company (Limited) on the 2nd of August 1889 and covered the South-East Quarter of Section 5 in Township 14 and Range 8, West of the Principal Meridian in Manitoba. This quarter section of land is currently being farmed by Samuel Kennedy of Westbourne.

With the advent of improved transportation and communication, the various Land Registry Districts were consolidated and in 1906 a vault-like office was built on 3rd Street N.E. to serve the Land Titles District of Portage la Prairie. The office is still in use today. The District Registrar at that time was W. J. Cooper and there were as many as 15 permanent employees. In 1969 there are only four: Orest W. Pressey, District Registrar; Webster Burton, John Reynolds and Joy Askin, all Land Titles Clerks.

In the early part of the century all deeds, titles and other documents were written by hand. In the year 1953 the first duplicate certificate of title was typewritten, but the original certificate of title was still written by hand. In September of 1961 the original certificates of title were typed for the first time. This was just another stage in the evolution of automation, which over the years reduced the number of employees from a high of 15 to the present 4.

Although procedures have changed over the years, the objects of the land titles system have remained the same since 1885. They are, "to simplify title to land, to give certainty thereto, to facilitate the proof thereof and to expedite dealing therewith."

It is regrettable that we do not have the names of all the people who spent many years of their lives working in this department. However, one of them, Roy McKay, who was Registrar for 31 years (1933-1964) is still a resident of Portage.

THE CITY BELL

In pioneer days there were many kinds of bells. There were the little country schoolhouse bells that teachers shook to summon pupils to classes; there were the town-school bells that were attached to a rope which hung in the hallways of schools and were made to ring by pulling on the rope; there were cowbells which helped farmers find their herd at milking time; there were sleighbells which tinkled along stretches of country roads in the winter time; and there was (and is) the Portage city bell that has survived them all in the passage of time.

The resonant tone of the half-ton bell would not be taken for granted if it were in a valley that would reverberate its ringing. While we on the prairie, in Portage la Prairie, take it for granted, we know that we would miss it if the clapper ceased to strike at its usual hours and perform its duties on important occasions.

No-one can deny that the town and city of Portage has been well-served by the ½ton bell, which for almost 65 years has rung out the hours. There is also the "quarter bell" at 8.45 a.m. to warn children of the approaching school hour. Through the years, how many parents have said to their children at the breakfast table, "There goes the "quarter bell" now SCOOT"? And how many have set clocks and watches by its dependable ringing?

The bell has seen many events and occasions, some of them gay and many of them sad, and in turn it has marked each. It has been heard joyously ringing out the old year and bringing in a new one, well over 60 of them; it has tolled the death of prominent men and women; and it has for years tolled the silence as Portage remembered its war dead.

In addition, the sudden, sharp and urgently spaced clanging of the bell has sounded the call to firemen and volunteers from all corners of the city, summoning them to join in fighting conflagrations of varying size, many of them, in 60 years, of a disastrous nature.

These services cost the Portage Fire Brigade 25c a pound, and the bell weighs 1027 pounds. When firemen reached a decision, in 1890, to purchase a new bell, they naturally "shopped around." Following is one of the letters sent to J. P. Young, in charge of the committee, by a representative of the McShane Bell Foundry of Baltimore: Quote — "I am just in receipt of a reply to my letter to the manufacturers and the best offer that I can make you now is 25c per pound, and for the bell metal of the old bell I will allow 14c per pound, i.e., on new bell and old bell, and I to furnish the manufacturer's guarantee with the bell against breakage. I think this is a better deal than the old one as I now pay the freights on the old bell as well as the new one and all you will have to pay is the duty."

The deal was made and the bell was shipped to Portage. It was hoisted to the top of the old fire hall where it began its service in what was then the 'town' of Portage la Prairie.

Today it sits in its own private little tower atop the City Hall, still a faithful servant sending out messages to the people.

GLAMOUR IN GLASS

Portage points with pride to an industry that is unique in Canada and in many parts of the world — a glass factory which produces unusually beautiful, colorful pieces in 29 different shapes and styles.

This industry was the brain-child of George K. Hill, a second generation pharmacist and former hotel owner in Portage la Prairie, who through the years has contributed much to improving and beautifying the city.

While on vacation, in 1965, he became intrigued with Mexican glassware and its profusion of color, so much that he brought a few pieces home with him to display in the Mayfair Giftshop located in the basement of his hotel. To merely share the beauty with Portagers was probably his purpose at that time. However, demands for this beautiful glassware were so great that he decided to have something similar, or better, manufactured right in Portage la Prairie.

He sent his nephew, Daryl Giffin, to Mexico for two months to study the art form. Daryl returned from the course accompanied by the leading painter from the best glassware company in that country. Together they perfected the art and set up production procedure.

The finest double diamond glass from west Germany has to go into a molding oven, and grinding and painting (with spectacular dyes and special paint) are only a couple of the steps involved in the manufacturing process.

An appealing feature, about the fine glass products made here, is that no two pieces are alike. "You just don't find newlyweds returning these to the gift shops for exchanges," says Mr. Hill.

In Canada, N. C. Cameron and Sons of Toronto, Ontario, have exclusive distribution rights. The U.S. market has distributors in places from Boston to San Francisco and Canadians will find it in quality gift shops from coast to coast. General Manager, Kelly Giffin, reports letters coming from as far as London, England and Scotland asking for the product or even patent rights!

Today "Mayfair Glassware," as it is called, employs thirty people and is planning to expand even more.

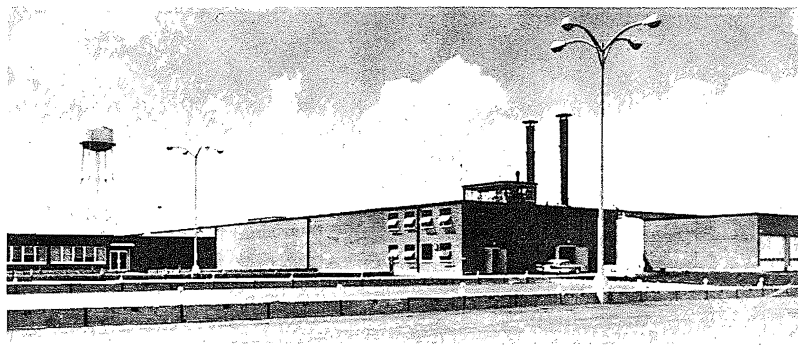
We say again "we point with pride" to this Portage product. And we salute the man who had the courage to venture into this daring field of manufacturing.

THE CAMPBELL SOUP CO. LTD. PLANT (See map for location)

Soup is not just a menu item in Portage la Prairie, it is also an industry.

The Campbell Soup Co. decided to locate here in 1959 because they considered it the best site for their purpose in the west. Freight rates, freight accessibility via railways and highways, potential to develop fine vegetable-growing areas, an adequate supply of good water and the availability of high calibre labour were all important factors.

The plant has grown considerably since it opened nine years ago. A freezer-warehouse was built in 1964 and a 'finished product warehouse' was added in this year of '68.



The picture shown here, although it doesn't cover the entire Campbell Soup Co. Plant, will give you an idea of the size and architecture of the establishment.

Some interesting facts about this industry can be stated briefly: 30 varieties of soup are made in the plant; all the soup produced must meet uniform taste and quality standards; much of the vegetables used are grown in our own fertile Portage soil; there are strict rules of sanitation; and most of the employees are Portagers. The manager is Mr. E. J. Korhonen.

Freight movement through the Plant during the past fiscal year 1967-68 reached a total of 90,000 tons of raw materials received and finished products shipped out. What this means in terms of the community economic picture is illustrated by the fact that employees'

wages and the purchase of ingredients and supplies in the area totalled $3,700,000. Of this total, employees received $1,433,000. in wages.

Another 40 persons are employed at a mushroom farm, purchased by the Campbell Soup Co. in 1965. They have proven that quality mushrooms can be grown even under Manitoba's extreme winter conditions. A spur line runs right into the warehouse area and can handle up to 5 cars at once. Mr. E. E. Jeffries is the farm manager.

There is every reason to believe that the 'soup centre for Western Canada' will always be Portage la Prairie.

SOUTHPORT

For many years the association between the city of Portage la Prairie and Canadian Armed Forces Southport has been an outstanding one. Firm friendships have been established between our citizens and Armed Services people, not only because many of them have resided in our city but also because they have actively participated in our social, athletic and cultural endeavours.

Southport is considered one of the most significant sources of business for the retail trade in our city. In terms of actual income, there are 1,000 men receiving an average income of $6,000 each. Many of the wives are employed in town and swell the labour force available. It is estimated that with dependents, Southport adds 3,000 to our city's population.

An annual Armed Forces Day program draws thousands of spectators to this area. During the day, daring feats in flying are performed by the famous "Red Knight". (The one presently holding this title is Lieut. Brian G. Alston.) There is also formation flying, and every phase of the base's operation is open to public viewing. The latest of these spectacular days (1969) attracted a crowd estimated at 20,200 persons!

For the actual history of this important base we turn to our local paper, The Daily Graphic, and quote:

"3FTS HAS A HISTORY GOING BACK 26 YEARS

The unit's history began in 1943 when Number 1 Instrument Flying School (No. 1 FTS) was formed at Mohawk, Ont. The school's role was to provide an instrument rating course for RCAF pilots. This unit moved to Trenton, Ont., in 1945 and again to Centralia, Ont., in 1947.

In 1956, No. 1 IFS was amalgamated with No. 1 Advanced Flying School (No. 1 AFS) at Saskatoon, Sask., the latter having been established there since 1952. The school's role then saw RCN, RCAF Regular and Auxiliary pilots introduced to the Expeditor aircraft and subsequently converted to the B-25 Mitchell for the major portion of an instrument rating course.

In 1959 the Mitchell was phased out and all instrument qualification training was completed on the Expeditor. In 1960, the school's role broadened and it was assigned the responsibility of training RCN pilots to wings standard as their training program in the United had been dropped at the time.

In September, 1962, the school moved from Saskatoon to Canadian Joint Air Training (CJAT) Camp at Rivers, Man., and it was here that the first army pilots began training for an instrument rating.

Nearly two years after arriving at Rivers, the school was moved in August, 1964, to RCAF Station Portage la Prairie and had its name changed to No. 3 Flying Training School (3FTS). No. 3FTS conducts a 16-to 18-week multi-engine course for Tutor trained students. Auxiliary, army and foreign national pilots are also trained to instrument standards.

The syllabus followed at 3FTS consists of ground school and simulator training, and flying of the Expeditor aircraft.

Upon arrival at 3FTS, the students are in ground school full days for the first week, where they are mainly learning Expeditor engineering and handling. After this exam the students, for the next five weeks, are half days in ground school and the other half on the flight line.

While in ground school, the students are taught flight conduct, flight procedures and general aircraft engineering. They are also subjected to drill, physical training, and officer development programs. At the end of approximately six weeks the tough instrument rating qualifying examination is given.

Now the flying takes up the full day, with clear hood or visual flying just about complete, and simulated instrument flying, utilizing navigation aids, becoming more and more familiar. A trip to Saskatoon, Sask., to become more proficient on the instrument landing system, and then a western cross-country, to Edmonton, Alta., prepares a student for the busy air terminals in the east.

The eastern cross country, to as far as Greenwood, Nova Scotia, is next flown. Then upon return to Portage la Prairie, a few more local trips to Dauphin, Brandon, Kenora and Rivers, and the student is ready to fly the instrument rating test. Upon successful completion of this ride, after approximately 120 flying hours, is graduation, and those hard-earned wings!

The Commandant of No. 3 Flying Training School is Lieutenant Colonel R. W. Found, CD, the Advanced Squadron Commander is Major M. J. Sauder, CD and Major W. G. Rowbotham, CD is the Standards Squadron Commander.

"A" Flight Commander is Major W. N. Russell, "B" Flight Commander is Major G. M. Hogarth. In these flights are a total of 15 other instructors.

Major R. W. McNish, and 10 other instructors, are in charge of ground school instruction and officer development."

THE LIBRARY

Since the days when papyrus afforded the most ancient material for writing, people have satisfied their craving for knowledge by reading.

During the fifth and sixth centuries, the Saxons, when referring to a beech-tree, used the word "book"; Icelandic people, the word "bok"; Danish, the word "bock"; German, the words "Buch" and "Buche"; Slav., the word "buk"; and all were related to the beech-tree. So, we see the words "book" and "beech" closely akin, and beechen tablets or pieces of beech bark are assumed to have formed the pages of the first books. Much later, came books as we know them today; a number of sheets of paper, folded, stitched, and bound together on edge.

When settlers came to the Portage plains, books were very precious things. Due to the weight of items necessary for survival, very few were brought in. These were, very often, read over and over by either candle-light or kerosene lamp-light, and anyone who could quote words of wisdom from a text was considered 'learned' in the district.

Reading also meant relaxation after a hard day of clearing and breaking land, and added a richness to an otherwise dreary existence.

With the advent of radio, and later of television, it might have been presumed that books would lose their prestige. We are happy

to observe that this has not been the case. While both commodities (radio and television) serve worthwhile purposes they can never take the place of the written word. The sound and sight of both are gone with the flick of a switch, but the written word lives on to refresh the memory and serve as a source of both pleasure and guidance.

It was in 1917 that the Local Council of Women made it known that a library was opening in the Millar Block on Saskatchewan Ave. E. Mrs. T. B. Millar was the president of the organization at that time, and her daughter, Margaret Millar, volunteered her services as the first Librarian. Books were obtained from McGill Travelling Library.

The optimism that prompted the ladies to undertake this venture was often tested in the years which followed. The number of locations listed is indicative of the work, worry and inconvenience they experienced. After vacating the Millar Block there was the Rural Municipal Bldg.; then the Richardson residence; then the old City Hall; then the present City Hall; and lastly, the present location in the former Bank of Montreal building.

When Mrs. J. R. Hamilton became president the travelling library system was changed, and the purchasing of books through a book co-operative replace it.

From 1917 on down through the years, the I.O.D.E. have been staunch supporters of the library and it could be said that they were instrumental in keeping a faith in its ultimate outcome alive. Mrs. J. M. Campbell, a native Portager who is admired by all who know her, was recently honored with a life membership in appreciation of her work and interest through such a lengthy period of time.

The local Council of Women relinquished their sponsorship in 1969, in favor of a Municipal Library. Mrs. W. W. Devine, who had been Chairman of the Library Committee for two years was appointed Library Chairman of the Board.

Mrs. Frank Wilson, who had been associated with the library for a little over a year, took the office of acting librarian.

Mrs. Alice Padgett deserves mention here as having actively participated in the operation of the library for some time prior to the change-over.

PORTAGE LIONS MEMORIAL POOL (See map for location)

On a hot day in August, 1942, when Madge, 13 years of age, and Ernie, 12 years of age, told their parents, Mr. and Mrs. J.

Hilland, that they were going swimming in the Assiniboine River, there was no cause for worry. Both children could swim, and other children were allowed to go to the same spot for the same purpose.

They were nice, mannerly, obedient children who were not only loved by their family but admired by everyone who knew them. Many people thought they were twins because they were so close to the same height and were so often seen enjoying the same games and fun.

It was not like them to fail to return home at an appointed time and that is when worry really began for the parents. As time ticked by, they knew something must have happened. But what?

Their fears were not groundless. Little articles of clothing, by the steel bridge where they had changed to dive into the cooling waters, told the story. Madge and Ernie had drowned.

No one knows how it happened, but everyone who knew them is quite certain that if one was in difficulty the other would go to the rescue. And that is likely what happened.

The grief-stricken parents didn't know that the tragedy would spark the idea for a project which would prevent the same grief for other parents. They didn't know, as the parents of soldiers in the war didn't know, that the lives of their children had not been taken in vain.

The Lions Club, which was charted on October 20, 1938, with 19 members: W. I. Bradley, E. M. Brock, A. Brown Jr., J. Earl, F. L. Gosman, R. A. Gilroy, S. Greene, Dr. G. H. Hamlin, G. K. Hill, A. A. Lang, W. C. Lowry, D. L. McInnerny, C. Miller, R. W. Morton, H. Sparks, W. G. Sterling, K. Stewart, W. C. Taylor and W. J. Wilson, had dwindled down to a precious few when the Hilland tragedy occurred.

Dr. G. H. Hamlin, who was President of the club, arranged a meeting of the 5 or 6 remaining members and all agreed that a pool for Portage, where both children and adults could swim safely under supervision, was one of the most practical projects that could be undertaken.

Architects were contacted and the costs obtained. The figures for construction were in the neighborhood of $25,000.00 and the members got busy trying to raise the amount needed.

With a worthwhile project as incentive, membership in the club increased.

Their two main sources of revenue were monthly dances at which the patrons had the opportunity of competing in certain games of chance with such expert operators as Errol Brown, Gordon Irwin, Watt Newell, Bert Wynne, Jim Gibb, Ralph Rea, Don Deveraux, Sam Green and Dr. J. Kettlewell. It was a poor evening in which they didn't clear $350.00 or $400.00. The other source of revenue was the commission from the sale of Victory Bonds every six months.

In 1943 the club felt they had enough money to start construction of the pool. A 99 year lease was obtained, from the city of Portage la Prairie, for land on the corner of Royal Road and Crescent Road. Even before the footings were done and the forms for the walls erected, shortage of materials and building restrictions imposed by the emergencies of war, made it necessary to stop construction.

By the time the war was over, costs of labour and materials had risen so high that their figures for construction had doubled. Errol Brown, who succeeded Dr. Hamlin as President, along with Dr. Hamlin and Percy Titchener, met on numerous occasions with the architects and had them make certain changes in construction which they felt would drop the costs low enough that they could meet them.

At that time, there was no organized memorial to commemorate the memory of the boys who gave their lives during the war, so in 1946 the Lions Club organized under the War Charities Act were able to raise in the neighborhood of $11,000.00. This is the reason that the pool adopted the name it still bears.

An unestimable amount of voluntary labor went into fixing an army hut, that was purchased and moved to the grounds, seeding to prevent the discomfort of sand blowing, and many things. Jim Hamilton, Bruce Jones, Bernie Dann, Don Bannerman, Ev Mackey and Foss Giffin deserve special credit for their time and effort.

The official opening was held in the summer of 1949. Rex Gilroy was President and the ribbon was cut by Charles Carter of Winnipeg.

Through fund-raising projects, a cement block building replaced the old army hut in 1967; two pools are now on the grounds — the large one, and a smaller one for little children; and a colorful playground with swings, etc.

There are about 76 members in the club at this time, and most of the money raised by them goes towards running, maintaining and improving the pool.

Thousands of children and adults have learned to swim since 1949. A person needs only to stop for a moment, on an afternoon in the summertime, and hear the happy, healthy squeals of excitement and joy emitting from scores of children, to realize what a wonderful contribution the Lions have made to the city.

CRESCENT LAKE AND ISLAND PARK

The lovely lake and Island Park, as you see them today, are products of the imagination of several pioneers.

Maybe it was R. Hill who was responsible for sparking their imagination by renting two or three boats to rowing enthusiasts in the summer of 1892, and increasing the number for hire the following year.

The Weekly Review of July 27, 1892, said, "It is not generally known that there are three splendid stretches of clear water where one's rowing powers can be tested quite enough to satisfy even the most boastful. Boating on the Slough is now a favorite pastime with many of the young folks".

When this spot took on the unglamorous name of "Slough" is uncertain. Stories by early settlers indicate that there was a considerable amount of water in it in their time. It certainly wasn't a place of deep mud or mire, that we associate with the word "slough", back in 1874 when children were going from the mainland to the school on the Island in canoes. However, it is true that as time went on the name became more applicable to it.

The gradual drying-up process left holes of mud and mire where the water had been deep, and excellent hay-land in the shallower areas. T. W. Boddy, H. Ogletree, W. M. Smith, W. Dunsmore, Nicholas Garland, Alex McLean, W. J. Cooper, Jos. Martin and the H. B. Co. were some of the owners of Slough bottom property that was producing this valuable commodity.

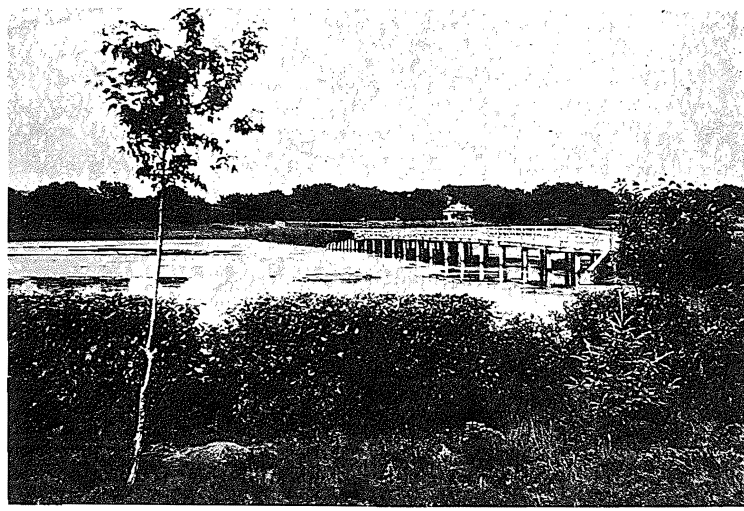
On the Island, by 1896, there were park grounds and those of the Agricultural Exhibition Society and Turf Club including a large Exhibition Building; well appointed livestock stables; especially constructed racehorse stables; a big grandstand; attractive and appropriately arranged athletic grounds, and the fastest half-mile oval race track in Canada. These features were probably conducive to popularizing the town of Portage la Prairie at that time. A paper of that date said, "A larger number of excursionists have visited Portage this season than at any other point in the West".

The first meeting of the Public Parks Board was held on September 14, 1897. Those present were Mayor Brown, T. A. Newman, Geo. Murton, T. B. Millar, C. R. Garland and R. S. Thomson. These were the men who made the first move to change the Slough from an eyesore to a thing of beauty which, they hoped, would be "a joy forever".

Naturally, owners of Slough bottom hay-land property were hostile to the idea of flooding their land, and much negotiating was done before some of them would agree to selling. Due to this, plans for the project didn't proceed very rapidly. However, it was deemed wise to build a bridge before flooding anyway, so the Board contacted Mr. I. H. Bossons to draw up plans for it. The main bridge to the Island in the early days, and still in use at the time these plans were prepared, was what was called the "mud bridge" which was located at the West End. (The "mud bridge" was ordered removed by the Parks Board in 1914.)

In 1898 the new bridge was ready for use, but to make it more attractive other things had to be considered. For one thing, a deplorable garbage dump at one end of it! Thos. Kennedy, Jas. Mitchell and Geo. Bourne disrupted the home life of many rats when they covered this with sand and planted willows there. For their work in aid of beautification, they were paid $28.20.

The willows flourished, as can be seen in the picture shown here. The location of this bridge has been given as "running from the 3rd hole of the golf course on the Island to the mainland".



Bridge

Keeping the bridge clean must have posed a bit of a problem back in those days, because at a meeting on April 27, 1899, it was moved by C. Brown and seconded by W. I. Cooper that the Secretary be instructed to have two notices placed at the entrance-ways to the bridge, to the effect that no manure or other refuse be allowed to pass over. (As it was all carriage traffic in those days, we wonder if they had "bridge-broken" horses!)

A picturesque, as well as useful, item was added to the Park in 1903 when the Town Council donated a windmill and tank. The Turf Club, who benefitted the most by this addition to the grounds, later took on the responsibility for the maintenance of it.

By 1904, the bridge was in need of repairs and $350.00 was spent on it. At that time too, the Parks Board proved that the old dream of flooding the Slough hadn't died, as they passed By Law No. 2 which provided for expropriation of Slough bottom property. The Mayor and Town Council were requested to consider running fresh water into the Slough.

Some mischief might have been anticipated, or why was Jas. Purcell appointed as a special constable to protect the dam at Smith's bridge?

Settlements for Slough bottom land were eventually completed, but the trials and tribulations were far from over for the Parks Board. Getting water into the Slough proved to be more difficult and costly than anticipated.

The dam at Smith's bridge was not very satisfactory apparently, and problems mounted. Home-owners complained about water in their cellars; a sluice gate had to be put on the grade on the road to the bridge; water in the Slough had to be lowered 18 inches to safeguard the grade in case of Spring freshets, and the dam itself had to be piled and sheet-piled. Then, as if those problems weren't enough, the bridge needed more work done on it.

In May of 1905, John Prout was given the contract to raise the bridge eighteen inches at each end, and four feet in the centre.

The water in the Slough didn't exactly smell like Spring flowers by this time, and this became another problem. Chas. Burley was appointed to experiment with bluestone in the water; not to necessarily impart an enticing fragrance, but to subdue the offensive phew that was pervading the surrounding area. There is no record of the success of this venture.

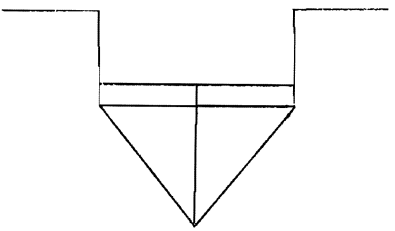
At a Parks Board meeting on September 29, 1905, W. Armstrong was authorized to engage an engineer to report to them the

best and cheapest way to have a running stream of water in what had started to be called "Crescent Lake", and a suggestion to flood the lake from the Assiniboine River was discussed. It was almost a year later that they decided to get an estimate of the cost of cement and tile piping, and also of trenching. A few days later (Sept. 11, 1906), 4000 feet of 18 inch tile was ordered, and tenders were called for laying it.

Between 1906 and April, 1908, a water-wheel system was tried and proven unsatisfactory.

In June of 1908, a Mr. Cameron, of Winnipeg, attended a meeting and showed a sketch of a pump or elevator, which he wished to sell, for lifting water from the River and emptying it into the pipe line. His proposition was not considered worthy of trial as he could offer no guarantee of its success.

The suggestion to build a needle-dam won favor with Board members, but as it would be a project involving about $35,000.00 nothing was done about it until Feb. of 1909, when the steel and iron work to be used in it was discussed, and Smith, Kerry & Chase were put in charge of construction. Parsons Construction and Engineering were to do the work. Two partners, Merriam and Symington were brought into the contract reading later.



Costs mounted. The canal had to be deepened in the centre to 3' 6" shaped as shown in the diagram here, and two bridges built over it on the Ogletree farm. A. McLarty was given the latter contract.

Then, in April of 1910, Mr. Chase recommended certain changes in plans with respect to the floor of the dam. He was also of the opinion that the needles shouldn't be placed or any attempt made to raise the water until extra piling was driven to protect both abutments. Mr. A. J. Riddell and a small gang of men proceeded to the dam site to carry out the orders.

Nothing seemed to go as planned, or hopefully expected, and neither Board or Engineers and Contractors were very happy with each other for awhile. This was made quite evident by accounts of pending law suits, etc. E. P. Garland was Solicitor for the Parks

Board at that time, and at one point, so carefully was a case being prepared that a diver was hired to examine holes and leaks in the upstream piling of the dam to prove a point!

Everything seems to have been cleared up without either side being too badly hurt, but faith in a needle dam was shattered, and it was agreed that a different system of bringing water into the lake must be tried. Messrs Bailey, Sharpe and Babb were appointed to look into the cost of putting a pump at the River, putting up a pump-house, and power to run the pump.

An itemized cost-sheet was presented at a Parks Board meeting on Oct. 6, 1911, and was followed by a call for tenders for machinery. The Westinghouse Co. were the most reasonable at $1.-356.00. Work was done by day labor under the supervision of a committee.

Mr. P. Handcock was the foreman and he, with his crew, built a concrete well, laid intake pipes from the River, and built a flume 2' x 6' to carry the water from the pump to the bulkhead.

By Feb. of 1912, the pump had been installed, and shortly after, the water in Crescent Lake reached a depth of 4' 4". The total cost for completion of this satisfactory project was $5,193.04.

Two men, Hodgson and Lee, were hired as engineers at the River Pump House @ $65.00 and $40.00 per month, which was considered a fairly good salary at that time. The pump had to be kept running at a speed suiting the elevation in order to obtain a constant capacity. It also had to be primed, and was operated by pulleys and a motor.

Weeds had made a little headway in the Lake by this time, and a submarine weed-cutting-saw was purchased to eliminate them. The cost of saw, freight and duty was $80.00. A raft was built later to facilitate the work of this machine.

The Board, anxious to promote further improvements, made arrangements for cutting a canal to connect both ends of Crescent Lake. Mr. H. Ogletree consented to give them the right of way without conditions or considerations. Tenders were called, and Joseph Nadon was hired to do all the work, cutting brush from the channel and excavating the canal, for $325.00.

At last the Lake was in condition to be enjoyed as a lake. Private boat houses were built, with owners leasing the land. The Parks Board erected a large one too, and in 1915 were charging

$5.00 for row-boats and $15.00 for motor boats, which brought in a little revenue.

Then, just when everything seemed to indicate clear sailing ahead, a Spring flood dampened that dream. The Lake was full and overflowing, the motor house was practically in the River (although the motor itself was high and dry), the sluice-way was entirely gone, two bridges were washed away, the bulkhead was damaged, and the dam broken away in three or four places! It's a wonder that the Parks Board didn't give up at that point! However, by the end of the year all building and repair work was completed and everything was in readiness for the next season.

During the years that the Lake was demanding so much attention, Island Park was not being neglected. Thos. Hill was ploughing and harrowing the land there in preparation for sodding, seeding and flower beds as early as 1900. E. A. Foley was hired as caretaker, that same year, at $40.00 per summer month and a rent free, year around home. He only stayed one season, and was replaced by B. F. Sharp at the same summer salary, with $10.00 per month in the winter. In 1906, when J. P. Young took over the job, the salary was raised to $75.00 and $55.00.

In 1912, Mr. B. D. Wallace of Island Park Nursery Co. rented the Nursery on terms of $100.00 per year for a period of ten years.

The first animals purchased for the Park were three deer, in 1913. Fenced enclosures and sheds for their protection were built. No-one knows how dogs got into the deer pen the following year and killed one of them. The owners of the dogs paid $40.00 in settlement of a claim.

In May of 1914, the Federal Government were given permission to build a septic tank, in connection with their building operations at that time. (There were restrictions regarding drainage, etc.)

Children got a wading pool in 1914, and everyone was made happier by the erection of a bandstand in 1915.

It has been mentioned that there was a bear pit in the Park in 1915. Does anyone remember it?

By 1918 the Park had two deer enclosures which were connected by a bridge, and the Park Superintendent had 5,000 beautiful plants blooming. (He was a busy man as supervising cemeteries was also part of his duties.)

While roads through the Park had been graded, it wasn't until 1919 that they were gravelled. It has been suggested that the gravel was purchased at low cost from the C.P.R.

By Law No. 13, which had been passed in 1913, stating that "No person with rod, line or net shall catch or destroy any fish in Crescent Lake" was waived for a time in 1919 due to the large quantities of fish in the Lake. The public were given permission to fish for one month.

In December of 1919 plans were being made, with City, Parks Board and Exhibition Board co-operating, to build a house for the Parks Superintendent.

It could be said that the most important events concerning the Lake and the Island in the 1920s were the plans for a new Industrial Building and for a new bridge.

The bridge which was built in 1898 had served the public well, even though the piles were only sitting in six feet of matter, like ooze. Because of this, it had a tendency to heave up every winter, and by 1929 was considered unsafe for traffic, which by this time included cars and trucks, and multi tons of elephant weight during circus performances. Repairs each year were costly and considered a waste of time and money by this time.

Engineer Porter consulted all the best bridge engineers regarding the most suitable structure and passed on their advice to Mayor Burns who told a mass meeting on March 21, 1929, that it was agreed that the best bridge for local conditions would be a creosoted pile bridge. The treated piling would last twice as long as untreated wood, they said, and was only one third greater in price.

It would seem that their advice was well heeded as the bridge, which was built from the extremity of Royal Road S. to the Island, has been in constant use since that time.

Many Portagers were not yet born when it was a new structure and the pride and joy of its designers. To some of the younger set, probably, it is a convenient bunch of boards which prevents them from getting their feet wet as they cross from the mainland to the Island. A little historical interest in it might be created if we impart one or two facts which are not generally known:

The piles you see above the waterline actually go down 30 feet below the Lake bottom where they were driven into the hard pan; the flooring of the bridge consists of two by fours, laid narrow side

up for strength, and were covered with what was called 'Tarvia' and gravel when the bridge was built; and, what will certainly interest all young people, and bring back memories to others, is the fact that several proposals of marriage were made and accepted while lovers strolled across the span on romantic moonlit nights.

One woman said, "Don't use my name, but I'll never forget the night Jack asked me to marry him. We had known each other for some time but he was shy and so was I, and it was an exciting thing for us just to go walking hand in hand.

Our walk, on the most important evening of my life, was over the newly built bridge. A bright summer moon was casting dancing rays of light on the rippling water of the Lake. We stopped walking and stood admiring the scene. All of a sudden Jack said, "Dear, will you" and before he could finish the sentence I said, "Oh yes! Of course I'll marry you". We have had a very happy married life".

That is only one of the lovely little romantic stories that have been told. It's too bad that we can't relate them all.

When the bridge was built many of our pioneers were crossing over it in their latter days. Critics may call the architecture of it "obsolete", but to Portagers it isn't just a bridge. It's a sentimental symbol as well.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Polden lived an interesting and happy life on the Island at a time when they were the only residents there, except for Mr. Jim Inglis who succeeded Mr. J. P. Young as custodian of the Park in 1927. Having none of our modern-day conveniences, they read books by lamplight; cooked with a good old fashioned wood-burning stove, and enjoyed the companionship of family and friends who came to visit them. Being lovers of nature, they found much to interest them during the daylight hours, and much to share with visitors.

Blue, Canada and Snow geese, and various kinds of ducks became like tame fowl in this spot where they enjoyed sanctuary. Mr. and Mrs. Polden were always circled by them whenever they stepped outdoors. Crumbs and tidbits were saved for them, and they seemed to know that they were mingling with mortals who loved them.

One pair, a drake and a duck, became special pets and were named Mac and Emily! This attachment had its origination at a time when Emily was in desperate need of human aid. She had stepped into a big spring-trap and there was nothing Mac could do

to free her. Flying as fast as he could to the Polden home he attracted their attention by batting his body against the screen door of the kitchen. Mr. Polden went out and followed him to where poor Emily was painfully quacking over her broken leg, which had to be amputated. The stump was treated and bandaged and she was set out on her nest. Mac never left her to shift for herself, but gathered food and carried it to her. Mrs. Polden has a wealth of similar lovely observances she has made on the Island.

The picture of Mr. Polden and ducks, shown here, is of interest because of their obvious trust in him.

Robt. Polden and ducks.

Mrs. Stewart Gunn, daughter Judy and ducks.

As time went on, wild fowl accepted visitors to the Park without fear. They participated in picnics and cleaned up crusts and crumbs that humans tossed carelessly aside. Children loved them and favorite family outings were spent there.

The Poldens lived close to nature and chipmunks, squirrels, skunks, coons and muskrats made an interesting study. The squirrels became so tame they would search for peanuts in Mr. Polden's pockets when he sat in a chair in his back yard. Knowing they would come, he made sure they wouldn't be disappointed!

In 1931, the Poldens built a refreshment stand, with an attached screened-in tea room. All the cooking was done on a wood stove, which meant the extra work of stoking, and cleaning out ashes. Appreciation of their services was made evident by the hundreds of people who patronized their place during the summers, from 1931 to 1946 when they retired. Mrs. Polden catered to wedding parties during the winter of those years, in her home.

Robert Polden has passed away. Mrs. Polden still resides in their home on the beautiful little Island that she loves.

JIM INGLIS AND THE BIRDS

When La Verendrye followed the Assiniboine westward he found the great grassy plains abounding with wildlife. The civilization that came later pushed back the buffalo and elk, leaving only the fields of grain. By 1896 the depletion of the wildlife had reached such a point that a group of farsighted citizens of Portage la Prairie set about to create a sanctuary of four square miles within the city limits. The wildfowl soon became aware of the protection offered here, and the unusual sight of wild ducks leading their broods across the lanes and over the lawns bordering Crescent Lake drew attention to all who were interested in wildlife. Soon farmers and hunters were bringing injured ducks and geese from neighboring fields and marshes. Fishermen on Lake Manitoba found crippled swans on the ice and brought these in as well; and here is where Jim Inglis came in, and performed an extra needed service.

He was a tall rugged Scot who had been trained as a gardener in his native land, had come to Canada in 1911, and made his living by his gardening ability and horticultural knowledge here. In 1927, as we have mentioned previously, he became custodian of the Park. While nursing wildfowl was not a requisite for obtaining this position it was, because of a deep and compassionate understanding of all wildlife, an extra duty that he assumed voluntarily. With skill and patience he nursed sick birds to health again, and from such a beginning developed the free-winged flock of three species of geese. Thus it came to pass that Portage Island Park became the only city park in North America with a breeding flock of Canada, Snow and Blue Geese free to migrate. Each Spring they returned to build their nests near paths in the underbrush, and to settle down and raise their

young, which were reared in full freedom and allowed to take flight with their parents when their wings were developed.

One goose, who returned to the Island year after year, was given the name of "old Mose". He was usually the last one to take off for the South and the first to return in the Spring. No fickle male goose was this one, as he raised a brood each year with his original mate! Park attendants heralded Spring with his return and, "Old Mose is back", promoted a much more optimistic viewpoint of forthcoming weather than whether a groundhog had seen its shadow or not! However, there came a time when Old Mose seemed to be late. Watchers scanned the sky and despaired lest he might have died from a hunter's bullet, got lost, or become too old and tired to make the long journey.

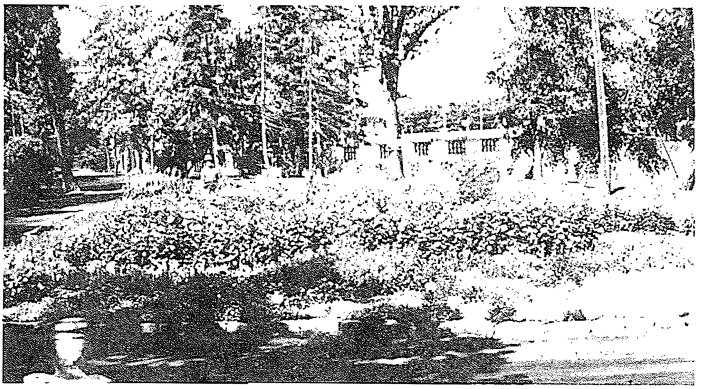
The truth of the matter was that Old Mose had become too old to migrate South and had spent the winter on the Island. When they found him he was stiffly guarding his mate and their last little brood of goslings.

The Park Directors in the days of Old Mose were: W. H. Burns, Chairman; W. Ashman, Secretary; and Mayor H. L. Henderson, Harry Duncan, R. E. Polden, Dr. C. M. Thomas, E. C. Mellen, George Dewar, Ald. W. F. L. Hyde and Ald. N. K. Weber as members.

ISLAND PARK AS IT IS TODAY

A description of Island Park, as it is today, will not be of much interest to Portagers who have the pleasure of partaking in the activities there, and enjoying the beauty of the place whenever they so desire. So, it is for Portagers who have moved far away who remember the Lake as a 'slough', and the Island as a primitive section of a 'town', and also for all who live across Canada and the U.S.A. who have never had the pleasure of visiting here, that we describe Island Park as it is today.

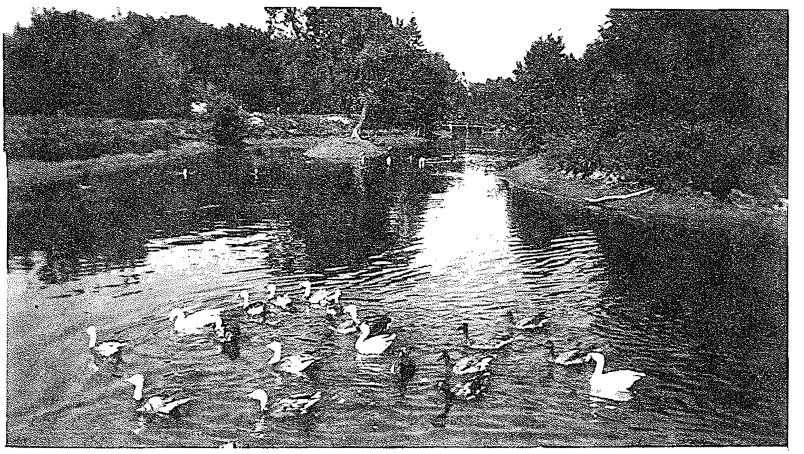
We say we will describe it, which is a very difficult thing to do! It's a spot where hills never hide the sunset that reflects its beautiful colors on Crescent Lake that circles it; a spot where tall trees, many as old as our pioneer ancestors, make an intricate lacework pattern on the varied colorings of the sky; a spot where a gull who has anything to squawk about can be heard; a spot where you can feast your eyes on beautiful flowers while you relax or picnic on velvety grass or at picnic tables; a spot where birds sing



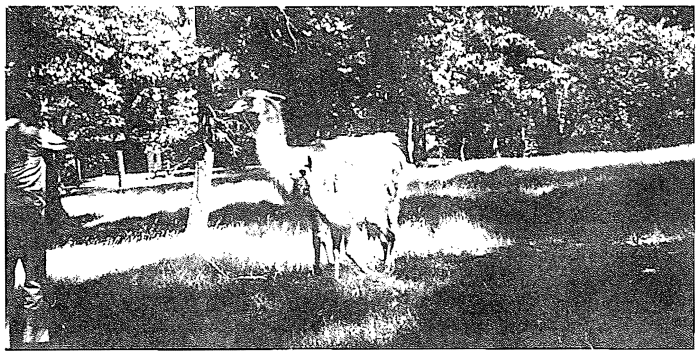
Flower bed in Island Park.

and twitter in the trees, and squirrels play 'tag' from morn 'til night; a spot where geese, ducks and swans move in a pond as effortlessly as their plastic counterparts do in a bath-tub; a spot where deer and other animals always look at you in wide-eyed wonderment as if they find it hard to believe that all humans don't look alike and are of all shapes and sizes; and it could be said that it is an artist's paradise.

The llama, shown here, has gotten twice as much attention since she became a Mama llama! She has been photographed as often as many movie actresses, we think! She isn't the least bit camera-shy and could almost be suspected of posing. It is regrettable that in



The duck pond in Island Park.

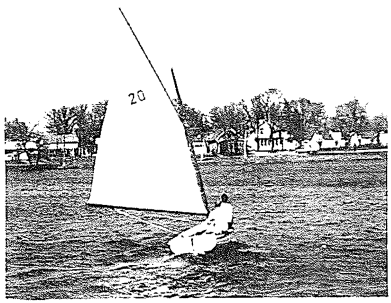


Llama in the Park.

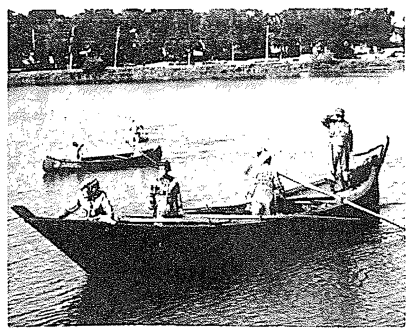
this picture her body and coloring almost obscures that of her baby who is beside her.

Children enjoy Island Park, not only because of the thrill of seeing animals and wildfowl close-up but also because of the playing facilities provided for them there, and family gatherings on week ends have become increasingly popular.

This lovely Island, within walking distance from the centre of the city, is the site for many outdoor summer sports in Portage; tennis, baseball and golf specifically. The annual Fair, with all the gaiety connected with it, is still a looked-forward-to event there too.



Sailboat on the Lake

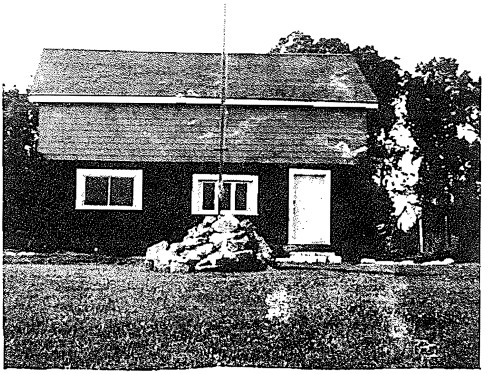


Lake Scene

Several beautiful homes have been built on the Island since the days when the Poldens were the only residents there. From their kitchen or living room windows house-wives look out on scenes such as these, and their husbands can forget the hustle and bustle of the workaday city-life five minutes after leaving their offices or places of business.

The scenic shoreline is enhanced by a Dutch windmill, a totem pole, which was carved and painted by an Indian youth, and an aeroplane, poised as though for flight.

This aeroplane, a T33, was a 'special' aeroplane as far as the pilots who flew it were concerned. It was assigned to our air base at South Port at the beginning of the flying career of the Red Knight, and flew many times in 'grand formation' over our city on Air Force Days. Eventually, it was declared outdated, and was donated to the city of Portage la Prairie. After it was stripped of all inside equipment, it was transported the four miles by helicopter and put to rest on a pedestal at the entrance to Island Park. It is now considered one of the landmarks in Portage la Prairie.



Camp Bays Boy Scout Cabin

A building, dear to the hearts of Boy Scouts and their leaders, is the one, shown here, which is located at Island Park. It is the Camp Bays Boy Scout Cabin.

Previous to its erection, in 1967, the Scouts had called an old log house on Crescent Road E. their clubhouse. The latter building has been torn down.

Portage la Prairie has reason to be proud of all the boys who got their scouting training here; many of them distinguishing themselves later, in various walks of life in the world.

From the Daily Graphic, March 29, 1968, we will quote the most recent news:

"With the largest representation of any district in Manitoba and Northwest Ontario, Portage la Prairie's Queen Scouts were presented to Governor-General Roland Michener Thursday in Winnipeg. Twelve members of local troops were recognized by His Excellency in the Legislative Buildings and received their Queen Scout parchments".

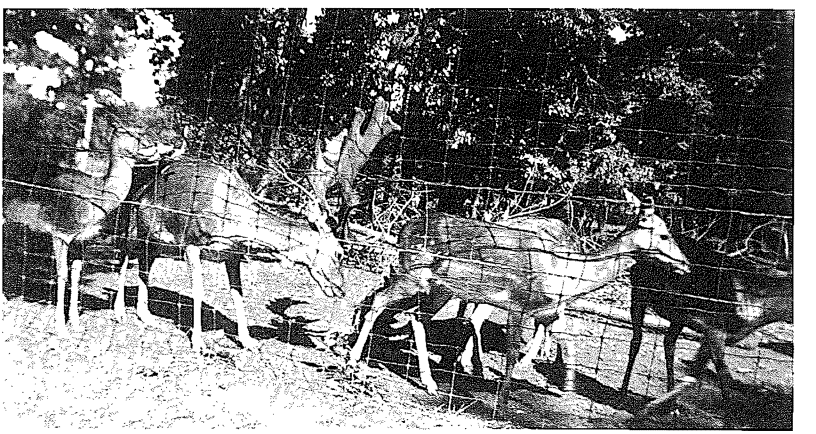
Names of the boys who received the above honor are as follows: Curtis Park, Danny Deloughery, Lorne Borland, Keith Brown, David Green, Jim Steeden, Craig Thomson, Ted Webster, Brian Tully, Keith Bogue, J. L. Collins, Scott McCulloch and R. L. Taylor.

Five Queen Scouts, who had been honored in 1967, were members of the guard of honor on the steps of the Legislative Building that day: John Pliszka, Murray Crewson, Barry Johnson, Ken John and Rae Thomson.

It's so easy to forget time and space when we start talking about Island Park! There is so much of its beauty that we want to share with you, by words and pictures if not in reality. Someone once said, "A picture is worth a thousand words", so, before we end our Island Park story we will add a few thousand words by means of pictures, trusting you will enjoy them.

Maybe, now that the snow banks are gone and 'Tinker Belle' has to use more muscle power to leap the high fence, she will learn to live amongst her own species in this deer pen. Mr. and Mrs. Dick Earl have put her there for her own protection.

Her mother probably died with one fast bang from a hunter's gun. She was found alone and uncared for when she was a little fawn.

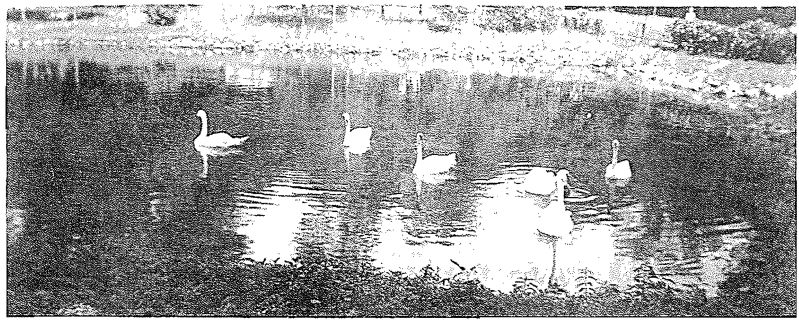


Te Deer Pen.

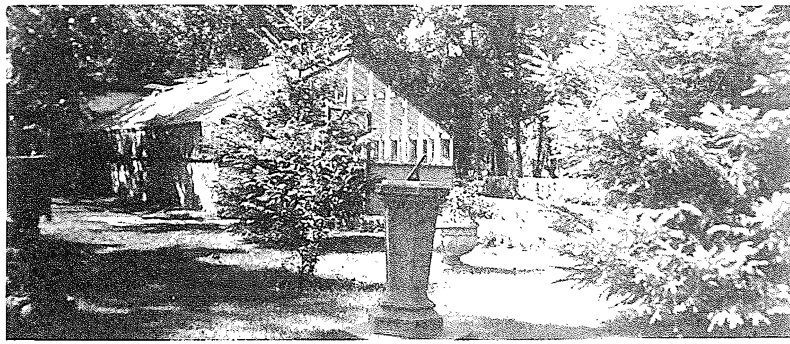
Kind people, that the Earls are, they loved her and cared for her and she became a family pet.

When she decided to take off, to see what the world was all about, they knew that something had to be done, and the deer pen was the answer, they thought. Other deer were enjoying the snow, and didn't mind the confines of the pen, so she should too. How wrong they were! 'Tinker Belle' almost beat them home!

The Earls go to visit her in her new surroundings, take her little treats, and hope that she understands that she is there because they love her.



The Swan Pool.



The Greenhouse and Weather Vane.

At the Entrance to the Park

From the time that people enter Island Park, and get their first glimpse of it, as in the picture shown here, until they leave passing the same scene, they are gathering beautiful memories for their mental flower garden.

KOKO PLATZ (See map for location)

One of the most beautiful residential areas in Portage la Prairie is the one named Koko Platz which has a history all its own.

The land on which this housing project was developed was first the property of James Whiteford who received title from the Hudson Bay Company on Nov. 28th, 1869. He sold it to J. M. House the following year. The next owner, Nicholas Garland, brother of T. A. Garland and a great uncle of Mrs. N. W. McKillop, was a man long remembered. His name 'Nicholas' went with his appearance, long curly white hair and long flowing white beard. No one called him St. Nicholas, but almost everyone called him 'Santa Claus'. He remained a bachelor despite the fact that he always sat at the table reserved for ladies instead of at the mens' table in the hotel.

The land passed on to various owners for quite high prices until times changed and Margaret Roe, wife of Tom Roe, obtained the land in a tax sale.

Tommy Roe, as he was called, turned some of this land into a sort of salvage centre. Anything that was of no value to anyone was given to him and heaps of debris mounted through the years. If anyone ever wanted anything from the pile they just took it! However, he didn't consider it a business, but rather a hobby. He made his living by travelling across the country with his privately owned merry-go-round in the summer, and by cleaning city sidewalks with a horse-drawn rig in the winter time.

Mr. and Mrs. Roe never had faith in banks and when Mr. Roe passed away in 1944 money was found hidden in the walls and various other places. With the money found, and with the land payment, Mr. Wilkinson who became the new owner, helped Mrs. Roe start her first bank account.

Mr. and Mrs. George Wilkinson built modern buildings and the area became an internationally known purebred stock farm. He retired in 1959, selling to Arden Christianson.

In July of 1960, Arden, John, and Conrad Christianson and wives became a corporation known as Koko Platz Development Ltd.

The name 'Koko Platz' has an interesting origin. Conrad Christianson says (Quote), "Before the first world war my father used to work with my uncle, Einar Eyvindson whom he nicknamed "Koko". (Later on my uncle had this legally added as his second name.) When my father came back from the war "Koko" had a farm on the

shores of Lake Manitoba that Dad started calling "Koko Platz" (Platz being German for 'place'). Later on he bought it and Arden and John were born there, and all our lives we have talked of Koko Platz. So, for sentimental reasons we named this residential area in Portage 'Koko Platz'."

Situated on the south side of Crescent Lake, in park-like surroundings, the 96 home owners enjoy holiday facilities the year around. Boating on the lake in the summer time, and skidooing on the lake in winter are parts of it. Parties and dances in a recreational centre, and skating and ball games are thoroughly enjoyed by young people; while older folks bar-b-que on spacious back lawns or take leisurely strolls along the landscaped lake shore, a few feeding the beautiful Canada geese that enjoy sanctuary there.

A school for little ones is located on Roe St. Yes, the street WAS named after Tommy Roe, whom so many still remember.

Mrs. Archie Lyon who nursed Tommy Roe during the latter days of his life remembers him as a sentimental man. He had a dog he loved and longed to see. Such visitors were not allowed in the hospital of course. Mrs. Lyon made a dying man happy by smuggling the pet in, wrapped in a raincoat.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CITY OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

It was our original intention to include a history of each of the clubs and organizations in Portage la Prairie in this book. However, as you can see by scanning the long list which follows, it is impossible to do so in a book of this size. Only the ones deemed the most important to the health and welfare of everyone, regardless of race, color, creed or affiliation are being used. It is regrettable that a few who should be included in the above category have not submitted material.

BENEVOLENT AND FRATERNAL

Assiniboine Lodge No. 7
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks
B'nai B'rith Lodge No. 1689
Canadian Order of Foresters
Court la Reine
Eastern Star (Electa Chapter)
Ruth Rebekah Lodge

Knights of Columbus
Loyal Orange Lodge
Royal Black Preceptory
Portage Shrine Club
Odd Fellows
Keystone No. 2
L.O.B.A.
Royal Purple

PATRIOTIC AND VETERANS

Army Navy and Air Force Veterans
Army Navy and Air Force Ladies' Auxiliary
Royal Canadian Legion
Royal Canadian Legion Ladies' Auxiliary
Armouries

BUSINESS, CIVIC AND PROFESSIONAL

Professional Business Women's Association
Portage Chamber of Commerce
Portage Junior Chamber of Commerce
Registered Nurses' Association
Local Council of Women
Allied Arts
I.O.D.E
Red Cross
Beta Sigma Phi Xi Delta
Beta Sigma Phi Iota Chapter
Dorcas Society

MISCELLANEOUS CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Women's Arts Club
Portage Lions
Portage Industrial Exhibition Association
Rotary Club
Catholic Women's League
Portage Kennel Club
Theta Rho
Officers' Wives Club
Women's Institute
Retarded Children's Association

Jaycettes
Jaycees
Kinsmen
Kinettes
Horticultural Society
Registered Psychiatric Nurses' Association
Manitoba Teachers' Society
Hospital Ladies' Guild
Northside Ladies' Hospital Guild
Bar Association
Ladies' Skating Club
Game and Fish Association
Portage Horse Club
Minor Hockey Association
Commercial Hockey Association
Bowling League
Minor Baseball
Softball League
Portage Curling Club
Delta Waterfowl
Portage Country Club
Barbershoppers
Portage Plowing Match
Kiwanis
Southside Hockey Club
Boy Scouts
Girl Guides
Ladies Evening Group — 1st Baptist Church
4-H
Salvation Army
St. Mary's W. A. Council B.
Trinity United Church Group
Ukrainian Catholic Women's League
W.C.T.U.
McKenzie U.C.T.W.
Miram Hadassh Leba
Presbyterian Evening Guild
Children's Aid
Sweet and Low
Ukrainian Ladies Group

MANITOBA SPECIAL AIR SERVICES CADET CORPS

No. 745 Manitoba Special Air Services Cadet Corps first came into being on the 25th day of September 1948.

Since its inception it has held the unique record of being not only the first, but the only Cadet Corps bearing the name "Special Air Services".

This Cadet Corps is the result of the vision of its original sponsors, Lt. Col A. H. Gammon, ED; Lt. Col. E. M. Brown, ED; and Major B. D. Jones, CD, who convinced not only the Deputy Attorney-General Brig. O. M. Kay, but the senior officers of Manitoba Area that such a Corps would not only be good for the boys but also for the armed services.

The Corps also boast a brass band. Its original bandmaster was Mr. Lorne Chappel, a teacher at the school. His duties have since been taken over by Major B. D. Jones who served in a triple role, Sponsor, Bandmaster and Superintendent of the school.

The Corps' first Chief Instructor was Wilfred Donaldson, OBE, who was succeeded by Nicholas Pliszka as Chief Instructor in 1959.

Lt. Col. A. H. Gammon, ED, on retiring to the United Kingdom, was replaced with Lt. Col. W. Burton, ED, CD, as Sponsor.

In 1949 and 1950 the Corps held its summer camp at Clear Lake in Manitoba, and since that time all summer camps have been held at CFB Rivers, using all the para training facilities located there and having on occasion used the "jump tower" at CFB Shilo for controlled jumps.

The Cadet Corps is young in years compared to others. However, they are old in tradition.

Since the inception of the Corps many of its young men have served in the regular armed forces of Canada, have acquitted themselves well, and have proved that given a chance its members can be citizens of high calibre and a credit to Canada.

SOMETHING ABOUT ELEVATORS

As a result of a very apparent trend towards increased deliveries being made to central points, United Grain Growers Limited decided to build an elevator at Portage la Prairie. The elevator was built in 1961, and is a composite type with the annex attached to the elevator. The storage capacity is 150,000 bushels, and the elevator

contains two elevating legs, allowing considerable flexibility in the process of receiving, cleaning and shipping grain. The elevator is equipped with a 30-ton scale with a 40-foot platform. A large shed was built in 1962 for the storage of farm supplies. Portage la Prairie is used as a distributing point for elevators in the surrounding area.

In 1964, United Grain Growers undertook further diversification in the handling of grain crops. Facilities were required to handle the cleaning of yellow mustard seed, for which contracts had been let out. The necessary cleaning equipment was installed in our elevator, and mustard is being hauled to this point by truck and rail to be cleaned and sacked for distribution to various parts of the world. Facilities for unloading from boxcars have been installed for this purpose.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE CO-OPERATIVE ELEVATOR ASSOCIATION

"A" — Built in 1928.
"B" — Bought from Reliance Grain in 1948.
"C" — Bought from Ogilvies in 1959.

First Agent was Mr. J. H. Whyte	1928-1947
Following Agents were:	
R. Pelletier	1947-1949
J. W. Sherritt	1949-1964
C. Brugger	1964-1966

Amount of Grain handled — 15,192,867 bus.
Patronage Dividends — $346,046
First Board of Directors —
SECRETARY — Roy W. Brown
PRESIDENT — A. G. Sissons
VICE-PRESIDENT — J. G. Arnott
DIRECTORS —
C. Ogletree
J. Henning
A. Wishart
Geo. Rennie
AGENT — J. H. Whyte

"PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE — CONSTITUENCY"

The constituency of Portage la Prairie was created in 1903. In 1947 it was changed to Portage Neepawa. Prior to 1903, it was Macdonald District. The district it belonged to before 1892 was Marquette.

The following information is taken from the *Parliamentary Guide.*

YEAR	CONSTITUENCY	ELECTED MEMBER	PARTY
1871	Marquette		

At the election held for this district, 2 March, 1871, the candidates were Angus McKay and James S. Lynch, M.D., each of whom received 282 votes; consequently neither of the candidates was returned.

Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1872.

On trial of election petition, 25 Aug. 1874, Mr. J. Ryan was declared the sitting member . . . . . .

On acceptance of office by Sir J. A. Macdonald, new writ, Joseph Ryan.

Macdonald — New electoral division created in 1892; general election 1896.

1871	Marquette	Cunningham, Robert	(L)
1874	Marquette		
1878	Marquette		
1882	Marquette	Watson, R.	
		Sutherland, Hugh	(L)
1904	Macdonald (Altered 1903)	Staples, W. D.	(C)
1904	Portage la Prairie	Crawford, John	(L)
1908	Portage la Prairie	Meighen, Arthur	(C)
1911	Portage la Prairie	Meighen, Arthur	(C)
By-election July 19,			
1913	Portage la Prairie	Meighen, Hon. Arthur	(C)
1917	Portage la Prairie	Meighen, Hon Arthur	(C)
1921	Portage la Prairie	Leader, Harry	(P)
1925	Portage la Prairie	Meighen, Rt. Hon. Arthur	(C)
1926	Portage la Prairie	McPherson, Ewan Alex.	(L)
1930	Portage la Prairie	Burns, William Herbert	(C)
1935	Portage la Prairie	Leader, Harry	(L)
1940	Portage la Prairie	Leader, Harry	(L)
1945	Portage la Prairie	Leader, Harry	(L)
By-election Oct. 21,			
1946	Portage la Prairie	Miller, Calvert Charlton	(PC)
1947	Portage La Prairie became	Portage Neepawa	
1949	Portage Neepawa	Weir, W. G.	(LP)

1953	Portage Neepawa	Weir, W. G.	(L)
1957	Portage Neepawa	Fairfield, G. C.	(PC)
1958	Portage Neepawa	Fairfield, G. C.	(PC)
1962	Portage Neepawa	Enns, S. J.	(PC)
1963	Portage Neepawa	Enns, S. J.	(PC)
1966	Portage Neepawa	Enns, S. J.	(PC)
1968	Portage Neepawa	Cobbe, Gerald	(L)

MEN WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE MANITOBA LEGISLATURE FOR CONSTITUENCIES OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE AND LAKESIDE

Lakeside (formerly Burnside)

Member	Election	Party
Burnside:		
McKenzie, Kenneth	Dec. 18, 1878	not stated
Smith, John	Dec. 16, 1879	Cons.
Mawhinney, Isaiah	Jan. 23, 1883	Cons.
Lakeside:		
McKenzie, Kenneth	Dec. 9, 1886	Lib.
McKenzie, Kenneth	July 11, 1888	Lib.
McKenzie, Kenneth	July 23, 1892	Lib.
Rutherford, —— (Dr.) (resigned)	Jan. 15, 1896	Lib.
McKenzie, James	by-election, Nov. 19, 1896	Lib.
McKenzie, James	Dec. 7, 1899	Lib.
Lynch, Edwin D.	July 20, 1903	Cons.
Lynch, Edwin D.	March 7, 1907	Cons.
McPherson, Charles Duncan	June 11, 1910	Lib.
Garland, John James	July 10, 1914	Cons.
McPherson, Charles Duncan	Sept. 16, 1915	Lib.
McPherson, Charles Duncan	June 29, 1920	Lib.
Campbell, Douglas L.	July 18, 1922	Progressive Lib.
	1927	Progressive Lib.
	1932	Lib.
(Minister of Agric. and Im-	1936	Lib.
migration in charge of Power	1941	Lib.
Commission 1940 appointed	1945	Lib.
Premier 1938)	1949	Lib.
	1953	Lib.

Campbell, Douglas L. Leader	1958	Lib.
of Opposition 1958-1961	1959	Lib.
M.L.A. Lakeside	1962	Lib.
	1966	Lib.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

Member	Election	Party
Bird, Frederick Adolphus	Dec. 27, 1870	—
McKenzie, Kenneth	Dec. 23, 1874	Lib.
Cowan, James	Dec. 18, 1878	Ind.
Cowan, James	Dec. 16, 1879	Ind.
Martin, Joseph (Att.-Gen.,	Jan. 23, 1883	Lib.
Jan. 18/88 to April 1891)	Dec. 9, 1886	Lib.
	July 11, 1888	Lib.
Watson, Robert (apptd. Min-	July 23, 1892	Lib.
ister of Public Works, May	Jan. 15, 1896	Lib.
26, 1892)		
Garland, William (died)	Dec. 7, 1899	Cons.
Armstrong, Hugh	by-election	Feb. 7, 1902 Cons.
Armstrong, Hugh (appointed	July 20, 1903	Cons.
Prov. Treasurer, 1908)	March 7, 1907	Cons.
	June 11, 1910	Cons.
McPherson, Ewan	July 10, 1914	Lib.
McPherson, Ewan	Sept. 16, 1915	Lib.
Taylor, Fawcett Gowler	June 29, 1920	Cons.
Taylor, Fawcett Gowler	July 18, 1922	Cons.
Taylor, Gawcett Gowler	June 28, 1927	Cons.
(resigned 1933)	June 16, 1932	Cons.
Sexsmith, William Raymond	by-election	Nov. 24, 1933 Cons.
Sexsmith, William Raymond	July 27, 1936	Cons.
Greenlay, Charles Edwin	by-election	Cons. coalition
Greenlay, Charles Edwin	Nov. 18, 1943	Cons.
	Oct. 15, 1945	coalition
Provincial Secretary 1946	Nov. 10, 1949	Cons.
Minister until 1958	June 8, 1953	coalition
Greenlay, Charles Edwin	June 16, 1958	Lib.
Minister of Labor, Mines and Natural Resources, Prov. Treasurer		

Portage (Con't)

Member	Election	Party
Christianson, John Aaron Min. Welfare 1962	May 14, 1959	Prog. Cons.
Johnston, Gordon Ellwood	Dec. 14, 1962	Lib.
Johnston, Gordon Ellwood	June 23, 1966	Lib.

WARDENS AND REEVES OF THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE SINCE 1879

H. M. Campbell (warden) 1879-80
John Wilton (warden) 1881-82
Matthew Ferriss (warden and reeve) 1883-84
L. W. McLean (reeve) 1885-86
T. H. Metcalfe (reeve) 1887-88
W. F. Smith (reeve) 1889-90
G. Greenlay (reeve) 1891-92
Jas. McBain (reeve) 1893
William Fulton (reeve) 1894-96
Maxwell Wilton 1897-98
James Bray (reeve) 1899
W. T. Muir (reeve to October) 1900
C. Greenlay (reeve to December) 1900
G. Lytle (reeve) 1901-02
C. E. Grobb (reeve) 1903-04
John Weir (reeve) 1905-06
William McBride (reeve) 1907-08
George Cadman (reeve) 1909-10
Robert J. Caskey (reeve) 1911-12
Harry Leader (reeve) 1913-14
E. H. Muir (reeve) 1915-22
Robert McDermott (reeve) 1923-25
David Thompson (reeve) 1926-28
John P. Bend (reeve) 1929-31
C. A. Curtis (reeve) 1932-33
W. Metcalfe (reeve) 1934-35
O. C. Neuman (reeve) 1936-37
T. W. McCartney (reeve) 1938-40
Allan McCallister (reeve) 1941-49
Lawrence Smith (reeve) 1950-61
T. N. Kitchen (reeve) 1962-63
Robert Adrian (reeve) 1964

MAYORS OF THE CITY OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE SINCE 1881

1881 . . . . Thomas Collins
1882 . . . . Thomas Collins
1883 & 84 . . . . Edw. McDonald
1885 & 86 . . . . John P. Young. (resigned)
1887 . . . . Business carried on by Joseph Martin, Solicitor, appointed by the council.
1888 . . . . J. P. Young
1889 . . . . Wm. Garland
1890 . . . . James McLenaghan (January to June)
Wm. Garland (July to December)
1891 . . . . Wm. Garland
1892 . . . . F. L. Newman
1893 . . . . F. L. Newman
1894 . . . . Wm. Garland
1895 & 96 . . . . W. J. Cooper
1897 . . . . Edward Brown
1898 & 99 . . . . Wm. Garland
1900 & 01 & 02 . . . . W. J. Cooper
1903 until 1908 . . . . Edward Brown
1909 . . . . S. W. Woods
1910 . . . . F. G. Taylor
1911 & 12 . . . . J. J. Garland
1913 until 1915 . . . . F. G. Taylor
1916 until 1918 . . . . S. R. Marlatt
1919 & 20 . . . . J. H. Metcalfe
1921 . . . . S. R. Marlatt
1922 until 1930 . . . . W. H. Burns
1930 to 1932 . . . . C. J. Sharp
1933 to 1935 . . . . J. C. Miller
1936 & 1937 . . . . W. D. Card
1938 until 1943 . . . . H. A. Ireland
1944 & 45 . . . . J. A. Cavers
1946 & 47 . . . . J. C. Preece
1948 until 1968 . . . . H. L. Henderson
1968 . . . . Wm. A. Linden

PERSONALITIES

Portage la Prairie is one of the smallest cities in Canada, and it is therefore a greater compliment to its sons and daughters that so many of the persons who were born here, or made their home here, have achieved fame that has made their names known far and wide across the land.

CITY COUNCIL 1968

Ald.
CLIVE MILLER

Ald.
OREST W. PRESSEY

Ald.
ALBERT R. BARRETT

Mayor
WILLIAM A. LINDEN

Ald.
AMIE M. OMICHINSKI

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

Ald.
W. FRASER CUTHBERT

Sec./Treas.
D. GILMOUR RODGER

Ald.
GERALD R. COBBE

Such a man was the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, who went all the way in his chosen profession — to the prime ministership of Canada.

This prairie city has also produced a premier for our province, sports personalities, and men who filled judicial posts with great distinction, as well as others who have achieved fame in other, less public walks of life.

The following is a capsule summary of the achievements of some of Portage's sons. It is impossible, in limited time, to give a broad picture of their background and achievements, much as we would like to include such interesting information. Many notable people may not be mentioned due to lack of information.

We hope the following will, at least partially, illustrate some of the important contributions that have been made by people we have been proud to claim as "Portagers".

HONORABLE HUGH ARMSTRONG, M.L.A.

Canadian Who's Who, of 1910, has this to say about Hon. Hugh Armstrong: (Quote) — "Provincial Treasurer for Manitoba; born in New York in August 1858; came to Canada with his parents in 1860, and educated at Richmond, Ontario; married 1885, Mary, daughter of Henry Younghusband, of Carleton Co., Ontario. Settled in Portage la Prairie in 1886, and engaged in fish export industry.

Elevated to Manitoba Legislature for Woodlands, at g.c., 1892; resigned 1896, to contest Selkirk for H. of C., but unsuccessful; elevated to Manitoba Legislature by accl. for Portage la Prairie, Feb. 7, 1902; re-elected at g.e. 1903 and 1907.

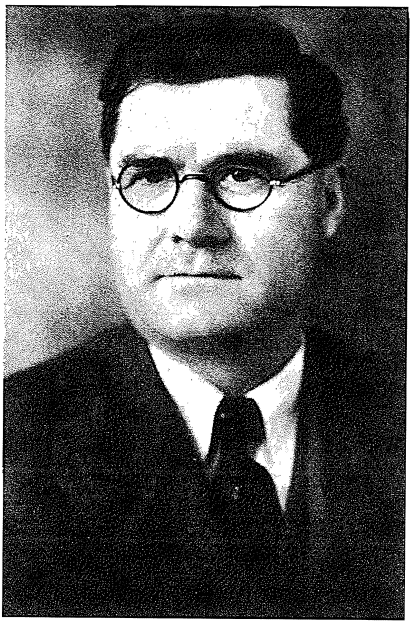
Recreation: travel.

Address: Portage la Prairie, Manitoba."

HARRY LEADER

Harry Leader is another Portager who has left a lasting imprint on Canadian politics. He holds a double distinction: as well as serving as M.P. for Portage la Prairie for fifteen years (1930-1945), he was also the first Manitoba-born reeve of the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie (1913-1914).

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Leader, travelled via wagon train from their former home in Fort Garry, and settled a few miles west of Portage.



Harry Leader eventually took over the parental farm, and it became famous as the home of the North Lane Herd of Registered Angus cattle, which Mr. Leader exhibited at agricultural fairs throughout Canada with considerable success.

Born in 1881 at Burnside, he was elected as a rural councillor at the age of 26 years. He represented Ward 5 for six consecutive years before assuming the role of reeve.

He later defeated Arthur Meighen and went to Parliament where his forceful expression sometimes got him into trouble with his party, but endeared him to his constituents. He was a champion of western agriculture, crusading for better farm produce prices, markets further afield, lower tariffs on machinery, and to raise the standards of livestock and grain.

Harry Leader was married to a Portage girl by the name of Ella MacBeth. Three children blessed this union. He passed away in 1946 leaving relatives, and the many many friends he had made during his lifetime.

DOUGLAS CAMPBELL

Mr. Meighen's 26 years in his country's service may have been long, but another Portager, this time a native of our district, is still making Commonwealth history. By 1970 Douglas Lloyd Campbell, a farmer's son, will have marked 48 years as a member of the Manitoba Legislature — a record unparalleled in any legislative body in the British Commonwealth.

Mr. Campbell's life has been filled with achievements. He has not personally lost one election since he put his name before the voters of Lakeside, a rural Portage constituency, in 1922. He served for 22 years as a member of the provincial cabinet; and 10 years as Premier of our province.

Mr. Campbell still operates the land that his parents farmed

when he was born May 27th, 1895, in the Flee Island district. He took his public schooling at Flee Island, high school at Portage la Prairie, and attended college in Brandon, Man.

He married Margaret Gladys Crampton of High Bluff, and from this union there are seven children.

It was during the time of Mr. Campbell's regime in the post-war years that the province's rural electrification program gained its impetus. This program will always stand as a monument to Mr. Campbell's work.

Mr. Campbell was elected by his Liberal party colleagues in 1948 to take over as premier when Premier Stuart Garson resigned to join the federal government. The Liberal party fell from power in the election of June, 1958, and Mr. Campbell was succeeded as party leader in April, 1961, by Gildas Molgat.

He still represents Lakeside as an MLA, however, and his warm understanding, boyish sense of humor, knowledge of the people and the province continue to make him a valuable representative whose council is valued by members of all parties.

ROBERT WILLIAM BEND

Robert W. Bend is the son of Mr. J. P Bend (the well-known hockey team manager) and Mrs. Bend of Poplar Point. He was elected M.L.A. in 1949; Minister of Health and Public Welfare, 1955-1958; Minister of Education in 1959; and at the present time (1968) he is Supervisor of the Transcona Springfield School Division.

HON. THOMAS ALEXANDER CRERAR, P.C., LL.D.

Hon. T. A. Crerar is another illustrious gentleman who got his basic education in the public schools and Collegiate at Portage.

During his lifetime he has been associated with various enterprises in an executive capacity such as the United Grain Growers

Ltd., Public Press Ltd., Modern Dairies Ltd., Sault Ste. Marie and Canada Steamships Co. and Algoma Steel Corp.

Hon. T. A. Crerar has a long list of accomplishments to his credit. He was elected to the House of Commons in 1917; re-elected in 1921; was Minister of Railways and Canals; Minister of Mines; Minister of Immigration; Supt. General of Indian Affairs; Member of the Canadian Delegation to the Coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1937, and attended the British Commonwealth Conference on War Effort in London in 1939.

He was summoned to the Senate Apr. 18, 1945 and resigned on June 1, 1966.

To add to all his accomplishments, it is said that in his youth he was a school teacher and a farmer for a few years!

HON. WALTER C. WEIR

Hon. W. C. Weir, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Weir, was born in 1929 at High Bluff. He received his elementary school education there, before coming to Portage to attend high school.

His first business venture was in Minnedosa where he operated a funeral home from 1953 to 1963. While there he played a prominent role in Municipal affairs, serving as councillor, deputy mayor and chairman of the town planning Commission. He was also Charter President of the Minnedosa Chamber of Commerce.

He was first elected to the Manitoba Legislature in the general election of 1959 to represent Minnedosa Constituency.

In 1961, when he was sworn in as Minister of Municipal Affairs at the age of 32, he became the youngest Cabinet Minister in the administration of Premier Roblin.

He became Minister of Public Works in 1962 and had the added responsibility of Dept. of Highways in 1965.

In 1966, he relinquished the public works portfolio, and added water control and conservation duties to his highway portfolio.

Hon. Walter C. Weir became Manitoba's 15th Premier in November of 1967. He succeeded Hon. Duff Roblin, who resigned after serving as Premier from June 16, 1958.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL HARRY JAMES COWAN, O.B.E.

Brig.-Gen. Harry J. Cowan, O.B.E., son of Dr. James Cowan, practiced law in Portage in the early days. He served in the South African War and also in the first World War.

He married Annie Ironside James of Portage la Prairie, a niece of Sir George Simpson, one of the Governors of the Hudson's Bay Co., and passed away in 1930. His widow was last known to be residing in Victoria, B.C.

FREDERICK O. BIRD

Frederick O. Bird
(Picture — courtesy of Manitoba Archives)

Representative Government commenced in Manitoba in 1871, after a census had been taken and constituencies defined. Frederick O. Bird (shown here), of Portage la Prairie, was elected as a member of the first regular Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba.

HON. ROBERT WATSON

Hon. Robert Watson was born in 1853 in Elora, Ontario, received his education there and became a millwright. He came to Portage la Prairie in 1876. (See 1886 business establishments listed in this book.)

During his lifetime he became a well-known political figure, having served in the Municipal Council for 2 yrs.; then for Marquette in the House of Commons (1882); Minister of Public Works in Mr. Greenway's provincial administration (1892); and as a delegate to Ottawa on the Manitoba School question (1896). In 1898 his address was Portage la Prairie.

EARLY SETTLERS

We have mentioned the builders and business men first because without them the pioneer farmers and professional men could not have survived for very long.

However, it works both ways, in that the builders and business men could not have survived without the patronage of the farmers and professional men.

We, therefore, feel it very fitting now to preserve for posterity the names of as many old-timers as available information allows:

W. HENRY ALBRIGHT: Came in 1874 and put in a crop on Slough Road (now Crescent Road).

ARCHIBALD ANDERSON: Came in 1879 and first farmed the land where the Training School now stands.

JAMES BARRETT: Came in about 1881, farmed for a time, and contributed much to the U.F.M. and other organizations.

KENNETH BAIN (or McBAIN): A pioneer of the 1870's.

WILDER AND ORANGE BARTLETT: Settlers prior to 1871.

REV. DR. ALLAN BELL: Came in 1875 and was one of the first pastors in Knox Church.

FRANK BODDY: Came to Portage in 1874 and homesteaded 6 miles north of town. Moved in 1892 to MacDonald.

ROBERT BROWN: Came in 1882 and farmed 10 miles north of Portage.

FREDERICK W. BROWN: Arrived in 1880 and farmed north-east of Portage.

ROLAND BROWN: Came in 1878. He was a member of the first fire brigade, the first baseball club, the first cricket club and the first lacrosse club in Portage la Prairie.

GEORGE BATES: Is listed as a Postmaster in Portage la Prairie in the Manitoba Directory of 1882.

F. A. BRYDON: Came in 1875 and settled on north half of 7-12-7 which is about seven miles northwest of Portage. The Brydon family have been identified with Portage for 95 years.

JOHN BRYDON: Came in 1871, and homesteaded 4 miles west of Portage.

JAS. BRYDON: Came in 1871, and homesteaded 3 miles straight west of Portage.

R. D. BYERS: Came to settle on the Portage Plains (in 1873) — 12 miles north of Portage.

CHARLES BURLEY: Was a merchant in Portage la Prairie in the early 1900s. (Mentioned in this book under "Music and Arts".)

GEORGE and JOSEPH CADMAN: Both arrived in 1870.

J. HOWARD CAMPBELL: Came in 1881 and settled in the Flee Island district where he farmed successfully until retiring to Portage in 1918.

R. P. CAMPBELL: Had a furniture and undertaking business in the early days.

JOHN CARROL: Came to Portage in 1872 and homesteaded 3 miles west of the city.

NATHANIEL CASKEY: Settled on a farm in 1881.

RICHARD T. CRAIG: Came to Portage with William Trimble in 1872. They held the second and third homestead entries on the Portage Plains.

JAMES CUTHBERT: An early settler of 1886 in the Portage Creek area.

CHARLES CURTIS: A pioneer of 1869. He passed away in 1874.

B. G. CREALOCK: Arrived in Portage in 1884 and worked for Frank Connor, Tom Sissons and Mr. Ferris respectively until 1886 when he made a payment of $20.00 on the S.W. 1/4 of 31-11-8. (Taxes were $2.35!) In 1889 he bought the S.E. 1/4 of 31-11-8 with a first payment of $64.00. The first grain that he marketed was 14 1/4 bushels of wheat, for which he received $8.12!

WILLIAM DAVIS: Came west in 1875, and settled in the Flee Island district.

JOHN PETER DEMARAIS: One of the settlers who was induced to come to the settlement of Portage la Prairie by Venerable Archdeacon Cochrane.

MRS. WILLIAM FRANCIS: After the death of her husband, moved with her family to Portage and settled in the Hood District in 1909. She passed away in 1922.

ROBERT FLETCHER: Came to Portage in 1872, and acquired a homestead northwest of town. He was secretary of the school board and instrumental in choosing the site of Central School which was built years later.

JOHN FRANCIS: A Dominion Land Surveyor. Came to Portage in 1904. In 1912 he was elected Vice-President of The Association of Manitoba Land Surveyors.

JAMES FULTON: Came in 1875 and took up a homestead which has been passed on through the years to descendants.

WILLIAM GAIR and ALEXANDER GAIR: Early pioneers of the Portage district; arrived in 1871.

JOHN GARRIOCH: Spent some years working for the H.B. Co. Later became a school teacher. Then farmed until his death in 1901. Rev. A. C. Garrioch, author of "First Furrows" was a son.

The REV. HENRY GEORGE: Assumed the duties of Venerable Archdeacon Cochrane when the latter retired.

JAMES T. GIBB: Came in 1881 and farmed land six miles north of Portage until 1912 when he retired in Portage.

MARK GRAHAM: Came in 1874 and homesteaded 8 miles northwest of Portage until 1888 when he retired to Portage. A son-in-law, A. E. Batters took over the farm.

HUGH GRANT: Came in 1871 and was the first settler west of Rat Creek. Two brothers, Donald and John, were also pioneer settlers.

GARDINER GREENLAY: Served as one of the first policemen (military police) in 1870 in Portage la Prairie.

MARK GRAHAM: An early settler who came to the Portage district in 1879. Mrs. Mark Graham passed away at the age of 96 years in 1929. They were the parents of Mrs. A. E. Batters.

REV. WM. HALSTEAD: Came to Portage in 1876. He was a minister in the Methodist Church which was located on Crescent Road at that time.

JAMES HARGRAVE: Was employed by the "Company of Gentlemen Adventurers Trading into Hudson's Bay", and transferred by them to Portage la Prairie in 1871. He continued in their service in Portage until 1876 when he was transferred again.

HUGH HARLEY: Came to Portage with his wife and family in 1881. In 1899 he accepted the position of Dominion Government Land and Immigration Agent at Swan River.

WALTER HENDERSON: Arrived in Portage in 1877. Later moved to Brandon, but returned to Portage to retire.

JAMES HERBERT: In the 1870's worked with survey parties on the Portage Plains.

JOHN HOGG: A Notary Public and commissioner for taking affidavits in the early days.

ALBERT HUDSON: Came to Portage in 1879 and was hired to build a sawmill near Pratts Landing. He took a keen interest

in the growth of the settlement. A. B. Hudson, Esq., K.C. was his eldest son.

W. J. JAMES: A lawyer in the early days, and a familiar figure in Portage until he passed away in 1900.

HUGH R. JOLLY: Came to Portage in the 1880's and was a successful grain buyer.

JOHN MacDONALD: Came to Portage la Prairie in 1883. He was appointed Deputy Clerk of the Crown and Pleas, and Clerkship of the Surrogate Court, which offices he held until he passed away in 1903.

ARCHIE McDERMID: An early settler who farmed south of the Assiniboine River, and later retired to Portage la Prairie, passed away at the age of 83 years in 1955. Mrs. McDermid is still a revered old-timer in our midst. Sons, Robert (with Portage Soda Water Works) and Knowlson (with Eaton's) are well-known in the district. Sinclair, Gordon, George and Mary (their other children) are living in other parts of Canada.

WILLIAM McCOWAN and his five brothers: Were all pioneers in the 1870's.

THOMAS McCARTNEY: Homesteaded in the Portage area in the late 1870's.

REV. FARQUHAR McRAE, M.A., Ph.D.: Came to Portage in 1882. He was the first classical teacher in the Portage Collegiate, as well as pastor for a 20 square mile area.

S. R. MARLATT: A pioneer of the 1870's was the first settler to own a self-binder and inaugurate threshing from the stook. His lifetime experiences and activities were many: fur trader, general merchant, lumber dealer, as well as farmer, are only a few. Mayor, Justice of the Peace for Manitoba, Official Assignee, Official Administrator, Inspector of Indian Agencies and Inspector under the Manitoba Temperance Act can be added.

GEORGE HERBERT MARLATT: In 1885 was Manager of the Hudson's Bay Company at Portage la Prairie. This position he held for 18 years.

JOHN J. MILLEN: Came to Portage in 1873. He was a successful farmer but also a clever amateur horse doctor.

W. W. MILLER: Was a postmaster in Portage la Prairie from about 1878 until his death in 1912.

JAMES MOFFAT: Settled north of Portage in 1873, and farmed successfully until 1899 when he retired to Portage la Prairie.

WILLIAM MOSS: Was appointed Governor of the Portage Gaol in 1882.

ROBERT NEELANDS: About 1878 he came to Portage, and a short time later permanently settled on land northeast of Portage.

COLIN CAMPBELL NEWMAN: A Portage pioneer, brother of T. A. and F. L. Newman, and father of Mrs. C. Cole, a respected Portage resident.

F. L. NEWMAN: Was very active in community affairs. He was mayor of the city for two years and an alderman for many years.

FRANCIS OGLETREE: In the early days was very prominent in public affairs. Hon. Francis Ogletree was a member of the first Legislative Council, Drill Instructor during the Riel Uprising, Police Magistrate for Portage for many years and Indian Agent for the district.

THOMAS OLIVER: Arrived in Portage in 1877 and was therefore among the first of the pioneer settlers.

EDWARD PORTER: Was the first manager of the Ontario bank which established business in Portage in 1880.

MR. THOMAS W. PROUT: Came to Portage in 1882 and settled in a house next door to where the Greenberg Groceteria is today. He ran a livery stable, along with Dr. Taylor, a Veterinarian, for a time before going into a machine business in the Prout Block, which was later destroyed by fire. He passed away in 1918. Mrs. N. Weber, of Portage, is a daughter.

WILLIAM PURVIS: Brought his wife and family to Manitoba in 1888; settled first at Minnedosa, and moved shortly afterwards to Portage la Prairie. A daughter, Helen, is remembered as having taught in West Ward, Central, and High Bluff schools. (She married William Charles Hall in 1905 and lived in Portage until 1930, when they moved to Langruth.)

WILLIAM RICHARDSON: Arrived in Portage la Prairie in 1879 and identified with many of its steps of progress. He was in the real estate business.

JOHN T. RUTLEDGE: Pioneer settler of 1877.

JOHN RUTLEDGE and WILLIAM RUTLEDGE: (no close relationship to John T.): Pioneer settlers of 1872.

JAMES and EDWARD SCOTT: Came to Manitoba in 1873; were pioneer homesteaders 8 miles northwest of Portage la Prairie.

WILLIAM STAIT SR.: Came to the Portage Plains in 1873 and traded a team of horses for a quarter section of land. Later, he brought his wife and family from Fort Garry to the homestead in a covered wagon. They recorded spending a day and a night with their wagon stuck in a slough en route!

R. G. T. SIMPSON: Came to Portage in 1880 and made quite a name for himself for the beautiful flowers and trees he grew on his farm north-east of Portage la Prairie. He was also credited with being a good and successful farmer.

THOMAS SISSONS SR.: Located at Portage la Prairie in 1871. The land he settled on has been farmed by his descendants ever since.

THOMAS SISSONS JR.: Came to Manitoba with his parents in 1871, and knew the pioneer life of which he became a part. He was the father of a family of nine of which a daughter, Melrose, was called to the Bar of the Province; Bonnie, with a Bachelor of Science and Home Economics Degree; Albert, a Veterinary Surgeon; Garfield, the diploma course at Manitoba Agricultural College, and Lynn, an artist. A fifth generation is residing on the original farm at this time.

W. F. SMITH: Farmed north of Portage from 1873 until 1899.

JAMES A. SMITH: Came about 1874 and farmed near Portage la Prairie until 1899.

EDWY WILLIAM SNIDER: Settled at Portage la Prairie in 1879. Seven members of his family formed the major part of the first brass band west of Winnipeg. He was a leading factor in many improvements made in the settlement, and each of his family have been a credit to our country since the early days.

JOHN SUTHERLAND: A pioneer farmer of 1878. Parish lot 53 was the legal description of his land.

THOMAS SWALES: Built the first frame house between Portage and Lake Manitoba in 1879 on a farm 3 miles north of Portage.

JAMES THOMSON: Arrived in Portage in 1880 as an employee of the Hudson's Bay Co. Later he was promoted to manager, then transferred to Calgary in 1885.

WILLIAM THOMSON: A pioneer of 1878 who settled six miles northwest of Portage la Prairie.

RICHARD THOMSON: Came to Portage in 1879 and was a secretary in the Portage la Prairie Milling Co. until 1881 when it became part of the Lake of the Woods Milling Co. of which he became local manager.

GEORGE TIDSBURY: Has the distinction of being one of the first men to organize the game of curling in Portage. He was also one of the first directors of Portage Mutual Fire Insurance Company.

WILLIAM TRIMBLE: Built the first house out of Portage on the Saskatchewan Trail. He was instrumental in having West Prospect Methodist Church built and organizing the school district of Belle Plain.

GEORGE A. TUCKER: A pioneer settler of 1873, farmed about 5 miles northeast of Portage. He lived on this land until his death in 1916.

ROBERT TAYLOR: Came to the Portage district in 1877 and farmed west of the present city. He was born in Blythe, Ontario in 1858 and passed away in Portage in 1929. A brother, John M. Taylor, who also lived in Portage, predeceased him.

JOHN WEBSTER: One of the early homesteaders at Macdonald. He moved into Portage in 1892 and worked for the Massey Harris Co. for a time, later taking employment in the D. McKillop undertaking establishment. He passed away in 1904 at the age of 48 years.

GEORGE AVERY WHITE: Arrived in Portage in 1873 and became both a farmer and flour-miller while here. He died in 1885.

ROBERT WISHART: Settled on 7-12-6 in 1870, with a family of five sons, and farmed there until 1880 when he moved to Saskatchewan where a little town, north of Fort Qu'Appelle, was named after him.

(A brother, Dr. John Wishart, of London, Ontario, was credited with performing the first operation for appendicitis on the N. A. Continent.)

WILLIAM WISHART: A brother of Robert and John, came to Portage in 1875 and settled on 13-12-7. A son, Robert, many years later, married Jean McGowan who holds the honor of being the only Portage woman who has sat on City Council. A grandson, W. L. (Bud) Wishart still resides on the original farm.

WILLIAM YOUNG: Was born Nov. 11th, 1850 near Brussels, Ontario, and came to the Portage district in 1873, taking up home-

stead 27-12-6 S.W. at that time. He is credited with having been a very successful farmer, and the large frame house that he built in 1887 is still standing. He married Margaret Barr, also from Brussels, in 1878, and from this union there were six children: Annie, Catherine, William, Milford, Irene, and A. Percival; the latter now living in Oakland, California. Mr. Young passed away in 1900 and was followed by his wife in 1937.

GEO. MARKLAND YOEMANS: Came west in 1873 and settled west of Portage where he established a home that became known as 'Yoeman Ridge'.

A. D. YUILL: A pioneer farmer of 1871.

JOSEPH W. YUILL: Started farming the S.E. quarter of 3-13-7 in 1888. Among his many activities was the one of Director in the Portage Mutual Fire Insurance Company.

(The foregoing families might not have been mentioned in this book had I, Anne M. Collier, the opportunity previously to peruse the list of taxpayers in the City Hall records. Having just done that, and counting 815 names for the year 1883 alone, with the numbers increasing through the 1800s, I realize the impossibility (due to space and time) of continuing with family research. Apologies are extended to all families whose names have been omitted.)

IF YOU'VE LIVED ON THE PRAIRIE

If you've walked along a sandy lane,
In bare and tingling feet,
While meadowlarks were singing
And toads hopped in retreat;
If you've savored summer's softness
In sunshine, flowers and rain,
And looking through a window
Seen golden fields of grain;
If you've welcomed fluffy snowflakes
As a time to be at home,
To rest and read by lamplight
And dream of days to come;
If you've heard a sleigh-bell's tinkling,
Which meant a friend was near,
And stoked the stove and raised the light
For a welcome that would cheer;
If you've helped a struggling neighbor,

With tasks too much for him
And been very glad to do it,
Though your own future looked dim;
If you have done the worthwhile things
That gladdened hearts no end —
Then you've lived on the prairie;
You really have, my friend!

Anne M. Collier

DELTA

Ask anyone, who has a summer home at Delta for some historical information concerning the place, and you are lucky if you get any further than a description of the lovely lake that meets the horizon, the soft as silk sand, and the beauty of the sunsets. It's understandable because all of this is true.

From the time that cottages are closed for the winter, their owners are looking forward to the first, warm, sunshiny day in Spring to get back. This is understandable too. And being only 15 miles from Portage, week ends can be spent there before and after the annual holidays.

Mrs. Hutchinson, who is now living out her twilight years in Portage, is one who has memories she enjoys sharing with others. She came from England in 1912 and went directly to live at Delta where her husband was then fishing on the lake (Manitoba). At that time the beach was thickly treed, and there were only a few cottages.

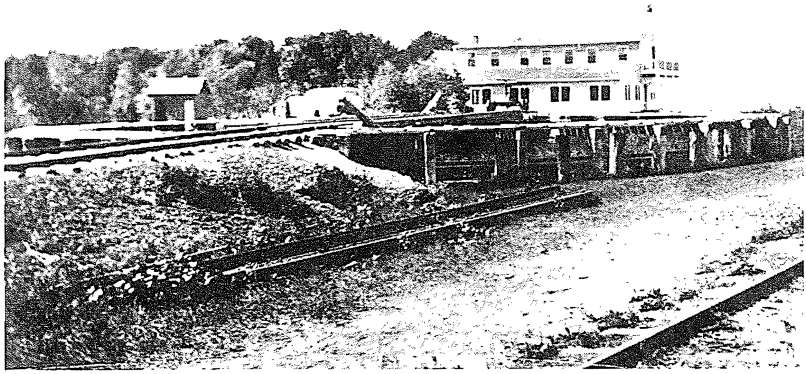
Mr. and Mrs. Hawkinson lived on the east beach near the site of the present Cadham cottage. Mr. and Mrs. John Cruzelle, who also depended on fishing for a living, made their home there too and drove their children into Portage to school until one was built in 1916. Mrs. Hutchinson remembers their little daughter, Mary, 8 years of age, drowning when a raft drifted out into deep water.

The Cruzelle home is now Mr. and Mrs. Joe Campbell's vacation home.

Mr. Younghusband ran a small store on the lakeshore and was employed in the fish sheds. His son, Leslie, married the daughter of the cosmetic millionaire who developed "Kiss proof" lipstick.

A larger store, and hotel, was operated by a Mr. and Mrs. Palmer who later sold to Gordon and Archie MacDonald after the

first World War. These brothers built a tennis court that was the centre of Delta recreation until the high water of 1955 destroyed it.



Records show that the turn-table, which is shown here, was built by the Portage & Northwestern Railway Lake Branch in 1899. It was of wooden construction, and was hand operated, and could be likened to a lazy-susan. Being the means of turning an engine around to re-hook with the train and commence the return journey, it was a very important piece of equipment at that time.

The first train operated July 1, 1900. The line was acquired by the Canadian Northern Railway in 1901, and in later years incorporated into the Canadian National Railway system. The line from Oakland to Delta was abandoned and taken up in 1941.

A pier was erected and the track ran alongside the pier for approximately 1100 feet into the lake. This pier was eventually destroyed by ice piling up in that part of the lake.

Going back to Mrs. Hutchinson's knowledge of Delta history, we learn that, before her arrival there, a channel had been opened to facilitate the loading of railway cars with gypsum from the barges which brought it down the lake from Gypsumville. Then

in 1913, it was necessary to build a breakwater and bridge to prevent high winds from eroding the channel with resultant danger to railroad and fish storage buildings. This bridge was also damaged in the high water of 1955 and was later dismantled. A road was built over the channel at the west end of the village at that time.

When Mrs. Hutchinson first went to Delta she remembers the fishermen working much closer to shore than they do now. She says they hauled sleighs by hand, and when these were filled with pickerel, tullibee and jackfish they were emptied into horse drawn sleighs and taken to the railroad to be loaded for marketing by Armstrong Fisheries. She also remembers the Icelandic fishermen from Gimli crossing to Lake Manitoba and down to Delta by dog-team.

Shortly after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival at Delta, permanent residents started homes on the ridge, and there were several summer cottages built along the beach. Among the first builders were Dr. Glascoe, Sel MacDonald, W. H. Thompson, the Richardsons, Coles, Andrich, Vadeboncoeur and La Fleche (parents of famous Giselle) families.

Campers came by train on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and on Saturdays there were three or four trainloads from Portage, the final one at night being known as the "Moonlight Special".

In 1928, a road was built through the marsh.

Delta has always been famous for its hunting lodges and Mrs. Hutchinson listed them in turn:

The Donald H. Bain lodge, now owned by the Manitoba government; the Portage Country Club, which was built west of the Bain lodge and had many ardent hunting enthusiasts as members; Jimmie Robinson's Flee Island lodge (this world famous editor of Sports and Field Magazine hosted many famous people such as Clark Gable); and the pioneer, nature-lover of them all, Dr. Cadham, who shortly after 1912 bought the land along the lakeshore from Delta east to Clandeboye and built his summer home. He later sold this land, with the exception of his summer home, to J. F. Bell of Minneapolis.

Then there was the Kirkhoffer lodge, built by Senator Kirkhoffer of Brandon, Manitoba, and located nine miles east of Delta in the marsh. It was to this lodge that King Edward VII came on vacation when he was Duke of York.

When J. F. Bell acquired the Cadham property, he built a lodge east of the Cadham lodge, and also started a mink ranch on the

ridge with Mr. Edward Ward as manager. He later gave up the mink business, and used his equipment as a hatchery, to raise ducks in captivity from eggs brought in from the marsh by the guides.

Delta beach has grown in popularity through the years, and there are many summer homes there now. With its soft sand and graduating depth of water, it is an ideal spot for family vacations. Even the tiniest toddlers can bathe and have fun in the sun, while adult swimmers choose their own level.

During the hot summer months, the road to Delta is a busy road. However, there is plenty of room for passing, and anyone wanting to dawdle along and take in the beauty of the countryside can do so.

THE DELTA SYNDICATE

The Association, in 1913, had Mr. Alex Taylor, M.L.S. make a survey of its holdings along the Lake shore from the Eastern boundary of same Westerly to the East shore-line of Eagle's Nest Creek, and in due course a plan of the same was made and registered in the local Land Titles Office as No. 427. In the Plan there were shown 33 Lots that have a lake frontage of approximately 100 feet each, and run north and south from a little under 100 feet to a little over 300 feet, depending on the shore line of the Lake. The Plan suggests that the Lots might not extend right down to the water's edge even at the date it was made, and, of course, the water is now considerably lower than it was in 1913. Provision was made on the Plan for a road allowance along the south side of the Lots. Placing the average depth of the Lots with the road allowance at 250 feet, the Plan would have an area of 825,000 square feet or 18.9 acres, which leaves the Association with approximately 190 acres over and above the plan.

When Mr. Charles Sing, Q.C., B.A., LL.B. made a personal inspection in the summer of 1968 he said that there was not a great deal of the above mentioned property under water. He also said, "This is accounted for to a considerable extent at the present time to the low level of the Lake. If the Lake were raised another foot or two the Association's Holdings under water would very materially increase and in that event they would probably be worth considerably more money, as they would have a greater value for trapping purposes and also would likely have value from a shooting viewpoint. The ridge along the shore of the Lake west of Eagle's Nest Creek appears to be very similar to the land subdivided. There-

fore, if a bridge were constructed across the Creek it would be a comparatively simple matter to have a Plan after the nature of No. 427 made out covering the shore frontage west of the Creek."

Plans for a syndicate were formulated in 1900, when a few Portage la Prairie people were refused permission to purchase portions of land they desired in connection with their cottages. The C.P.R. owned the desired land. Eventually, J. J. Garland on behalf of Hon. Mr. Justice Taylor, T. H. Tebo, S. M. Macdonald and the following, all of whom have since passed away, namely: himself, Hon. R. Watson, J. O. Cadham, W. R. Richardson, J. Alex Snider, W. H. Thompson, H. O. Sutton, J. H. Metcalfe and Dr. J. E. Lundy purchased the holdings of the C.P.R. which are represented to consist of 210 acres. (The total acreage mentioned here takes in land acquired and added at a later date than No. 427).

The land in question was placed in the names of the late J. J. Garland and W. H. Thompson as Trustees for the parties interested as above mentioned. Due to the death of the late J. J. Garland, on Jan. 11th, 1927, the Hon. Mr. Justice F. G. Taylor, who was then practising law in Portage la Prairie was appointed Trustee. Those joining in the Agreement as parties thereto were: Thompson, Watson, Cadham, Metcalfe, Macdonald, Richardson, Snider and the Garland estate, Lundy estate and A. H. Dennis as Assignee of H. O. Sutton, E. A. McPherson as Assignee of the interest of J. H. Metcalfe, and D. M. Ormond.

Under a Trusteeship Agreement, the late Wm. Richardson was appointed an agent for the Syndicate for the purpose of selling real estate and in connection with the trapping privileges. Unfortunately, for many years back there has not been any demand for property of the Syndicate's Holdings. This, coupled with the fact that for several years there has been no income from the ratting rights, the Trustees' funds have been going out with nothing coming back. Consequently, in the year 1936, the Trustee, out of his own funds, paid on account of taxes $3.48. In 1937 he paid $31.95, and in 1938 he paid $31.61 for the same cause. He was later reimbursed for $36.00 of the total amount.

Commencing with 1937 Delta Beach grew in popularity. However, sales that have taken place have been in connection with improved real estate. A great deal of credit is due to the energies of some of the cottage holders and the Delta Beach Association for the increased popularity of the Beach, as, due to their efforts, an all weather gravelled road has been constructed and various other

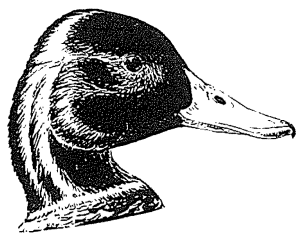
improvements made. Credit is also due to some of the members of the local Rural Council who have materially co-operated to get the improvements.

As a result of some of the good work done by people interested in the welfare of the Beach, Eagle's Nest Creek Channel has been opened up again, and that part of the Beach is being used extensively by holidayers. This should tend to materially improve the value of the land in the vicinity of the Creek, which at the present time all belongs to the Association. The C.G.I.T. erected a camp a short distance west of the Creek and have been enjoying free camping sessions for some time.

If the amount of snowfall is indicative of a high lake level we should be seeing it in the Spring of 1969!

THE DELTA MARSH

The Delta Marsh is the location of the most famous Waterfowl Research Station on the North American Continent. We are happy to say it is within close visiting range of Portage la Prairie — only 15 miles.



It was through the courtesy of the congenial Director of the Research Station H. Albert Hochbaum, M.Sc., LL.D., that an authentic history of the Marsh was obtained for our book. The realistic sketches are a part of his contribution too.

"The Delta Waterfowl Research Station is the outgrowth of an experiment undertaken in the early 1930s by Mr. James Ford Bell. He set out to rear ducklings from the eggs of wild birds, turning his production loose on the flyways each fall. In the large hatchery he built on the Delta Marsh, many problems connected with artificial hatching and rearing were solved, attracting wide attention among biologists. One was Dr. William Rowan, of the University of Alberta, who not only carried on his studies at the Station but, along with Dr. Miles D. Pirnie of Michigan State College, induced the great conservationist, Aldo Leopold, "father" of modern game management, to visit Delta. Leopold, deeply aware of the need for basic waterfowl research, was impressed with the facilities at Delta, and persuaded the American Wildlife Institute to sponsor an expanded program there.

Later on, in 1949, Mr. Bell presented the Delta Station, with its hatchery and equipment together with a substantial contribution for its support, to the North American Wildlife Foundation, the progenitor of which was established in 1911. The Foundation was incorporated in 1935 as a permanent central organization to promote and assist in the coordination of wildfowl conservation. It is governed by its Board of Trustees, presently composed of:

President — Robert Winthrop, New York, N.Y.; Vice Pres. — Seth Gordon, Sacramento, Calif.; Secretary and Treasurer — C. R. Gutermuth, Washington, D.C.

(Of the 23 others who are on the Board of Trustees, three are Canadians and Manitobans: Peter D. Curry, William A. Murphy and Henry F. Sellers, all of Winnipeg.)

A Committee of the Trustees advises with the Director of the Station both as to policy and administration while the actual management of the Station and its accounts are supervised by the Wildlife Management Institute which generously contributes its services thus making it possible for all contributions earmarked for Delta to be used in toto for conservation.

At present, the Delta Station's budget runs about $60,000 a year and is rising — rising because costs are increasing and because its program is expanding year by year as the value of basic waterfowl research is better understood and accepted. At the present time, it is operated by a small staff combining the university backgrounds of Director H. Albert Hochbaum, M.Sc., LL.D., Dr. James K. Lowther, M.A., Ph.D. and a man who has had long practical experience, Peter Ward, who is Hatchery Superintendent.

Facilities at the Delta Waterfowl Research Station are: laboratories, field equipment, a hatchery, decoy, flying pens, an extensive biological library, photographic darkroom equipment, dormitories for students and simple accommodations for married couples.

Over 60 biologists have gained advanced degrees by way of Delta Research and the following Universities have sent graduate students to carry out their original researches at the Station: Bishop's, Bristol, Cornell, Duke, Michigan State, Purdue, Alberta, British Columbia, California, Guelph, Illinois, Manitoba, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Utah and Yale."

Vegetation, water and weather play important parts in wildfowl life. Bulrushes and reeds thrive when the water level is high, and the nesting diving ducks, that like this habitat, thrive also. In 1967, there was a steady lowering and Dr. Hochbaum said, "by the end of September, emergent vegetation was stranded by wide mud bars that were still dry and crusty at freeze-up."

When temperatures have dropped during the nesting season, early-nesting Mallards and Pintails have been known to abandon frozen eggs. When this happens, they remain together in flocks where open water remains.

The start of nesting in Canvasback and Redhead usually occurs during the last week in April. However, in 1967, the first eggs were not being laid until May 11th. "Despite this delay, nesting unaccountably ended about ten days earlier than normal and was the shortest breeding season in 30 years! The shortened nesting period was followed by an early build-up of adult moulters at Delta," said Dr. Hochbaum.

Some of the latest developments at the Delta Waterfowl Research Station are as follows: A new Hatchery Laboratory to make space for the more sophisticated embryological studies, and to accommodate greater research demand for hand-reared ducklings; (in cooperation with Controlled Environments Ltd., of Winnipeg, there are incubators and freezing compartments in which eggs may be incubated or held under precisely controlled temperature, humidity and light); a new winter pen for the wild Mallard breeding flock (this is covered so that the birds may be held free-winged); Peter Ward devised a pond for the pen that keeps water open in the coldest weather; two new observation towers commanding views of the Station pond; a new drawing table (presented to the Station by Mr. W. H. Lang of Minneapolis); and a new residence for the Director (an eight-room two-storey bungalow-type dwelling overlooking Cadham Bay).

We have mentioned only Mallards, Pintails, Canvasbacks and Redheads thus far, as most of the interesting experiments seem to concern them. However, many enlightening observations of wild

geese and Whistling Swans are made at the Station too. For instance, during the week of October 22, 1967, a flock of swans reached Delta. The flock was made up of 452 adults and 21 cygnets.

Anyone who has seen the documentary films that have been produced in cooperation with the C.B.C. and the University of Minnesota, is more intensely appreciative of the wildfowl research going on at the Station at Delta.

BURNSIDE

Burnside village, 11-8-1; (P.O. 1871); on Rat Creek (now called Willow Bend) was originally a Scottish settlement named by Kenneth McKenzie Sr., an early settler. "Beside the Burn" as it would be actually referred to by the Scottish folk, was shortened to "Burnside."

Mr. McKenzie attended the University of Edinborough and after coming to this country, with his wife and six sons and four daughters, settled for awhile in Guelph, Ontario, before coming west in 1868. (His family followed him in 1869 and 1870.)

He selected a block of land at Rat Creek, just north of the spot he afterwards named. On this land which he homesteaded, he raised registered Shorthorn cattle and fine horses which gained him the reputation of an admirable stock raiser. The terrain was ideal for this purpose too, with good clear water, grazing ground and tall sheltering trees.

The McKenzie farm has an interesting historical story. Before the first survey of 1871, and of course roads as we know them today, there was a trail from Portage la Prairie west which followed the higher ground. It crossed Rat Creek a little north of the present building site where there was a "ford" and later a temporary bridge constructed each year by felling logs across the stream at a narrow point. These logs had to be replaced each year because of the high water every Spring.

The McKenzie home was a well-known stopping place for travelling settlers and Indians and many a story is told of the hospitality and kindness they received there. Sickness often occurred on the trail and stories suggest that there are several graves not far from the crossing.

Mr. McKenzie was a man of whom this part of the country can be justly proud. He donated four acres of land to the Presbyterian

Church for its building site, at a time when there wasn't a church west of Portage. (This old building is still standing.) He purchased a block of land in the centre of Portage (around where the Collegiate is situated) and gave it to the Portage la Prairie Agricultural Society who held the first Agricultural Fair in this area on those grounds. He was a public spirited man and gave freely of his time and efforts whenever needed and won recognition as an M.L.A. — a post he held for several terms. When Kenneth McKenzie passed away in 1910 he was borne to his last resting place in the Burnside cemetery, the cemetery for which he had donated land also.

Actually, before he donated land for a cemetery there was one on the Matt Ferris farm which later became the Galbraith farm (on the Edwin road south of the C.P.R. tracks). It was abandoned in favour of the one on the McKenzie land, which is still being used — on the side of the Trans-Canada Highway.

School classes were held in Mathew Ferris' home until a school was built. Miss Emma Ferris was the teacher.

The school building was made of hewed logs according to J. H. Metcalfe in Tread of the Pioneers. Records show that 600 ft. of lumber for $12.00, nails, whitewash, stove-pipes and a stove (box) were purchased for $24.00, plus 30c worth of paint. A lock and some windows were also mentioned. No doubt the lumber was used in the interior of the school.

On Nov. 12th, 1875 it was reported that Miss S. L. Harvey had applied for the position of teacher; also, that by the end of the year $116.88 was the total tax collection. The record book for that year was signed by Wm. Kitson, Sec.-Treas.

Miss Harvey became the first teacher in the newly built school at a salary of $260.00 per year.

Expenses were paid as the receipts came in and the teacher's salary was very often in arrears — so they had to give her a note until such time as they could afford to pay her. In fact they sometimes borrowed from the odd settler to keep the school operating!

In 1879 there was a Mr. Edwards teaching who was paid $40.00 in March. At this time they were still paying Miss Harvey back wages. (She had accepted a position in Winnipeg.) As an indication of resourcefulness, in Jan., 1880, they gave Mr. Edwards a payment of value in beef!

In spite of the hardships of teaching in those days, such as no indoor plumbing, cold floors in winter and poor ventilation in

summer and the uncertainty of wages, teachers were happy to fill the needed position in Burnside, among congenial people who treated them like kinfolk.

When failing health forced Miss Harvey to quit teaching, she came back to Rat Creek to the home of Mr. Mathew Ferris where she had boarded while teaching there and it was there that she passed away.

On Feb. 7, 1896 it was decided at a meeting of ratepayers, to build a new school 26' x 36' and that the trustees be authorized to borrow the sum of $700.00 by issue of debentures for the purpose. Indications are that it was $1300.00 for the job plus $110.00 to J. O. Cadham for the brick furnace installed.

This school served the district through the years from that time on. It is one of the very few, little attractive school houses that hasn't been hauled away to serve some other purpose.

From 1875 to 1967 many residents served as trustees on the school boards. They are too numerous to mention them all so we will pay tribute to the last school board who served faithfully for many years: Mr. Ralph Faurschou, Mr. Dave Roy, Mr. Lloyd Hyde and Mr. Ernie Askin.

In 1882 the Methodist Church was started. The cost of the building was: lumber — $104.77; hardware and building paper — $105.99; furnishings — $49.22; brick and mortar — $9.25; shingles — $60.00; and painting — $100.00 (Compare those prices with the cost of building materials today!) Members of the Methodist faith subscribed $1,127.00 to the building fund.

Tribute was paid to Jonathon Troop who was instrumental in starting the church. Also remembered were his staunch supporters and co-workers, James Dunfield, Mathew Ferris and Elias Brown.

The first minister was Rev. A. J. Barltrop, and the first organist was Miss Bella Troop.

In the Presbyterian Church which was built on the land donated by Mr. McKenzie, some of the ministers were: Rev. Farquar McRae, Rev. Riddel, Rev. Jacobs, Rev. Pecover and Rev. Langille who served following the union of the Presbyterian and Methodist Church.

The C.P.R. siding and station were first placed one and a half miles west, opposite what was then the Ferris farm (later J. Galbraith's) and Mrs. Farquar McRae was the first passenger to get off the train at the whistle stop. Later, the station house was moved

farther east to the present location and resident agents were there for a considerable time, a Mr. Anderson was one of those.

In the eighties, Burnside village was a thriving little business centre. As well as the station and school and churches, there was a store, Post Office, freight sheds and two grain elevators. Homes in the village added to its larger appearance of course.

For many years the general store and Post Office was operated by a Mr. Fox who was a witty man and a violin player of note. Indeed it is said that he built a makeshift dance hall to the rear of his store. It's nice to think he brightened the lives of some of the young people by playing jigs and reels for them in his little dance room.

A Mr. and Mrs. Harvey operated the store and Post Office after Mr. Fox left and carried on business there until the building burned down. It was never rebuilt.

Cars, trucks and good roads have stymied the growth of many lovely little villages, and in many cases almost obliterated them. Little local stores cannot compete with larger ones that are only a few minutes driving distance away.

For anyone who has been absent from Burnside for many years, and probably for even as long as before the Trans-Canada Highway was built, they might find themselves looking for the sign "Rat Creek". As we have said previously, the sign is no longer there and the curve in the road which goes over the bridge that spans the creek reads "Willow Bend". (This information may also prove valuable to some historian, a hundred years hence, who may try to find Rat Creek on a modern map.)

The first Road Side Park west of Portage is situated on the south bank of the creek. This spot with its tall shade trees and beautiful scenic setting is a popular stopping place for tourists from across Canada and the U.S.A. It had its beginning in 1959 and the Manitoba Highways Dept. are commended for their efforts.

Historically it is an ideal location for the park. Back in the early days it was an overnight camping ground for the Indians and from the 1890s to 1914 they attended an annual picnic there.

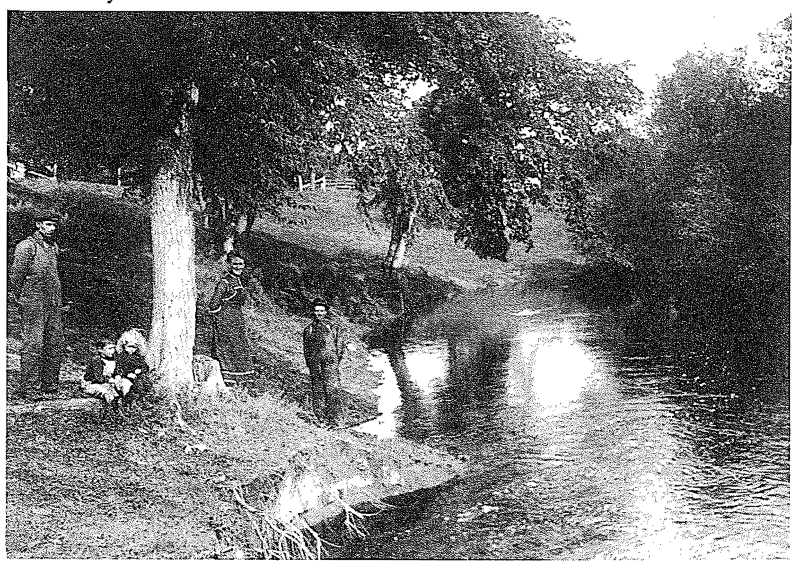
Space and time prevents narrating the interesting and worthwhile events related to each of the lives of the pioneers in this lovely little community. Our tribute to them can only be to preserve their names for posterity by recording them here, in the order of

their arrival in the district. K. McKenzie, Sr., Robert Bell, Sr., Wm. Kitson, Hugh Grant, The Fraser Family, Rupert Munro, Chas. Fawcett, William and Alex Gair, Thomas Leader, Jonathon Troop, John and Wm. Rutledge, Geo. Yeomans, Adam Smith, Mathew, Walter, Thomas and Mack Ferris, W. A. McIntosh, Henry Treffry, Thos. Oliver (Rignold), Sam Graham, Paisley (Rignold), Mickeljohn family, Jas. Askin, John Pallister, Henry Voss, Soloman and Thos. Beck, Rev. F. McCrae, Joseph Hyde and his mother and family, N. Graham, J. Walker, Jardine Bros., James Dunfield, Joseph Hall, Rev. A. J. Barltrop, R. L. Sturgeon, R. J. Fawcett, Thos. Doherty, John Hall, C. Doherty, Hector Paisley, Angus Ferris, Elias Brown, John Watkings, Charles Vickers, Fred Brown, John Lazier, Graham Forige, A. Boyer, John Burney, Harry Barltrop, David McFadden, John Adams, J. W. Allardyce, J. Irwin, John and William Ferguson, W. Hillman, W. Brown, Buckingham family, Wilbur Lamb and the Roy family.

Another pioneer worthy of mention is Mr. John Galbraith who came west in 1879 with his widowed mother and 8 brothers and sisters and worked on farms in the Portage area to help support them.

In 1889 he married a young lady named Margaret Spice and in 1908 he purchased the farm of one of her cousins, Walter Ferris.

The picture shown here will be of interest to strangers who read this book and wonder what the scenery is like, and will also bring back many memories to those who remember it.



Rat Creek ran through the Galbraith farm and served as a watering place for livestock. The lawn that led down from their home was a picnic paradise for family and friends.

Shown in the picture, left to right, are: John Galbraith, his son John E., his daughter Esther (now Mrs. A. James), Mrs. Galbraith and son, William, who later took over the farm and was killed in a farm accident in 1959.

Two daughters, Marjorie (now Mrs. A. G. Sissons) and Isobel (now Mrs. P. D. McKechnie) are not in this photo due to attending school in Portage la Prairie. Another family member missing is a son, C. F. Galbraith who, several years after this picture was taken, won the D.F.C. and gave his life for our country in 1918.

EDWIN

(Formerly known as the FOX district)

The history of the Fox district goes back to 1891. It was named after Jerry Fox who was a station agent and later a store-keeper at Burnside. Mr. Fox also owned land in the area which was named after him. This land later became the property of L. W. Crewson.

Before the Canadian Northern Railway reached the Fox district, Mr. Sol Hadley had a post office there. He received a salary of 75c per trip for bringing the mail from Burnside, a distance of appxoximately eight miles! After the coming of the railroad, in 1905, the mail came by train.

While mail from family and friends in the outside world was of great importance to the settlers, so also was their need for schools and spiritual guidance. A log school was built in 1895 which served as both school and church. Rev. Farquar McRae, of Burnside, was the first minister. This building was used until 1905 when it was replaced by a brick structure, which served its purpose until 1960 when another school was built. (The first service held in the 1905 school was a memorial service for the late Mrs. J. S. Boak.)

The Geographic Board of Canada says that it was in 1905 that the Canadian Northern Railway reached the Fox district, and on

January 1, 1907, the name of the district was changed to "Edwin" in honor of Edwin James who was manager of that railway at the time.

In 1907 the people of Edwin received telephone service. The first subscribers were: J. Crewson, J. S. Boak, Robert McDermott, George Charlton and Thomas Bedford. "Central" was at Bagot at that time, but later it was changed to Portage la Prairie. At the present time (1968) the community is enjoying dial phones.

In 1910 a Ladies' Aid was organized which lasted until the early 1960s. A W.M.S. was formed in 1905 and only four members of this group are left.

Edwin had two elevators at one time. The first one was built in 1917 by Andrew Forsythe of High Bluff. It was later moved away. The second one, built in 1928 by the Manitoba Pool Elevator Company, still serves the community.

In 1949 Edwin received hydro service and electrical appliances and water-works soon became an accepted part of daily life there.

While the people in the community appreciate the benefits of the progress that has been made, there is a little nostalgia for the "togetherness" they once knew: the church services in the school house; the congenial gathering of neighbors for a common cause; and the times when the pastoral scene was made more beautiful by the sight of numerous sleek horses in a pasture; and contented cows wearing tinkling bells.

Livestock is rare now. Children go to school by bus. Residents drive to Portage la Prairie to church. Farm work is done with the aid of machinery. And evenings are spent viewing television instead of visiting as in the old days.

To prevent the names of pioneers of Edwin from sinking into oblivion we will mention as many of them as names are available here: John McConochie, James McConochie, Frank Woods, L. W. Crewson, William McCulloch, Joseph Patterson, Frank Dankesreiter, R. J. Fawcett, William Condy, John McKenzie, J. S. Boak, Sol Hadley, John Pallister, Dave McKenzie, a Mr. Keele, William Gould, Robert McIntosh, Willard Black, Charles Larkin, Richard Trimble, Robert McDermott, Walter Brass and Mr. M. Cail.

A few of the farmers who are tilling the soil which was originally broken by the pioneers are: Harry Gould, Lloyd Slater and Hugh McDermott.

A store which was built by Walter Brass was bought by William Condy who gave service for 32 years. It has changed hands several times since and is now (1968) owned and operated by two capable people, Kelly and Joan McIvor.

HIGH BLUFF

(Known as the "Nairn District" in the very early days.)

Because of a high bluff or grove of trees, which rose conspicuously out of the surrounding woods the area was given the name 'High Bluff.'

Archdeacon Cochrane can be credited, not only for starting the first white settlement at Portage la Prairie, but also for the confidence he inspired in pioneers to cast their lot in the area which circled his settlement. High Bluff came within this circle.

The Archdeacon seemed to have been of the opinion that mental development and spiritual fulfillment were co-related, as his first thoughts were of schools and churches wherever new-comers settled. In 1859, High Bluff had its first school built under his guidance, a school which was given the number 13. It was located on a trail that led to the lake which later became known as Black's Lake. Fire destroyed the school in 1876 and classes were held in the Drummond House until a new educational edifice could be erected. Land for the site was purchased from Mr. Colin Setter, and in 1879 the bell rang for the first classes in the new school, which served as the training centre for students in the immediate area until 1893 when the last school was built. It was another of the little school houses which had to check out after 51 years of usefulness.

The parish of High Bluff was called the Parish of St. Margaret, and a church was built the same year as the school, in 1859. It was located where the Anglican Cemetery is, on No. 4 highway. This church, which followed similar architectural lines to the one built earlier in Portage, burned and a smaller one took its place. A manse was also built to accommodate a resident minister. After many years of service this church was moved away.

The Methodist church was built on land which was, at one time, farmed by John Norquay who sold it to John Moss who resided at High Bluff until he passed away in 1930. Mr. Moss settled in the area in 1872. The graveyard which was beside the church is still there.

A news item in the Weekly Review paper of Aug. 15, 1895, says, "Tuesday's storm raged in the vicinity of High Bluff. The wind blew down the old Methodist church, Mr. Donnelly's granary, the roof off Mr. Moggey's stable and Mr. Thompson's house. The Inkster house was also damaged."

A Presbyterian church and a manse were built in 1871. Land was also allotted for a cemetery. The site was known as "near the Gemmel Farm."

The advent of the railroad in 1881 saw settlers flocking to the area. The place where the first pioneers homesteaded became Old High Bluff and northerly, a village sprang up which was named High Bluff Village.

A Presbyterian manse was built in the village in 1882, and the church, which is still playing an important part in the religious life of the community, was built in 1890.

High Bluff Village was a pretty important little place in those days.

The first steam-powered elevator was built by Mr. John Dilworth in the early 1880s (two horse-powered ones having been built and used previously). It was rebuilt after being consumed by fire in 1897 and Andrew Forsythe, who founded the Forsythe Grain Co., built a grain dryer to be used in conjunction with the new one. The head office for the Company at the time was High Bluff.

Before the railway went through mail was picked up by a carrier who met the stage coaches conveying it to Old High Bluff. Later, a room in Mr. Coxsmith's home became a post office. Another room in his home became the first telephone office. At that time there was a bank (the Bank of Nova Scotia), three stores, three blacksmith shops, a livery stable, two implement shops, a boarding house, a billiard hall and barber shop, a grist mill, and the services of a doctor.

Sports and entertainment added zest to the life of the community. Skating, curling, lacrosse and baseball were the main sports, and concerts, house parties and garden parties the main entertainments.

Two professional ball players who got their basic practice in High Bluff were Melville Jackson and Clarke Metcalf. The High Bluff baseball team won the provincial title in 1924.

High Bluff played an important part in patriotic efforts in both of the World Wars. The many men and boys who made the Supreme

Sacrifice is the greatest proof of this. High Bluff gained in stature because of them, but was made poorer by their absence.

Due to progress in modes of transportation, speedy communication and advanced education, another little village is living in its glorious memories of the past. The history of any village contains an element of nostalgia.

Before time runs out and men are completely engulfed in a speedy stream that rushes ever onward, with never a moment to lower the sails and search out treasures of the past, let us record the names of High Bluff pioneers. We do not have a complete list and our apologies are extended to any family whose ancestral name is omitted due to unavailable information.

We have been given conflicting dates on the arrival of John Norquay at High Bluff — 1862 and 1870. Either date makes him a pioneer settler so whichever is correct is not too important. The important thing is that he became a very notable man, not only in the district but in the province, by being elected to the first Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba and later becoming its Premier (1878).

Charles and Thomas Anderson are recorded as being constables in High Bluff in 1864.

1869 saw the arrival of James Harkness and James Howie. (The west half of High Bluff Village is situated on the latter gentleman's original homestead, and the home he built on it was the first house erected north of the two-mile limit.)

Gardner Greenlay came with Sir Garnet Wolseley in 1870 and served with the military police in Portage before homesteading in High Bluff.

Others who came in 1870 were: George and Joseph Cadman, Maxwell Wilton (who later served the Rural Municipality as Councillor and Reeve for nine years) and James Henry Vollet.

While we do not have the date of arrival of Donald McKay we know he was among the first settlers by the fact that he was working a farm before the land was surveyed.

James Stewart was another of the early settlers. Fortunately a son, William M. Stewart, who is now 93 years of age, has a clear memory of his boyhood years, and remembers happenings recounted by his parents. We hope that the brief narrative which follows will be of interest, not only to those who know the Stewarts but to all who are appreciative of history.

James Stewart was born at Trincastle, Blair Athol, Perthshire, Scotland, and came to Canada in 1855. He married Ann Fraser of Nairn, Ontario, and by 1871 they were the parents of five sons, Hugh A., John S., Dougal R., Donald J., and William M. With this family they joined the Walter Lynch party who were coming to settle in Manitoba.

They travelled by train to St. Cloud where they transferred their belongings to wagons. Further along the trail the wagons were loaded onto tugs and transported down the Red River to Fort Garry; here the wagon-train was re-formed, and they proceeded their journey west. At Sturgeon Creek, camp was set up for the women, and James Stewart, accompanied by Duncan McKay, Rod McKenzie and John Garnett left the party to search out a suitable spot for a settlement.

Being men with calculative minds, they looked for a spot most suitable for a settler's requirements, which were water, wood and an abundant hay supply; and after many days of absence from their families they returned to tell them that High Bluff would be their home.

While the men-folk were away, their wives had a few unpleasant things to cope with, but proved equal to the occasion, in the spirit of the '70s. For instance, the time Indians charged into the Stewart home demanding liquor and tobacco! Mrs. Stewart had neither of those commodities and pacified them with tea and food.

There was also the time when a baby was demanding attention and Mrs. Stewart shook the buffalo robe, on which he had been lying, and a snake fell out and slithered away! THAT would shatter the equilibrium of the most stalwart maiden today!

There are several families mentioned as having arrived in High Bluff in 1871: James Whimster, John Wilton, Roderick McKenzie, Francis Muir, Edwin Newell, John P. Garnett, John Gowler, Andrew Boyd, Mathew Owens, and two brothers, William and James Donnelly.

We have a little information about the Donnellys that might be of interest to many: William Donnelly, born in 1837, and his wife, Isabella Moggey, born in 1822, came from Grey County, Ontario, on the above mentioned date, and took up homestead 18-12-5 N.E. They had six daughters: Jane, Eliza, Annie, Isabel, Margaret and Rachel, and one son, Andrew William, all of whom can now be named among the pioneers.

William Donnelly's great-grandson, Dr. Kenneth R. Donnelly, M.D. graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1955, and has a position in the Medical School there at this time.

James Donnelly was the first inspector of roads and bridges for the Rural Council. Two sons, Andrew and William, became successful farmers at High Bluff and Pine Creek respectively.

Among the newcomers in 1872 were: Thomas Wark, William and James Moggey, and Rev. Nelson Brown (who supplemented his income by farming). They were followed in 1873 by James Oliver Fraser, Thomas Smith, Richard Meabry, Jas. Threadkill and George Tidsbury with son, Robert.

George Lytle and sons, W. C., George Henry and Percy came in 1876, as did Charles Cuthbert whose son, Sterling, was manager of the Portage Fair for many years.

George and John Setter, and James Parker added to the population of the settlement in 1877.

In 1878, we see the names of Edward Cook, John Dezell and Rev. Hugh McKellar; followed by John Evans in 1880 and Jos. Bowes in 1890.

The date of arrival of John Kennedy and John Albert Lee is uncertain but it is thought to have been between the two latter dates. Another note of interest might be injected here by telling you that Mr. Lee helped to lay the first plank sidewalk in Winnipeg before travelling west to High Bluff.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Prout must have been very early settlers, as records mention them as being residents there when High Bluff was called the "Nairn District".

OAKVILLE

"Place-Names of Manitoba" — published for the Geographic Board of Canada, has Oakville listed thusly: "C.N.R. station, 11-5-1 (1888-89); Kawende is the P.O. name."

Turning to "Kawende" we see: "P.O., 11-4-1 (1900); earlier Oakville, P.O.; from the Chippewa Indian 'kawin' meaning "no"; Oakville is the C.N.R. station name here."

A little confusing isn't it? And why the name 'Kawende' was used when it meant nothing more than "no" is a good question!

At a time when there were no drainage ditches and much of the area was therefore swamp, it took mighty optimistic pioneers to regard it as a land of promise. Such people were Mr. and Mrs. Dave McKinnon who came to Oakville in 1874 and were the first settlers there. Following them were: the Alexander Christie family, the Tom Vint family, Sam Hall, Bob Dawson, Mr. and Mrs. William Vint, Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Woods, Ed. Morrow, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Parker, Mr. ? Williams, Jack Grant, Tom Stait, Bob McIntyre, the McQuins, Bill McKee, the McShannocks, the Mandervilles, Jim Bell, Honorable R. Tait, the Staples, the Zimmermans and Van Meters, Thomas Wark, W. Thompson, J. Little, William Whitman, the Dave Thompsons, the T. Plaskett family, Mr. and Mrs. Peavine Sinclair, Mike Parynuick, Jack Hamilton, William J. Solomon, the Spence family, John Elliot, Bob Lees, Finlay Robertson, Bill Moxham, Colin McDonald, Jim Mason, the Inksters, the John Lee family, the Nels Kitchen family, H. J. Nicholls and family, Harry Nicholls and family, the Herb Nicholls family, the George Blight family, the Joe Maloney family, W. Holliday, the Pages, the Stewarts, the T. Irvines, the Elijah L. Tully family, the R. G. Miller family, Mr. ? Picord, the Beam family, Neil Wallace, the Andrew W. Boddy family, the James Bartlett family, Nat Bradley, the Colin Burnell family, Frank Herbert, the Wm. R. Thomas family, the Wm. L. Boddy family the ? Ross family, the John Craig family, James and John King families, John and James Moffatt families, T. W. Prouts, John R. McDonalds, James Donnelly and probably many more whose names are unavailable.

It's impossible to mention all the descendants of these families in limited space. However, for a very interesting narrative on the lives and experiences of the above mentioned families, we refer you to "The Deeper Roots of Oakville" by A. J. Moore.

The first school classes were held in the McKinnon home, which they named "Glengarry" after a place in Ontario from whence they had come. Seven McKinnon children were the only students for some time. Miss Eliza Chisholm was their teacher.

In 1889 a school was erected, then another larger one in 1891. Both were built of logs.

Oakville has come a long way since those days! A large, modern Collegiate (built in 1962) is evidence of this.

Schools which were built in the districts around Oakville through the years were: Elm River (1890), Salem (1890), Fortier (1893), Ingleside (1894), Beautiful Valley (1896), Mill Creek (1898) and Curtis (1902).

Before any church buildings were erected, services were held in the log school house, located on what became known as "the Jack Tooth farm." Mr. A. J. Moore says, "In stormy weather, Mr. Garrioch would gather the people together at the section house or any other place available in the village."

The Anglican Church was built in 1900. Rev. A. C. Garrioch was the first pastor. The land for the church site was donated by Mr. Nat Bradley.

A Presbyterian Church was built in 1905 and Rev. Claxton, Rev. Inglis and Rev. Smith have been mentioned as first ministers in it.

The Sacred Heart Church, erected in 1921, had Father Caraher to guide the Catholic congregation.

After 1925 the first United Church minister was Rev. R. D. Johnson.

The first post office was on the farm of Mr. Neil Wallace who acted as postmaster. It was located one mile north of where Oakville stands today.

Later, Mr. W. V. Anderson was postmaster in a boarding house.

It seems no-one was too keen on the job as several names are mentioned in connection with it in a short period of time: A. B. Dalzell, A. G. McBean, Thos. Stait, D. A. Moore and E. E. Martin.

Then came Andrew M. Boddy who held the position for 20 years when his son, Joseph, took over for a brief time.

Mr. Walter Tomes was the next postmaster. The responsibility of the office was taken over by Mrs. Tomes when he passed away. The present Oakville Post Office, which was formerly a bank, contains 300 mail boxes and is still under her supervision.

Telephone service, by 1914, had become an accepted part of life in the village and the M.T.S. had 27 local and 110 rural subscribers on their list.

The first village lighting system was oil lamps hung on poles along the streets. These lamps had to be lit each night, of course. Then a gentleman by the name of Cliff Jameson installed a generating outfit at the back of Boddy's store and with the help of Howard Christie, an electrician, (and a Waterloo tractor to run the generator) it wasn't long until Oakville was enjoying a more modern means of lighting.

In 1922 the Manitoba Power Commission moved in, which was a further improvement and in 1945, farmers in the surrounding area received the benefits of electrification.

Doctors always deserve mention in even a brief history of an area. The ones who went into undeveloped regions to be of assistance to pioneer families are especially worthy.

Among the first doctors in Oakville were Dr. McCreary and Dr. W. H. Clark. However, it was Dr. A. A. Alford, who was a resident doctor there for 31 years, who endeared himself most to the people. Much could be written about this man if space permitted. When he passed away, in 1950, he was succeeded by Dr. Bowman, Dr. T. W. D. Miller and Dr. D. L. Price; each one remembered for their noble work in the community.

Oakville is certainly a place that has shown tremendous progress from the time of the first settlers, and a place of which the municipality can be very proud.

MACDONALD

Just when the name Drumconner was changed to Macdonald is hard to ascertain. However, in Place-Names of Manitoba by the Geographic Board of Canada it states that it was named after the Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald who was Prime Minister of Canada from 1867 to 1873 and from 1878 to 1891. As late as 1893 both names were being used in the village, as you will see in the following narrative.

In June of 1893, when two Weekly Review newspaper men visited Macdonald, they came back with a very descriptive story, which is an enlightening addition to other items printed of the early days there. Quote — "Beneath the sun in Manitoba, there lies not out of doors any nicer piece of prairie than that which stretches itself between Westbourne and Macdonald, and very well indeed do the land-owners of that neighborhood recognize and appreciate the fact, for those of whom we inquired told us they held their land at from $40.00 to $50.00 per acre.

A small stream passes through Macdonald, which causes one of the main roads leading into the village to diverge from its natural point of the compass. From the stream some fish have been taken weighing from 10 to 20 lbs.

Though within 9 or 10 miles of Portage la Prairie, the village's location affords it ample room for growth and in a very few years

it may become a flourishing place. Already there is a good school, 3 elevators, a warehouse, 2 general stores, a lumber yard, 2 blacksmith shops, telegraph, telephone and express offices, etc.

A hotel is much needed. When we got to Macdonald we looked for one in vain and then rapped at the door of Mr. E. Brown, who is one of the town land-owners. Mrs. Brown very kindly lodged us for the night, and Mr. Todd, the teacher who boards there shared with us the hospitalities of his comfortable bedroom and in the morning we spent an hour with him and his pupils. We were delighted with his method of imparting instruction, and the proficiency of his scholars amply reward him for his extra labor.

Mr. R. E. Broadfoot has a general store; he has been there for the past two years.

Mr. H. A. Manwaring has a general store also. Mr. E. G. Fisher manages it and although the stock is not extensive, it is well chosen.

Mr. Geo. Porterfield works a farm of 1280 acres, 4 miles north of Macdonald. In returning from the school which is a short distance out of town, we rode behind one of his matched teams; beautiful bays about 15 hands high and well matched in speed. They dash over a mile in 3½ to 4 minutes. We asked his price and he replied, "$200.00 each."

Mr. James Dunfield lives on a farm about 6 miles southwest of Macdonald. There he owns 320 acres and elsewhere he has 240 acres. The 320 are broken and regularly cropped. In getting there, in 1874, from Ontario, he had to take his wagon apart no less than 33 times while crossing different obstructions in the old Dawson route! He has a frame house 20 x 28 ft. with kitchen 14 x 18 ft. having a splendid stone cellar. His stables are extensive, one of them being 28 x 36 ft. and one of his granaries is 18 x 32 ft. and two stories high. His highest wheat average was 47½ and his lowest 22 bushels.

A grain buyer told us he was giving 52 cents for No. 2 hard wheat and from 18 to 20 cents for both oats and barley. There are, he told us, over 4 hundred thousand bushels of grain shipped from Macdonald yearly.

Mr. E. Brown is postmaster at Macdonald station, but the name of the Post Office is Drumconner. One name or the other should be blotted out, annihilated. There is a grand opening for a doctor, a drugstore, a livery, feed and sale stable and a hotel or boarding house." (end of Quote)

The village of Macdonald was built on land donated by Mr. James Cowan; the location being the northwest quarter of Sec. 35, Tsp. 12, Rge. 8. and from the time it was seen through the eyes of the reporters in 1893 to 1900 it had grown considerably. Added to the list of business establishments that they mentioned were: a boarding house (operated by Mr. and Mrs. A. Curtis), a barber shop, a butcher shop, a creamery and two churches — the Presbyterian and the Methodist.

Gentlemen credited with having the churches built were: John Ferris, Henry Clark, James Askin and Elias Brown.

The Methodist church is again in operation after having been used as a classroom for a year or so.

In 1936 the Presbyterian Church was bought by the school board and by 1954, with two rooms added to the building through the years, MacDonald had a fair-sized high school.

The school system had its start in the village in 1885 when a little log school-house was built and registered as Drumconner S.D. No. 476. The first trustees were Elias Brown, Henry Clark and Thos. Connor. The first teacher was Miss Mary Morrison.

This school served the educational needs of the community until 1905 when a larger one became a necessity. The new building which was erected that year was named the "Connor" school.

Consolidation came about in 1962. The school districts of Dundonald, Longburn and West Oakland united with Connor and the new school was registered as "Macdonald Cons. School No. 2401."

In 1964 Belle Plain and in 1966 Elsmith came in as closed school districts. Since 1964 high school students have attended the Portage Collegiate and the three room school in Macdonald (with 70 to 80 pupils) operates with three teachers.

Back in 1910, Macdonald had a C.P.R. station with a resident agent and mail service twice daily. This continued until 1954 when the trains were taken off. The mail has been delivered by truck since that time. (Mrs. M. Burton and Mrs. D. Gillespie took the last mail off the train).

Macdonald got telephone service in 1907. The local exchange was situated in Curtis' store.

By this time more businesses had been added: a livery stable, Curtis' general store, R. E. Barber's store and two elevators (Lake

of the Woods and Paterson's). Another boarding-house was added too — Mrs. F. M. Brown's.

In 1929 the No. 4 highway was built and in 1950-52, a more modern one which by-passed the town.

August 1940, saw the construction of the R.C.A.F. No. 3 B & G School. The first class of airmen to come for training in 1941 were Australians. When the station closed in 1945 the Canadian Army used it for a time as a 'Vehicle Storage Depot.' Then the R.C.A.F. took it over as a 'Gunner School.'

In 1952, the Government bought the north half of 2-13-8 for a housing site, and 150 units were built for airforce personnel.

The station closed again in 1959. The provincial government bought the unoccupied airport in 1964 and sold the barrack blocks by public auction the following year. A number of buildings were opened for the housing of Indians from the Roseau Reserve when their homes were in danger during a flood in 1965-66.

It wasn't until the fall of 1945, when the Manitoba Hydro started a project to electrify Manitoba, that Macdonald got electricity. The benefits rural places enjoyed from this project are well known.

It is impossible to get a complete list of the early pioneers, however a few more families can be added to the ones previously mentioned: Armstrongs, Elliotts, Kirkwoods, Boddys, Balfours, Ferris, Robertsons, Glennies and Rodgers.

The village of Macdonald is situated in Ward Four in the Municipality of Portage la Prairie. The municipality was formed in the year 1879 and included the town of Portage la Prairie until 1881. Originally, it was divided into two wards which were called East Ward and West Ward.

In 1903 it was divided into six wards and in 1914 into seven. Each ward elected its councillor to represent it in the general council.

The councillors of Ward Four have been as follows: 1903-04, A. W. Balmer; 1905, P. D. McArthur; 1906-10, R. J. Caskey; 1911, H. Bailey; 1912-15, K. C. McKenzie; 1916-31, C. A. Curtis; 1932-37, T. W. McCartney; 1938-45, C. A. Curtis; 1946-58, W. G. Brown; 1958-61, R. S. Adrian; 1962- , L. Morgan.

The following from Ward Four have served as Reeves of the Portage Municipality: 1911-12, R. J. Caskey; 1932-35, C. A. Curtis; 1938-40, T. W. McCartney; 1964- , R. S. Adrian.

Curling and skating have been the main Macdonald sports. In fact curling was so popular that three curling rinks have been built there through the years! However, comfortable cars, improved roads and a proximity to larger more modern rinks, wrote finis to the little local ones, and at this time there remains only an open air skating rink there.

Present day businesses in Macdonald are: two modern, electrically operated elevators, a store owned by L. G. Gillespie and rented by Mr. and Mrs. J. Rink, and the Macdonald garage.

Long gone are the days when settlers gathered in the village, to share their experiences, on a Saturday night; an evening when every hitching-post had a horse tethered to it.

OAKLAND

Before the railroad got to Oakland in 1898 the settlers had to haul their grain to Portage la Prairie which was a distance of 19 miles in some cases. This was a chore reserved for the winter months when they could be sure the roads were passable and they wouldn't be pestered by mosquitoes.

The railway in every instance was a blessing to settlements, hamlets, villages and towns. It not only meant that elevators sprang up but it also meant regular mail and passenger service. (The Canadian N. Railway station was sold a few years ago and passenger travel discontinued.)

The elevators in Oakland have been operated by various companies: Newmans, Ogilvies, Forsythes, Reliance and the Manitoba Pool. One of the first elevator operators was a Mr. Stephens whose father was the founder of the Morden Experimental Farm. Others who bought grain at Oakland were: Guen Dutson, Hiram Cook, John Turner, L. McCowan, William Davidson, Sidney Dack, Wilber Odair and his son, Gilbert Odair, James Ogilvie, Tom Howie, A. Lingquist, J. N. Anderson, Dennis Corder and Fred Wentzell.

Mrs. Betty Love says, "The first store to be opened in Oakland we believe was opened by a Fred Purdy, who sold to Archie Bell, who later sold to J. Hardy." Another store was established in 1921 by John Turner. Then in 1947, Mr. Stan McVity built a general store which has served the community since that time.

Blacksmiths were very necessary tradesmen in every community and Ike Bosslaw and William Howe catered to Oakland's horse and buggy trade in the early days.

The first school, registered as No. 57 was built in 1887. After it was destroyed by fire another one was built in 1902. The first teacher was a Miss Glass.

Children are now picked up by bus and attend school in Portage la Prairie.

Oakland Presbyterian Church was erected in 1890, one half mile west of Oakland village. In 1907 it was moved into the village and Presbyterian and Methodist congregations shared it during different hours on the Sabbath day. Members, of one or the other denominations, from Portage Creek, Dale, Flee Island, East and West Prospect, as well as Oakland, attended the services. Rev. W. H. Rowand is the first pastor mentioned. Others who followed him were: Rev. Ross, Rev. Jas. White, Rev. John Russell, Rev. Naismith, Rev. McTavish, Rev. Peacover, Rev. W. C. North, Rev. Geo. Dickson, Rev. Huguet, Dr Murray, Rev. Carmicheal, Rev. Meek, Rev. Welsh, Rev. Bygraves, Dr. Richards, Rev. Crossley, Rev. Denyes, Dr. Kenner, Rev. Cooper, Rev. Ivan Fulford, Rev. Hodge and Rev. Miss Miller. (Mrs. Betty Love played the organ in the church for 21 years.)

"The original church was closed in 1961 when the new Murray United Church was opened, which is located on the north side of the road opposite where the old church stands," says Mrs. Betty Love.

There is only one church for the Oakland district and they are in the same circuit as High Bluff and Poplar Point.

The first skating rink was sheltered by canvas, the second one (built in 1900) was destroyed in a cyclone and the present one (built in 1921) has a waiting-room which has served as a community centre for dances, showers, bazaars, banquets and meetings.

Curling seems to have been the main winter sport in Oakland and some of the earliest enthusiasts who participated were: the Thomsons, Luis, Eadies, J. Hardy, Alex Finnie, the Browns, Fultons, Rices, F. Wilkinson, Simpsons, Frasers and Loves.

It is regrettable that space does not allow family histories connected with all the noble pioneers of the district. An interesting narrative (many pages long) could be written about David Love alone. For instance: his life in Ireland where he was born in 1837; his life in Canada, after arriving in the country in 1870; his experiences surveying the Portage district with Mozey McFadden in 1872; and his life on the homestead in Oakland in 1878 where he raised eleven children and spent the remainder of his 82 years of life.

Mr. Thos. Huddlestone is another Oakland pioneer whose life's story would provide many hours of enjoyable reading for everyone. We wish we could tell of the young Englishman's experiences on a plantation in South Carolina after he came to America with his bride in 1850 via sailing vessel; their trip to Ontario in 1866; their lives as storekeepers in a shop three miles east of Portage la Prairie on the banks of the Assiniboine River; and their experiences, also, on a homestead in Oakland — a farm that has never passed out of family hands.

Every pioneer has had an interesting story to tell and many of them related their experiences to descendants. What a pity that we are unable to include them in this book!

In the past 40 years Oakland has enjoyed having the Delta highway, the first No. 4 highway, and now the new modern one which makes trips to Winnipeg speedier and more enjoyable.

With all the modern conveniences of today, folks enjoy country living in a manner unknown to their ancestors.

FLEE ISLAND AND PORTAGE CREEK MADE UP THE JACKSON DISTRICT

This district was named after Fred Jackson, an early settler, who donated the north-west corner of 14-13-6 for the site of a church which was to be built there. However, the official opening of a church didn't take place until 1909. In the meantime, services were held in the Portage Creek school and in the home of a Mr. Green, another early settler.

The first church board elected were: J. G. Hill, Ed. McDonald, Ed. McKechnie, F. Jackson and J. P. McKechnie.

J. F. Bain, who arrived in the district prior to 1873, owned the land on which the school stands. C. J. Green, who bought the land, deeded one acre to the district for $5.00 in 1895. The school was built by Thos. Cook in 1886 and opened for classes in the fall of 1887 with 14 pupils enrolled. The first teacher was Miss Louella Wainde and the first school board — S. C. Higginson, Chas. Cuthbert and C. J. Green.

Names of the men credited with establishing the school are as follows: Chas. Cuthbert, G. W. Snider, E. C. Snider, C. J. Green, Alf. J. Green, Mathew Howie, J. Trimble, J. McLeod, John N. McDonald, J. R. Snider, and Jas. McDonald.

Mrs. H. Brook says, "Portage Creek school was named after one of the historic routes used in the early days. As far back as 1738 the channel known as Portage Creek was used by La Verendrye in his expeditions by birch-bark canoe. When water was high in the Assiniboine River it was possible to travel to Lake Manitoba and farther on via Portage Creek without having to portage their canoes."

The famous Yellowquill Trail also made the area more historically important by crossing this creek.

Flee Island is reputed to have been thusly named back in the 1860s, when Sioux Indians, who were escaping from the U.S.A. after the Custer massacre in 1863, established themselves in a fortified camp there.

They not only had U.S.A. retaliation to fear, apparently, but also attacks by their enemies, the Red Lake Indians. J. H. Metcalfe, in The Tread of The Pioneers says, ". . . . there is authentic historical record that Red Lake Indians actually besieged the Sioux at their fortified camp at Flee Island, where the Sioux Indians inflicted great loss and the Red Lakes were glad to escape with the remnants of their party." Mr. Metcalfe more or less pin points the location of the camp as two miles south of the Flee Island school.

This school, registered as No. 527 was built in 1888 on the S.E. corner of the S.W. half of 28-13-6, on land homesteaded in 1878 by John Hancock Gould, but owned by that time by Marshall Tuck. (Mr. Tuck was the first Flee Island postmaster, as well as the only storekeeper to ever open a shop there.)

A more central location was chosen for the school in 1896, which meant a move of one-half mile east of the old site. In 1964 it was closed when Flee Island consolidated with High Bluff.

A few more names of pioneers can be added to the ones mentioned in the foregoing narrative: Ed. McDonald, the Owens family and the parents of Douglas Campbell, who is mentioned elsewhere in this book.

Names that can be added to farmers of the Portage Creek area are: F. J. McDonald, William Simpson Sr., Robert Brown, Fred Brook, William Dawson, John Cole, Geo. Lawrence, John G. Hill, Bruce Williams, James Mackie, George Henry and F. S. Taylor.

Descendants of many of these pioneers are leading worthwhile lives and contributing much to the betterment of the country.

PORTAGE CREEK CHEESE FACTORY

A building of interest on the Portage Plains, which was opened in the early 1890s with twenty shareholders, was a cheese factory, still standing, on the farm of Wm. Cuthbert of the Portage Creek district.

The milk, which was set out each morning except Sundays, in 20 gallon cans on stands, was picked up by team and light wagon. This wagon had a rod down the centre and the cans of milk were placed on either side. Three such outfits were used, one for each of three routes.

The milk cans were unloaded by a pulley and track system on the east side of the cheese factory building.

The cheese was processed in two round presses of different sizes and was stored in a small building adjoining the factory. A stationary steam engine was the source of power. Mr. Robert Oliver, who came from Ontario, was the cheese-maker.

This enterprise was successfully operated for several years. When it ceased operation, a roller was installed in the building for rolling grain. Later on, a small building was added to the south end of the old cheese factory and it was used for a beef ring.

At a time when many historical old buildings have disappeared from our landscape it is a credit to the Cuthberts that they do not consider the old cheese factory an eyesore on their land, but rather a monument to a pioneer industry.

EAST PROSPECT DISTRICT

The history of East Prospect dates back to a time before 1871, when the few homesteaders who had settled there endured the same hardships as other pioneers on the prairies.

When S. M. Marlatt arrived in the district in 1871 it was these few neighborly folks who helped him erect his home on the S.W. quarter of 30-12-6.

Mr. Marlatt must have settled with a bit of skepticism about his venture as his words, "There is a prospect of starvation," has been handed down through the years as the origination of the name of the district. He must have been fairly successful as a farmer as he worked the land for ten years before selling to Wm. McCowan who later sold to John Wishart who farmed it until his death in

1925. The place was passed on to Mr. Wishart's son Hector. The McCallister brothers became the next (and present) owners.

Mrs. Ida Wishart Brown says, "The first school was built in 1876 on the S.W. quarter of 36-12-7, then owned by Mr. J. Grant. This building was actually built for a home but was later used as a school and served the purpose until 1879."

As the population of the district increased a second school was built which was named West Prospect school. (The district thus becoming divided into East and West.)

In 1880 another school was built, on the N.E. quarter of 19-12-6, which sufficed until 1910 when the present school was erected. This school is still in use, but since 1963 has been consolidated with the Dale District.

East Prospect became well known across the country for its superb show-horses. John Wishart with his Hackneys and Clydesdales was seen at many fairs in Portage and Winnipeg. Mr. Wishart was president of the Horse Breeders Association of Manitoba for a time.

Other exhibitors from the district were: David Little, John McCowan, W. P. Smith and A. M. Brownridge who was president of the Clydesdale Association for years.

The district has always shown a keen interest in the plowing matches, and not long ago Mickey Demman won the contest down east to compete overseas, where he made a good showing even though he didn't win top honors.

One of the East Prospect's most widely known men was J. G. Cowan who received his basic education in the local school, practiced law for 13 years and then became Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. He was also first Deputy Minister of Public Utilities of Manitoba. He passed away in 1966 after serving the public for 33 years.

Taxpayers in the district in 1881 were: E. W. Snider, David Custer, James Moffat, J. A. Patterson, W. P. Smith, John Moffat, Alex Moffat, Gaddis Thompson, John Dallimone, J. P. Reach, Fred Pope, James Cowan, M.D., John Simpson, Charles Meur, Wm. Thompson, G. A. Tucker, James Ferguson, David Thompson, Margaret A. MacDonald, Wm. McCowan, Higgins and Young, D. D. Fraser, John McLelland, R. A. Neilings, Alfred J. Green, David McCowan, James and Robert Sheil, Thomas Swales, Wm. Wishart, James Trow, George Brandon, Henry Moss, Frederick Westgate and John Grant.

GAINSBOROUGH DISTRICT

This district located just a few miles south of Portage la Prairie was named by an Englishman, H. Simmons, in 1920 when a school, needing a name, was erected. Most English people were admirers of the famous Thomas Gainsborough paintings and it is logical to assume that it was named after him.

At one time the Metis Indians were the owners of part of the district, with the C.P.R. and the Hudson's Bay Co. owning all except the wooded University crown lands, of the rest.

Speculators are said to have acquired the Indian land easily by offering them cash.

D. J. McLennan was one of the first, if not the first pioneer to take up a homestead in Gainsborough in 1879. Others who are known to have arrived before the turn of the century are as follows: Edwin Garrioch, Joe Thompson, Art Allan, George Sheppard, Jim Henry, Alex Walker, J. Western, Lou Pedro, E. Gates, M. Silverthorn, Robert Graham and Chris Forge. The latter gentleman had an interesting (and profitable) hobby. He raised wild animals of various kinds and sold them to zoo keepers and parks boards.

Settlers who arrived after the turn of the century were: George Garrioch, R. J. Fawcett, Ben and Chet Fawcett, Bob and Jess Roe, the Rennie brothers and Frank O'Neil.

As in all early settlements, homes were built from handhewn logs. As late as 1924 a log home was erected in the district. Mr. S. P. Stewart used an unusual plan in this building by standing logs vertically instead of lying them horizontally. 120 logs, one and one-half feet thick were used in the two-storey home. A few of the settlers' homes are still in existence and occupied.

Mr. and Mrs. Stewart were beekeepers and shipped many tons of honey to customers far and near.

In 1912 the Dyson Pickle Company invested in land for the purpose of growing cucumbers. Due to early frosts this project was short-lived.

Gainsborough has enjoyed active community life through the years, which has benefited not only the people in the immediate area.

In 1939, Dan McLaren, Jack Green and Walter Bird organized an Independent Funeral Fund Club. The purpose of the club was

to relieve the burden of expense for bereaved families. Membership numbered 75. It was a good example of togetherness in the district.

During the war years the ladies of the district were very active in Red Cross work and attended meetings in the winter time by riding in a horse-drawn cutter or sleigh box. Mrs. Wilf Thompson was the first president of this group.

The 4-H club was organized in 1951 with Mrs. H. Griffin as the leader. The 14 girl members chose the name "The Gainsborough Stitchers" for their club. Doris Ferguson, one of the members, later distinguished herself in Daniel McIntyre Collegiate in Winnipeg by topping the class in sewing and winning a medal and scholarship for general proficiency.

Until 1963 most of the social events in the district were held in the school house. On that date, an air force building at Carberry was purchased to serve as a Community Hall. Payments on this building were completed in 1966.

An all-weather road, provided by the provincial government in 1965 has been a blessing to residents. It is known as Provincial Road No. 240 and runs through the centre of the district.

Rural electrification in 1949 brought with it the benefits of modern appliances and more leisure for farm folks.

With limited time and space it is impossible to include all interesting stories connected with this little community. However, one, told by Mrs. Roy Bell, is worthy of recording for the interest of naturalists. Quote — "Ernest Bradford, a naturalist of some repute, has resided in the district for some time. He owns a large tract of land along the river bank — a haven for waterfowl and animals in which he takes a keen interest. Many top grade fur pelts have been marketed from his trap-line in past years."

GENEST

Genest is listed in the Manitoba Place Guide as being part of the Municipality of Portage la Prairie and yet for a considerable length of time it seemed as if we would have no information concerning it! However, Mrs. A. M. McKay and Mrs. Clarence Yuill, who collaborated on an interesting brochure called "Belle Plain District History," mention Genest in it.

Apparently it is a siding (which at one time was called Six Mile Siding) located in the Belle Plain area.

The Geographic Board of Canada have this to say about it: (Quote) "C.P.R. station, 12-7-1 (1904); named after L. O. Genest, general storekeeper of the railway."

Up until 1904 settlers had to endure the hardship of bagging their grain. Mr. J. Trimble and A. E. Batters are credited with being instrumental in getting the loading platform there. Mr. Achison, C.P.R. manager in Winnipeg gave an understanding ear to the need of the district, when the two gentlemen interviewed him.

BELLE PLAIN

The name of the area is descriptive of the terrain. However, it was not only its beauty that was conducive to pioneers settling there, but the apparent fertility of the soil and the abundance of water as well.

The first settlers began arriving in the 1870s. The only road in the area at that time was the Saskatchewan Trail which passed along the south side of West Prospect Church, followed a high ridge in a westerly direction, crossed a slough at the "round barn" (now owned by Bruces) and went on north-west towards Westbourne.

The advantages of good soil and lots of water do not necessarily mean a guarantee of good crops and freedom from worry, as the settlers were soon to learn. The seed that they had to broadcast by hand, cut with a scythe and thresh with a flail, combined with the asset of a few livestock merely meant survival at first.

Then came the grasshopper plague of 1873 and 1874, late blizzards in both 1881 and 1882, severe frosts in 1883, 1884 and 1885, and records show only two bumper crops in the early years — 1887 and 1901.

A flood in 1902 (and there was another in 1921!), inundated much of the district, forcing several families to take refuge on higher ground.

Going down through the years, the little district suffered more hardships. In 1918 or '19 there was a severe wind and snowstorm during which A. J. McKay lost one thousand sheep; a cyclone and hailstorm in 1922 resulted in a complete crop loss as well as broken windows and destroyed buildings; and in 1935 some wheat fields were burned 100% due to rust.

Despite these unbelievable hardships and disappointments, they gradually realized their ambitions.

West Prospect, Burnside and Macdonald have always been closely associated, and families of Belle Plain attended church services and helped with the maintenance of the church in one or the other of those places.

The Belle Plain School District No. 46 was established in 1877. The site of the original school, on the N.E. Corner of Sec. 19-Township 12, was probably chosen for its central location. This land had been leased on Feb. 7, 1874 to Private L. Gutteridge of the 1st Ontario Battalion of Rifles which had been sent west to quell the Riel Rebellion. However, contrary to Government wishes, this gentleman did not stay and the land was later homesteaded by J. Scott. The school board leased one square acre from Mr. Scott for the sum of five cents per annum!

A log school was built and opened in 1880 with an enrollment of thirty pupils. The first remembered teacher was Miss M. Campbell, and the Secretary-Treas. was Mr. Phillip McKay.

By 1895 it had become necessary to build a new school. Mr. Jonathon Henderson was paid $50.00 for an acre of land on the N.W. corner of section 20 and the school was erected there at a cost of $629.00. Trustees at this time were J. A. Fisher, James Scott and John McKay. Mr. R. G. Taylor was the first teacher in the new school at a salary of $450.00 per year.

The site of the original school was sold to R. B. Hill in 1907 for one dollar!

Belle Plain school closed in 1965 and the pupils were sent to MacDonald C.S.

The last school board consisted of Mr. Geo. Wolfe, Mr. Kenneth Moffit, Mrs. Laura Adams and Mr. Reg. Bruce.

Skating, curling, baseball and hunting have been the main sports of the district through the years.

The Portage la Prairie Plowing Match Assen. has been in existence since 1900, and in the passing years Belle Plain District has been the host on several occasions.

In 1962 the two day event was held on the Batters' farm. There were 65 competitors who came from provinces from all across Canada. J (Toby) Trimble was declared Canadian Champion and Mickey Demman of High Bluff took a third prize that year.

The following names have been submitted as early settlers: P. McKay, W. Trimble, R. Craig, J. McKay, Ed. and John Scott, J.

Ferris, S. Justus, J. Fisher, M. Graham, Ployfords, Thurstons, J. Mellon, J. Gallaway, F. Jackman, T. and H. O'Neill, Hendersons, T. Latimer, D. Irwin, Whimsters, N. Caskey, A. Batters, W. Perry, R. Simpson, T. Gibson, R. Sturgeon, John Caskey and Harry Kitson.

It's regrettable that space and time does not allow a followup on all the families to the present day. (A complete listing of all the people in the municipality would fill a book in itself!)

Suffice it to say — that Belle Plain has been one of the places we can be proud of, for showing courage, determination and ambition through the years.

POPLAR POINT

A very interesting book could be written about Poplar Point alone. Its history actually goes back to before the time of Sieur de la Verendrye who built the first Fort de la Reine there. Records show that the Hudson's Bay Co. had a fur trading post there as early as 1835. (This post did business until 1885.) The last manager was Mr. John Armstrong, brother of Hugh Armstrong, M.L.A.

The building was of log construction and was in existence until 1960 when it was torn down.

Poplar Point, which name is descriptive, is listed in "Place-Names of Manitoba" by the Geographic Board of Canada as located at 12-4-1. It also says that there was a Post Office there before 1870.

The Edmonton Trail, used by ox trains travelling from St. Paul, U.S.A., to Edmonton, ran through the village. This part of the trail later became part of the first No. 1. highway. (Poplar Point is now bypassed by the Trans-Canada Highway.)

One of the most interesting historical buildings in the village is St. Anne's Church, which was built under the instruction and supervision of Archdeacon Cochrane in 1859 and is still being used. The people of Poplar Point are deserving of praise for preserving this old sacred edifice; a memorial to the man who planned it, the men who built it and the people who received spiritual guidance and strength within its walls.

West Poplar Point school was opened in a building just east of this church in 1860 and was under its auspices until 1882 when another school was built just north of the church alongside of the trail. This building is still standing and is privately owned.

East Poplar Point school was built around 1883 and was in existence until 1912 when it was destroyed by fire. It was replaced by a new building the same year. Later it was moved into the village and is now a four room school which is attended by children from grade 1 to grade 8.

From 1865 to 1881 a grist mill was in operation about one mile east of the village. Other businesses listed were: Poplar Point Wheelrite Shop and General Blacksmith (1850 to 1880); Dyers Blacksmith Shop (1880 to 1930); Robert Hasty-Fur buyer and General Store (1870 to 1893); and Lachlin McLean's Stopping House (1880 to 1920). General Stores through the years have been operated by the following merchants: G. M. Jackson (1886 to 1897), M. H. Ritchie (1891 to 1907), M. Chemileskey (1907 to 1913), J. P. Bend (1913 to 1921), Francis Ltd. (1922 to 1940) and T. W. Murray (1940 to the present time).

Farmers in the district in 1890-95 were: Mr. Bigelow, John Bruce, Don Bruce, Jas. Jewison, Wm. Reid, James Cunningham, John and Alex Cunningham, John Inkster, John Francis, Ben Francis, Capt. Butler, Mr. Mclean, John Setter, D. Setter, Chas. Setter, Wm. Gowler, Donald Kennedy, Amos Sparks, Jack Adams, Chas. Mett and John Braden.

Poplar Point has long been known in sporting circles in Canada, the U.S.A. and even around the world! Many names may be omitted due to lack of information, however, a few of the outstanding athletes that called Poplar Point "home" are:

Jack Smith, who won the provincial mile championship in 1896 and Rupert Spence, who won the provincial mile, 440, 220, and 100 yards in 1919. We are especially proud of Olive E. Little (nee Bend) who joined the Rochester Professional girls fast-ball league and played with them from 1941 to 1945 inclusive. They won the World Championship in 1945, and Olive was picked to play on the American All Star team for 3 consecutive years. Her picture now hangs in the Hall of Fame, Arena Rink, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Olive's brother, Lin Bend, was a member of the Portage Terriers when they won the Memorial Cup. He turned pro with the New York Rangers (1942-43), joining the armed forces after the season finished. After the war he again played pro hockey in the American League until 1949. Later he was associated with the St. Paul and Kansas City teams.

J. P. Bend (father of Olive and Lin) managed hockey teams from 1918 to 1960, during which time the teams with which he was

associated won 15 Provincial Championships and a Dominion Championship. Allie Bell of Poplar Point was Coach for the Terriers when they won the latter event (1941-42).

Mr. J. P. Bend is now 85 years of age. With his wife he is still enjoying life in Poplar Point. Through the years he has served the community well, not only in the sports field but as a councillor for 27 years and as a Reeve for two years.

Bryan Hextall, a nephew of Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Bend, needs no introduction to hockey enthusiasts. He turned pro in 1934 and played with Vancouver Canucks until 1936 when he left them to play with the Philadelphia Ramblers for a season. From the latter team he moved on to the New York Rangers (1937-1948), and his next affiliation was with the Cleveland Barons (1948-49).

He was named All Star in the National League for three consecutive seasons — 1939-40, 1940-41, and 1941-42, and was Individual Scoring Champion 1941-42.

At the present time he is Coach of the Portage Terriers and is also in the lumber business at Poplar Point. Three of Bryan Hextall's sons, Bryan Jr., Denny and Rickey are now following in their father's footsteps and are playing pro hockey. We predict that you will be hearing more of these boys!

George Little, a well-known Poplar Point sportsman was appointed team manager of the Portage and District Terriers Junior "A" hockey team for the 1968-69 season.

George is also actively interested in baseball and softball. He played several seasons as shortstop with the Poplar Point seniors who compiled an enviable tournament record. His crisp fielding in baseball and fine hands in goaltending at hockey earned him the nickname "Slick."

After his baseball playing days ended, he and his wife, Olive, organized a girls' softball team at Poplar Point. The team rarely lost and later several players graduated to the CUAC Blues, Manitoba senior ladies softball champions and Dominion finalists for several seasons.

The Little's two daughters, Bobbi and Frankie, were top pitchers on both of these teams. George was manager of the Poplar Point team and later with the Blues.

Hockey and ball have not been the only sports enjoyed by the people of Poplar Point. As in most places through the years, activities have been many and varied.

In Sept. 1968, 2,000 people turned out to watch rodeo events which were held south of Portage. Among the names of winning participants were some from Poplar Point: Russ Taylor (calf roping), Sherry Taylor (Ladies' goat tying), Russ Taylor (pole bending), Russ Taylor (men's barrel race), George Pirie (horse chariot race) and Jacqueline Phillips (powder puff).

Space and time does not permit the listing of all the activities in the village. However, one which is of special interest to everyone is the annual horticultural show. When it was held on Aug. 17, 1968, the entries were classified under the headings of House Plants, Garden Flowers, Vegetables, Children's Section (which was made up of both flowers and vegetables) and Fruits. Competitions took in Home Grounds and Children's Gardens.

The number of entries can be estimated by the fact that the list of prize winners' names filled two full newspaper columns.

Poplar Point has always kept pace with the times.

If any local histories are omitted in this section it is because material was not submitted.

FORT LA REINE MUSEUM

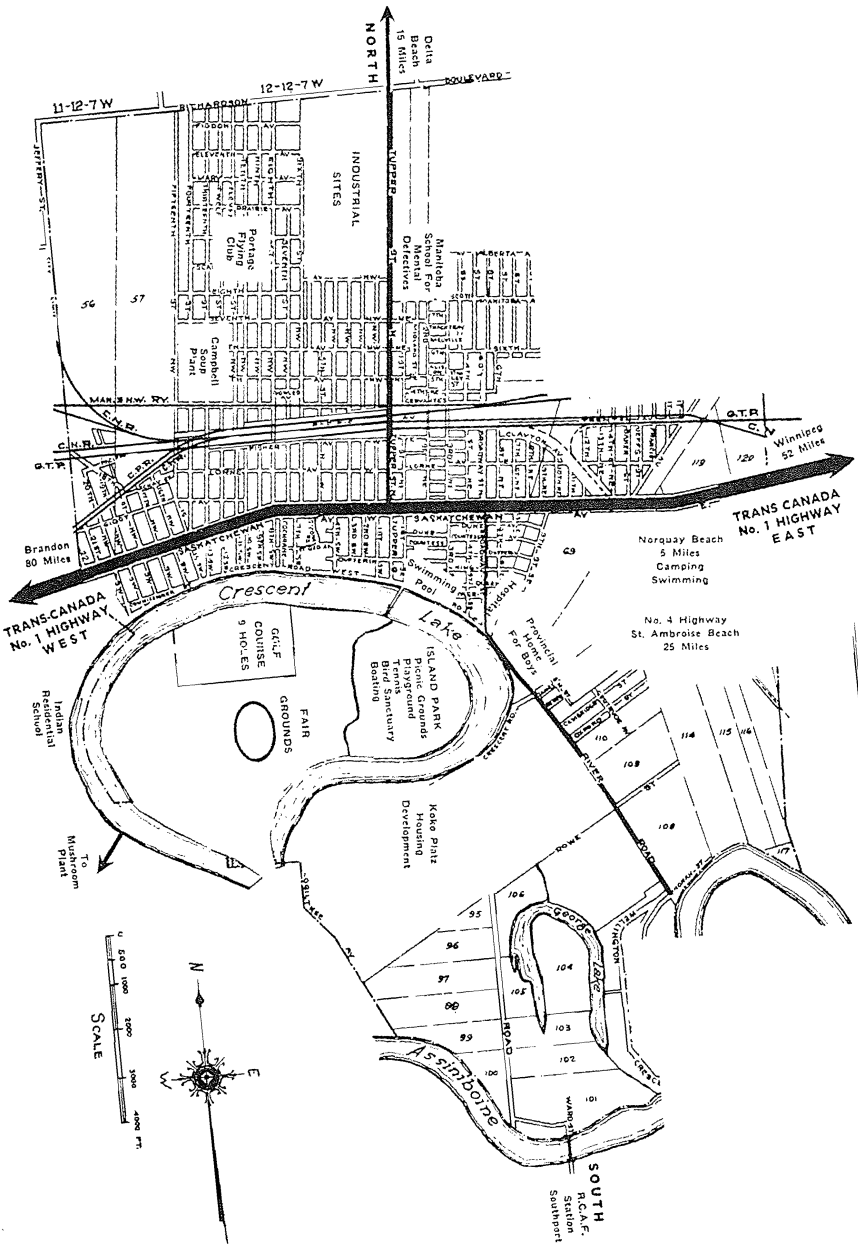
Portage la Prairie Chamber of Commerce and the rural municipality have cooperated in having a Centennial museum built at PL 125. It is their aim that the museum proper should portray the life of yesteryear, and it is gradually taking on that interesting aspect.

A church, which was built in 1884, and a school, which was built in 1881, have been moved onto the museum grounds. A replica of a York Boat was built by Maintenance Wing at South Port, donated to the museum, and is also on the grounds. As time passes it will be a historic reminder of the type of boats that were once built at York factory and were used by the Hudson's Bay fur traders.

Before the year 1969 is out, hopefully, a typical pioneer home will be completed and added to the surroundings.

While the museum is still in a state of development it is, even now, a place that houses many interesting relics of the past; a place that is well worth visiting.

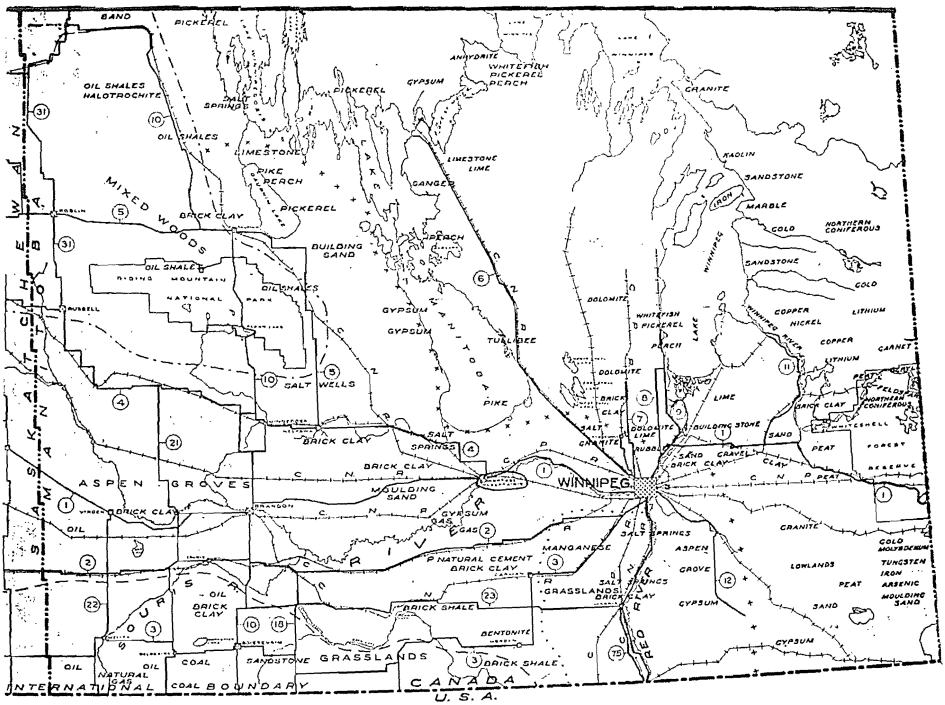
The population of the city of Portage la Prairie (1968) is 12,748.



PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE
MANITOBA

Although Portage la Prairie has grown considerably since the map on the foregoing page was drawn in 1961, it will serve in giving you an idea of the general layout of the city.

The map, which follows, shows the relationship of Portage la Prairie (circled) to the natural resources known to be in the province.



The Portage la Prairie soils support a diversified agriculture that is the basis of the city's economy.

BUSINESS PLACES (1969) IN PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

It has not been easy, or even possible, to name every business establishment from the days of the first white settlement to the present time. We have, however, attempted to acquaint you with as many as information allowed.

While Portagers are aware of the establishments located here now, the following listing may be helpful, many years hence, to someone who, once again, attempts to bring the history of Portage la Prairie up to date.

Due to the time element, the writer is unable to do thorough research on this subject, and offers sincere apologies to anyone whose place of business is not included here.

A & W Drive-Inn, Sask. E.
Ace Taxi, 25-5th St. N.W.
Active Refrigeration, 910 Sask. E.
Adams Furniture Co., 15 Sask. E.
Agnew Surpass Shoe Stores Ltd., 116 Sask. E.
Albion Hotel, 17-3rd St. N.E.
Allied Van Lines Ltd., 20-3rd St. N.E.
Al's Machinery Sales, Pl. 124
Allis Chalmers Ltd., Pl. 123
Alsip Brick Tile & Lumber Co.
Animal Aid Centre, 1000 Sask. W.
Animal Clinic, 62 Royal N.
Arrow Taxi, 203 Melville
Asselstine, Dr. L. E. (Chiropractor), 72 Tupper S.
Assiniboine Electric, 48-8th N.E.
Astbury, Chas. B. (Farm Equipment), 410 Tupper N.
Avco Finance Ltd., 226 Sask. E.
Avenue Automatic Service (automatic trans.), 1357 Sask. W.
B.C. Pea Growers Ltd., 10th St. N.E.
Bakuska, C. A. (refrigeration), 127 Royal Rd. N.
Bank of Montreal, 1 Sask. W.
Bank of Nova Scotia, 103 Sask. E.
Bargain World Ltd., 150 Sask. E.
Barrett's Sales & Service Ltd. (shoes, repairs, awnings, paints, sports equipment, etc.), 25-2nd St. N.W.
Beauty Nook Salon, 135 Sask. E.
Beaver Lumber Co. Ltd., 72-3rd N.E.
Beese Food Store, 326 Sask. E.
Bell, Leslie D. (Public Accountant), 32 Tupper N.
Bill's Catering Ltd., Sask. E. and Sask. W.
Bill's Service (auto), Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Bingo's Auto Body Clinic, Pl. 119
Bottomley's Furniture, 131 Sask. E.
Bowes Mobile Homes Ltd., No. 1 Hwy. E.
Bradley's Esso Service East, 416 Sask. E.
British-American Oil Co. Ltd., 3rd St. N.E.
Burger House, 700 Sask. W.
CAA Emergency Service, Pl. 53
CFRY (radio stn.), 1500 Sask. W.
C.P. Transport, N.E. Pacific and Tupper N.
Campbell Soup Co. Ltd., 500-15th N.W.
Campbell's TV Radio & Hi-Fi Service, 71-12th S.W.
Canada Manpower Centre, 10-1st St. S.W.
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Sask. and Tupper
C.N.R., Fisher Ave.
C.P. Railway Co., 3rd St. N.E.
C.P. Airlines, C.P. Station
Carmichael Plumbing & Heating Ltd., 29 Tupper N.
Case Power & Equipment Ltd., 2500 Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Chicken Delight of Canada, 1320 Sask. W.
Chicken Villa, 206 Sask. E.
Christianson Ltd. (farm implements, etc.), 1st St. N.W.
Chuckwagon, Bill's (restaurant and Esso service), Pl. 127
City Centre Esso Service, 103 Sask. W. (D. Bradley)
Classic Coiffures, 325 Sask. E.
Clayton Agencies (real estate, etc.), 109 Sask. E.

Cobbe's Plumbing & Heating Ltd., 15-3rd St. S.E.
Cockshutt Sales, Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Connery's Riverdale Farms Ltd., WL 208
Cook's Jewellery, 70 Sask. W.
Co-operative Ltd., Sask. W.
Craftsman Shop, Pl. 124
Crescent Creamery Co. Ltd., 63-3rd St. S.E.
Cuthbert-Lyon Ltd. (insurance, real estate, etc.), 1390 Sask. W.
Dahl, Frank Service Garage, 1301 Sask. W.
Daily Graphic, 201 Sask. E.
Dairy Queen, 1300 Sask. W.
Dann's (dry cleaners), 15-1st St. S.W.
Darragh's Shoe Centre Ltd., 2 Sask. W.
Davis' Service Stn., 360 Sask. W.
Deeley, W. J. & Associates (accountants), 4 Old Fort Rd.
Delta Adjustment & Appraisal Co., 301-3rd St. N.E.
Delta Investments 301-3rd St. N.E.
Delta Lanes, 1-2nd St. N.E.
Delta Motor Products Ltd., 851 Sask. E.
Dick's Cafe, 134 Sask. E.
Don Display (signs, etc.), 68-3rd St. N.E.
East End Shell, 510 Sask. E.
Eaton's, 149 Sask. E.
Electrolux (Canada) Ltd., 677 Maplewood Crescent
Elliott, Dr. M. G. (chiropractor), 612 Sask. E.
Ellwood-McRorie Ltd. (builders, contractors), 32 Tupper N.
Enterprise Press Ltd., 36 Tupper N.
Evergreen Memorial Gardens Ltd., Pl. 49
Fairbairn's Men's Wear Ltd., 210 Sask. E.
Farm Credit Corporation, Federal Bldg.
Finlayson, D. G. (farm sales, commercial, etc.), 65-7th N.E.
Firestone Stores, 330 Sask. W.
Forsythe, A., Coal Co. Ltd. (gravel, sand, etc.), 1400 Sask. W.
Forsythe, A., Ski-Doo Shop, 1400 Sask. W.
Fort La Reine Motel, 1941 Sask. W.
Frontier Portage Motel & Hunting Lodge, No. 1 Hwy. E.
G. & R. Music Supplies, 229 Sask. E.
Gabel's Jewellery Ltd., 112 Sask. E.
Gallaway, Mrs. Kathleen G. (C.A.), 36 Tupper N.
Garland & Wilson Jewellers, 4 Sask. W.
George, Erle R. (optometrist), 9, 13 Sask. E.
Gib's Sports Shop, 39 Royal Rd. N.
Gillam, H. & Son (elephant brand fertilizer), 420 Pacific
Gillis & Warren (automotive wholesale), 805 Sask. E.
Gordon Motor Inn, 177 Sask. W.
Gordon's Groceteria, 185A-3rd N.E.
Gordon's Hairdressing, 49 Royal Rd. N.
Gray's Welding, 115-10th St. N.E.
Greenberg's Groceteria, 90-4th St. S.E.
Greyhound Bus Lines, 41-2nd St. N.E.
Guinn & Simpson Co. Ltd. (Memorials), 52 Tupper N.
Hare Gork Watters & Co. (C.A. and auditors), 32 Tupper N.
Hargreaves Portage Drug Store Ltd., 24 Sask. E.
Hay Decorating Co. Ltd., 32 Tupper N.
Hebner Hardware, 108 Sask. E.
Henderson Farm Equipment Dealer, Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Hetherington, Dr. W. G. (dentist), 204-32 Tupper N.
Hill's East Rexall Drugs, 200 Sask. E.
Hill's West Drug Store Ltd., 2 Sask. E.
Hobby Centre, 139 Sask. E.
Holiday Retreat Nursing Home, 550 Portage
Hollinsworth & Co. Ltd. (women's apparel), 10 Sask. W.
Hotel Portage, 125 Sask. E.
H.F.C. of Canada, 108 Sask. E.
Human's Service (lawn mowers), 54-5th St. N.W.
Hutch's Auto Body, 20-2nd St. N.W.
Ideal Van Lines Ltd., 20-3rd N.E.
Imperial Oil Ltd., 3rd St. N.E.
Industrial Acceptance Corp. Ltd., 42 Tupper N.
Inspirational Fabrics, 141 Sask. E.
Inter-City Gas Utilities Ltd., 14 Tupper S.
Isaryk Painting & Decorating, 450-4th St. N.W.
Jack's Appliance Service, 511-3rd St. N.W.
James Cartage, Oxford St.
Jimmy's Cafe, 215 Sask. E.
Johnson Motor Rebuilders, 19-3rd N.E.
Keddy, J. A. Ltd. (wholesale auto supplies), 309 Sask. E.
Kentucky Fried Chicken, 206 Sask. E.
Kitson's Service Stn., Pl. 53
Koko Platz Builders Ltd., 202 Sask. E.
Linden's Flowers, 489 Sask. E.
MacDonald's Food Market (grocers), 246 Sask. E.
MacDonald, K. E., Optometrist, 29 Royal Rd. N.
Macleods (hardware, etc), 102 Sask. E.
Mac's Messenger Service, 203 Melville

Makarchuk TV Service, 60 Sask. W.
Malron Ambulance Service, 210 Alfred
Malron Texaco Service Station 402 Sask. E.
Man. Dairy & Poultry Co-op Ltd., 405-8th St. N.W.
Marr Fashions Ltd., 218 Sask. E.
Marg's Layette, 3rd St. N.E.
Maxwell Studios & Camera Shop Ltd., 222 Sask. W.
Maxwell's Trucking (sand, gravel, etc.), 127-8th N.E.
Mayfair Hotel, 2 Sask. E.
Mayfair Motel, 66 Royal Rd. S.
McAllister Pea & Seed Cleaning Ltd., 400-4th Ave. E.
McCutcheon Realty, 167 Sask. E.
McLean's Radio & TV Service, 25-1st S.W.
McLeod's Auto Repair, 34-6th St. S.E.
McMaster Funeral Home, 83 Royal S.
Meseyton Cartage, 53 Strathcona Rd.
Metheral, T. N. (rental agents), 109 Sask. E.
Metropolitan Life Ins. Co., 42-14th St. N.W.
Metropolitan Stores Ltd., 26 Sask. E.
Midland Refrigeration Co., 127 Royal Rd. N.
Milady's Beauty Salon, 27 Royal Rd. N.
Mil-Jeanne Flowers, 219 Sask. E.
Modern Upholstering, 54-2nd N.W.
Narvey's Clothes for Men, 220 Sask. E.
Nebozenko, W. S. (certified seed potato), 52-10th St. N.W.
New Holland Dealer, Pl. 124
Niagara Finance Co. Ltd., 42 Tupper N.
Nichol's Taxi, 33-6th N.W.
Nick's Cafe, 350 Sask. W.
North American Lumber Ltd., S.E. Fisher and 1st St. N.W.
North End Royalite Service, 437 Tupper N.
Northern Equipment Ltd., 70-10th N.E.
Nu-Way Decorating Co., No. 1 Hwy. E.
O'Brien Travel Service, 200 Sask. E.
Olympia Cafe, Sask. E.
Palendat Bros. Farm Equipment, Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Paramount Mortgage Investments Ltd., 231 Sask. E.
Parrott, Dr. F. W. (dentist), 150 Cochrane
Pat's Aviation (servicing and welding), 801-8th N.W.
Perth's Cleaners, Launderers & Furriers Ltd., 232 Sask. E.
Portage Agencies Ltd. (insurance), Ste. A, 231 Sask. E.
Portage Auto Driving School, 101-16th St. N.W.
Portage Auto Safety Clinic, 309 Sask. E.
Portage Business College, 910 Sask. E.
Portage Cartage & Storage Ltd., 20-1st N.W.
Portage Concrete Products, 300-8th N.W.
Portage Creamery, 64-3rd St. S.E.
Portage Credit Union Society Ltd., 17 Royal Rd. N.
Portage Denture Clinic, 29 Royal Rd. N.
Portage Feed Mill, 103-4th N.E.
Portage Flying Club (aero school), 10th N.W. and 9th
Portage Garage Ltd., 480 Sask. W.
Portage General Hospital, 5th. St. S.E.
Portage International Farm Equipment, Elm and Sask. W.
Portage la Prairie Mutual Insurance Co., 749 Sask. E.
Portage Leader, 201 Sask. E.
Portage Medical Services, 41 Royal Rd. N.
Portage Memorials, 125-3rd N.E.
Portage Mobile Home Co., 800 Sask. W.
Portage Pharmacy, 220 Sask. W.
Portage Photo Studio, 618 Sask. W.
Portage Plains Nursery, 101 Bridge Rd.
Portage Rotary Housing Ltd., 60-9th St. S.E.
Portage Second Hand Furniture Store, 221 Sask. E.
Portage Septic Tank Service, 159-5th St. S.E.
Portage Soda Water Works Ltd., 60 Tupper N.
Portage Taxi, 25-5th St. N.W.
Portage Tires, 211 Sask. E.
Pragnell Bakery Ltd., 6 Sask. W.
Prairie Abattoir, Pl. 122
Prairie Gas Ltd., 151-4th Ave. N.E.
Prairie Implements, Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Prairie Medical Associates, 156-6th St. S.E.
Prairie Textile Mfg. Ltd., 900 Fisher
Preston Auto Electric, 184-3rd St. N.E.
Rabkin Departmental Store, 106 Sask. W.
Ralph's Dept. Store, 120 Sask. E.
Ralph's Fabric Centre, 136 Sask. E.
Ralph's Warehouse Clearings, 321 Sask. E.
Reid's Appliance Repairs, 3 Roe St.
Revelstoke Building Materials Ltd., 550 Sask. W.
Reward Shoe Stores, 208 Sask. E.
Reys (tailors and cleaners), 12 Royal Rd. S.
Rodgers & Son Ltd. (wholesale tobacconists), 44-10th N.E.

Rolands Hair Styling, 167 Sask. E.
Romyn Plumbing & Heating, 36-15th St. N.W.
Royal Transportation Ltd., 80-10th St. N.E.
Royalite Oil Co. Ltd., Sask. W.
Rudy's Farm Supply, Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Semrick Glass & Building Supply, 312 Fisher
Shell Canada Ltd., 201-3rd St. N.E.
Sherwin-Williams Co. of Canada Ltd., 80 Sask. W.
Simpsons-Sears Ltd., 112 Sask. W.
Sing, Chas. W. (Q.C.), (barrister), 21 Royal Rd. N.
Singer Co. of Canada Ltd., 14 Sask. W.
Smith, Dr. H. H. (dentist), Sask. E.
Smith Motors Ltd., 3rd St. S.E. and Sask. E.
Smith, Dr. W. C. (dentist), 32 Tupper N.
Smitty's Taxi, 25-5th St. N.W.
Snider Hardware Ltd., 12 Sask. W.
Stasiuk, Dr. J. N. (dentist), 41 Royal N.
Stewart-Greenslade Agencies, 33 Tupper S.
Stylerite Stores of Canada Ltd., 120 Sask. E.
Sunset Motel, Trans-Canada Hwy. W.
Sylvester's Shoes Ltd., 10 Sask. E.
Texaco Canada Ltd., 207 Fisher
Thomson, Dr. J. S., 62 Royal N.
Thorne Gunn Helliwell & Christenson (C.A.), 32 Tupper N.
Tilley, N. M. Realty Ltd. (R.E.), 202 Sask. E.
Trading Block, 20-3rd St. N.E.
Travel Service O'Brien, 200 Sask. E.
Trimble's Funeral Chapel, 56 Royal Rd. S.
Used A Bit Shop, 6 Massey Dr.
Vanguard Agencies Ltd., 202 Sask. E.
Violet's Beauty Shop, 45 Royal Rd. S.
Vopni Press Ltd., 201 Sask. E.
Wall Plumbing Heating & Trenching, 137-3rd N.W.
Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Co., 202 Sask. E.
Webb Bus Lines Ltd., 124 Duke
Westend Electric, 48-7th N.E.
Western Bearing & Auto Parts, 223 Sask. E.
Westgate Inn Motel, 1010 Sask. Ave. E.
Winters, Dr. G. N. (dentist), 29 Royal Rd. N.
Wishart's Service, 775 Sask. W.
Yellowquill Motel, 20th S.W.

WHERE AGE DOESN'T MEAN YOU FEEL "OLD"

Is it the good, clean air, the fertile soil for vegetables, the friendly environment, the scenery, or the fact that people don't race around like mad mice in a milk bottle, that makes for longevity in Portage la Prairie? Maybe it's a combination of all of those things, and more. Whatever it is, it's a fact that our city and surrounding districts have produced people who haven't let go of the reins of life until they were well over the 100 mark! What is more remarkable is the fact that many of them are mentally alert through their latter years.

The ages of 70 and 80 years are not considered "old" here. Why! many of the people in this age group attend and enjoy hockey games in the Arena and ball games in the Park, either walking or driving their own cars to those places. Curling, golfing and gardening are favorite forms of exercise for quite a few of them. Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Zimmerman (79 and 80 years of age) thoroughly enjoy bowling, as do Mrs. Gordon Troop (76) and Mrs. Wm. Bradshaw (78). If we could muster all the active sports enthusiasts in our city that are over 70 years of age, we would have quite a line-up! The old-fashioned idea of folding the hands, twiddling the thumbs,

and resignedly waiting for the Grim Reaper to take a whack, when time bongs out 'three score years and ten' are things that are not accepted or practiced by most elderly Portagers.

We should mention Mrs. William Oliver here. She was born in Portage la Prairie and is still with us. If you were to see this attractive lady, and if someone were to tell you that she is 94 years of age, you would say, "I don't believe it!" She still keeps her own home and is interested in the world around her.

As we look through Daily Graphics, 1962 to 1967, which were saved by our chairman, Mr. Webster Burton, we see the names of many of our elderly citizens who were celebrating birthdays and anniversaries. It is with pride that we mention them here.

In 1962, Mrs. Mary B. Livingstone was 90 years of age; Mrs. H. A. Gordon was 88 in 1963; Mrs. Elizabeth Longdon, 85, in 1964, and Miss Mary E. Cameron was 95 the same year; Mrs. Elizabeth Leslie was 90 in 1965. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Smith received congratulations from Queen Elizabeth on their diamond wedding anniversary in August of 1965. Fiftieth wedding anniversaries were celebrated by Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Remple in 1966, and by Mr. and Mrs. John Scharien in 1967. Mrs. Eugenie Victoria Burton was 88 years of age in 1967. How pleased we would be to honor everyone in the above age group, by preserving their names for posterity in this book, if we had a list of all their names!

Mrs. Eliza Balmer wouldn't have been happy to have her beautifully decorated birthday cake perforated by the number of candles that would indicate the years of her life! Two would do; one for the first fifty years, and the second one to mark the occasion. Yes, the day this picture was taken, Mrs. Balmer was one hundred years of age!

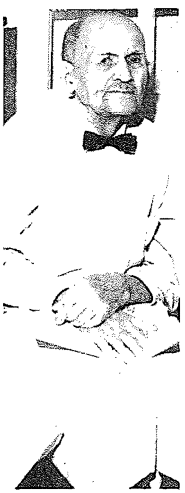
Two years have gone by since that birthday celebration and, God willing, she could be with us in 1970 when she will be three years older than the Centennial that we commemorate.

One of the highlights of her 102nd year of life was the occasion, in April, when she was

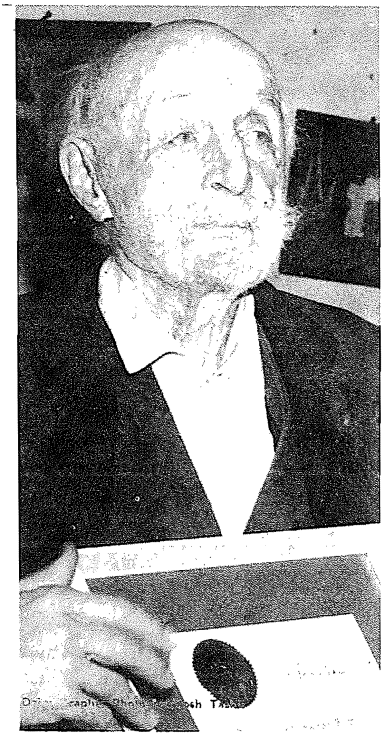
presented with an Order of The Crocus certificate from the Manitoba Centennial Corporation.

A wonderful, and charming host and hostess greeted guests at their home in Portage la Prairie on a lovely summer afternoon in 1966. Mr. Arthur Smallpiece had reached the 100 mark! Mrs. Smallpiece was 89 years of age at that time.

The following year, Mr. and Mrs. Smallpiece, dressed in the fashionable attire of the 1800s, led the parade in a celebration commemorating Canada's Centennial. The picture of Mr. Smallpiece, shown here, was taken during that year. He passed away on the 28th of December, 1968. On January 2nd, 1969, his funeral service was postponed when his loving wife joined him. Arrangements were then made for a double funeral. In view of the life they had lived, it was fitting that they shared in the last big event.



Two Portage la Prairie gentlemen who received Order Of The Crocus certificates on the same day as Mrs. Balmer were Mr. Charles Mitchell, shown at left, who is 95 years of age; and Mr. Jos. Hourie, shown at right, who is now 97 years of age. Mayor W. A. Linden made all three presentations in Holiday Retreat where these folks are enjoying companionship and comfort in their twilight years.



Mr. Stuart Linwood Bott was Manitoba's oldest resident when he celebrated his 108th birthday in 1968. He might even have been Canada's most senior citizen.

When Mr. Bott came to Canada from England he purchased a homestead in the Lakeland district, and loved the land so much that he didn't retire until he was 103 years of age! A truly remarkable man, and one that was loved by everyone who knew him.

He was one who could recall historical events that took place in Canada and the World during his lifetime, and took a keen interest in world affairs.

As he was one of the first homesteaders in the Lakeland district, he helped build their first school and served as a trustee for many years. He also helped to build the first Anglican Church in the district.

The Daily Graphic, December 14, 1968, said, "When he celebrated his 107th birthday December 3, 1967, he was heard to remark, "Houses in town are good but I'd rather have the old cook-stove and cut and carry the wood for it."

This beloved old gentleman didn't live to celebrate his 109th birthday. He passed away in the Portage la Prairie General Hospital after a short illness. Left to mourn his passing was his loving wife, the former Harriet Isabelle Mayor, seven daughters, four sons, 29 grandchildren, 43 great-grandchildren.

Where hills don't hide the sunset,
And clouds don't dim the truth,
There's as much joy in living
Years of age, as years of youth.

Anne M. Collier

As we reflect back on the past century, we recall in memory the courageous men and women who were pioneers in this area, and we are proud that we carry high the torch that they handed to us, and that we recognize our duty to build well the city and districts bequeathed to us, by them.