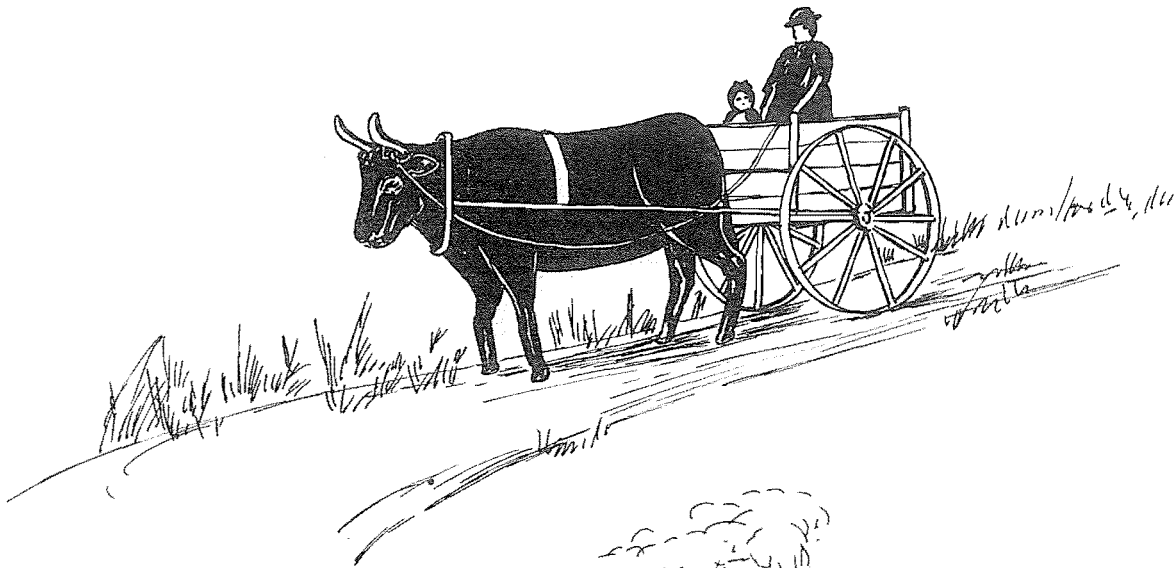
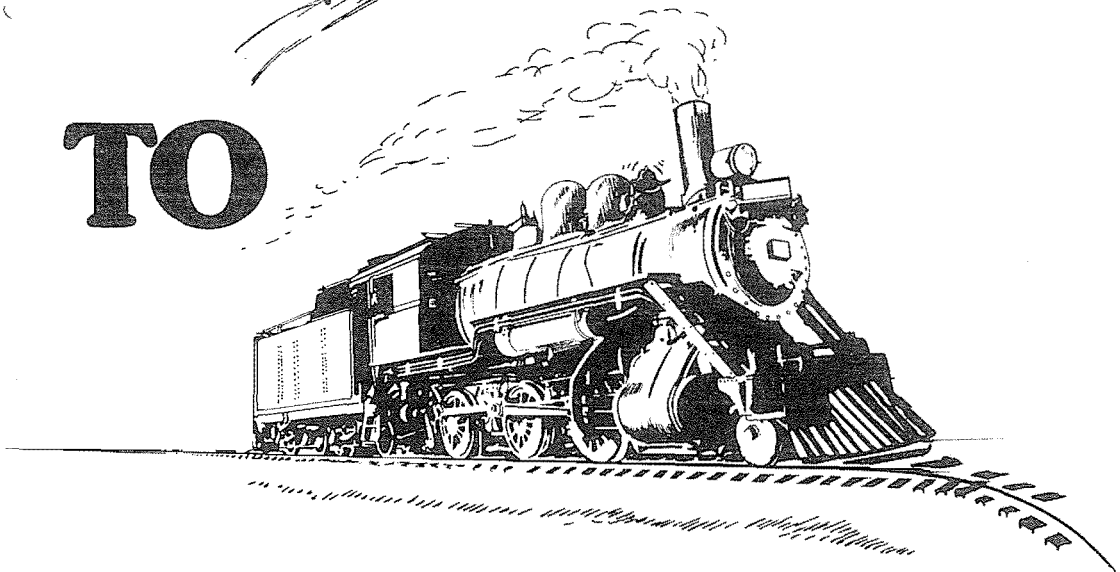


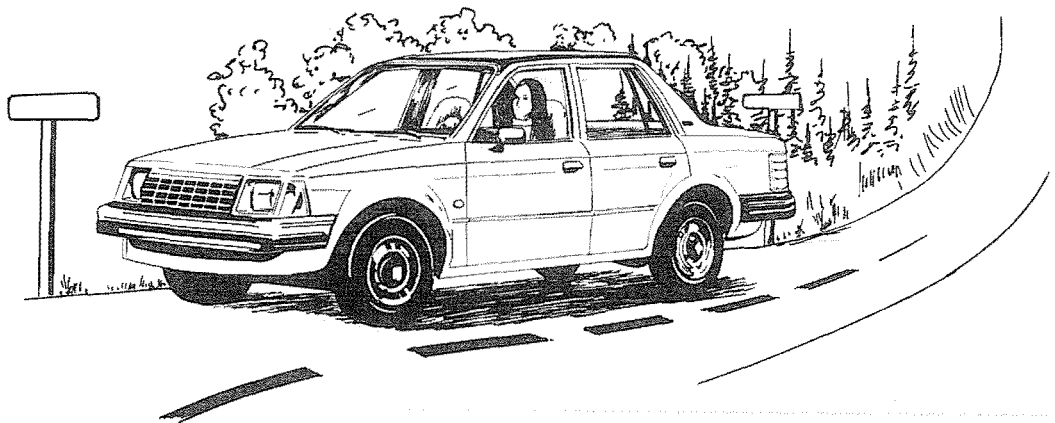
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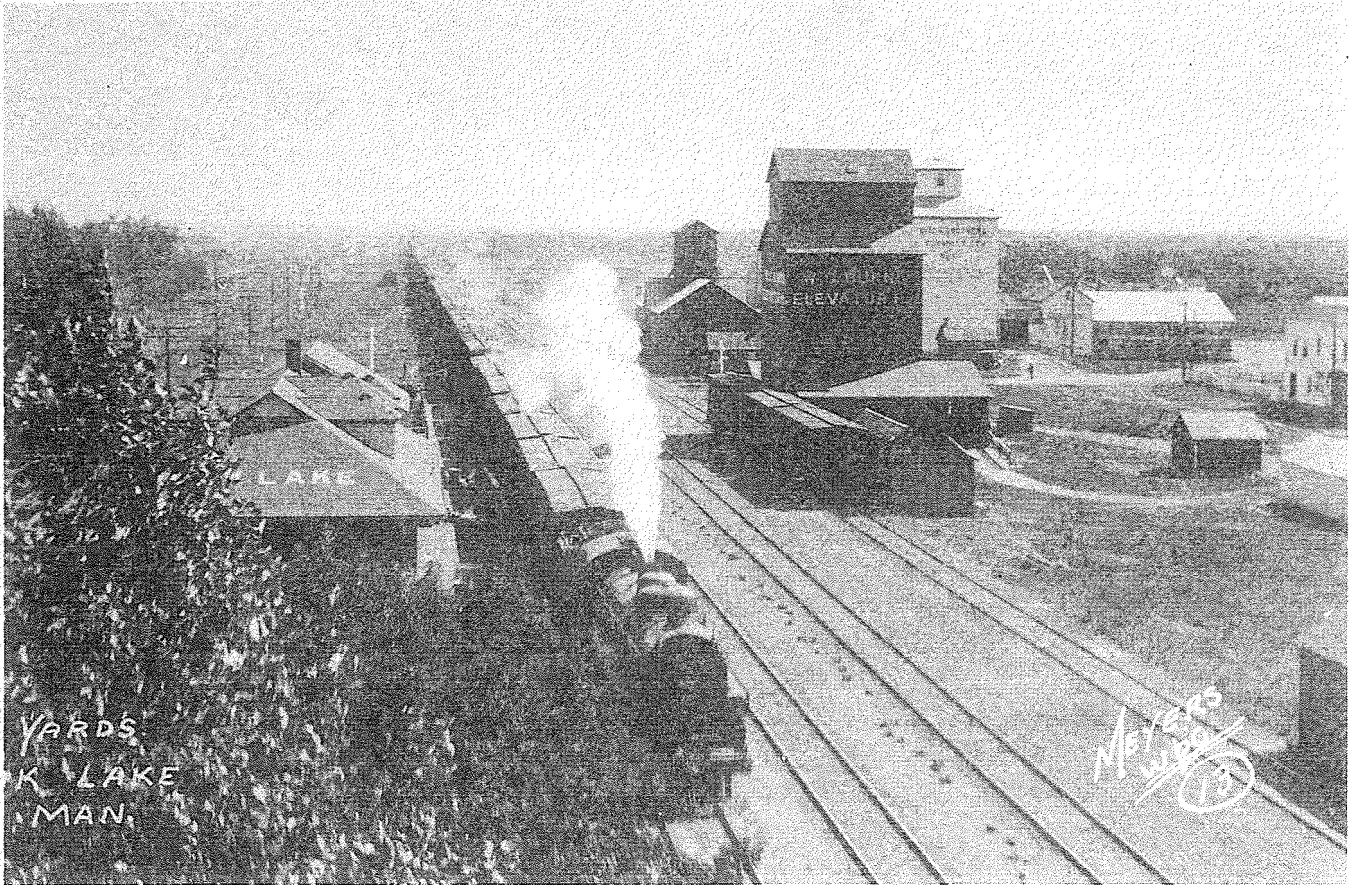


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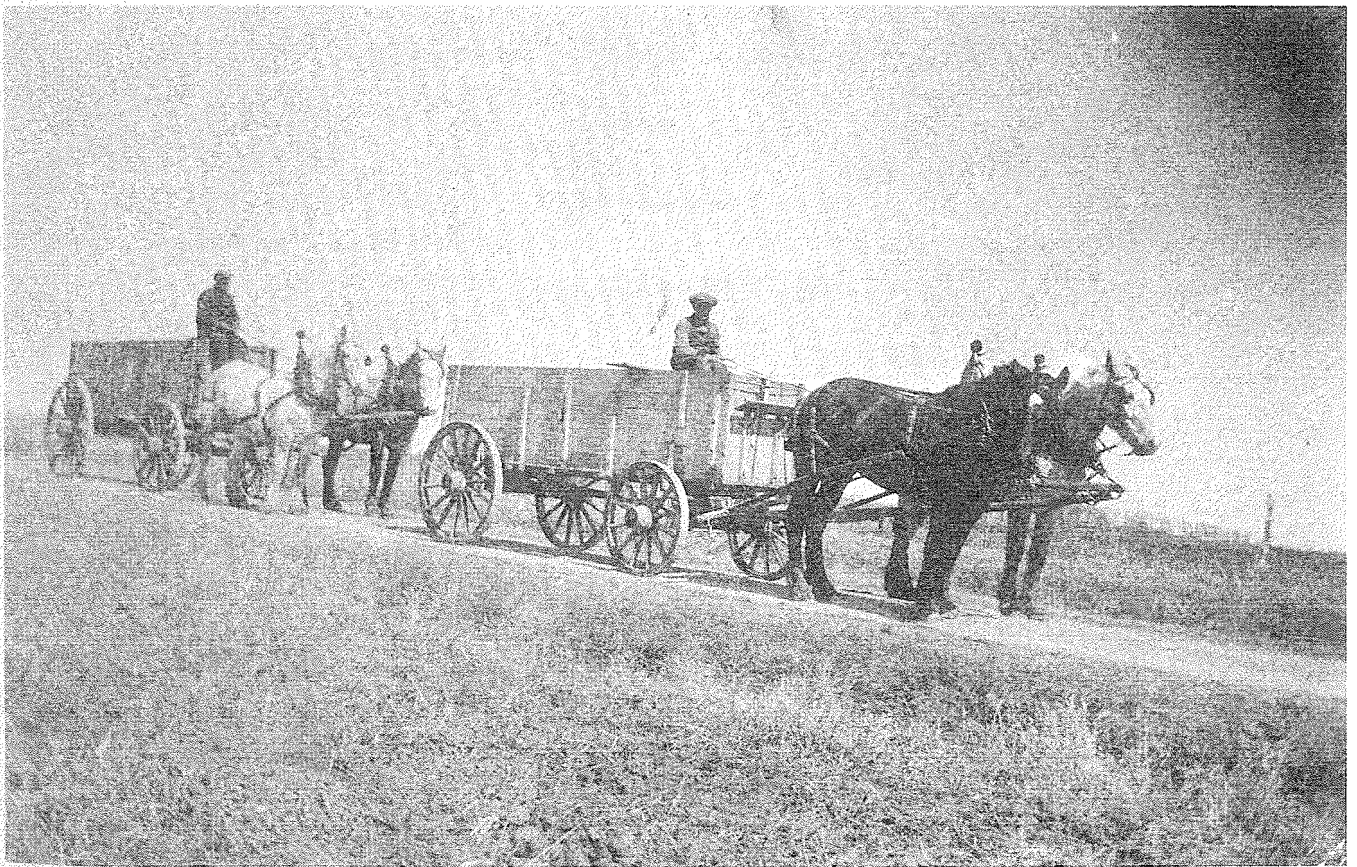


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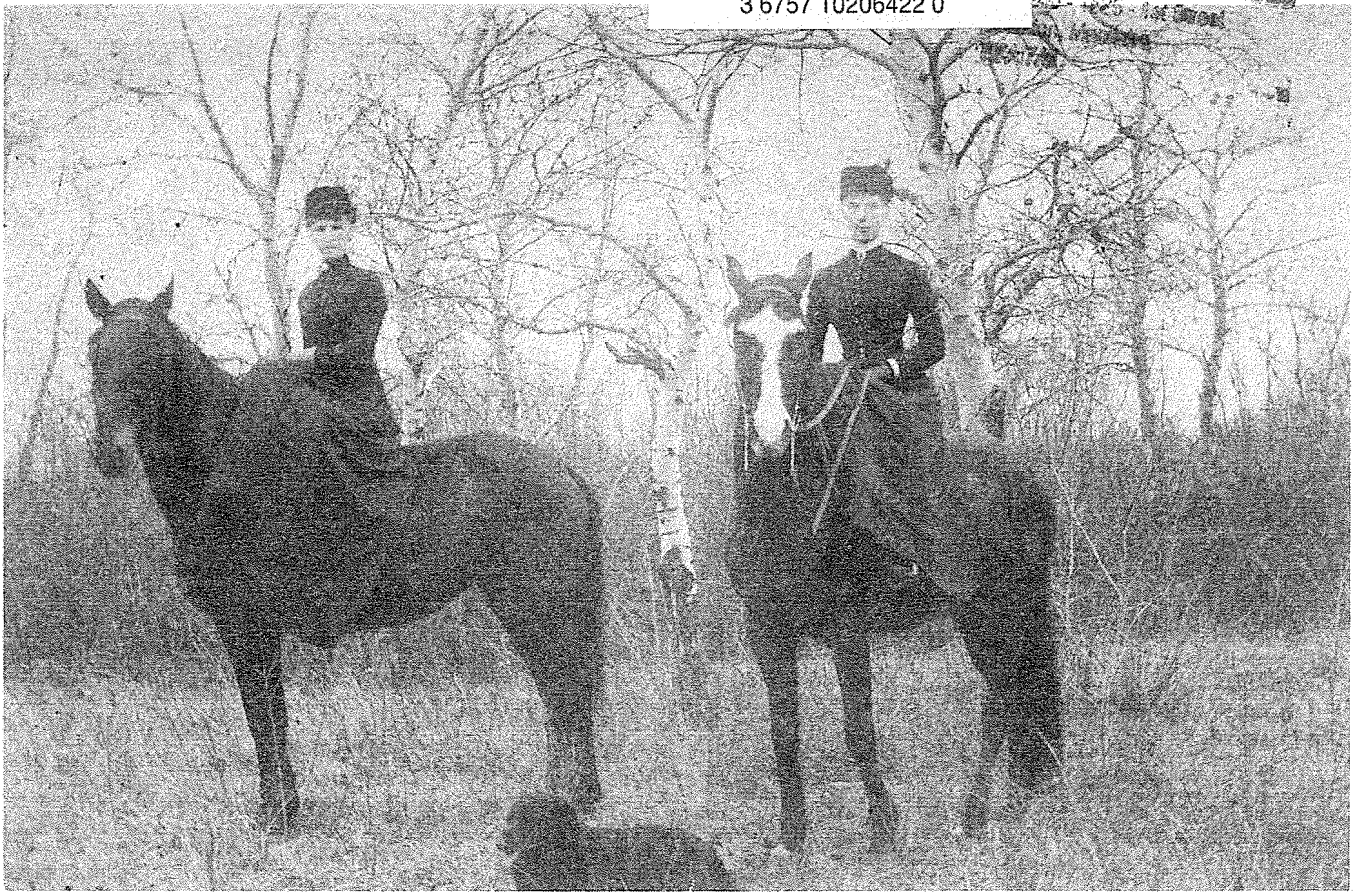


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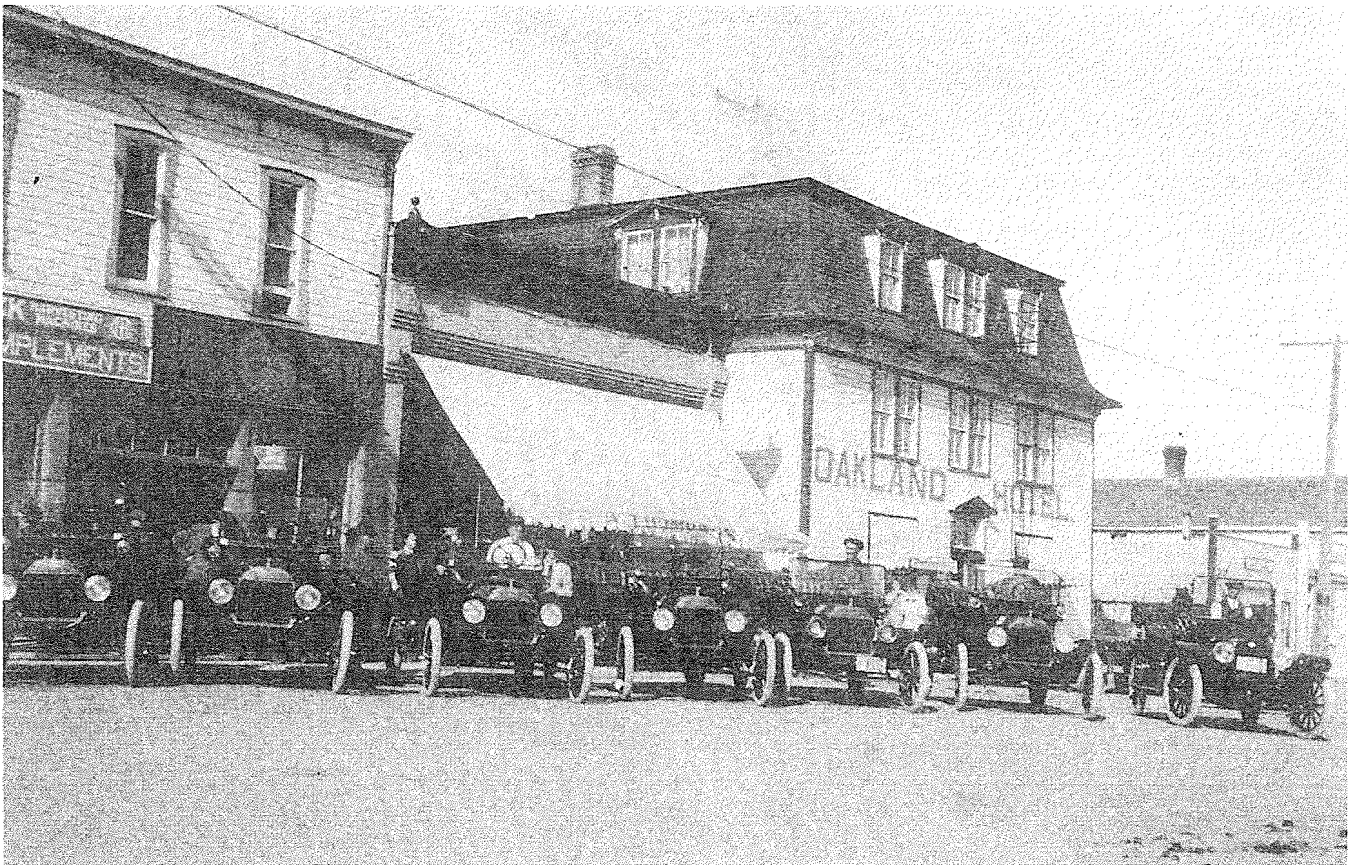


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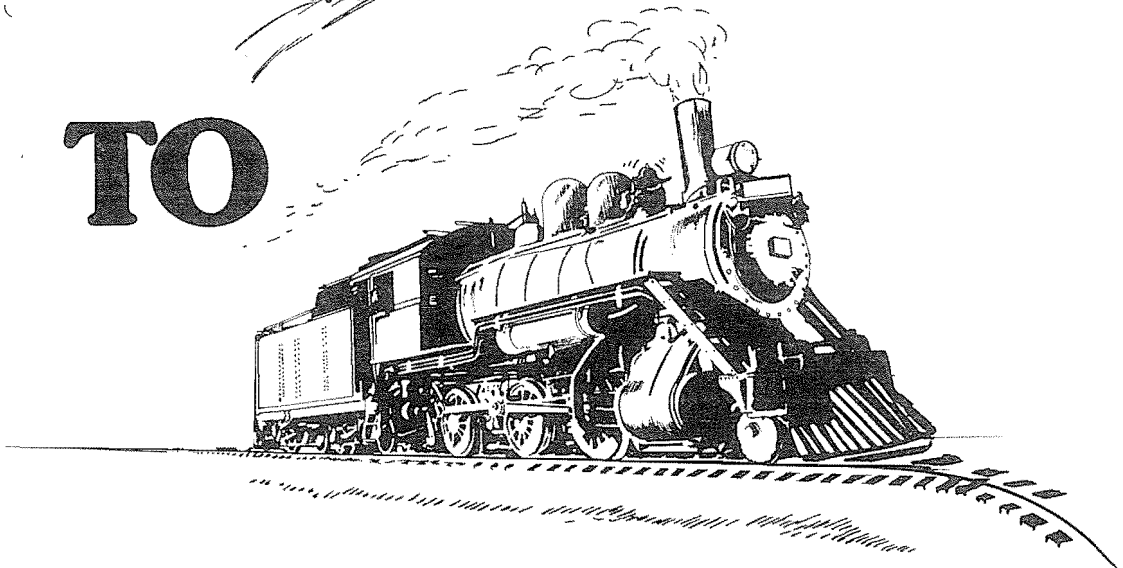


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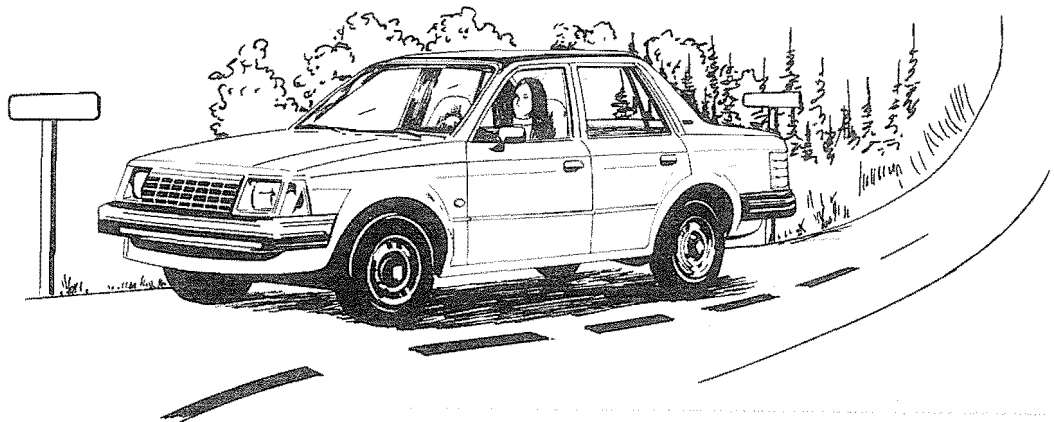
# OX TRAILS



TO



# BLACKTOP



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# Foreword

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In the belief that it is important for people to know as much as possible of their own history, many of us have been deeply interested in the progress of this book, and happy to know that the names of our pioneers and stories of life in those early days are to be recorded before they are all completely lost. As a daughter of one of these pioneers, I feel greatly honoured in being asked to write this Foreword for our book, but before continuing, I heartily congratulate the History Committee on the work it has done.

It was a lonely, empty land to which those first men and women made their way — those first settlers. The buffalo, which in their thousands had fed and flourished on these plains were gone, only their whitening bones left to tell the story of their extermination. The native people were already established on reserves, and in a long day's travel there was little to break the monotony but the odd soaring hawk or wily coyote.

But come they did, whole families, ready to risk whatever they had heretofore accomplished, to build for themselves homes; homes where they could raise their children and be a part of the formation and growth of a wholly new development. Although families might have different beliefs and customs, they all felt the same need of companionship or neighbourliness, and the spirit of helpfulness was strong among them. The bare, wide-open country and the hardships common to them all fostered a strength and self-reliance as well as understanding which made possible the remarkably fast development of the area.

These same elements of friendly co-operation and fortitude, coupled with a widespread recognition of the value and need for spiritual development, have carried on through the years and given strength and cohesiveness to a populace drawn from widely scattered areas. In these values lie our strong hope for the future.

Agnes Scott McQuarrie



# Acknowledgments

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Sometimes long periods of time go by before a project is finally planned and completed. Actually this is what has happened with **Ox Trails to Blacktop**.

As many as thirty-five years ago Mrs. Grace Watson began to plan a book about Oak Lake's first beginnings. At that time many descendants of the pioneers were still available for information and Mrs. Watson interviewed many people and gathered much information with the idea of writing a book herself. All this information was compiled and organized but then the project had to be dropped. When Mrs. Watson realized that a book would not be written at that time she sent all the material she had gathered to the Manitoba Archives.

Since that time discussion has come up periodically as to the writing of an Oak Lake history, but it wasn't until early in 1981 that work began in earnest. A History Committee consisting of Phillis Cairns (president), Wilma Hatch (secretary), Tom Bailey (treasurer), Lorraine Holland, Marion Lundy, Irene Olive, Mabel Holland, Marjorie Torrance, Pat Scott, George Scott, Gavin Gillespie, Betty Olive, Jean McQuarrie, Berenice Johnston, Lyman Smith and Arlene Hatch was formed. Later a New Horizons grant was applied for and the members of the History group formed this new committee. From the group three editors were chosen; Phillis Cairns, Wilma Hatch and Betty Olive.

Phillis and Betty, with Berenice as helper, worked on the first section of the book and Wilma with her assistants, Marion and Lorraine, edited the schools, churches and family histories. Berenice did the proof reading for Betty and Phillis while Mabel and Arlene worked long hours proofing the family histories. Everyone else on the committee assumed certain responsibilities and carried them out cheerfully and well. Various people contributed articles and these were used whole or in part, as space permitted.

A book such as this is not put together by ten or fifteen people. **Ox Trails to Blacktop** is the result of ideas and information contributed by many people. Old diaries and scrapbooks, copies of the Oak Lake

News and the Town and Country News and innumerable pictures have been borrowed by the committee members.

As well, sources outside the community yielded valuable material. Copies of the notes, interviews and pictures gathered by Mrs. Watson were obtained from the Manitoba Archives. The director of the Austin Museum lent Mrs. Olive the old copies of the Oak Lake News and Don Loveridge's thesis, **The Settlement of the Rural Municipality of Sifton** was borrowed from Brandon University. Other books were used as references, such as Pierre Berton's **The Last Spike**, Lawrence B. Clark's **Souris Valley Plains, a history**, W. L. Morton's, **Manitoba, a History**, W. L. Tyman's **Section Township and Range**, Cavanagh's **The Assiniboine Basin**.

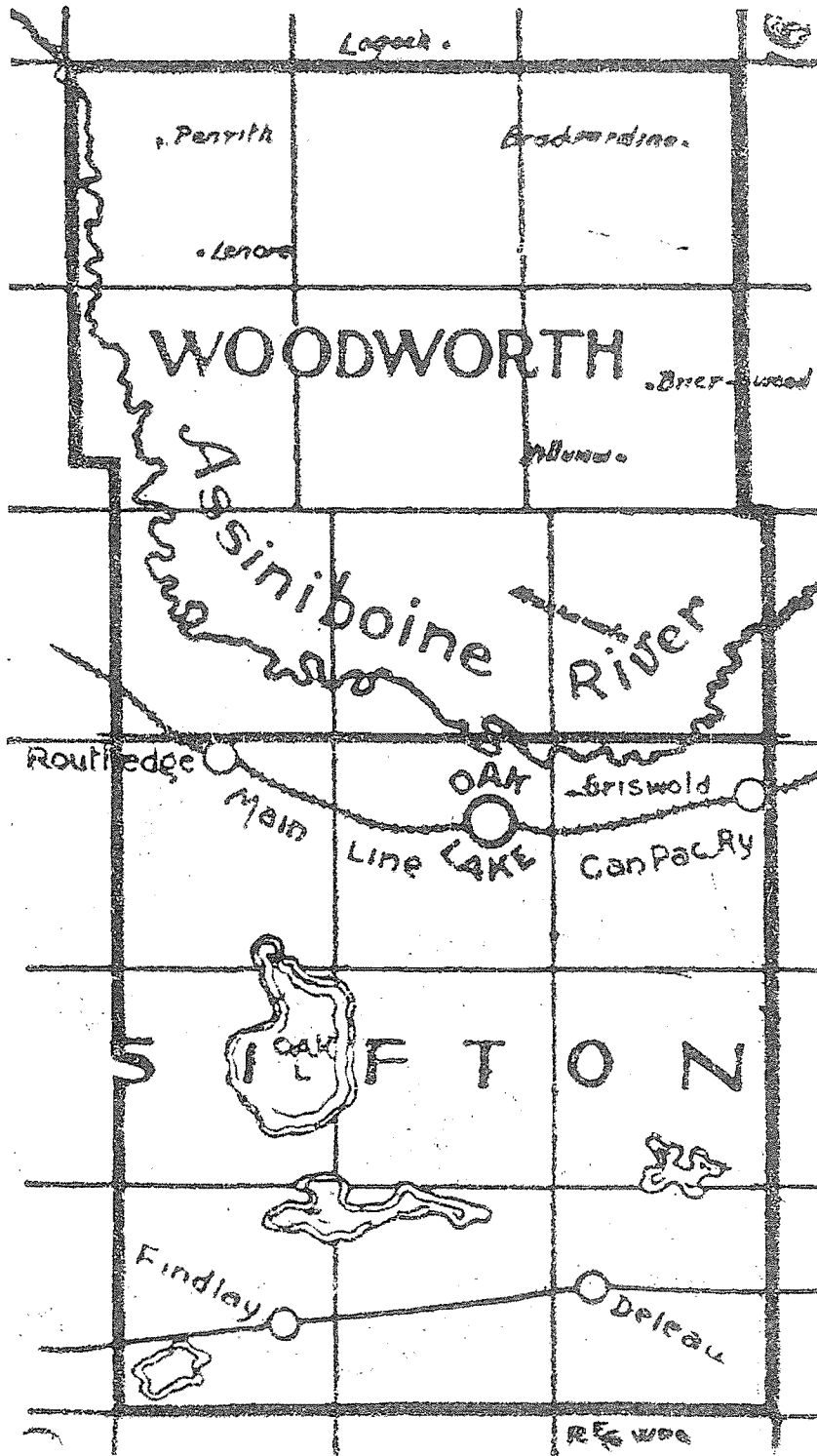
The cover for the book was designed by Mrs. Arlie Hogg. We gratefully acknowledge the grant received from New Horizons. This money has enabled us to buy the supplies and do the travelling that was needed.

Finally, a thank you to our typists, Libby Wohlgenuth and Maureen Buckley, for the hours they spent working on the material for the book. A great big thank you goes to the husbands who put up with scrappy meals, papers spread from one end of the house to the other and the continual ringing of the telephone. Their interest and support we gratefully acknowledge.

We apologize for mistakes made and information omitted. Limitations of time and especially space have made it necessary to deal with family histories only as they pertain to people when they lived in Oak Lake and area. This is why the children of people who no longer live here are only named. The material published deals mainly with the early history of the Oak Lake trading area and priority was given to pioneer family stories. These stories are of varying length, according to the material given to us. All this was done with the hope that an update would be written at some future time.

We have enjoyed compiling the book and we hope you, The Reader, will enjoy reading it.

— History Book Committee



Sifton and Woodworth Municipalities.

### Prairie Born

Not bare these spreading spaces,  
To us who call them Home  
Who love with inborn passion  
The smell of rain-washed loam.

Who've seen the sultry sunshine,  
Along the furrowed sod;  
And seen the heat-breeze rising,  
Like incense to our God.

Nor lonely is this vastness,  
To us who still contend,  
That flowers are boon companions,  
And every tree's a friend.

The prairie calls her children,  
Where e'er their feet depart,  
Her voice still finds an echo,  
In every plain-born heart.

And lips grown pale and ashen,  
In whispers yet repeat  
Their longing for the sunrise,  
Across the miles of wheat.

Lawrence Phillips  
Ninette, Manitoba  
Free Press 1932



# This Land

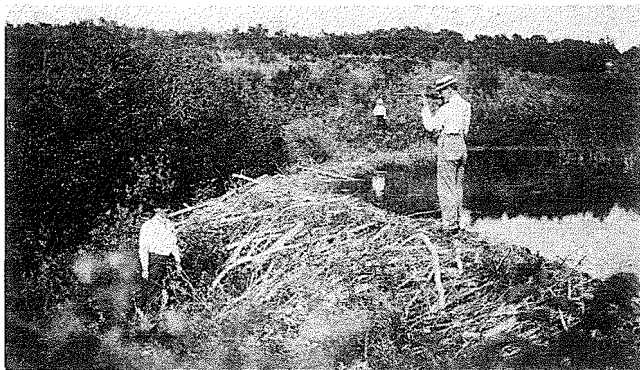


One generation passeth away  
And another generation cometh  
But the earth abideth forever.  
— Ecclesiastes 1:4

## Topographical Background

In recent geological times the present Rural Municipalities of Sifton and Woodworth lay within the basin of Post Glacial Lake Souris which had been filled with waters from melting glaciers of the last Great Ice Age, 9000-7000 B.C. As a result both possess black earth soils.

The Sifton area is a beautifully undulating plain with mainly light sandy soil from glacial silt, clay and sand. Good brick clay under the whole area impedes drainage in low portions. The greater part of the west central section of the Rural Municipality of Sifton is covered by sloughs, marshes, Plum Creek and Oak Lake. Sand hills or dunes run south east across the northern half of the municipality and south east from the south end of the lake. Except for the sand hills the elevation of Sifton is between 1400 and 1425 feet above sea level. (It may be interesting to note that the elevation of the town of Oak Lake is 1419 feet, Griswold — 1428 feet, Virden — 1585 feet, Kenton — 1484 feet above sea level.)



Sunday Afternoon at Flat Creek.

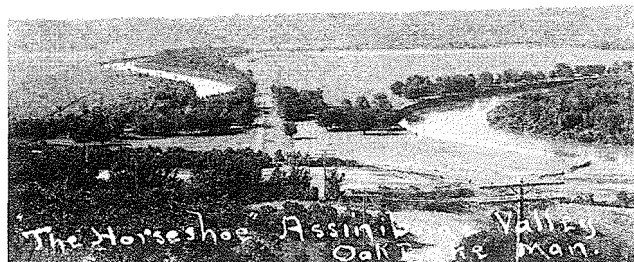
Half of Sifton is light, sandy, well drained arable land — but drift-prone if not managed properly, and capable of a reliable and plentiful supply of good drinking water. The north portion contains some good sandy loam. The Assiniboine Valley and Pipestone Creek channel areas possess excellent alluvial soil, but are subject to flooding.

The Rural Municipality of Sifton has both parkland and grassland characteristics, the former being predominant today. From early records it seems that the area was mainly grassland at the time settlement began. This was due, to a large extent, to the lack of prairie fire control which inhibited the growth of poplar trees and willow bushes. Also, according to reports by surveyors and settlers, phenomenally wet conditions generally prevailed from about 1875 to 1882. This condition encouraged unusual growth of prairie grass as indicated by a news item in a July 10, 1881 Winnipeg newspaper. "C.P.R. trains are mak-

ing poor time these days. When the wind blows hard the long grass is laid across the tracks and crushed beneath the wheels impeding the trains." Although the railway hadn't reached the Sifton Municipality in July 1881, the report indicates the effect heavy precipitation must also have had on the wild grasses of this territory.

In contrast, the early 1870's brought drought conditions which are said to have caused the north end (some say all) of Oak Lake to dry up allowing wagon trails to cross it. Some say, "Rubbish!" However, in an account written for the Oak Lake News in 1970, Mrs. Agnes McQuarrie recalls that "an old cart trail of dryer years led through the small lake, across the land, up the hill and on forever westward. It was where the widespread ruts of this old trail reached the higher land that Father had built his house." (This pioneer, Mr. James Scott located on SE 12-9-25-W1, in 1882).

Sifton is an area of great variety possessing treed sandhills, lowlands, swamp lands, lakes, rivers, rich valley lands and eroding creek and riverbanks. In other words it is a transitional zone in which these characteristics merge one into the other and offer many mini environments. Settlers to this area with definite ideas concerning the type of farm wanted, had to choose carefully in relation to their needs, expectations and abilities.



The Horse Shoe in the Assiniboine Valley on the William's Road.



Deep Ravine.

Woodworth Municipality comes close to being bounded on the south and the west by the convoluted Assiniboine River with its deep, beautifully wooded valley slopes, productive bottom land and gently rolling farm lands on either side.



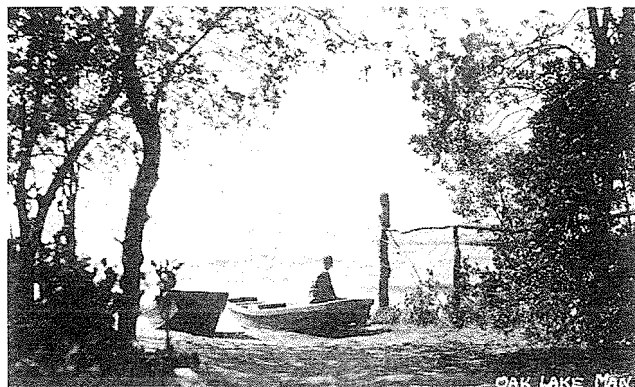
Looking west from the Kennedy Bridge Hill.

There are seven soil types in the southern part of Woodworth under discussion in this book. This region's black earth soils are developed (a) on fine to medium textured glacial lake deposits and (b) on sandy textured glacial lake deposits with moist substrata. The first of the (a) group soils is classified as "Harding clay to silty clay" which is fertile, but packs badly and is found in the north east third of Ryerson. Water seepage in this clay is very slow and sand strata are buried seventy to ninety feet. Hence wells are very deep. Much of the water is not fit for infant consumption owing to mineral content. "Carroll clay loams" are found in the remaining  $\frac{2}{3}$  of Ryerson and in most of Harvey, Hagyard and Johnston. There are "Carroll loams" in a small 3-section chunk of Ryerson which also slips into Harvey plus a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  section piece touching sections 4, 5, 8-10-23.

The (b) group classification is "Souris loamy fine sand" of which Sifton is mainly composed. In Woodworth this soil type is located on the west side of a range of partly wooded, shaly hills running northwest from the Assiniboine River at Harrison's (NE 36-9-24) to Salt Lake and beyond. This Souris loamy fine sand overlays deposits of moist substrata which generally assure an ample supply of good water. However, the soil requires, at the very least, average precipitation to grow good crops. This light land, with an area of about thirteen sections and roughly triangular in shape, is situated in the angle formed at Harrison's by the hills and the Assiniboine. In the very tip of this angle is a long narrow strip of "eastbank clay loam" on sections 1 and 2-10-24. To the north of the Souris loamy fine sand type soil

Nature has seen fit to leave soil classified as "Miniota sandy loam, shaly phase".

Both Woodworth and Sifton Municipalities have "eroded slopes complex" type soil in river and creek slopes and channels which often flood. For the most part the portion of Woodworth being treated in this book has no stones. Could this lack of material for tools and weapons have been one reason for there being no Indians actually living in the country between Sioux Valley and the Birtle Reserve in early settlement times? They merely passed through on their winding trail.



A Boatman at Oak Lake 1910.

### The Oak Lake Marshes by David Hatch

Myriads have been written and said concerning the marshes of Oak Lake and like all great marshes in the world, they have often been the centre of controversy.

One of the most amazing facts about the Oak Lake Marshes is that they are one of the few remaining large wetlands in southern Canada that have not been drained or been regulated by dykes, ditches and dams. Oak Lake proper, however, has had a dyke skirting its periphery for several years. The marshes stretching west, south and east of the lake embrace thousands of acres and traditionally fluctuate through the extremes of flood and drought.

To furriers, the Oak Lake marshes are known for the thousands of high quality muskrat pelts that are harvested there most years. Particularly in dry years, the marshes are home to scores of white-tailed deer that seek shelter in the dense stands of cattail and bulrush.

Oak Lake and to a lesser extent, its marshes, are well known for the amount of northern pike (jack-fish), pickerel (wall-eye), and perch to be found in years of average or above average waterlevels. Winter kills have often decimated the fish population; however, restocking by provincial government personnel and by natural infusion from fish entering via



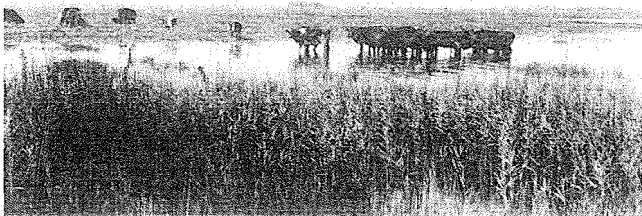


Winter Kill — 1958. Herman Battersby checking fish kill at Oak Lake.

the Pipestone and Plum creek systems has always restored the population.

The Oak Lake marshes became particularly famous during the 1930's for the tens of thousands of tons of hay that they yielded. Because they provide hay and pasture for so many cattle, there are those who petition to have the wetlands drained so that they can produce more hay annually and do it on a long-term basis. However, other people, who have lived next to the marshes all of their lives, claim the best hay production occurs when waterlevels are relatively high in the spring and the water table remains high enough to yield good quality hay on the uplands. These same people argue that the dry wetland basins rapidly turn to the production of thistles and other weed species after they have been dry for two or three years.

These marshes, however, are most famous for



Cattle in the marsh south west of The Lake 1927 (Manitoba Archives).

their wildlife. For waterfowl, the Oak Lake marshes have become an extremely important fall staging area in which tens of thousands of ducks and geese now stop annually. They are used to a lesser degree on spring migration.

Oak Lake was famous as a major stop for snow geese and concentrations in excess of 100,000 "waveys", as the snow geese were locally termed, were common. With the outbreak of World War II, Oak Lake was used by low flying aircraft on training missions. Snow geese are terrified of aircraft and they rapidly vacated southwestern Manitoba. Over the next 30 years they were seldom encountered at Oak Lake. Ducks Unlimited then initiated a Canada goose re-introduction program at Oak Lake and thanks to local pressure, much of the area was closed to Canada goose hunting. This sparked tremendous interest in geese and now there is a small population of Canada geese breeding locally. This reduction in hunting pressure and a shift in the continental migration route resulted in Oak Lake once again becoming a regular stop for countless thousands of snow geese.

Although Oak Lake formerly produced great quantities of ducks annually like all of the marshes of southern Manitoba, this is no longer the case. The habitat is still relatively good for duck production and all that is required to return this marsh to its former productive state is intensive management of the local duck population. Decimated by over hunting, it will take implementation of new, imaginative policies to achieve this objective.

For colonial-nesting birds, the Oak Lake marshes are invaluable. There is often a number of small colonies of western grebes and the breeding population of eared grebes some years is probably higher than anywhere else in Canada. Black-crowned night herons, Forster's terns, black terns, and Franklin's gulls all breed in the marshes on a regular basis.

During peak years, the Franklin's gulls nest in such numbers that their colonies may stretch almost continuously for nearly two kilometers. Their floating nests are anchored to the cattails or bulrushes and are in a meter or less of water. Franklin's gulls gorge themselves daily on grasshoppers and a wide array of other agricultural pests. These gulls are among the farmer's best friends. Unfortunately, during droughts none of these birds nest here.

These marshes are invaluable on a continental basis as a place for birds to breed but they have numerous other values, not the least of which is as a surcharge area to maintain underground water levels.

All marshes face an omnipresent threat of being encroached upon and for this reason, the Oak Lake Marshes must be safeguarded at all times.

## The Sand Hills by David Hatch

Oak Lake is geologically a very interesting area. At the termination of the last ice age, large glacial lakes were produced. Much of eastern Manitoba was covered by Lake Agassiz which left lakes Winnipeg, Manitoba, Winnipegosis, and Dauphin. Oak Lake and its marshes are remnants of glacial Lake Souris, which engulfed southwestern Manitoba.

To the north of town is the Assiniboine River, one of the deep, flat-bottomed valleys produced during deglaciation.

The lake, marshes and rivers are the geological features most frequently discussed when people mention the area's physical attributes, however there is another dominant aspect. Sandy lacustrine sediments cover a vast stretch of land south of the river and extend well beyond the Oak Lake district. Prominent on this sandy soil are the Routledge sand hills, which stretch in a northwest-southeast band, south and east of Oak Lake. Although not a continuous band of dunes, they are connected with the Lauder sand hills which are west of Hartney.

The Routledge sand hills can reach a dozen meters in height while those of Lauder may be a few meters higher.

Before the area was settled, fires swept through them and the dunes were largely absent of trees and shrubs. Bison, elk, and mule deer traversed them.

With the control of fires they were transformed and now bur oak and aspen poplar cover much of them. Bison and elk were extirpated locally much quicker than the mule deer and were gone before the first settlers arrived. Hamilton M. Laing, one of western Canada's greatest early naturalists, taught school at Oak Lake. He reports mule deer were "quite common" locally when he discovered the first white-tailed deer seen in the general area. The year was 1910 and the animal was at the Flat Creek ravine east of town. Now white-tailed deer are common and mule deer are rarely if ever seen here.

The sand hills and some of the damp areas in and around them are a treasure house of plants; some of which are very rare. The sand hills of Oak Lake possess three species of cacti. One of these is extremely rare provincially and this is the only place in Manitoba where all three species can be located.

The spiderwort is another rare plant that occurs in the Oak Lake sand hills. Three species of lady's slipper grow at Oak Lake, but these naturally are not in the dry sand hills. Cattle grazing and grain growing are constantly encroaching on more and more land on which these endangered plants live, but equally alarming is the number of these flowers that are being dug up.

The sand hills are particularly unique as they are

on the second prairie level well west of the old Agassiz escarpment and thus contain several species that are isolated. The hognose snake is a classic example. This harmless snake scares those not regularly haunting the sand hills but is a fascinating animal in need of our protection. The smooth green snakes and red-bellied snakes are frequently encountered in these sandy soils and are beautiful, little creatures.

Hopefully a segment of these sand hills will ultimately become an ecological reserve or wilderness park, so these endangered plant and animal species can be permanently protected and maybe even the elk will return to breed. The people of Oak Lake have long loved nature and such a wilderness preserve would be an everlasting tribute to their appreciation.

## The Pre-Settlement Period

"Some archaeologists believe that man first arrived in North America more than 20 thousand years ago. However, stone artifacts from south west Manitoba indicate that men first arrived along the Souris River about 10 thousand years ago. These first primitive tribes were hunters of buffalo and other animals. From these early men, who were nomadic, developed more stable groups or tribes such as the Cree, Gros Ventres and Chippewa." Lawrence B. Clarke, from *Souris Valley Plains, a history*.

This paragraph from Mr. Clark's book applies to more than the Souris River basin. These nomadic tribes wandered over large areas and artifacts are found all over this region, particularly around Oak Lake (the lake) and along the high hills on both sides of the Assiniboine River valley.

Also, in south west Manitoba there is evidence of old earth mounds. These mounds are about six feet high and circular. There are several known around the Souris-Melita area and a few in Sifton but these have never been investigated. It is believed that they were not burial mounds but ceremonial sites. It is interesting to speculate about the people who built them, even if the information is sparse.

There are several interesting locations along the hills on the north side of the Assiniboine River, in the vicinity of the farm owned by Mr. and Mrs. Max Gompf. In the valley, not far from the Gompf farm, there is supposed to be an "Indian Wall". This "Wall" is located fairly close to the river and is really a pile of stones that is thought to have been a bison kill. People believe that brush was piled on and around the stones and that the buffalo were driven into this "Wall" as they came to the river to drink.

Also, in this area, on one of the hills facing the river, is a long line of stones in the form of a snake. These same serpents, as they are sometimes called,

exist in other parts of southern Manitoba. Much speculation exists as to their purpose but it is believed that they were put there long ago, by the Indians who occupied this area.

Rolling Acres Tribal Site is located on twelve acres of the Gompf farm. Mr. and Mrs. Gompf became interested in studying the things they found so they joined the Brandon Archaeological Society and gathered many artifacts, mostly projectiles and scrapers, that were uncovered on the field after heavy rains. Later Mrs. Gompf took a night course at Brandon University and became acquainted with Professor Syms.

In 1974 Professor Syms and a group of university students dug part of the twelve acres, a section not under cultivation. Artifacts from this dig were sent to Ottawa to be carbon dated.

The suggested date of the site is AD 500 to 1700, determined only by the projectile points. It is probably not a village site or permanent dwelling but rather was occupied for the bison kill and preparation of hides. The tool makers probably came with the hunters bringing their Brown Chalcedony (Knife River flint) from the Knife River in North Dakota. Pink, yellow and white quartzite stone found in local gravel deposits and in stream beds as well as agates from Souris are also found. Some local sandstone was made into hammerheads, anvils and hide scrapers. Due to the large quantity of thumb scrapers that are found it is believed that the hides were made into leather by the women on the site.

Pemmican was made here as heated stones with a greasy feeling are found along with broken bones. The bone marrow is thought to have been used as a preservative in the pemmican. This pemmican was sewn into leather bags and buried for later use. The Black Duck pottery found here is common in Manitoba and so gave us no particular information.

There used to be a fairly high hill at Cherry Point on the north shore of Oak Lake. This hill had a steep drop to the south and was believed to have been the place where the Indians killed their buffalo. Years ago, when the water was low, people used to pick up arrowheads along the lake shore and there are some people around the area who have quite extensive collections. People thought that the buffalo were either killed in the fall from the hill or else hurt so that they were more or less helpless. These stories had been repeated for many years but had never been really proven.

Because of these stories and the artifacts that had been collected, Brandon University archaeologist, Professor E. Leigh Syms conducted test excavations in 1973. He was hoping to find out if digs would be feasible; if enough information could be gathered to make further work worthwhile.

Oak Lake is one of the few large lakes in southwestern Manitoba. The digs would be an investigation into the power of the lake as an attraction to the peoples of Manitoba, both modern and prehistoric. The lake has had highly varied uses in the time of modern man — as a site for bison drives, the hunting of game, fishing, a center of trade and trapping, as a source of lumber for overland travellers, and as a holiday resort. It remained for the digging teams to try to piece together the story of prehistoric man, if there was such a story.

The digs were begun in 1974 and continued in 1975. The teams varied in size from six people in 1974, when they lived in tents at Cherry Point, to about fifteen in 1975. The second group stayed at the H. S. Perdue Research Station on the south east part of the Island.

The top layer of the dig sites had been disturbed by ploughing and rodent digging but the ground underneath hadn't been touched. The sites were blocked off and very carefully dug to different depths, 5 cm. at a time. The excavated remains were sent to Brandon, Regina and Winnipeg to be studied. As well as the Cherry Point sites, smaller digs were carried out on the Island, at the H. S. Perdue Research Station and at the dam. From all these digs, small quantities of projectiles (arrowheads), end-scrapers, side scrapers, fire cracked rocks, potshards, bones and a few knives were found. The bones were sent to the University of Saskatchewan to be radiocarbon dated. The results showed that these bones were from the period 910 B.C. to 935 A.D.

From all the data collected the following information was pieced together.

The hill at Cherry Point and the hollow or valley, as it is called in the report, to the east of the hill were probably late spring or early summer campsites for relatively small bands or groups of people.

Cherry Point was a bison kill and an occupation site. Animals were killed either singly or in small groups by driving them onto the peninsula or into the marshy shores of the lake. The report doesn't say anything about driving the bison over the steep hill because the cliff had been partially levelled in 1967. The carcasses were probably cut up along the shore or on the raised beach. The quarters, heads and necks were cut up more completely on the west hill and in the valley, at the campground.

As well, hide preparation and treatment took place in the same location, along with the smashing of bone to obtain bone marrow and grease.

The hollow and the hill beside it, were probably the habitation areas. Cooking and household activities would have taken place there. However, this was only a hunting camp so there wasn't much evidence of household artifacts.

The work that has been done leaves many questions unanswered. Perhaps more information will be available at some future date. Certainly it makes for interesting speculation about the people who lived here long ago.

### Traders and Trading Posts

It is believed that the main Indian tribes to occupy this part of Manitoba in later years were Western Plains Indians such as the Assiniboines and the Sioux. The Assiniboines travelled over present day Manitoba and Saskatchewan as well as the Souris River area in the United States. They were sometimes joined by the Cree and the Ojibway. The Sioux claimed much of North and South Dakota and some of Minnesota as their territory.

This country around the headwaters of the Missouri and all around the Souris River was much prized by all the Indians because it was rich in small furs and because it was well populated with buffalo. The buffalo moved north and south in their migrations and the Indians followed them for the hunt. Because of the furs and the hunting, the Sioux began raiding the Souris River country and by 1800 were making a determined effort to drive out all hunters and traders.

Before 1820 there were at least two fur trading companies operating in this part of the country. The North West Company was pushing westward and in 1738 they built Fort La Reine at present day Portage La Prairie, followed by Fort Montagne a la Bosse in 1794. This fort was built on the south bank of the Assiniboine, east of the mouth of Gopher Creek and north of present day Routledge. From that time on they traded westward and southward into North Dakota. By 1766 the Hudson's Bay Company was sending traders into the Missouri River country to trade with the Sioux, although they didn't build forts until 1793 when they built Brandon House #1 near the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine Rivers. By the early 1800's American traders had reached the Missouri River and had begun to trade along the Souris River into Canada. These three companies were intense rivals for the furs and pemmican available from the various tribes.

Such was the situation when the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company amalgamated in 1821 under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company. The immediate problem then became the American traders who were coming north from the United States.

1829 May 6

"To act as a barrier between our American Opponents and the Indians of Qu'Appelle, and also, as a

decoy to draw back such of the natives as had joined them in past years, or were in their territory, I sent Mr. George Setter and six men to Oak Lake, which is situated a little to the southward of Montagne a la Bosse, where they passed the winter months and made twenty packs of furs, but with no provisions, (pemmican), although that was also one of the objects for which that temporary post was established —."

Extract from Report on Brandon House District, by Chief Trader Francis Heron. Hudson Bay Archives.

The trading post at Oak Lake was established for several reasons. The Hudson's Bay Company needed to try to win back the Indians who were trading with the Americans. It was thought that the post at Oak Lake would be closer to Qu'Appelle territory where these Indians usually wintered and that contact could be made with them before they went south to trade. The Company needed large supplies of pemmican for use by the fur brigades and the Red River Settlers. It was thought that a post at Oak Lake would be excellent for this purpose because it would be situated in the heart of the buffalo country. The third advantage was supposed to be the fact that the men at Oak Lake would not need to have supplies sent to them because they would be able to live off the land — mainly fish from the lake. Lastly, the Company wanted to find out whether this post at Oak Lake or the one at Montagne a la Bosse was the best situation for trade.

None of these things went as planned. There had been great prairie fires in the fall and this proved disastrous. The buffalo failed to appear and both traders and Indians were in trouble. The Indians were starving so instead of bringing pemmican and furs to the fort, the few who arrived came begging and had to be fed. The supply of fish in the lake fell off and the traders had to be provisioned from Brandon House. The post at Oak Lake had not proved its worth and so the men were recalled to Brandon House.

The problem of the long distance the Qu'Appelle Indians had to travel in order to trade at Brandon House still remained. Apparently with the object of gaining the trade of these Indians, Fort Ellice was established on the Assiniboine near the mouth of the Qu'Appelle River in 1831. Later Montagne a la Bosse and Brandon House #1 were abandoned and Fort Ellice became the main trading post for this area.

This information was gained from letters sent to Mrs. Watson in 1948 by the Hudson's Bay Company, then with headquarters in London, England.

The next move on the part of the Hudson's Bay Co. concerned the supply of pemmican and the buf-

falo hunt and involved a Metis by the name of Cuthbert Grant.

After Brandon House was abandoned Cuthbert Grant started a freighting business on the Souris Plains. He brought boats and carts into the Souris Valley in order to buy and bring out buffalo robes and furs. At the same time he started a Metis settlement at St. Francis Xavier, on the Assiniboine River west of Winnipeg. This settlement was to serve as protection for the Fort Garry settlement against the Sioux. Thus Grant's job was two-fold. He was to drive back the Sioux and bring in supplies and furs to Fort Garry. The boats followed the Souris and Assiniboine Rivers and the carts used the Yellow Quill Trail.

From 1830 to 1866 the country south of Oak Lake in the Hartney, Lauder, Melita area swarmed with buffalo. Cuthbert Grant established a post on the Souris River and it was used as headquarters for the hunt until 1861. Grant died in 1854 but the operation was carried on by relatives, one of them being his grandson, Thomas Breland. As many as sixty families, sometimes led by Grant and sometimes by a lieutenant, carried on buffalo hunts and raids against the Sioux in the Lauder-Hartney sandhills. It should be pointed out that the Sioux were probably only protecting their hunting grounds but nevertheless they caused Grant's men a lot of trouble.

In 1861 Fort Grant was closed and the buffalo hunts organized from St. Francis Xavier. However, the buffalo were greatly diminished in number and the last large buffalo hunt took place in 1868. After 1861 some of the people who had been at Fort Grant took up mixed farming in the Grande Clariere — Oak Lake area. Some of the Metis from the Red River Rebellion arrived in the Oak Lake — Grande Clariere sand hills in 1869. Another group settled along the south bank of the Assiniboine between present day Oak Lake and Griswold. At one time these people numbered about 20 families. Such names as Dauphinais, Breland, Berard, Couteau, Gladu, Leveillie, La Fontaine, Whiteford and Kennedy turn up in the accounts given by the old timers and in the records of the Oak Lake Cemetery.

When Sifton Municipality was surveyed in 1880 some of the people who had settled along the Assiniboine River let their land go and moved farther west but the families by the lake remained.

The records show that in 1888 a Father Gaire arrived in the area around the lake, intending to establish a parish. He found the area already settled with Catholic families and so established his church at Grande Clariere. As time went by and white settlers appeared in the country, the Metis withdrew to southern Saskatchewan. At this time, very few descendants of these people remain. Also by 1878 the

Sioux were settled on reserves at Sioux Valley near Griswold and the Oak Lake Reserve near Pipestone.

There is not too much proof to back up this last section but Mr. Lawrence Clark, when he was writing his book, "Souris Valley Plains — a history" interviewed many people still living in the area at that time and the information given in interviews by Mrs. Carberry and Mrs. Lafournaise tell the same story. Also in their stories there is mention of the remains of a trading post and of trade goods being stored with Mab Marion. This could easily be from, not the first documented trading post, but a second, much later one. The fur traders, especially the Hudson's Bay men, built posts or storage sheds all over the country, used them for as long as necessary and abandoned them. In the Andrew Gillespie notes there is mention of the last great train of Red River Carts from Fort Ellice laden with furs and buffalo hides camping at the Lake. The oak trees at the Lake had for many years been used to repair the carts from the trains so it is quite possible that a trading post or storage post was in operation there.

### Settlement Patterns

The first people in the Rural Municipalities of Sifton and Woodworth were nomadic Indian tribes who moved with the season and the animal migrations. They used the land in a communal way, believing it belonged to everybody.

The first settlers in the Rural Municipality of Sifton were Metis people many of whom had worked as hunters, voyageurs, freighters and traders in Cuthbert Grant's independent freighting and trading business along the Souris River and on the Souris Plains. He used boats, canoes and Red River carts to collect and ship buffalo robes and furs to the east. In 1824, Cuthbert Grant built his own trading post, Fort Grant, and set up business in opposition to the Hudson Bay Company and the North West Fur Trading Company, with whom he had been previously employed. Fort Grant was located 2½ miles west of Hartney on the Souris River and was run by Cuthbert Grant's daughter and son-in-law, the Brelands, and other Metis relatives until its closure in 1861. Some of these people then settled around Grand Clariere and The Lake as well as along the Assiniboine River, north east of the location of what would be the town of Oak Lake. These settlers included Mab Marion who settled on "The Island" and others such as Breland, Levielle, Dauphinais, Berard, Grandmaison, Lepine, Lavalle, Gladu and Benoit.

When the survey crews arrived in 1880-81 there were already a few white settlers squatting in Sifton. Sixteen Metis families were reported, mostly along the Assiniboine close to the south branch of the Fort



Ellice Trail. This cart trail cut across the north part of what is now Sifton Municipality with a branch running south to Oak Lake and on to Moose Mountain. Oak Lake was important to the freight cart trains as a source of huge oaks for Red River cart repairs which were done by Mr. Berard, Mrs. A. Carpenter's father. The Metis had established themselves on long narrow river lots and lake shore holdings which were incorporated into the 1880-81 land survey. The people who had carried out improvements were allowed to make first entry for homestead or sale and so retain their homes. Most of these people were hunters, trappers and/or farmers. Because of this they usually selected land close to trade routes (rivers and trails) complementing their prime interests which demanded wooded areas, marsh areas, open water and shelter. Hence, for the most part, their farms were marginal.

After the 1880-81 survey white settlers began coming in greater numbers and most Metis soon moved to undeveloped Saskatchewan. The white man's fences and herds, by and large, spoiled the Metis' informal and communal use of the land. They felt a lack of respect from Ontario and British immigrants and also felt their way of life slipping away.

The survey laid the land out in square mile parcels (sections) which were in turn subdivided into half and quarter sections. This created a different pattern of settlement — some areas having a family on every quarter of a homestead section.

The coming of the railway also influenced the pattern of settlement as many people wanted to be within a reasonable hauling distance of markets, supplies and postal service. This, of course, lent itself to the growth of towns — Oak Lake and Griswold being the largest centres in Sifton and the southern part of Woodworth Municipality. The villages of Routledge, Deleau and Belleview also sprang up.

The section survey reserved 99 foot road allowances between the sections to be used for road building when the need demanded. Once farmers began fencing land, this need became more pronounced and the municipalities took on the headache of trying to construct and maintain serviceable roadways. This led to later settlers trying to find land close to the best road systems leading to the railway towns.

In the earliest homestead years farms were scattered because of distance, lack of people, varying soil conditions, poor drainage and the fact that only even-numbered sections were designated as homestead land and the odd-numbered parcels being held for sale by the Government, the Hudson Bay Company, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canada North West Land Company. However, for various special

reasons, this pattern was not completely adhered to in every township lying within railway reserves. Hence discrepancies in the pattern may be noted on some maps.

Because of the dearth of trees, except in the creeks and valleys of Sifton and Woodworth, many farm people, by 1889, were requesting that the government supply them with tree seeds and cuttings to plant farm windbreaks to provide shelter from bitter winter winds and summer heat. In the 1890's these were being shipped to prairie farmers from the Dominion Experimental Station established at Brandon in 1887 and later from government nurseries at Indian head. By 1901 the service was free.

Thus the pattern and character of the country-side began to change as windbreaks grew up, a few prairie bluffs began to appear and more and more fences and roads were constructed. Telegraph and telephone poles, towering grain elevators, slim church spires, stately windmills and bridges, huge 2½ story brick, stone and wood houses replacing homestead shanties, tremendous barns with huge haylofts and finally micro-wave towers, TV aerials, hydro power lines and sub stations have produced marked changes on the skyline pattern of Sifton and Woodworth, as elsewhere on the prairies.



Birtle Land Titles Office 1880 (building in foreground) where many Woodworth settlers walked to file their homestead claims.

### Survey

The fields lie flat, symmetrical, designed  
 In sections, quarters, halves. Six sections make  
 A township. Two dimensional, they stretch  
 Of equal length and breadth, barring mistakes.  
 Correction-lines fix that. The rivers wind,  
 But not the roads. As some great hand might etch  
 In parallels across more parallels,  
 They run straight on — endless, it almost seems,  
 To reach infinity. To south and north  
 No third dimension rises but the dreams  
 Of man. Quilted in square on square, all else  
 Is diagrammed in flatness on the earth.

— Thomas Saunders



\$10. Inspection fee also paid.

DOMINION



LANDS.

INTERIM HOMESTEAD RECEIPT.

No 6636

Office of Dominion Lands,

Souris District.

1 June 1885.

I Certify that I have received from William

Harrison of Muskawata P.O. man.

the sum of Ten Dollars, being the office fee for Homestead Entry  
for NW Quarter of Section 36

Township 9 Range 24 West of 1st Meridian,

and that the said William Harrison is, in consequence of such  
entry and payment, vested with the rights conferred in such cases by the provisions  
of the "Dominion Lands Act, 1883," respecting Homestead rights.

In Justice

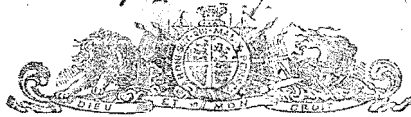
Local Agent.

(OVER.)

Price  $\$$  50. an acre.

50¢ an acre paid =  $\$79.65$

DOMINION



LANDS.

RECEIPT FOR PRE-EMPTION ENTRY FEE.

206637

Office of Dominion Lands,

Louis District.

1 June 1885

I Certify that I have received from William Harrison

the sum of Ten Dollars, being the office fee for Pre-emption Entry in connection with Homestead Entry for W. Quarter of Section

36 Township 9 Range 24 West of 1<sup>st</sup> Meridian, and that the said William Harrison

is, in consequence of such entry and payment, vested with the rights conferred in such cases by the provisions of the "Dominion Lands Act, 1883," respecting Pre-emption rights

Wm Forster Local Agent.

15 (OVER.)

This Certificate is not valid unless countersigned by the Commissioner of Dominion Lands.

# Certificate of Recommendation for Homestead Patent.

Department of the Interior,

*Oak Lake*

Office of Dominion Lands,

(2581<sup>2</sup>)

*A. J. W.*

*Brandon Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1888*

**C**ertify that *William Harrison*

who is the holder of a Homestead and Pre-Emption Entry for *A<sup>2</sup>*

of Section Number *36* Township *9* Range *24*

West of the *1<sup>st</sup>* Meridian, has complied with the provisions of the law required to

be conformed to, in order to entitle him to receive a patent for such Homestead, and that I

have recommended the issue of such patent.

Countersigned this *27<sup>th</sup>*

day of *Nov* 188*8*

*H. H. Smith*

Commissioner of Dominion Lands.

*W. W. Miam*

Local Agent.

133900

# MUNICIPALITY OF SIFTON.

TREASURER'S OFFICE.

OAK LAKE,

Jan 11<sup>th</sup> 1887

No. 51  
21 90

Received from *Wm. Johnson* the sum of *21 90* Dollars,  
being Taxes due on the following lands, to the 31st of December, 1887, viz:

TRACT OF SEC.	SEC.	Tp.	RGN.	MUNICIPALITY OF		
				<i>Sifton</i>	=	0
<i>1/2</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>24</i>				
				<i>Levi Rebole</i>		<i>24.32</i>
						<i>2.43</i>
						<i>21 90</i>

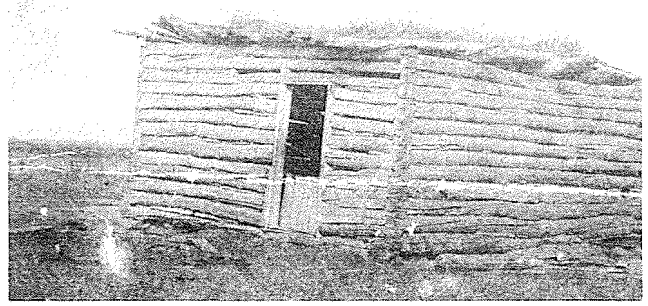
*Wm. Johnson*

## Influences on Settlement

Dominion Lands disposal policy from 1881 to 1920 resulted in as many people as possible being established on prairie farms and urged to begin crop production immediately. In Sifton many people tied by family, friendship, religion or ethnic association settled as close together as possible on small farms located on the best land at their disposal. Later, settlers found only poorer lands whether on Dominion, Hudson Bay Company, C.P. Railroad or Canada North West Land Company holdings.

These sturdy pioneers command respect from following generations in the way they adjusted to the strange and often cruel environment in which they found themselves in the early stages of settlement. Failure rate, in relation to the number of people involved, was actually quite low. In the Prairie Provinces 41% of homesteads filed between 1870 and 1930 were not patented by the enterer. However Manitoba's statistic in this respect was only about 20%.

Before too much time had elapsed, settlers realized that their farming operational base of a 1/4 section was not of good economic potential for successful farming and neither had it been intended as such. The system tied up much too much land in quarter section holdings, as after a time the pre-emption scheme was withdrawn in an attempt to locate more and more people in the area. In many cases this prevented



Home Sweet Home at Oak Lake 1891 (Manitoba Archives).



1890 Frame Home at Oak Lake (Manitoba Archives).

farmers who were able, from buying adjacent lands in order to expand.

In the long run, unsteady market prices and wildly fluctuating weather conditions defeated the goals of many hard working, well intentioned homesteaders. Some left this area in the hope of greater success in Saskatchewan and the U.S.A.

The homesteaders knew that a viable farming operation depended on larger farms but the Canadian Government kept pouring in more and more settlers, the theory being — the more people, the more farm produce for railway shipment and the more freight transport to the west to supply their needs — how else was the railway to pay for its construction and upkeep as well as show a good profit? Yes, the west's duty was to pay for the railway through the purchase of C.P.R. lands and the payment of freight rates.

Settlers already established had to pay relatively dearly to acquire adjacent land up for sale, to snap up nearby deserted lands or to buy out those who wished to move on. In spite of the high risk many farmers opted to mortgage their holdings in the name of expansion. When weather, production and good prices failed to synchronize then some of the original Sifton settlers, as well as those from other areas across the west, "lost their shirts" on Mortgage Road — a bitter price to pay on the altar of transition. Because of the pressure of immediate problems the price of transition was also extracted from those who succeeded in riding the storm. One of the greatest worries was extensive soil exhaustion which pointed to the need for decided changes in farm management.

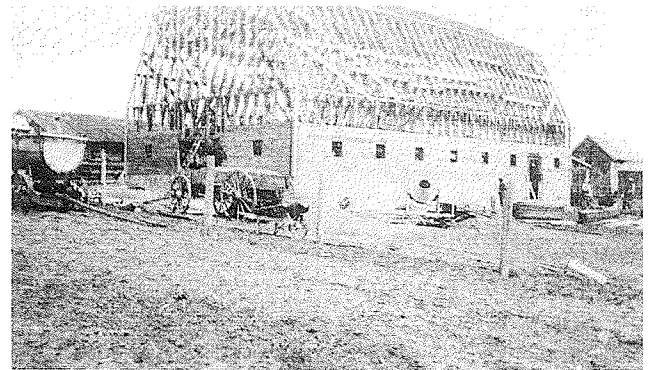
World War I brought about an upswing in market demands creating improved prices of which local farmers took full advantage. The demand for wheat increased greatly as did that of other commodities such as beef. This plum was readily available to many well established farmers who had already begun expansion in land holdings and diversification in production. Others followed suit. Thus it may be proper to say that World War I speeded the transition from a one product economy to one of wider diversity.

Sudden full scale breakdown of farm markets and the Canadian economy in general resulted in high unemployment and drastically curtailed incomes. This period which began in the fall of 1929 and continued for the best part of 10 years, brought many farmers to destruction.

It was ironic that in the 1930's Nature's precipitation system also hit a serious snag resulting in a prolonged drought on the Canadian Prairies. In blinding dust storms top soil was whirled into ditches, sloughs, bluffs and fence lines by punishing hot dry winds. Farmers experienced desperate short-

ages of feed, seed and marketable produce and cursed low prices, tumbling weed and the government. A shortage of drinking water for house and livestock, myriads of grasshoppers and millions of gophers compounded a well nigh hopeless situation. Many farmers, merchants and tradespeople alike had neither the resources nor the fortitude to wait out such a long period, hence economic and often enough psychological ruin were the harvest.

One good thing to come out of this chaos was The Prairie Farm Assistance Act that worked on water control and conservation. Assistance was given farmers to dig huge dug-outs in drainage courses to provide adequate farm water supply. Farmers were encouraged to espouse better farming practices, such as planting pasture and hay mixtures in areas prone to wind erosion. Such measures had been ignored throughout the settlement era in the face of the overriding concern for survival. Water conservation dams, planned and put into action, found great favour as normal precipitation again became the pattern and farmers once more began to prosper.



William Gompf's new barn 1930.

## Politics In A New Land

To trace the political development of the Sifton and Woodworth area and its relationship to the Province of Manitoba and the Dominion of Canada may prove interesting and educational for some of our readers, and may even hold a few surprises for others.

Because this is such a broad topic and very difficult to deal with, we are giving the highlights only, in the hope that this will show the pattern of development as it took place in the province and in this area.

1867 — Upper and Lower Canada (now Ontario and Quebec), New Brunswick and Nova Scotia became the Dominion of Canada through the passing of the British North American Act by the British Parliament. Practically all of the remaining territory west of Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains and north to the Arctic Ocean became known as the Northwest



Territories of Canada. Queen Victoria was the reigning monarch of the British Empire, of which the Dominion of Canada was a part. The Marquis of Lorne was the Governor General of Canada and Prime Minister Sir John A. McDonald, Conservative, headed the new Dominion Government.

1870 — Manitoba, the "Postage Stamp" province was formed and joined Confederation becoming Canada's fifth province. It was bounded on the north by 50°30' North Latitude, which runs through the lower end of Lake Winnipeg, on the south by the 49th parallel which runs along the United States border, on the west by the 99th meridian just east of Carberry and on the east by the 96th meridian about half way between Winnipeg and The Lake of the Woods. The province had an area of 14,340 square miles and a population of 11,962. The Honorable John Norquay was elected Premier of Manitoba and The Honorable Joseph Cauchon appointed Lieutenant Governor.

1871 and 1873 — The present Woodworth area, then of the Northwest Territories, had no white settlers, but it was surveyed by Dominion Lands Survey crews, anyway. Lt. Col. James Stoughton Dennis was then Surveyor General of Dominion Lands. The surveyors constructed their mounds and set up their wooden marker posts on the north east corner of each section. The later surveys used iron posts.

However, not much in the way of settlement took place for another eight or ten years as the main thrust of settlement did not begin until 1881, 82, 83.

1880 — In what is now known as Sifton, then part of the Northwest Territories, a survey crew headed by Wm. Pearce did the township outlines first. By November 1881 the townships had been surveyed into sections, half sections and quarter sections. It was an extremely difficult job because of the excessive amount of water in the large low-lying regions.

Ideally, the sections are one square mile in area and contain 640 acres. Owing to a 0.15% surveying error which, for some reason was unresolvable, Sifton has a working figure for "total acreage" of 207,680 acres. This amounts to 320 acres more than the 'ideal' total. (Loveridge)

1880 — The revised Manitoba Act divided the province into six counties for the purpose of local government. These counties were Selkirk, Marquette East, Marquette West, Provencher, Lisgar and Rat Portage. Rat Portage (Kenora) was soon assigned to Ontario.

1881 — The Manitoba boundaries were extended to the present boundary of Saskatchewan on the west. The northern boundary was fixed at 52°51', near Winnipegosis. Now, for the first time, the few settlers who were living in present day Sifton and

Woodworth could indicate "Manitoba" instead of "North West Territories" when writing home. In 1884 the territory was extended east to the present Ontario boundary.

It wasn't until 1912 that Manitoba assumed its present size. The extension shifted the northern boundary of the province to the 60th parallel of latitude and Hudson Bay.

In 1881 the County of Brandon (the new territory added on the west) was added to the existing five, Selkirk, Lisgar, Provencher, Marquette East and Marquette West.

There was further arranging of territory that year. The Province was divided into three judicial districts — Eastern, Central and Western. The Western Judicial District headquarters were set up in Brandon. Thus we have Brandon County Court and the County Court Judge. In the early days, when the Western Judicial Board visited in the north east part of Dennis County they met at the home of J. W. Helliwell.

The "added territory" of the province was divided into five provincial constituencies. The first election in 1881 saw the Honorable John Norquay remain as Premier of Manitoba. J. W. Sifton was elected in Brandon, Stephen Clement in Birtle, John Davidson in Dauphin, John Crear in Minnedosa and J. P. Alexander in Turtle Mountain.

In the second provincial election Mr. J. E. Woodworth defeated J. W. Sifton. Thus Mr. Woodworth became the second member for the Brandon Electoral Division.

The County of Brandon was very large for administrative purposes so it was divided into counties numbered 22, 23, 24 and 25. Number 22 remained Brandon, 23 became Turtle Mountain, 24 was Souris and 25 became Dennis County, the area in which we live.

Also, in 1881, the Municipal Act set up the machinery whereby Dennis County and eight other Manitoba counties could be divided into municipalities.

For a time county system of administration was tried but even the smaller area of Dennis County proved too difficult to handle and a new arrangement had to be made. The single township municipality which worked well in populous Ontario had been proven unsuccessful in other parts of Manitoba so the multi-township municipality was planned for Dennis County.

1883 — The Municipal System as we know it became a reality when Dennis County was divided into four municipalities; Woodworth, Sifton, Pipestone and Wallace. Woodworth Municipality was named for Joseph E. Woodworth, Conservative, elected M.L.A. that year. It included townships 11



and 12 and about half of 10, in ranges 23, 24 and 25. The other part of 10 had been allotted to the Oak River Indian Reserve, Number 58 when the reserve areas had been designated in the 1870's. This reserve is now known as Sioux Valley.

The Rural Municipality of Sifton (possibly named for the first M.L.A. for Brandon, John Sifton) emerged from the subdivision of the county with an area of 324 square miles containing townships 7, 8 and 9 in ranges 23, 24 and 25. In this area is to be found the "Big Bend" of the Assiniboine River where it seems to attempt to meet with the Souris River bend.

1884 — The Electoral District of Brandon had its name changed to Lansdowne Constituency in honor of Lord Lansdowne, then Governor General of Canada. It is surprising how many events and buildings in Dennis County seem to have been named for this man.

In later years the Provincial Constituencies have been changed several times. Lansdowne Constituency was absorbed by Brandon West, Souris-Killarney, Arthur and Virden. Now the Municipality of Sifton is in Arthur Constituency and is represented by Jim Downey of Melita. Woodworth Municipality is part of Virden Constituency whose M.L.A. is Morris McGregor, a farmer at Kenton till recently. In 1979 this constituency was extended on its northern boundary to take in the south half of the Birtle-Russell riding. In October 1981 McGregor indicated his intention to retire from politics after representing his constituency for 20 years.

The first municipal elections in Sifton and Woodworth Municipalities were held in 1884.

The first Woodworth Municipal Council met in the farm home of John Parr. At that meeting, By-law #4 was passed authorizing the sub-division of the municipality into six wards, each to be represented by one councillor.

The council meeting place rotated between Ralphton, Rowan and Verity Schools until Kenton Hall was available in 1910. Since then Kenton has been the municipal seat and now the meetings are held in the Municipal Hall constructed in 1974.

The first Council of Woodworth was made up of — J. W. Helliwell, Reeve; Thomas J. Todd, Secretary; and councillors — John Bond Sr., Thomas Speers, Wm. Shaw, Archie Steven, James Gee and Thomas Nichols

Sifton's first meeting was held in Sandhurst School. Edward Dickson became the first Reeve; W. G. Knight, previously Secretary-Treasurer of Dennis County, now became Sifton's first secretary-treasurer. Some of the councillors were Mab Marion, M. Ray Sr. and Robert Sutherland Sr. The municipal seat

for Sifton is Oak Lake and meetings are held in the Municipal Hall every second Tuesday.

Two interesting pieces of information are available. Mr. Fred Gould Sr. served as reeve for Woodworth Municipality for 44 years. Previously he had served six years as councillor. Mr. J. W. Helliwell served as reeve of Woodworth Municipality from 1884-1889. Then he moved to Sifton Municipality and served as reeve there. He is the only person we know of who served as reeve of two municipalities.

Over the years the councillors of the two municipalities have had several ongoing problems to deal with, two of these being the building of roads and bridges.

One of the first roads in Woodworth made by order of the Council was constructed in 1890. The road was staked out and R. K. Smith was appointed pathmaster. With oxen he plowed a furrow for each cart wheel. The center track would soon be worn down by ox and horse.

According to a July 31, 1901 issue of the Oak Lake News there was "a very good road out to the lake from town", which undoubtedly made many people happy and just as many dissatisfied and envious.

Frequently a municipality would purchase a right-of-way through a farmer's land in order to circumvent a troublesome wet area. At a December 1900 meeting, Woodworth Council passed the motion: "that this municipality relinquish all claims to the right of way around Shaw's slough on section 25-10-24 in consideration of \$10.00 worth of work performed on the grade through Shaw's slough". "That Ed Slimmon be allowed \$10.00 for the use of a road running through his land for the summer of 1905" is also noted.

Some individuals considered the gravel on public roads as fair game, for, in February 1905 a Woodworth Council motion declared "that each councillor be instructed to take the necessary steps to prevent parties from digging holes in the roads in his ward for sand or gravel or otherwise injuring the roads."

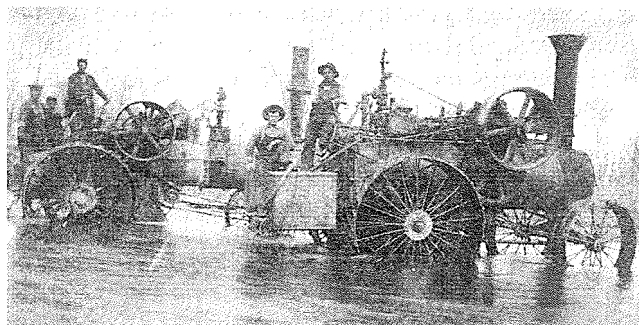
In early years the village of Oak Lake and land close by had great difficulty with poor drainage. In June 1905 the Sifton Council came up with the idea of draining the land by way of Flat Creek. A year later a motion was made that a committee of councillors Cameron and Wright, and the Reeve engage an engineer for the purpose of estimating the cost of drainage into Flat Creek and the Souris River. The project must have been carried out because in December, 1906, is the information that bills re the Flat Creek drainage would be paid. Drainage of the land south of the town is still a problem and new projects are dealt with periodically by the Sifton Council. Because of

this drainage problem, roads in Sifton have to be continually upgraded.

In early times the work of grading through sloughs and low wet lands was all done by horse and man power. There was no such thing as a seat on a scraper and men and horses spent endless hours wearily slogging through mud and slush as they hauled in dirt, scraperful by scraperful, to build grades through sloughs.

The people of this area are fortunate in having the shale hills on the south side of the Assiniboine valley. This shale has been used for many years on newly built roads. When the lumps are pounded down by the passing traffic, it makes a good solid base for gravel. In the early days hauling gravel was a back-breaking job. Most of the work was done in early winter. The false bottom wagons were pulled up to the bank in the gravel pit and the gravel shovelled by hand. There was always a real danger of the gravel caving in on the men and horses. Then the trip was made to the road and the gravel spread by removing the planks in the bottom of the wagon and driving the team slowly along the road.

The settlers living north of the Assiniboine River not only had the problem of building roads, but they had the added difficulty of crossing the river and negotiating the steep hills on either side of the valley.



Fording the River.

In the early days the settlers crossed the river on the ice (a dangerous and difficult route) and in summer they were forced to use ferries operated by the people who lived at strategic crossings.

In 1884 the Woodworth Council applied for provincial aid to pay for the ferry system at Sproat's Crossing. This system operated on the following fee system — "double team 25¢, single 15¢, saddle horse 15¢, loose horse or cow 10¢, passenger 10¢, swine 10¢. Legal hours 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. double rates for overtime. Travel at your own risk".

Enoch Williams operated a ferry across the river north of Oak Lake for several years until it was outdated by the building of Williams' Bridge.

In 1883 the first Kennedy ferry, operated by a Metis named Kennedy, began service at the Assiniboine River crossing near the present Kennedy (Skinner) Bridge. In 1884 Tom Harvey, Dougal McDonald and Duncan McDonald bought a steam threshing outfit. To cross the Assiniboine they loaded the machine on the Kennedy Ferry.

The ferry system was eventually replaced by bridges. In 1886 a timber bridge was built at Sproat's Crossing and the same appropriation made provisions for the construction of a bridge at Williams' Crossing. According to the Grace Watson notes, this bridge was completed in 1887. The expense was equally shared by the municipalities of Sifton and Woodworth. From that same appropriation came \$700.00 as Woodworth's share of the expense for the Griswold Bridge, now known as Hall's Bridge. The contractor for these three bridges was Dave Moore of Oak Lake.

The first Harrison Bridge was built in 1897. The land was donated by George Harrison Sr. and the project was funded by Oak Lake merchants, Sifton and Woodworth Municipalities and the Manitoba Government.

It is thought that the Kennedy (Skinner) Bridge was built about the same time.

From the mid 1880's to the early 1900's logs from the Shell River Valley in the Russell area of Manitoba were rafted in booms down the Assiniboine, through the Oak Lake area and on to Hanbury Mills in Brandon. Floating camps — tents on rafts — supplying cooking, eating and sleeping facilities for the loggers, followed the log booms down the river. That must have been quite a sight!

Edith Rogers' mother, Mrs. Nixon makes mention in her notes of going, in 1903, to Skinner's Bridge to see a log jam. It seems there were too many



Crossing the Assiniboine via the old Harrison Bridge.



The First Kennedy Bridge.

logs at Brandon so they were backed up and held at this bridge.

Upkeep on these bridges was always expensive and at times of flood became a real problem. There are many accounts in the Council minutes of repairs being made to the bridges and the approaches. In 1913 there was another flood and the Sifton Council meeting reports tell of paying Thomas Bailey Sr. \$24.50 for "cleaning out Harrison's Bridge during the flood" and "Mr. Connel \$60.00 for work on Harrison's Bridge".

About 1913 and '14 the Councils began to realize that the bridges and the grades leading to them were too low and they began discussing the replacement of Williams', Harrison's and Skinner's Bridges. It was some time before this happened but in 1921 Williams' Bridge was replaced, in the early 30's, Harrison's and finally in 1939, Skinner's. These bridges have served until the present, but in 1981 a new one is contemplated for the Williams site. The large machinery and high loads transported now, make an open bridge necessary. At present these high loads have to be taken around by Sproat's Bridge, many miles out of the way.

Apart from the very real problems of roads and bridges, the Municipal Councils dealt with many other problems.

Years ago gophers were a real menace and at times the land seemed to be walking away with them. The Councils paid a bounty of 1¢ a tail for years. It was said that some people even paid their taxes with "gopher money". Certainly many kids got spending money by selling the tails. Scarlett's Drug Store advertised gopher poison in 1901 and periodically the municipalities made gopher poison available to the farmers.

Crow hunting was encouraged and contests were even run through the schools and province-wide. Again a bounty was paid, this time on crow's eggs and magpie legs. Bounties have also been paid on coyotes and foxes when they became too numerous.

There are many other problems that the councillors have dealt with but one deserves special mention. Around 1910 and for some time thereafter, many people, suffering from tuberculosis, were sent to Ninette Sanatorium. The Councils of Woodworth and Sifton organized fund drives for the Sanatorium for several years.

This review only touches some of the areas of municipal responsibility relative to changing times. It would seem safe to say that the Municipal Councils have proved themselves to be one of the most important grass roots organizations of our day.

MUNICIPALITY OF WOODWORTH.

STATEMENT OF TAXES FOR YEAR 1898.

M *Thos. Harvey*  
 NW SEC 12 TP 10 RGE 24  
 TOTAL ASSESSMENT \$ 550

Municipal Rate .....@13½ mills.....	7.42
Municipal Commiss'r.....@.1. mills.....	55
Debenture Rate.....@.¾. mills.....	28
Statute Labor Tax.....@....per diem.....	
General School Rate.....@.5. mills.....	2.75
Special School Tax.....@....mills.....	
Total for 1898 .....	11.00
Arrears.....	
Total .....	

On Taxes of 1898 a rebate of 10 per cent. will be made if paid before 31st December, 1898. All taxes unpaid on 31st December, 1898, shall be payable at par until 1st March upon which date in each year 10 per cent. is added on all arrears. All taxes due by residents, unpaid within 30 days of receipt of this notice, may be collected by distress with costs. Cheques must be payable at par at Virden and be marked good.

HILLVIEW, *14/11/1898* W. V. STEVENSON, Secy. Treas.

Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths.

These must be registered within 30 days; failure to register as hereinafter directed subjects the defaulter to a penalty of twenty-five dollars and costs, viz:

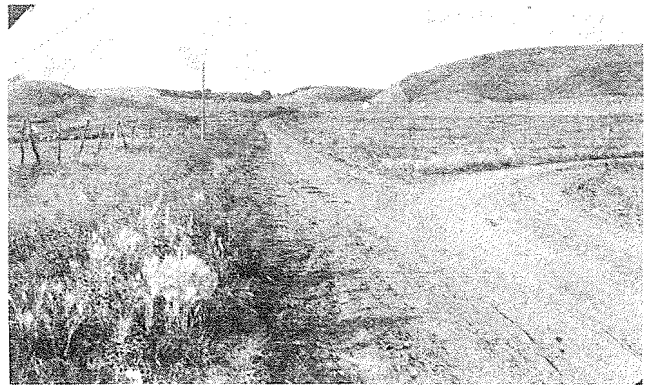
BIRTHS:—By father, mother, guardian, occupier of house in which child was born, or by medical practitioner or nurse present at the birth.

MARRIAGES:—By officiating clergymen.

DEATHS:—(a) before burial, by the occupier of house in which they occur or by some person present at the death; or (b) by the Clergyman performing service over any body without receiving certificate of registration of death. Medical practitioners must register the cause of their patients' deaths within one month.

Forms of Registration can be obtained free from Municipal Clerks and Postmasters, and when filled up will be returned free of postage to Municipal clerks.

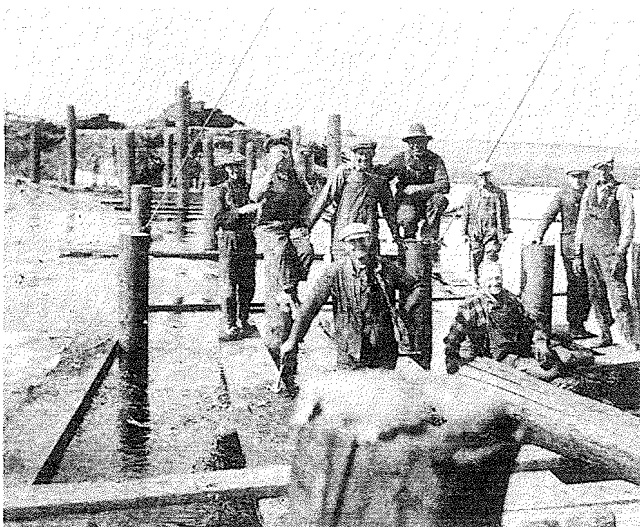
Tax Notice, Thomas Harvey.



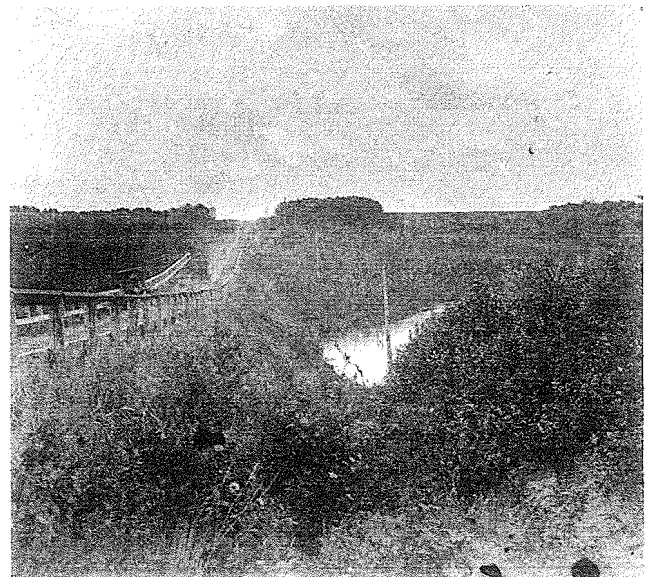
North Road by Harrisons.



Boivin Road Gang at Hagyard School 1930 or 1932.



Building the Gabrielle Bridge 1923.



Highway No. 1 over Flat Creek in the 1920's.





Trans-Canada Highway "Trimmers". D. A. Taylor, Contractor  
1934.



Shale Pit.



All ready for the Judging ring.

# Our Town

## “Our Town — A Dream”

Our town is old — almost a hundred years.  
Our grandparents had a dream, and what is more  
They had Faith in their dream, and they dared to build.  
First they built homes, then schools and churches.  
Yes, stone by stone, and brick by brick, and  
By the sweat of their brow, and their Faith they  
built a Town.

“Oak Lake” they named their Dream.  
It grew and flourished. They were proud of their Dream.  
They lived, they worked, they served.  
In good times and in bad times.

In flood, and drought, blizzards and hail  
They worked . . . mid grasshoppers, mosquitoes and flies,  
They worked, there was much to do.  
They were building a Dream, for me, and for you.  
On the bald prairie they built their Dream.  
Without benefit of electricity, pavement or fire  
protection.

But — they planted trees — our trees — for beauty.  
And they grew tired — and they left us their Dream.  
Let us have Faith, and perhaps we too, may dare to  
dream.

Gwen Dean



C.P.R. Yards, Oak Lake 1894.



## Introduction

Life in the pioneer communities had certain common characteristics. The trading centers were established, and sometimes moved to new sites, according to the needs of the people. The first settlements were along the rivers because water was the first means of transportation. However, with the building of the railways the importance of water transportation disappeared and towns sprang up all along the rail lines. These towns were established in close proximity to each other. In the beginning this was a blessing because the farmers could travel the relatively short distances to their town to sell their produce and buy their supplies. Each center had a basic pattern of trades and professions. There were certain types of goods and services necessary in each community and usually these were provided as certain people moved into the towns and established themselves. Sometimes a lawyer, dentist or veterinarian served two small communities but there wasn't very much dependence on the larger centers such as Brandon or Winnipeg.

Usually, each town had its blacksmith and harnessmaker to take care of the horses and the farm implements. A carpenter, a tinsmith, a shoemaker and sometimes a tailor and milliner made and repaired the articles needed in the home. The bricklayer and plasterer were sometimes trained, sometimes the carpenter in another garb. The town required a doctor, a lawyer, a town clerk and a bank manager. Along with these professionals went the minister, the school principal and a doctor, a highly respected group. Two or three general stores, a hard-

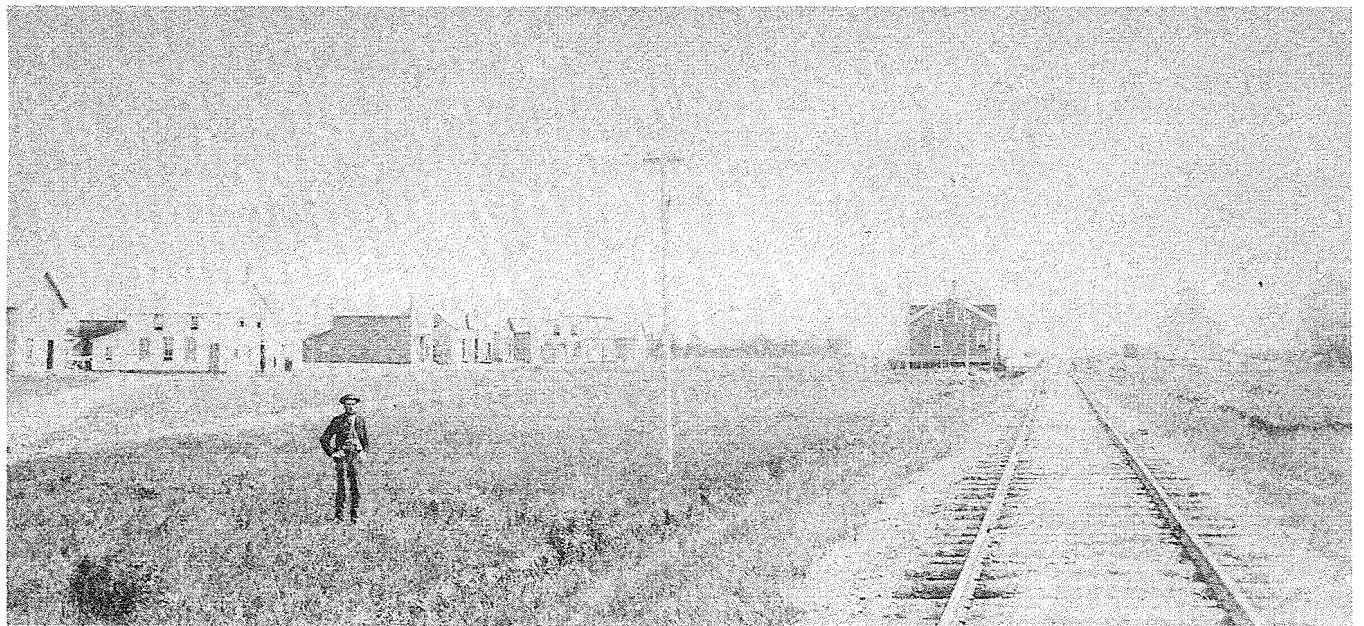
ware, a lumber yard, a butcher shop, a restaurant and hotel, and a Chinese laundry supplied the necessary services. The insurance and implement sales were handled on the side, as extra income for someone with another business. One other group of people swelled the population. These were the casual workers; the mill workers, track men, shop clerks and elevator men — the working force of the town.

These people formed the nucleus of almost every town established in southern Manitoba in the 1880's and 90's and Oak Lake was no different. Our town had its stores, harness shops and hotels the same as did every other small town along the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. However, the town was different from others in its very beginning and we find this story fascinating. Oak Lake, or Flat Creek as it was called, was for one winter the stopping place of the C.P.R. in its race for the Pacific in the 80's. It is the story of that winter and the following summer that makes Oak Lake's history so interesting.

## The Canadian Pacific Railway

The contract to build the Canadian Pacific Railway was given royal assent in February, 1881. The plans had been ten years in the making but now work could go ahead. The railway was to be built in sections, and one of these sections was to be across the Canadian prairies, from Winnipeg 900 miles to the Rocky Mountains.

The company had been given certain stretches of railway that had already been completed. One of these was a branch line from Winnipeg to the Minnesota border, known as the Pembina Branch. This line became the shipping route from the east because



C.P.R. Yards Oak Lake 1886.

the section between Fort William and Selkirk was not yet completed. The second section given to the company was a very flimsy line about seventy miles long between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie.

Construction of the railway was to proceed in four stages. The surveyors would locate the line, lay out the curves and gradients and drive stakes along the center line for the navies, as the work crew members were called.

Next the road bed would be graded ready to lay steel. A swath sixty-six feet wide would be cut out of the brush and rocks or across the prairie and horse drawn scrapers would make a ditched embankment four feet high.

The third job was to lay the steel. Ties or "sleepers" were placed at right angles across the grade and parallel rails were to be laid on them and spiked in place. Fishplates connected one rail to the next.

Last, the line would be "ballasted"; the space between the ties would be filled with crushed gravel so that the line would not shift. Separate work crews were to be assigned to each of these jobs and they would follow each other as the job moved forward.

In the spring of 1881, Winnipeg became the headquarters for the western section of the C.P.R., as the railway company was now commonly called. That year the plans were to update the section from Winnipeg to Portage la Prairie and to proceed as far west as possible. Winnipeg became the busy center for the marshalling of men, horses and supplies and work began in May of that year. During the summer of 1881 the roadbed was completed as far west as present day Moose Jaw and steel was laid to Flat Creek, mile 169 west of Winnipeg.

In January, 1882 a new contract for the completion of six hundred and seventy miles of track between Flat Creek and Calgary was given to General R. B. Langdon of Minneapolis and D. C. Shepherd to St. Paul, U.S.A. It was felt that no Canadian company existed that could tackle the job and it was probably true. W. C. Van Horne, president of the company, set the goal for Langdon and Shepherd of five hundred miles of completed track in 1882. Van Horne had ten years to complete the nationwide railway but he was determined the work would be finished in a much shorter time and so he set out next to impossible goals.

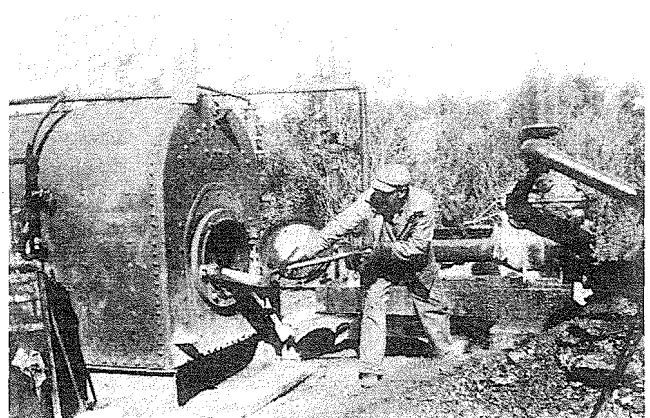
Immediately after the contract was signed, Langdon and Shepherd advertised for three thousand men and four thousand horses. Winnipeg became the gathering point for the men and supplies needed for the gigantic job due to start in the spring. As fast as the men and material were sorted out, they were shipped to end of steel at Flat Creek. Along with all

this traffic, settlers were pouring into Winnipeg and moving all along the line as far as Brandon.

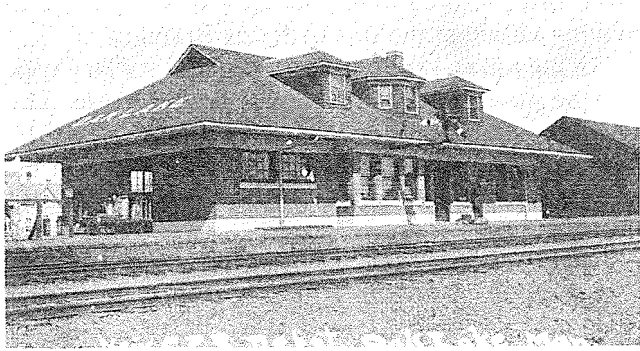
In the fall of 1881 work had stopped at Flat Creek and the men and supplies were wintered there. The late 70's had been years of excessive rainfall and the lowlands of Manitoba were waterlogged. The original railway line was built south of the present one and the Flat Creek camp was placed in the worst possible part of the section. At any time, this land is boggy and during wet years it is almost a swamp.

Into this quagmire were packed fifteen hundred men and many horses and mules. The men spent the winter in tents with no other shelter and the animals stayed in the open. Remember that at that time this part of the country was largely bare of trees. These men were from all parts of the world and had vastly different backgrounds. Along with the railroad officials and engineers, there were a great number of the roughest men imaginable. Also there were the whiskey peddlers. Liquor was prohibited in the North West but the peddlers ignored the law. The story is told of a raid being carried out by the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. Forty-gallon casks of whiskey were smashed and while this was going on, whiskey runners were dashing in every direction with casks in their arms. The problems were compounded by the terrible food and the sickness that resulted from living in the continual dampness of the camp.

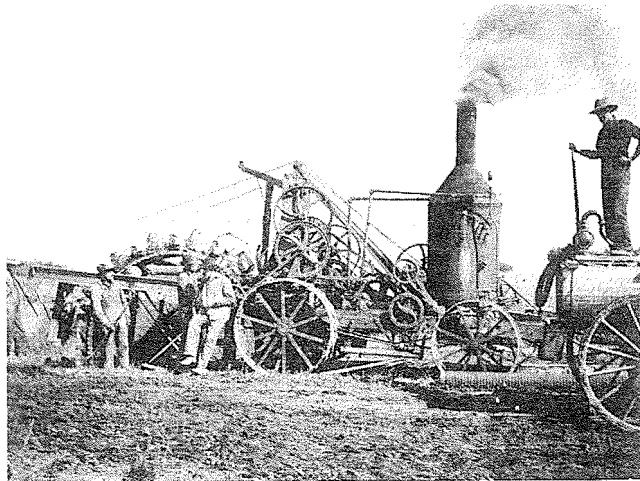
In April of 1882, the first crews pulled out of the camp and work began with a rush. Along with the men went the supplies as they were needed. Some of the men went immediately to the end of the grade at Moose Jaw and some started laying steel beginning at Flat Creek. By July the men, the supplies and the camp followers had all moved on to Broadview and Flat Creek camp was no more. The siding and station were moved further west, opposite the present fair grounds, and later that year the name was changed to Oak Lake.



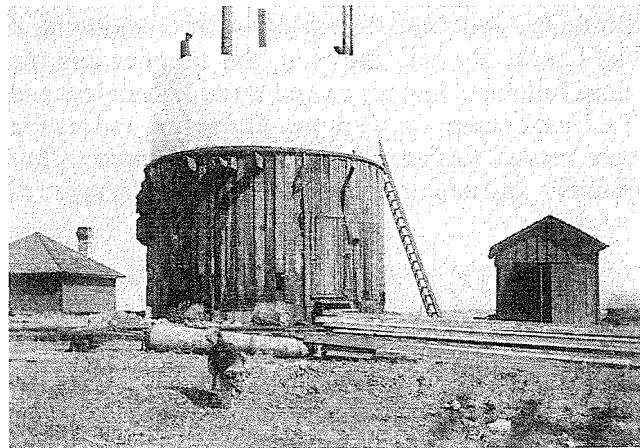
Charlie Goodwin, C.P.R. pump-house man. During transition from steam to oil Mr. Goodwin and his machines worked out doors.



New C.P.R. Station at Oak Lake, Manitoba.



Digging the trench for the C.P.R. water line from the Assiniboine.



Old C.P.R. Water Tank froze and burst. Lumber removed, huge ice block remained.

## Oak Lake

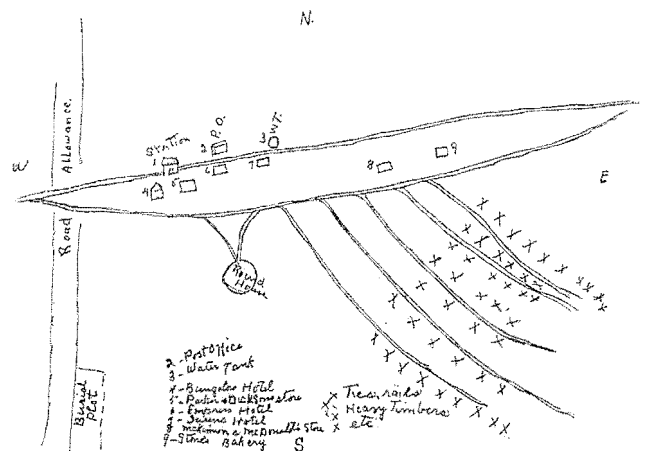
We cannot verify the stories of the beginnings of the town of Oak Lake. The first newspapers available are for 1897 and '98 and by that time the town was fifteen years old. We do have some records of businesses that were taken from the Henderson Directories for the North West Territories. The information

contained in these reports is accurate but not always complete. Along with this, we have many accounts of the early days, but they have been written in the 1930's and 40's and the information in these accounts varies. Because of the variation, the story of early days in the town will have some weak spots, but it is very interesting.

When the railway men moved out of the camp at Flat Creek a new site for the station, section house, round house and water tower was chosen, just south of the present Agricultural Grounds. Frame buildings for the station, section house and round house, as well as a water tower powered by a windmill were constructed. At that time the station was still called Flat Creek and it was not until later that year or early in 1883 that the name was changed to Oak Lake. Some say the name change came about as a result of a petition by the settlers, others that the C.P.R. officials were responsible.

At any rate, the first town by the Agricultural Grounds consisted of the station, the section house, a round house and the water tower and several tents. Parker and Dickson had a large tent used as a general store and post office. Mr. Miller was clerk in the store. Mr. Labourdais had a grocery store and Jerry Icliff had a small whiskey tent. For a time that summer there were several tent hotels and Langdon and Shepherd (the C.P.R. contractors) still had their stable about where Leitch's mill was built. There were still many railway supplies left that summer and these were stacked along short spurs built south from the track and farther east. Also farther east were two more tents, Stone's Bakery and McKinnon and McDonald's Store. The town was a very busy place because settlers were pouring in, getting off at Flat Creek and heading out in all directions for their homesteads.

By 1883 the railroad had been built further west



Andrew Gillespie's map of Oak Lake, 1882.

and the great influx of settlers had slowed down as far as Flat Creek was concerned. By this time the C.P.R. officials began to realize that the water problem was just as bad at the new townsite as it had been at end of steel at Flat Creek. The water to the north and west of the townsite was three or four feet deep. In Parker and Dickson's store planks were put up on trestles and the customers stood on these. The mail bags and supplies were stacked on tables and planks and if either people or supplies got out of place, they were in two feet of water.

Sometime in 1883 the town was moved to its present site. It was now called Oak Lake and the business places had changed. The roundhouse, spur tracks and piles of railroad supplies were gone. Along with them went the tent hotels, Jerry's whiskey tent and Langdon and Shepherd's stable. Now Parker and Dickson ran their general store and post office with Mr. Miller still as clerk. Mr. Labourdais had his grocery store. Mr. Miller had a frame house and this became a boarding house quite by accident. When the tent hotels moved west, there was no place left for people to stay and Mrs. Miller, being a kind hearted person, started taking them in. From this beginning rose her boarding house, which she operated until 1903. It is thought that Mrs. Chatwin, Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Miller were the first women in the

town. About the only other permanent residents were the C.P.R. employees. Mr. Jas. Gillespie was station master, Mr. M. Ronberg was section boss and Mr. Murdock was tankman.

The Henderson Gazetteer and Directory for the North West Territories has interesting information for 1884.

"Oak Lake, a station on the main line of the C.P.R., 165 miles west of Winnipeg. Has telegraph and express offices. Mail daily. Population 45. There are Episcopal and Presbyterian missions here, and two public schools."

The businesses listed were J. H. Labourdais — general store, Marcott — blacksmith, V. Mitchell — blacksmith, Parker and Dickson — general store and W. H. Parker — postmaster.

The list of farmers in the area included — J. Armstrong, D. B. David, James Dixon, Edey, H. R. Foot, H. W. Foot, H. P. Garland, T. E. Griffiths, Henry Hatch, J. Horne, J. G. Horne, Mrs. Hornibrook, W. G. Knight, J.P.; Sandhurst Meteorological observatory, Jas. Lang, R. Lang, R. L. Lang, A. Malcolm, J. Marcott, A. Marion, M. Marion, Jas. McFarlane, W. McFarlane, J. W. McFee, J. McLaren, J. D. Miller, R. Mitchell, V. Mitchell, E. Parker, A. Roberts, Jas. Scott, Snelson, E. Specks,



The First Cameron Store 1889 (Manitoba Archives).

D. Sutherland, J. Sutherland, R. Sutherland, J. J. Walker and J. W. Walker.

By 1885 the town was beginning to settle into the pattern that it would follow for the next twenty years. The first thing that was necessary was a market for the grain the farmers were producing. In 1885, James D. Moore sold shares and built a flour mill. This mill was sold to Leitch Brothers in 1886 and burned in '87. Leitch Brothers rebuilt it and they were able to handle a good portion of the grain sold in Oak Lake. From the Grace Watson notes, "Prior to the building of the mill Wm. Thompson had been operating an elevator for Ogilvies." In the Stevenson diary a notation "January 2, 1885, drew three loads of wheat to Oak Lake . . . 142 bushels at 40¢. January 7th, took 35½ bushels wheat to Plum Creek Mill (Souris) . . . Took load of wheat to Griswold. Couldn't sell it. Was offered 30¢ a bushel for the carload, left it outside in piles, 17 bags . . . October 25, Sold wheat . . . 32 bushels for 25¢."

The method of grain delivery as told by Andrew Jackson was a tedious business. "Grain was brought in sacks, dumped on small scales, lifted by hand and carried up a plank and dumped by hand. There was no hopper until the Moore mill was built, when scales as well as an elevator were installed. During the winter of '87 and '88 grain deliveries were so heavy that it was impossible to accommodate the influx. The elevator proved inadequate and often the railway was blocked, so sacks of grain branded with the

owner's name were piled in the streets and avenues, often in piles six feet high, awaiting shipment. As space was found bags were removed for shipment and others were added." This went on most of the winter. These elevators weren't elevators as we know them. They were simply long single story warehouses. Nevertheless, the total wheat market for Oak Lake amounted to 125,000 bushels in 1885. It is thought that this was not from a single crop year but had been stored up previously, waiting for sale.

The first hotel was built by Wm. Thompson in 1885. That same year Mr. Cook built the Leland Hotel, the same building that houses the Oakland Hotel today. A third hotel, The Manitoba, was built by Mr. Jas. Andrew in 1900, but the night before it was to open, it burned to the ground. Arson was suspected.

During the next twenty years the town continued to grow as its business people tried to keep pace with the needs of the people in the trading area. People continued to move into the town and by 1889 the population was 200, by 1905, 500. Henderson's Northwest Gazetteer and Directory gives detailed information for 1905. It has been reprinted here in its entirety. This list shows that the town now offered the services required by a settled, prosperous community. The business people were well established now and numbers of them remained in the town for many years.



# THE EMPIRE TYPEWRITER

CANADA'S STANDARD TYPEWRITER

PRICE \$60.00

AIKINS & PEPLER

Agents Man. & N. W. T.

WINNIPEG, MAN.

Oak Bluff

GAZETTEER AND DIRECTORY.

Oak Lake 809

of Macdonald, on the Carman branch of C N R 12 miles southwest of Winnipeg in the provincial electoral division of Morris and municipality of Macdonald. Mails bi-weekly

Postmaster—G P Wastle  
Canadian Elevator Co (3,000)  
Presbyterian Church, Rev Stephenson,

**OAK HAMMOCK, Manitoba.**

A post office on Sec. 25, Tp. 13, Rg. 3, east of 1st Mer., in the municipality of St. Andrew's, eastern judicial district. Nearest railway and telegraph. Selkirk, 6 miles

Postmaster—Chas. Johnstone.

**OAK LAKE, Manitoba.**

A station on the main line of the C.P.R., 165 miles west of Winnipeg, in the municipality of Sifton, western judicial district. Mails daily. Has post, telegraph and express. Methodist, Episcopal, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Churches, public school, flour mill and four elevators.

Elevator capacity—100,000 bushels  
Population, 1905—500

Postmaster—A H Campbell

Churches.

Anglican—Rev S Ryall rector  
Methodist—Rev J W Johnson pastor  
Presbyterian—Rev W A McLean  
Roman Catholic—Rev J G Bouillon

Anderson Caroline E (estate of) hardware

Andrew James real estate and insurance

Baker William painter

**BANNATYNE ROBERT,**  
Proprietor **LELAND HOTEL.**

Barradell Edward miller Leitch Bros

Bell James carpenter R J Bell

Burns W C live stock

Cameron Angus stone mason

**SYSTEMS**

**Edwards & Ronald**  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS  
20 CANADA LIFE BUILDING, WINNIPEG

**PRINTING**

That is artistic and up-to-date in design, and executed by skilled pressmen, pays the advertiser. This is the **STOVEL** kind. :: :: ::

**The Stovel Co.**  
Winnipeg, Canada

42

## BAR FIXTURES

Pool Tables and Supplies

**J. D. CLARK, Agent, Winnipeg**

**BRUNSWICK-BALKE COLLENDER CO.**

Cameron A & Co (Alexander A Cameron) general merchandise

Campbell Roy clerk T J Parsons

**CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY,**

Alexander Houston agent

Chadwick Herman B clerk Leland Hotel

Clow W A meats

Conner G B miller Leitch Bros

Costley John B livery

Crone A L clerk R L Hood & Co

Dix O C bookkeeper Leitch Bros

Dominion Elevator Co, Richard Leonard agent

Douglas John blacksmith

Edward William agent

Ellis George teamster

Emond Edmund blacksmith

Grey Robert J furniture & undertaker

Harrison George T clerk Arthur Thompson

Helliwell A K livery

Helliwell W J (Helliwell W J & Son) secy and treas municipality of Sifton

Helliwell W J & Son (W J and R J) farm implements

Hibbert Wallace gardener

**HOCKIN ROBERT HICHENS,**

NOTARY,

**FIRE & LIFE INSURANCE,**

**REAL ESTATE & LOANS.**

AGENT FOR

London Assurance, Atlas and Sun Fire Companies.

Dominion Permanent Loan, Home Investment & Savings Associations,

Dominion of Canada Accident and Confederation Life Association.

Norwich Union, Quebec and Royal.

Hogg Thomas barber

Hood R L & Co (Robin L and John R Hood)

Jack Alexander carriage maker

Jordon John carpenter

Lamond A M clerk J R Hood

**ALBERTA PHARMACY**

Phone 342

**NORMAN BLOCK, CALGARY**

CURREY & COPE, Props., 128 8th Ave. W.

Calgary Electrical Engineering & Supply Company

CALGARY

PHONE 328

FIRST STREET WEST COR. TENTH AVENUE

# TAYLOR'S SAFES & VAULT DOORS

CARRUTHERS, JOHNSTON & BRADLEY, 471 Main Street, WINNIPEG.

810 Oak Lake

HENDERSON'S NORTHWEST

Oak River

## LETHBRIDGE COAL

Mined at TABOR, ALBERTA



193  
Lombard

COR.  
MAIN

PHONE  
461

Ledgerwood J S baker  
Ledgerwood J G clerk Leitch Bros  
Leitch Bros (Arch, Angus J and Malcolm) flour mill

LELAND HOTEL,  
ROBERT BANNATYNE, Prop.

Lind David A drayman  
Lind James clerk A Cameron & Co  
McCallum Joseph baker  
McFarlane & Lamond (Donald McFarlane, John G Lamond) meats  
McKechnie N teller Merchants Bank  
McKeiver Joseph farm implements  
McLean Malcolm agent Massey-Harris Co

Marshall R J veterinary surgeon  
MASSEY-HARRIS CO. LTD.,  
MAKERS SEEDING, HAYING  
AND HARVESTING GOODS,  
PLOWS, WAGONS & SLEIGHS,

Mattick H J harness  
MERCHANTS BANK OF CANADA,  
J. B. WALLACE, Manager.

Miller John clerk Arthur Thompson  
Milstead Alfred porter Leland Hotel  
Newlove William miller Leitch Bros  
"Oak Lake News" (weekly) E W Harris publisher

Ogilvie Elevator Co, David Finlay agt  
Orr E E jeweler  
Park Mrs D H  
Parker William H clerk C E Anderson

Parsons Thomas J hardware  
Plews R G clerk Leitch Bros  
Potter S H bookkeeper Joseph McKeiver

Sandell T & J (Thomas and James) harness makers

Scarlett Edward druggist  
Sharp H R real estate and insurance  
Steen Ephriam clerk A Cameron & Co

Stevens Henry lumber  
Thompson Arthur general store  
Thompson A S clerk Arthur Thompson

Thompson Hannah general store  
Tenycke Peter S photographer  
Tolton C L clerk Merchants Bank  
Waldie W L tinsmith C E Anderson  
WALLACE J B.,  
MANAGER

MERCHANTS BANK OF CANADA.  
Wilkinson H tinsmith T J Parsons  
Winnipeg Elevator Co, R T Leonard agent

Wright H A physician  
OAK POINT, Manitoba  
A station on the C N R on Sec 36,  
Tp 17, Rg 5, west of 1st Mer, 60  
miles from Winnipeg

Postmaster—Angus Pritchard  
CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY  
Halldorson J general store  
Lake Manitoba Trading & Lumber Co  
general store

MASSEY-HARRIS CO. LTD.,  
MAKERS SEEDING, HAYING  
AND HARVESTING GOODS,  
PLOWS, WAGONS & SLEIGHS,  
Reykdal (Frank) & Eggerton general  
store

OAK RIVER, Manitoba  
A station on Sec 28, Tp 13, Rg 22,  
west of 1st Mer on the Minota branch  
of the C P R 48 miles from Brandon,  
9 miles from Hamiota; in the municipality  
of Blanchard, Western judicial district.  
Mails daily, except Sunday. Has  
Presbyterian, Anglican and Methodist Churches

## CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

"Scenic Route of the World"

QUICKEST SERVICE TO ALL POINTS  
TICKET OFFICE:  
MAIN ST., COR. McDERMOT

## CANCER CURE. R. D. EVANS, Proprietor BRANDON - MAN.

Two Days Treatment will Cure any Cancer—External or Internal

During this time the affairs of the town had been looked after by the Sifton Municipal Council but as the town had grown so had the agitation for self government. The newspaper carried editorials pointing out the benefits of incorporation and suggesting that Oak Lake was paying for roads and other improvements that were really rural concerns. Finally early in 1907 a vote was taken and the town was incorporated. The Oak Lake News still carried editorials commenting on current issues. The June 20 issue pointed out the kind of men considered necessary for a good council and claimed that these men should have to run for office, not to be elected by acclamation.

The elections were held and the first council meeting was called for July 2nd. The council was sworn in: Mayor, Robin L. Hood, councillors, Alexander Jack, Edward E. Orr, Andrew J. Todd and David A. Lind. At a later meeting, R. H. Hockin was appointed secretary-treasurer at a salary of \$100 a year and J. H. Glass was appointed town constable at \$50 a year. Notice was given that the following by-laws would be introduced at the next meeting:

A. Jack — early closing by-law, dog tax by-law and poll tax by-law.

E. E. Orr — poundkeeper by-law and running at large of animals.

D. A. Lind — a by-law licensing drays and livery stables.

A. J. Todd — a by-law licensing tent shows, pool rooms and transient traders and peddlars.

So the council got down to the serious business of running the town.

A giant celebration had been planned for incorporation and this was held on July 4th. The day started off with a huge parade and the introduction of the new mayor and the council members. The day was rounded off with athletic events, and both a football and baseball tournament.

Ever since that time the Town Council has tried to look after the welfare of the populace. The June 4, 1914 council meeting is representative of the problems handled. The meeting was long and the business items varied. The Board of Trade requested a grant towards a publicity account with a Toronto agency. Mr. Wm. Shaw, director of the Agricultural Society, requested a grant towards the building of a poultry building. Mr. Tipp, as bandmaster, urged the necessity of the construction of a band stand. Fire chief Henry Stevens presented the brigade report and drew attention to certain repairs necessary on one of the engines and the hose.

After these requests, the following motions were made and carried.

— that we grant the Agricultural Society the sum

of two hundred and fifty dollars, one hundred and twenty-five to be expended on a poultry building.

— that councillors McCubbin and Cameron be a committee to find out from the executive of the band what kind of stand they want.

— that fire chief be authorized to turn axles on new fire engine and to dispose of faulty hose.

— that secretary be instructed to write Mr. Adair, thanking him for his services as fireman.

— that in view of the fact that it appears the secretary-treasurer is not being paid enough to look after all the work of the town, that the position be declared vacant.

— that all back yards and lanes be cleaned up on or before June 15th, and that ratepayers be asked to make a general clean-up before July 1st. The meeting was adjourned.

Many projects have been undertaken by the Town Council members but three are very important to the people of the town.

From earliest times the problem of lighting in the homes and the streets was of first importance. Until some system of street lighting could be installed, most people were inclined to stay home at night, or else to grope their way along the dark streets. In 1915 a system of gas street lights was installed, with only qualified success. Gasoline was expensive, the lamp globes broke regularly, and the town caretaker was asking for more money because of the extra work involved in lighting the lamps each evening.

There were a few private lighting systems in town. The Municipal Rink had its own power plant run by a Lister engine.

Audrey Stevens had a garage plant where Bob Spence is now. He used huge storage batteries and supplied power for the Presbyterian Church. Later Selwyn Fall had a power plant that supplied lights for Wallace's store and house; Fall's house, the Presbyterian Church and a few others places. Otherwise, the town was black.

In 1929 a vote was taken on Hydro in Oak Lake but it was defeated. Finally, in 1935 the hydro lines were built south from Kenton and on August 30th, the power was turned on in Oak Lake — a red letter day indeed.

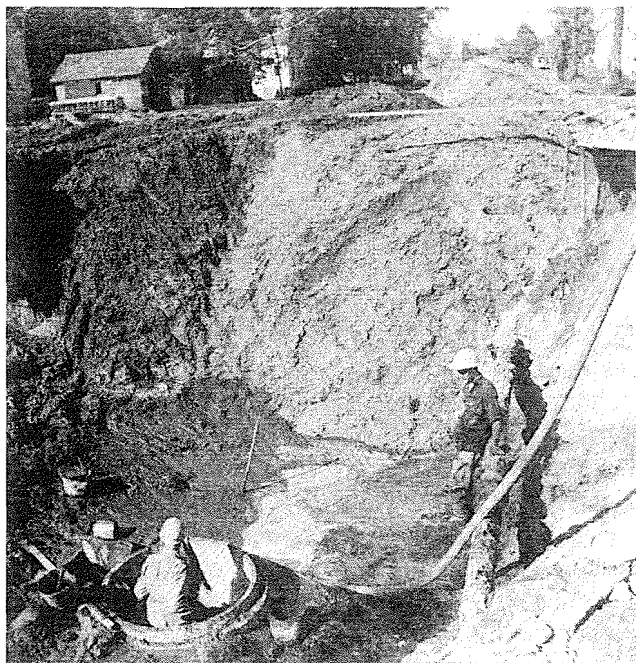
Rutted streets that were hard as rocks in winter and full of water in summer were common in the town. From the very beginning different solutions were tried. In 1891 the streets were shaled and this was hailed as a great improvement. The shale was fairly successful and was used in combination with gravel for many years. Finally in 1965, the two main streets south from the highway were paved. Since then, some of the others have been done and it is hoped that more can be finished in the future.



Snow Removal, Oak Lake Main Street 1940's.

The third problem that was always with the people of the town was water. The first accounts of Oak Lake mention the water that was everywhere. Plentiful supplies of drinking water could be obtained from sand points but the problem was sewage disposal. In 1962, By-law #286 was passed, authorizing the construction of a sewage system for the section of the town north of the Canadian Pacific Railway. A lagoon was constructed north of town and the houses were hooked onto the system one by one. This proved a formidable task because of the high water level and the sandy soil but the job was finally finished and the system has proven to be successful.

Space won't permit further discussion of the life of the town. Instead, some excerpts from the newspaper have been included with the hope that they will



Putting in the Oak Lake Sewer System.



Advertising, 1900's style. Leitch's Mill, Scarlett's Drug Store, Johnston's Drug Store, Pifer's Saddlery, Scales and Carscadden, General Merchants.

give an idea of the kind of trade that went on over the years.

In December 1905, A. Cameron — ladies' skirts \$1.75 to \$4.00, English flanelette, 10¢ a yard, 98 piece dinner sets — \$8.50 and 14 pound boxes of valencia raisins — \$1.25.

E. Scarlett — Christmas gifts in his drug store — books, poetical work, fiction and history, hair brushes 75¢ and \$1.00, collar and cuff boxes, fountain pens, games, shell goods, fancy stationery, gold rimmed eye glasses and toys, toys, toys.

T. and J. Sandell — single and double driving harness at \$10.00 and up.

In 1910 A. Thompson — men's coonskin coats \$35.00 to \$110.00. Mr. Thompson announced that his catalogues had been mailed.

W. W. McCubbin — Mauser rifles for \$5.00.

A. Cameron — imported Scotch blankets for \$4.50 to \$7.00 a pair.

R. J. Grey — Christmas gifts — pianos \$275, 6 octave organs \$95, sewing machines \$20, Edison phonographs \$16, child's sleighs 45¢, hanging lamps \$2.75, iron beds \$4.00, 3 drawer dresser and wash stand \$10.90.

E. E. Orr — seven inch cut glass berry bowl \$3.00, watches — 20 year gold filled case with a good lever movement \$6.00, alarm clocks 55¢.

Ledgerwood's Bakery — 10 loaves \$1.00.

Canadian Pacific Railway — Fare and one third for the round trip between all stations on the main line, Port Arthur to Vancouver.

Fred Simpson, drayman — Ice, big loads, best quality, right prices.

Lansdowne Livery, Patrick and Cochrane — good horse and rigs, suitable wraps and careful drivers.

**1916** Wm. Dean — top grade Overland, 75 at \$900.00.

Noble E. Lyons, Druggist — a complete line of spring tonics, Sarsaparilla, Blood Purifier and Hypophosphites, tennis balls — 25¢, Oak Lake pennants 2/25¢.

A. M. Tipp — auto gauntlets, fine line with collapsible cuffs \$3.75.

A. Cameron — Gossard corsets, they lace in front \$5.00, Fleetfoot tennis boots, \$1.50, \$2.00.

**1919** Oak Lake Bakery, P. H. Piroth — 4 loaves bread 35¢ cookies 15¢ dozen.

G. Walkey, druggist Oak Lake and Griswold — moth balls 40¢ pound, gopher poison 50¢ to \$1.20, sheep dip 5 gallons \$10.00.

A. S. Stewart — Ford trucks complete with body and enclosed cab.

The Merchant Bank — War Bond interest coupons and cheques cashed free.

**1920** Alex Jack — carriage builder, general woodworker, repairing, painting and trimming.

Connell's Garage — Oxo — Acetylene welding of all kinds.

T. C. Butterworth — classic tailored clothes \$35 to \$70.

Steen and Lind — ladies' house dresses \$3.00, ladies' black cotton hose 3/\$1.00.

Dyson's pickles in 1 gallon tins \$1.75.

James Lind — eggs for hatching \$2.00 for 15 White Wyndottes.

G. A. Todd — 2 purebred shorthorn bulls, \$125 each.

E. Thomlinson — Premost seed flax \$6.00/bushel.

**1924** Steen and Lind — 100 pound sacks sugar \$9.50, pickling vinegar gallon 60¢.

Smith and Adams — the Wonder Kidney, Liver and Stomach tonic.

Oak Lake Livery, Norman L. Boyce — first class cars and horses at your service, night and day.

Bank of Montreal, R. N. Bell manager — "A letter is as good as a Call."

W. W. McCubbin — thresher belts, lace leather, rope lagging.

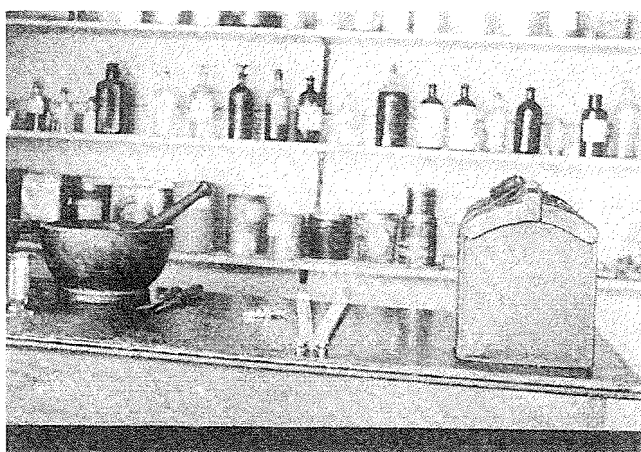
**1937** Grey's — house dresses — \$1.00, \$1.35, table oilcloth squares — 54x54 — \$1.00, Lisle hose — 30¢.

Wallace's — peanut butter 48 oz. tin — 45¢, cocoa — ½ lb. tin 14¢, medium blue chambray shirting — 25¢ yard.

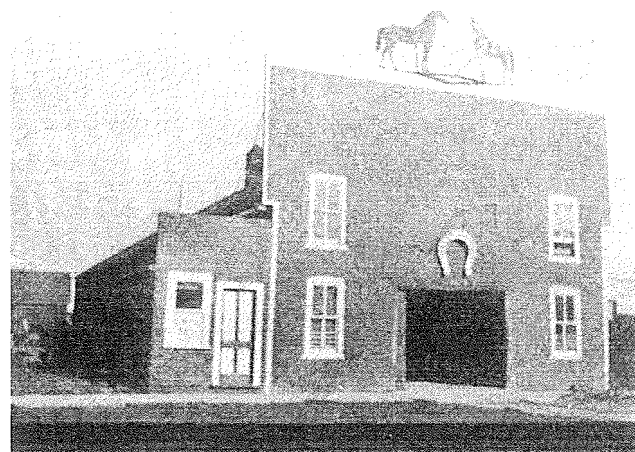
Wallace's Hall — talking pictures — Princess O'Hara.

Strong and Gordon — 16 quart galvanized pails 60¢, green glass cream and sugar 20¢.

Dutton and Patterson — 4 bars soap and cut out book, 23¢, 97 piece dinner set — \$21.50.

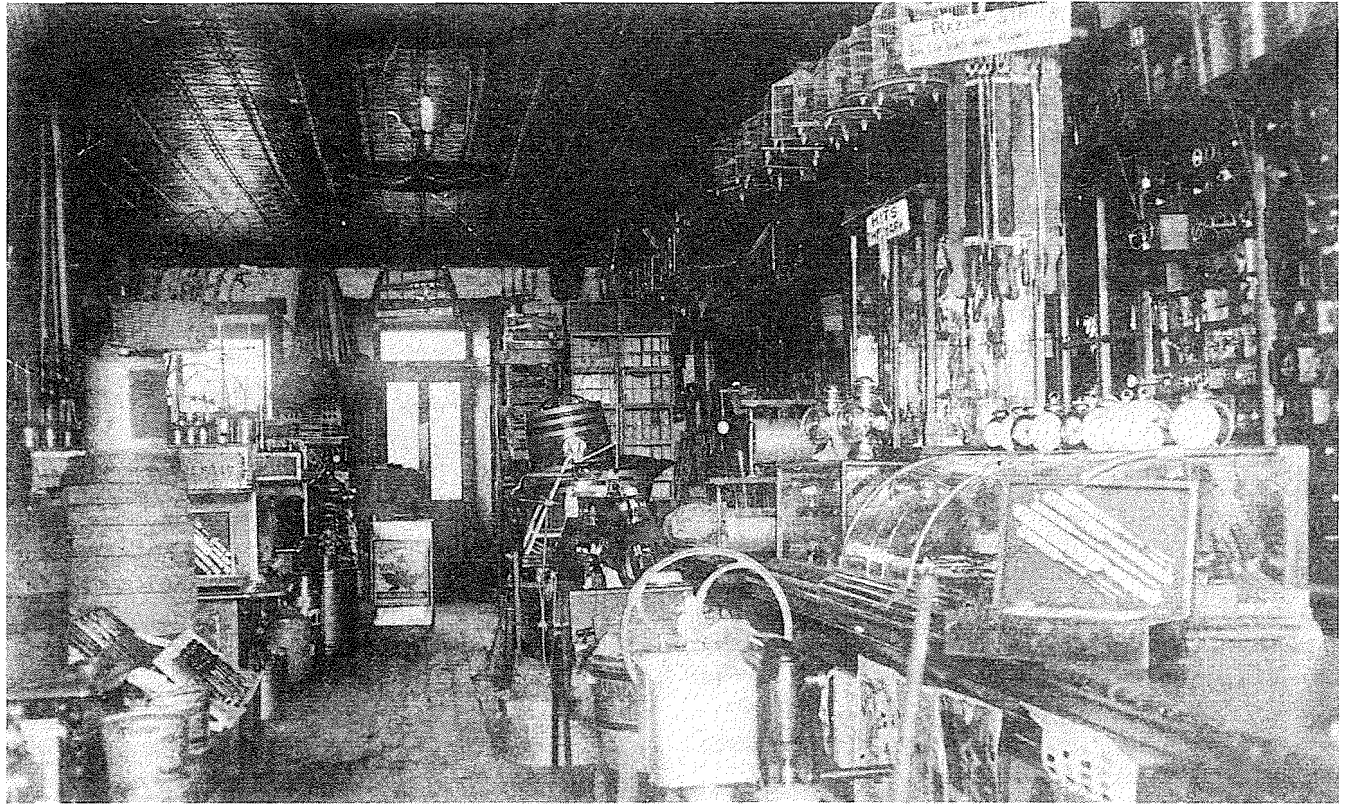


Interior of Dr. McLeish's Vet Office.



Dr. Val McLeish's Veterinary Office attached to Livery Barn.





Interior of McCubbin's Store 1920.



Robin Hood's 1905. Left to Right — Jacques, Robin Hood, Donald McFarlane,



J. S. Ledgerwood Bakery and Delivery Wagon.



Jack and Pete Lamond in the Butcher Shop.

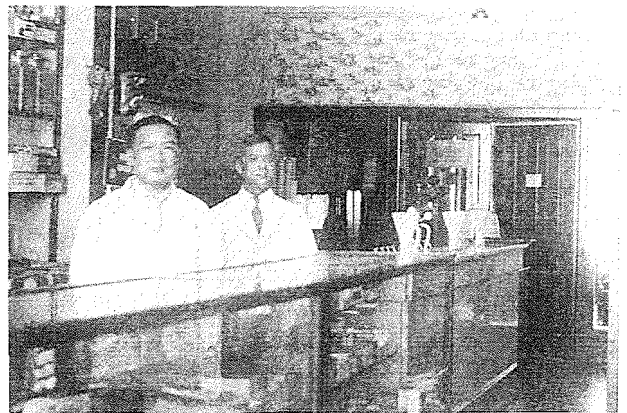




Ed Edmond's Blacksmith Shop. Grandad Emond, Ed Emond. Julius Godin's Woodwork Shop. Log house where the Emonds lived (in background).



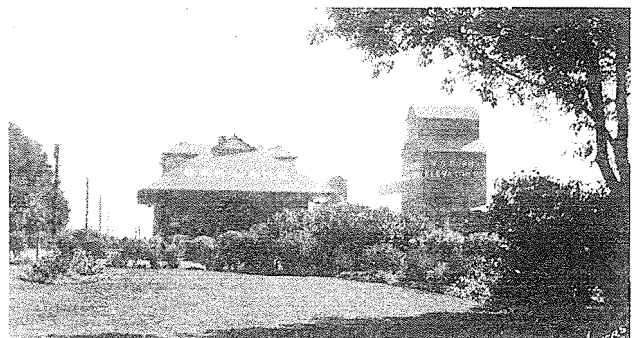
Arthur Thompson's General Store.



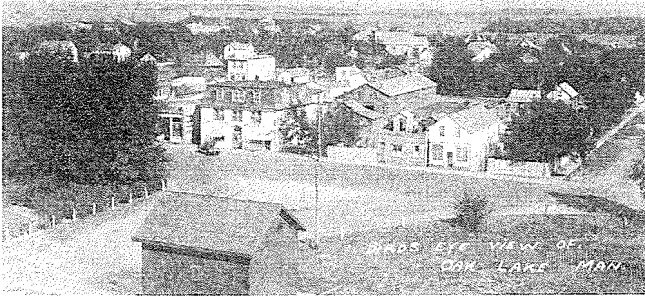
Yin and Fred Dong in their cafe 1940's.



Burns Elevator, C.P.R. Station and Water Tower.



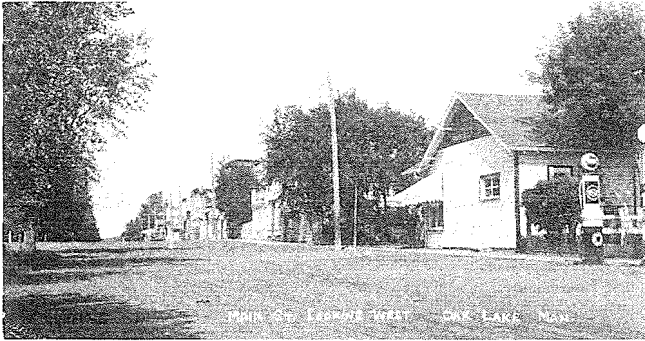
C.P.R. Station and Gardens.



Bird's Eye View of Oak Lake.



Birds Eye View Looking North over Oakwood School.



Looking West up Main Street, Oak Lake.



Main Street Oak Lake, from C.P.R. Station.



Main Street Looking West, in Oak Oak.



2nd Avenue Looking North in Oak Lake.



Back Row (Left to Right) — Earl Lang, Allan Gordon, Lorne Cole, Adolph Fiori, Wes McCubbin, Wilf Carpentier, Ted Le Surf. Front Row — Lawrence Alford, Lawrence Emond, Tony Ducharme.



Young People at Thompson's Star Theatre.



Gertie, Jack Dean's fabled tow truck.

## Industries

Much of the history of Oak Lake is the history of Western Manitoba. After the 1890's few Manitoba towns increased in size, but the log buildings so hastily constructed gave way to more substantial ones of frame, brick and stone. New churches went up, along with schools, town halls and court houses.

The people in these settled areas often were not content for their town to be merely a shipping point and market center; they wanted local industries as well. These industries varied from place to place but bore a remarkable similarity to each other. There were brick yards, potteries, flour mills, sawmills, woolen mills, creameries and cheese factories. Almost all of these were shortlived because of the lack of local material and competition from larger companies such as the Ogilvie Elevator Company or the Lake of the Woods Milling Company. Oak Lake followed the pattern set out in the other towns and had several industries. Some are gone, others remain a viable part of the community.

### The American Pottery Company

The first industry to be attempted in Oak Lake was a pottery. There are clay deposits along the Assiniboine River valley and at Oak Lake and it was hoped that some of this clay could be used for housewares. The information is very sparse but it is thought that the American Pottery Co. operated a business in 1884. The building is supposed to have been on front street, near the present Post Office. The company made crocks and bowls but went out of business — no explanation given. The reason might have been the quality of the clay they were using. In recent years the clay obtained along the Assiniboine has been tested but it is not considered satisfactory for pottery. It fires to a pleasing grey color but is weak and the fired pieces break easily. At any rate, we think the pottery only operated for one year.

## The Brickyard

The brickyard was located on the eastern shore of Oak Lake, where the last little slope from Cherry Bluff dropped sharply to the level area north of The Island. The trail to The Island followed the lakeshore between the water and the brick kiln. It was owned and operated by Amable Marion and his brother Roger. Mr. Berard, father of Mrs. Carberry, built the machinery for the brickyard.

We don't know how long the brickyard was in operation but the Henderson Directories for the Northwest Territories give listings for 1894 and again in 1897. Clay from the lakeshore was used for the bricks and one source said that the clay ran out so the brickyard was closed.

There are several buildings around the countryside made from these bricks — the old Telephone Office, Weatherald's house, Cameron's stable and a few cottages at the lake, among them, Allan Gordon's.

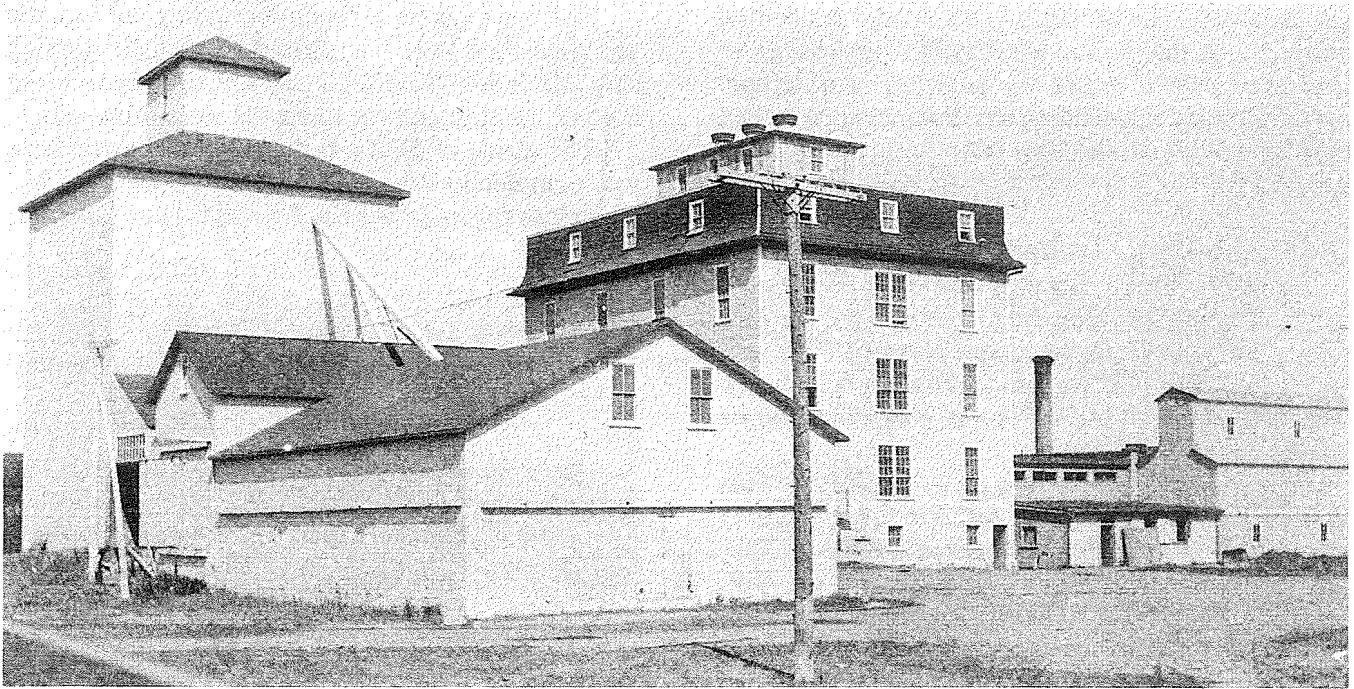
## Leitch Brothers Grist Mill

In 1885 David Moore built a grist mill in Oak Lake. He asked the farmers of the area to donate wheat to pay the cost of starting the business and by so doing started the first co-operative in the town. Mr. Moore operated the mill for one year; then in 1886 sold it to the Leitch brothers, Archie, Angus, Alex and Malcolm. In 1887 the mill burned but it was rebuilt and enlarged to handle the growing volume of business. Messrs. Alex and Archie Leitch later moved away and the two remaining brothers, Malcolm and Angus lived in Oak Lake and ran the business, which included a flour mill, an elevator and a lumber yard.

The mill was of great importance to the community for two reasons. The mill and the office employed between twenty-five and thirty people at any given time. This made a great difference to the people of the town and many of the family histories tell of a man getting his start in this country by working in Leitch's mill. From the James Black notes — "James Black came to work in the Leitch Mill in the fall of 1890 at \$30 per month. At that time you could get a suit of overalls and smock for \$5.00. Boarded at Wm. Thompson Hotel (The Thompson House) for \$3.00 a week including room, 'three squares a day and often a drink thrown in before dinner', stayed one year, then got married."

The second reason for the importance of the mill was that, because Leitches operated an elevator and a flour mill, the farmers were able to sell wheat at a time when the other companies were unable to ship their grain. An article in the 1901 Oak Lake News





Leitch Brothers Flour Mill.

explains the situation. "There were twenty loads of wheat waiting at Leitch Brothers Mill long before daylight Saturday morning and such was the case more or less all week. The mill can grind about 1000 bushels a day, and with the elevators all idle for lack of cars, this is all the chance farmers have to sell their loads and deliver them. Even at that, some farmers have to wait until afternoon to get unloaded. The mill furnishes an outlet for as much of the grain as it has capacity to grind and so is a great help to relieve the local market while the unusual shortage of cars, largely on account of the great wheat crop this year, exists. Among the markets in this part of the province there can be no doubt that Oak Lake ranks as good as the best."

Over the years the business was built up until "Anchor Brand Flour" was shipped all over the country and to Europe as well. Soldiers in France in World War II told of seeing old Anchor Brand signs nailed to buildings. This is possible, because the signs were made of tin and lasted for years.

In 1917 Leitches sold out to the Northland Milling Company. They ran the business until 1923 when the mill was closed for good.

### **The Oak Lake Creamery Association**

There was both a creamery and a cheese factory in Oak Lake in the early 1900's but we can't separate the information that we have gathered. Probably the two operations went on under one roof and it was called a creamery. The 1897 Henderson Directory

lists both a creamery and a cheese factory with W. J. Helliwell as manager of the creamery. It was located across the street from the north east corner of the Agricultural Grounds but at that time it was on the western edge of town.

The operation was evidently a co-operative because mention is made of shareholders and meetings. The building was closed in 1905 and badly damaged in a wind storm in 1907. It was of brick construction and during the storm one wall and the roof were blown in. A shareholders meeting was held in 1910 and a motion made to sell the property.

Mrs. McQuarrie writes about the cheese factory — "Whole milk was gathered by horse drawn vehicles. During one summer of the late nineties Robert Gray was the driver of one of these and came at least as far west as the Scott home — now the home of Mr. John Sawatsky. The driver was required to draw a sample of the milk before it was emptied into his containers. These samples he stored in small glass vials much like those of our school chemistry sets. It was an interesting process for children to watch".

The property was sold in June 1910. From the June 9, 1910 Oake Lake News — "The property owned by the Oak Lake Creamery Association, and consisting of some seven lots with some second hand building material, was disposed of by public auction on Saturday last, and the sale, which was conducted by our local auctioneer, R. J. Helliwell, must have been quite satisfactory to the shareholders. F. G. Taylor was the successful bidder, and the price paid

was \$700.00. The property is a splendid residential site and now that it is in Mr. Taylor's possession we may expect soon to see the skeleton of a defunct industry turned into a handsome town residence, and thus remove what has long been an eyesore in the west ward."

### **Oak Lake Furs Limited**

By 1927, fox fur farming was fairly well established in Manitoba. However, such was not the case for muskrats, mink and raccoon. Farming these animals was a very new venture and hadn't been tested thoroughly enough for any sound conclusions to be made.

Albert Knott was the manager of Oak Lake Furs Limited and he came from Toronto in the fall of 1927 to establish a muskrat fur farm at the lake. They obtained the N.W. quarter of 16-8-24 and the S.E. quarter of 21-8-24 and hired local help to get the project started. The rats were to be trapped alive and shipped to Hamburg, Germany. Five hundred pairs were ordered and it was hoped that this shipment could be used as the nucleus of a muskrat fur industry in Germany. If the first order could be filled successfully, more would be sent the next spring.

The land extended into the lake and the plan was to build a fence from one inch mesh chain woven wire around the whole half section. The fence was to sink into the mud far enough to prevent the rats from digging under it and to extend it high enough above the water to prevent them swimming over the wire. This proved a formidable task because the fence was built out on the ice in the middle of winter.

In 1928 a house was built for Mr. Knott so that he could live close by the project. That year the water was low and some of the fence was on dry land so small rods had to be driven into the ground every 1½ inches along the fence line, a very tedious job.

Ten acres of carrots were planted in the spring of 1928 and these were harvested and dug into pits so that they could be used for trap bait and as food on the trip to Germany.

Allan Gordon made live animal traps for Mr. Knott and local men were hired to trap the muskrats. These men were Joe Lafournaise, Chummie Oliver, the Stewart brothers, the Hatch brothers and Herman Battersby. They agreed to sell the live rats they trapped to Mr. Knott for \$2.50 each.

The first order for 500 pairs was filled with 850 muskrats from Oak Lake and 150 from Oak Point. These rats were put into wire cages holding ten animals each and then into a specially outfitted rail car and sent on the long trip to Germany. Charlie Stewart and Mr. Knott accompanied the shipment as far as Montreal.

The muskrats were six days crossing the Atlantic and then they were transferred to a small Russian ship. Mr. Battersby thought that salt water got into the hold of the ship and the muskrats were drowned.

The spring of 1930 was dry and the muskrat farm was completely dried out. The house used by Mr. Knott was sold to James Jiggins and the company was dissolved.



The Muskrat Venture 1929.

### **Specialized Soil Products Company Limited**

Specialized Soil Products Co. Ltd. was formed in May 1969, moving to Brandon in 1971 with Norris Johnston, Dick McBeth and Walt McLachlan as main shareholders. In 1974 Walt McLachlan was bought out and Storey's Garage in Oak Lake was purchased for a warehouse.

In 1975 Beasley's Service was purchased on No. 1 Highway and the business was then operated from that location with Norris Johnston as president. Since that time the company has expanded into both Saskatchewan and Alberta. Following Norris' death in 1977 his son Dennis Johnston and son-in-law, Lynn Wilkinson joined the company. The company has just completed an office expansion and acquired additional property in Oak Lake.

Specialized Soil Products has a distribution network of approximately 150 dealers throughout Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Spraying equipment accounts for approximately 40% of sales, grain drying equipment for 35%, field sprayers for 10% and fertilizer and other equipment for the remaining 15%.

Specialized Soil Products has a distribution centre at Elstow, Saskatchewan, opened in February of 1980 and a sales office in Sylvan Lake, Alberta, started in November of 1980. Specialized Soil Products has a staff of eighteen people with thirteen employed in Oak Lake.

## Community Services

The people in every community need certain services. If these amenities are available, the population will be contented and the community will be a better place in which to live. These services begin with the most basic, a post office and a newspaper. From there, others develop as the need arises. Sometimes these services are offered by private citizens, sometimes by service organizations and sometimes by government. However they are acquired, they make the community more attractive.

## Oak Lake Post Office

When Oak Lake was a tent town there was no post office. The mail was taken off the train in the bags and stacked at the back of Parker and Dickson's store. There was no postmaster appointed so the job of sorting the mail fell to whomever had time from the other duties in the store. Because of this situation, the customers often took their own mail from the sacks.

- By 1884, Mr. Parker was listed as the postmaster.

The next year Mr. George Miller was the postmaster, with the mail being handled from the boarding house. Mr. Miller was listed as the postmaster, but evidently Mrs. Miller actually handled the

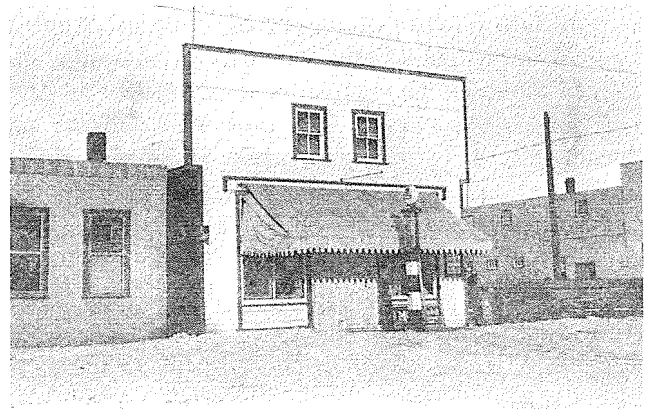


Mrs. George Miller, 1st Oak Lake Postmaster's Wife 1891 (Manitoba Archives).

mail, as the old diaries and accounts name Mrs. Miller as the first official postmistress in Oak Lake.

By 1894 the mail had been moved again, this time to Robin Hood's store. He and his clerks operated the post office. In 1897 Mrs. A. H. Campbell became the postmistress and she rented a small building on front street between James Andrew's Notary Public office and the stone drug store. This office burned in 1913 so Mrs. Campbell built a second office between Lamond's Meat Market and T. J. Parson's store. This building was used until the present post office building was opened in 1930.

The post office was a very busy place in the 1910's and 20's. Long distance telephoning was not common practice and the business of the town was carried on by letter. There were six trains a day eastbound and westbound carrying mail.



1913 the Post Office beside Parson's Store.



New Post Office in Oak Lake 1930.

## Maskawata Post Office

By 1893 there were enough people living in Rye-son District to warrant a Post Office. It was established at the Douglas McCallum home, NW¼ of 16-10-23 W1 and known as Maskawata, meaning "oak tree" in Cree. Whatever the weather, every Tuesday and Friday Duncan McMillan brought the mail from Griswold by team. He took passengers too and went on to Hillview and Verity districts to return



the next day. The farmers found it a great convenience to be able to get their mail so much closer.

Mr. McCallum died in 1903 and Mrs. McCallum sold out to a Mr. Orr. The McCallum home had been more like a rallying point for all the neighbours than a Post Office. In 1905 Maskawata was moved to William Cowing's at S.W. 29-10-23 W1. In the later years Mrs. Cowing and her daughter Mrs. Jenny Sloan sorted and dispensed the mail which was brought from Oak Lake by Mr. Albert Fuller. In the winter he used a propeller-driven snowmobile.

Finally, in 1939 Rural Mail Delivery on a regular basis was instituted so the old Post Office was closed.

On July 20, 1939 the announcement concerning rural mail appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press.

"Oak Lake, Manitoba, July 20th. — John R. Scott, Oak Lake, has been awarded the contract of mail delivery for a new rural route mail service north of here which will commence on Tuesday, August 1st. The new route will be known as Rural Route No. 1, is approximately thirty-four miles in length, and nearly sixty farmers will receive mail delivery on Tuesday and Friday of each week. Heretofore those connected with the new service received their mail at Oak Lake, Kenton and Maskawata."

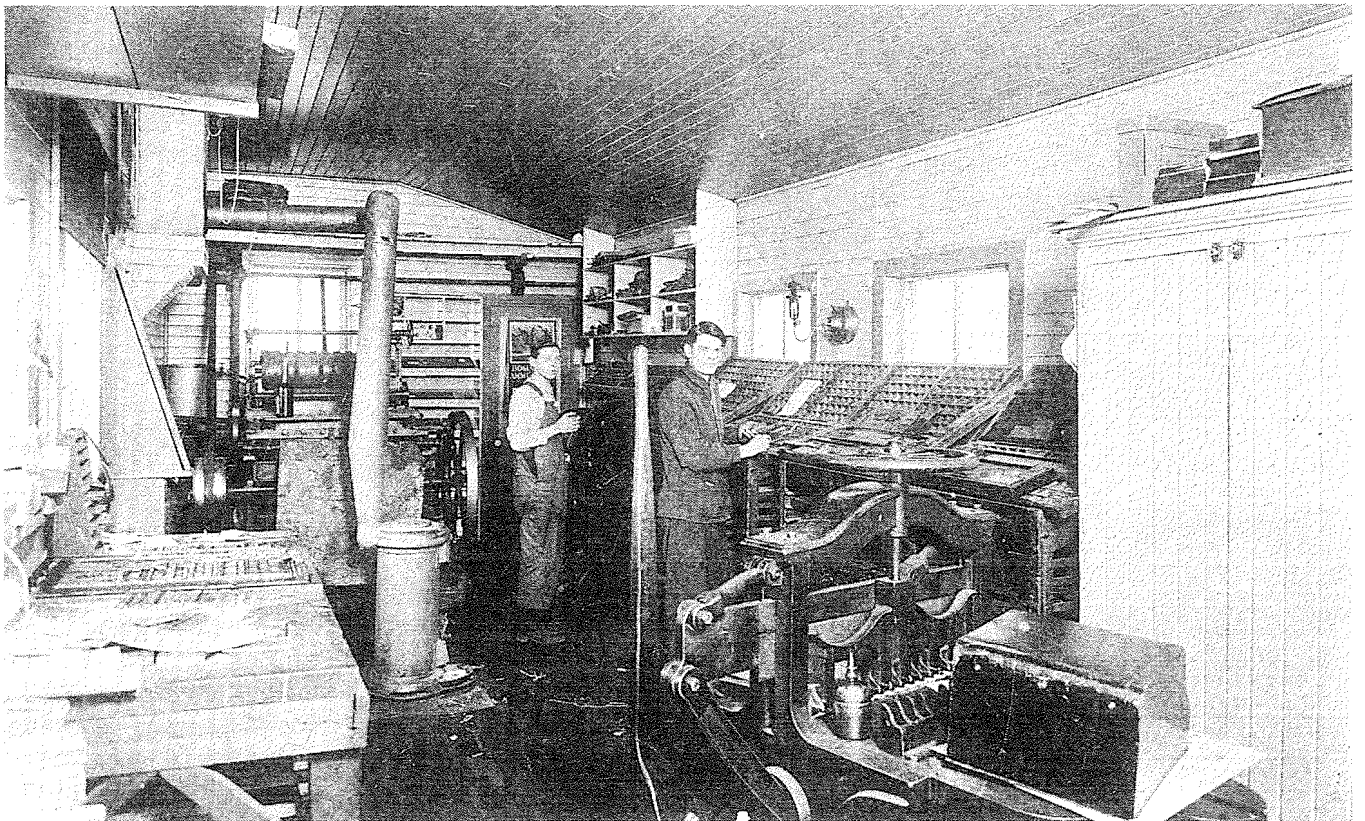
This mail service is still provided today, although the route has been changed and shortened in the last few years.



Maskawata Post Office SW 29-10-23, home of Mrs. May Cowing.

### The Oak Lake News

In 1881 the Canadian Pacific Railway had been built as far west as Flat Creek, a short distance east of the present site of the Town of Oak Lake. That year a large number of settlers came from the British Isles and Ontario to stake their claims in the West. From then on new businesses were established and in 1890 John Miller Bender started a Printing and News Paper business in the Town of Oak Lake, on Lot II, Block 7, known as "The Oak Lake News". In 1901 he sold to William Murray Wheeler, who in turn sold to William Cowper Harris, in 1902. Then Mary Young



Interior of Oak Lake Printing Shop 1919. Left to Right ("Tony") Amile Ducharme, assistant and Russel Hogg, Editor.

purchased the business and she and A. T. Young ran it till 1907, when she sold out to F. A. Briscoe. On January 31st, 1910 Thomas Rutherford Hogg became the owner of the Oak Lake News. Harry Freemantle, his son Russell Hogg and Richard Tillett worked with Mr. Hogg. In 1916, A. E. (Tony) Ducharme joined the staff and they carried on until 1919 when Mr. Hogg sold the business to his son Russell. During this time C. M. Strong was a member of the staff for a number of years; Freemantle and Tillett had taken jobs elsewhere.

The Oak Lake News received large orders of printing from Leitch's Mill and the local merchants which kept the news paper a going concern. When cars became a popular mode of transportation and people could go to larger centers to shop, business suffered in the small towns. In 1941, Tony Ducharme, who had been with the paper for 25 years, took a job in Brandon. Lloyd Harrison came to learn the printing trade. In 1947, John A. Ready, of Boissevain, joined the staff. He too, learned the trade. In 1952 he purchased the business from his father-in-law, but in 1954 he took a job with the Virden Advance, Virden, and Mr. Hogg resumed ownership. His wife Arlie, learned to set type by hand and to help out in the office. Once when her husband was away, she and her daughter Lila, with C. M. Strong running the press, issued the paper. In 1961, due to ill health, Mr. Hogg sold to Mr. John Hresavich, of Neepawa. Mr. George Matheson worked as editor for several years, then Allen Morcombe took over and rented the office from him until February 1974, when due to difficulties in obtaining parts for the linotype, the office had to close. Mr. Hresavich, who was in ill health passed away in 1976. He left the office and contents to his half brother, Mr. Joe Morland of Churchill, who heard that the Austin Agricultural Museum was looking for an antique printing office and informed them of this one. Arrangements were made to move the contents to Austin where they are housed in a "news office" in the Homesteader's Village with everything ready, "to go to Press".

### The Town And Country News

When the Oak Lake News printing press was moved to Austin the town and district was without a newspaper. The loss was keenly felt and finally a group of interested people decided to try to publish a newspaper for Oak Lake. Meetings were held, news was gathered and a paper put together on September 25, 1974. The account of that first newspaper is reprinted here:

"Let 'er Roll"

"The staid Municipal board room took on all the air of a busy press room on Wednesday, September

25, as the greenhorn crew began to roll out the first edition of a trial paper for Oak Lake and area.

The committee are deeply indebted to the R.M. of Sifton for the temporary use of the gestetner and facilities to get out this edition.

We were running behind schedule, trying to get a dry machine to ink better, making mistakes, wishing we'd run off No. 1 page last, instead of first — (we made fewer errors toward the end), feeling a bit inadequate, when our spirits were revived as Mrs. Batho brought us sustenance in the form of tea and cookies.

Our No. 1 critic and cheering section, Cliff Gordon, arrived to do his bit cranking out copy and overseeing the job. At last we were going in fine style; pages passed from gestetner to the straightener, snatched up in order and on to stacker, stapler and folder.

The smooth rhythm was shattered when Cliff grabbed the first copy hot off the press shouting, "Extra, Extra — Read all about it".

Many problems must still be solved. Where do we get enough money to finance production? If we get it — more practical — putting it out ourselves or sending the material to another paper to print? These are only some of the questions that have to be considered ere a permanent paper can be ours. However, nothing can diminish the sense of achievement and exhilaration — even though we were exhausted — felt by all who participated in issue No. 1.

What we've done once, we can do again, and now we're experienced, well, a little!!!

Who is "The Committee"? How is the paper run? How did it start? These and countless other questions have been asked.

A paper for Oak Lake had been talked about and discussed in the last few months almost everytime a group got together. Mr. Cliff Gordon and Mr. Gordon Stevenson probably deserve the most credit for bringing things to a head by inviting a number of people to a meeting in early September.

Present were Mr. Stevenson (who chaired the meeting), Mr. C. Gordon, Mrs. E. Batho, Mrs. Lloyd Hatch, Mrs. Mabel Holland, Mr. Jack Harrison, Mr. Wm. Holland (sitting in for his wife) and Mrs. C. Helton. At a later date they were joined by Mrs. E. Kufflick of Griswold and Mrs. Hart.

We decided to try and put out 2 trial issues, meanwhile exploring various means to publish a paper, get money to do so, how to go about it, etc.

On September 30, following an excellent response from our first effort we organized our Committee a little more formally. Chairman — Mrs. E. Batho; Secretary — Mrs. Lorraine Holland; Treasurer — Mr. Cliff Gordon; Subscription Secretary —



Mrs. Donna Hutchison; South Country News Co-ordinator — Mrs. Wilma Hatch; North Country News Co-ordinator — Mrs. Mabel Holland; Pleasant Plains News Reporter — Mrs. Audrey Taylor; Sport Reporter — Ray Larway; Town Reporters — Mrs. L. Holland, Mrs. W. Smith, Mrs. Hogg; Town Co-ordinators — Mr. C. Heapy, Mr. J. Harrison; Griswold News — Mrs. E. Kufflick; Births, Deaths and Weddings — Mrs. Helton; Advertisements — Cliff Gordon. Both schools have been asked to report their activities.

The Committee looked after getting out the first paper. Each subsequent paper will have 2 novices assisting part of the previous crew.

In this way anyone interested will be able to participate from time to time. Indeed without these new people helping with each bi-monthly edition it would be difficult to carry on. We need the interest now and a year from now.

We expect as involvement increases to find our future permanent staff emerge with their various talents newly discovered, or old ones dusted off, ready to be put to Community service."

Since that first beginning, the paper has been enlarged and improved. The news is gathered, checked by the editor and the assistant and then typed. From there the gestetner crew take over and then the paper is assembled and addressed. Quarters are much more comfortable in the former rest room and work more efficient with the new gestetner. The paper has a circulation of 600 now so there is every hope that it can be carried on for years as a community project.

### Oak Lake Telephone Office

The first record of a telephone office in Oak Lake appears in a May 10, 1906, Oak Lake News which reads as follows:

#### Local Bell Telephone Numbers

The telephones for the local system were installed in Oak Lake last week and the following are the numbers:

James Andrew res. ....	12
James Andrew office .....	7
Rev. Fr. Bouillon .....	11
A. Cameron res. ....	15
A. Cameron store .....	3
W. A. Clow store .....	6
G. B. Connor res. ....	14
Leland Hotel .....	1
R. H. Hockin res. ....	8
R. H. Hockin office .....	4
J. R. Hood .....	9
R. L. Hood & Co. ....	2
Mrs. M. Leitch res. ....	29

Leitch Bros. office .....	20
W. W. McCubbin store .....	17
News Office .....	19
T. J. Parson's store .....	18
Mrs. Shaw boarding house .....	10
H. Stevens office .....	16
C.P.R. Station .....	13
A. Thompson .....	15

In 1906 there were 21 telephones. When the office closed in 1976 there were 600.

The C.P.R. station number remained the same from 1906 until the station closed in 1971.

The first Telephone office was located above A. S. Stewart's machine shop on front street. Apparently the first operators were, Miss Cora Findley and Miss Carey. The office was later moved to the annex of the old municipal office, also on front street. Among the first operators were Mrs. James Stephens and her daughters, Hazel and Grace. Her son Bill was night operator as was Art Hollis.

In 1908 the Manitoba Government had taken over the Bell Telephone System in Manitoba. It was first called Manitoba Government Telephone but in 1921 was renamed Manitoba Telephone System.

In the early years the offices of Mr. De Manby and Mr. James Andrew, notaries, and Mr. R. H. Hockin, who was secretary treasurer of the Municipality, were located in a brick building at the corner of Aspen Street and 2nd Avenue.

Many initials were carved on the bricks and spikes may still be seen along the ledge, put there "to keep the young people from sitting on the window ledge".

This building was taken over by the Manitoba Telephone System in the 1930's.

Griswold became part of the Oak Lake exchange in 1944.

The Telephone Operator was referred to as "Central". To some, this seemed to be her given name for it was quite common for an operator to walk down the street and upon meeting a gentleman, he would politely lift his hat and say, "Hello Central".

A province wide switchboard operator strike June 14-26, 1974, had its effect on the local telephone office when the operators walked off the job. Four men from the Engineering Department were sent out from Winnipeg to assist the Chief Operator, Marion Lundy. Subscribers were taken aback at the sound of a man's voice at the switchboard.

For a number of years the A. E. Fullers ran messenger service, — a service for non-subscribers. A long distance call would come in to the Oak Lake Operator, requesting that a messenger be sent to call someone to the telephone in the office. The operator would then contact the Fuller residence and they

would notify the called party. This service was provided for a mere 10¢ or 25¢ if on the outskirts, in the 30's and 40's.

On December 2, 1976 the Telephone Office closed its doors for the last time when 600 telephones were cut over to the dial system. At the same time a new office which housed the new dial equipment was opened on the site of the former Russell Steven's residence.

With the dial conversion came a change in the lives of the 10 operators. Some retired and others went to work in the Brandon Telephone Office.

Districtmen and linemen had to have technical knowledge and a pleasant personality in dealing with subscribers and at times the job demanded much more.

One installer found the following note hanging on the front door of the customer's home:

"Telephone man — I don't think there is any ring in the hall at all. I remember when you first hooked the buzzer up and we tried it and I could hear pretty good in the living room, but now when the phone rings I can hardly hear it at all and even if I stand up on a chair I can't hear any ring from the buzzer you hooked up in the hall.

Remember when you were trying to get the ring out of the dial? You managed to get the ring out of the dial on the phone, but we didn't try the buzzer after so maybe something went wrong then.

Please make the ring (in the hall) as loud as you can as my problem is not being able to hear the phone ring in the living room or the bedroom. Mind you, I spend a good deal of my time in the kitchen so I don't want you to take the ring out of the kitchen — I don't even think the ring in the kitchen is as loud as it was before so will you have a look at it and make it louder if you can. Will you please try the phone before you leave and see that it doesn't ring every time I dial or no ring in the hall at all. I guess it is the better of the two evils as I simply cannot hear the phone the way it is now. Sorry.

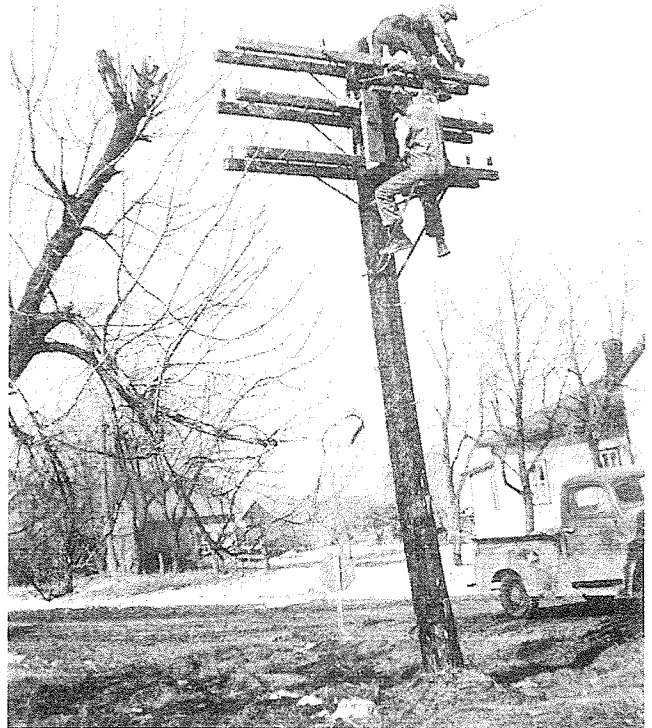
— Our installer reports the problem(s) were remedied once he managed to decipher the message. No, this was not a transcript of a Perry Mason trial." The Telephone Echo

The telephone operators were always expected to answer with a smile in their voices, even if they were being berated by a subscriber. Some sympathetic person wrote this poem for the Town and Country News in 1976.

#### Ode To The Telephone Girl

With a clamp on her head like a cage for her hair,  
She sits all day on a stiff little chair,  
And she answers the calls that come over the wire  
From people of patience and people of ire,

And "Number" she queries of noble or churl —  
A wonderful voice has the telephone girl.  
She has to be pleasant, and hustling and keen,  
With a temper unruffled and ever serene.  
There are 45 things she must think of at once,  
Or someone, impatient, will call her a dunce  
The blame for your grouch on the telephone girl  
It's wearisome work on the nerves and the brain,  
Continual hurry, continual strain,  
And of course she gets tired — as other folk do —  
So think of her doing her best 'mid the whirl,  
And try to be white to the telephone girl.



Telephone Repair Crew in Oak Lake.



Interior of Oak Lake Telephone Office. Marion Lundy (foreground) and Shirley McMullen 1953.

## Oak Lake Cemetery

The R.M. of Sifton on November 12, 1892, purchased from the North West Land Company, ten acres of the SE¼ of 23-9-24 to be used as a public cemetery for the municipality. By-law #133 authorized that the land be laid out in plots and blocks and that a plan be registered. The Roman Catholic ratepayers of the municipality requested that a portion of the cemetery be set apart for their own use, so in May 1893, the west two Blocks, C and D, were set aside, subject to the agreement that the fences be kept repaired and that part of the cemetery be kept in good order. A later by-law set aside 100 graves in the south east corner in Block A "for free burials and single graves".

The earliest grave marker to be found on the Catholic side is dated 1892, Charles Wolfe, who was born in 1799. Other early grave markers were probably made of wood and perished in the many grass fires that swept the cemetery in the early years. At any rate, there are many unmarked graves in the Catholic part of the cemetery. The B Block contains the graves of great numbers of the earliest pioneers of the community.

From an 87 year old former Oak Lake resident it was interesting to learn that in the years before Oak Lake Cemetery was established, burials were made in Sandhurst Cemetery. This cemetery still stands but it is no longer used. Later many of these people were re-interred in Oak Lake Cemetery. He also stated that early Town residents chose a spot south of town for a Cemetery but were told "it was too near Town". A slaughter house was later located on this property!

Members of The Women's Institute erected a Cenotaph in the centre of the cemetery after World War I, in memory of those killed in the war. This Cenotaph was later moved into town and is now in the Legion Hall Grounds.

An early Cemetery Committee was given power in 1936 by the R.M. of Sifton to "regulate, control, prevent trespassing and damage and to take care of the Cemetery". In 1952 a re-organization of the committee took place with W. P. Whitcomb as President and P. B. Dickson as Secretary; also the councillor for Ward 3, R.M. of Sifton, as a permanent member. This committee has worked continuously since 1952 to improve and maintain the cemetery. They have erected a steel post fence and planted evergreens around the entire cemetery. They have also built two cement block sheds to house the tools and water system. Two very attractive large iron gates were installed in 1967 to commemorate the Dominion Centennial year.

As a special 1982 Centennial project, the committee plans to erect a small, natural stone cairn on

the North Block in memory of our many pioneers. At present the committee is working towards having 'Perpetual Care' taken of the cemetery and grounds.

## Johnston Cemetery

In 1896 Johnston Cemetery was established on NE 21-10-24, on land donated by Andrew Johnston. The first trustees were Andrew Johnston and Walter Forrest.

Prior to 1896, St. David's burials had taken place at Breadalbane or Oak Lake Cemeteries. Later the remains of some St. David's people were brought from Breadalbane and re-interred in the new Johnston Cemetery.

By 1906 the cemetery required a major up-dating in order to fulfill the requirements of the original agreement with Woodworth Council. A new fence replaced the old and the grounds received a major clean-up. A drive to sell plots at \$5.00 each was undertaken to meet the cost of improvements and upkeep.

In 1935 plans to build another fence and to plant evergreens on the east side of the cemetery were made by the committee.

The Beef Ring building was donated to the cemetery committee in 1951 and sold. The money was used to construct a building on the cemetery site.

An enlarged plan of the plots was posted in the cemetery building in 1957 and numbered markers were placed on the northeast corner of the plots, for easy identification.

Since 1974 a new page wire fence and handsome double front gates have graced the cemetery.

In 1979 a major fund drive was undertaken by the Johnston Cemetery Board with gratifying results. These donations have been invested to help provide the necessary funding for adequate improvement and caretaking in the years to come.

Much hard work has been done throughout the years. Many dedicated people have planned and maintained a beautiful, well kept cemetery in St. David's. The community owes them a debt of gratitude.

## Oak Lake Rest Room

The United Farm Women's Organization was in operation during the 1920's and 30's. For quite some time they sponsored the rest room. Evidently this served as a drop in center for farm women. There was a phone there and the library was housed there. A woman was paid to run the place and she served lunch to the people who came in, as well as signing out books and keeping the place clean. The money to run the building came from small grants from the

Municipality of Sifton and the Town and from people who were interested in its operation. Long lists of donations of food and furnishings were often published in the paper along with the donations of money. When funds got low the United Farm Women put on banquets, concerts and dances to raise the necessary money.

In later years this project was taken over by the Town Council but as time went by the Rest Room was used less and less. Finally when the Town and Country News needed permanent space, the building was rented to the newspaper committee. Now it has become the publishing building for the newspaper.

### **Oak Lake Volunteer Ambulance Crew**

The Oak Lake Ambulance Service is run through Virден District Hospital No. 10. The objective of the Hospital District is to provide competent, efficient ambulance service to all parts of the area by providing ambulances stationed at Virден, Reston, Elkhorn and Oak Lake. Basic control of the service is provided locally, with organization and management coming from the Hospital District.

The Oak Lake Ambulance Crew was first organized in 1976 and at that time was made up of 15 members. Manno Wiens was the first superintendent of the group. These people work in teams of three and one team is on call at all times. They take regular training so that they are fully qualified to operate the service.

In 1980 Oak Lake received a new, fully equipped ambulance and the crew continues to answer calls from all parts of the district. These volunteers contribute a great deal to the district. They spend many hours looking after the sick and injured who need attention.

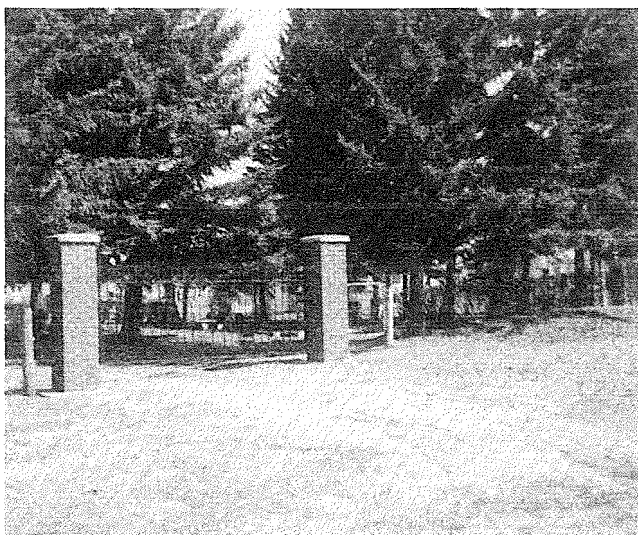
### **Oakwood Place**

Oakwood Place is Oak Lake's fine public housing unit built for senior citizens by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. The attractive single story building is constructed of brick and stucco with rows of windows facing north and south. A cement walk leads to the entrance foyer, with flowers and shrubs on each side and more planted here and there all around the building. To the west is the garden space. Earth has been hauled in for the garden, and shrubs and perennials planted around it.

There are nine single units and three for double occupancy. Each suite is equipped with electric stove, refrigerator, T.V. outlet and lots of cupboard space. As well there is a laundry room, common room with shuffleboard, and a very comfortable front foyer. This room displays some very nice gifts given by people who are interested in making Oakwood Place a valuable addition to the town.



Oakwood Place.

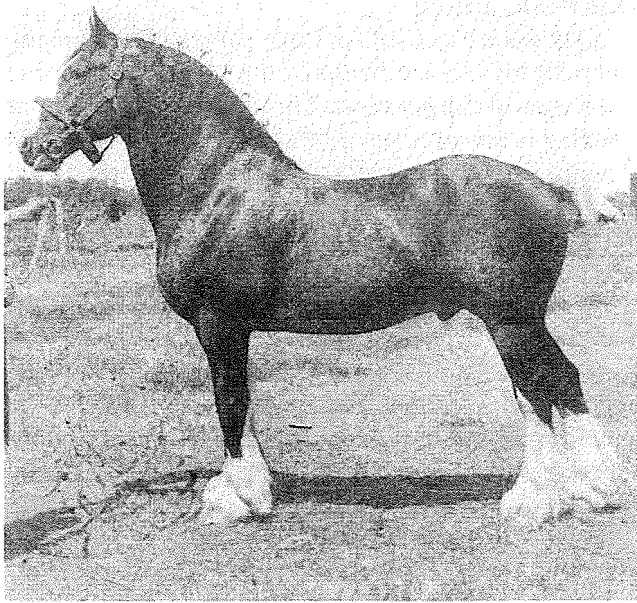


Oak Lake Cemetery.



Paving Main Street in Oak Lake.





"His majesty".



Berry picking.



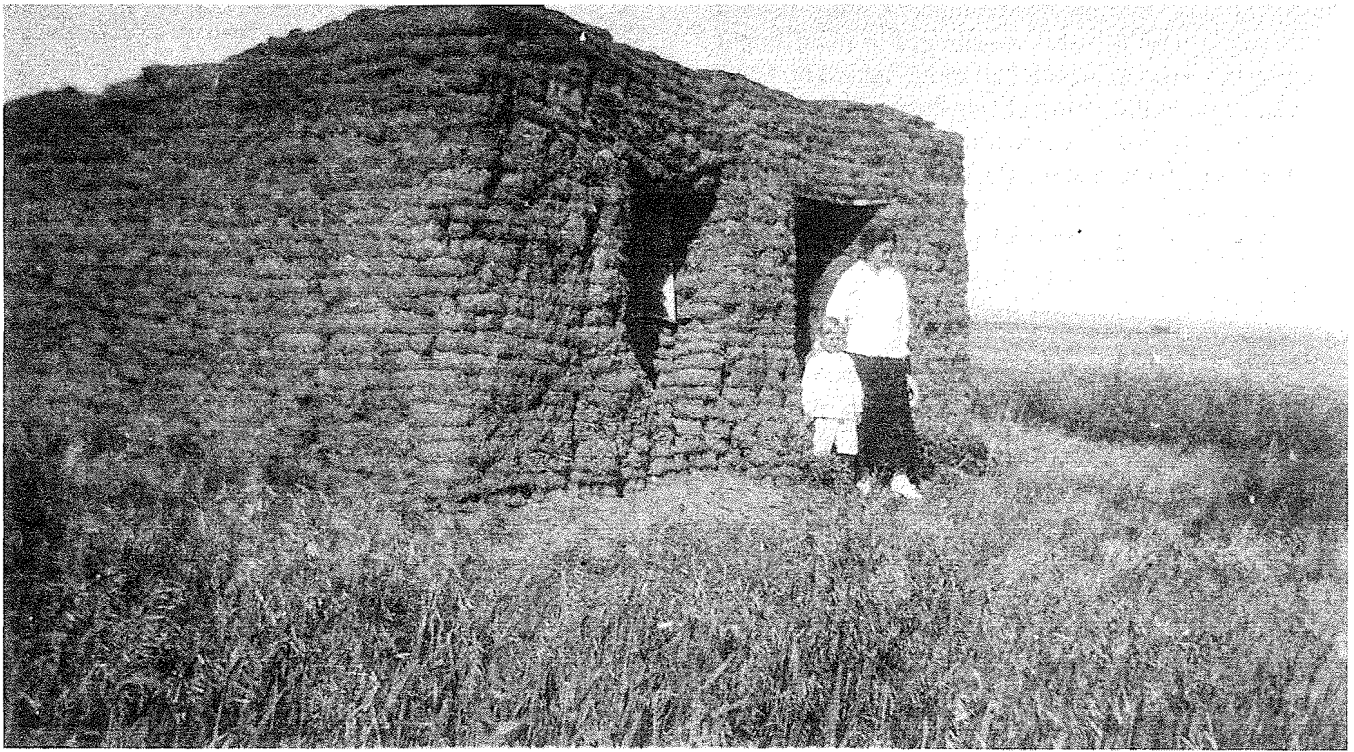
What are we waiting for?



Pete Anderson in baker's cap and apron.



# Pioneer Life



Little Sod Home on The Prairie.

**“ . . . Be it ever so humble  
There’s no place like home . . . ”  
— Sir Henry Bishop**

## Pioneer Life

While the man of the house was busy trying to earn a living for his growing family, his wife was working just as hard carrying out her role of wife and mother.

Pioneer homes were very busy places. Because of the distance from a trading center and the lack of ready cash, the necessities of life were produced at home whenever possible.

Women worked dreadfully hard with primitive methods to supply family needs and for some that could mean for 10 or 12 children and the menfolk. How weary they must have been, as for many a woman there was always a baby in the cradle, one hanging on to her skirts and one under her "pinny", not to mention the older ones! Crowded conditions of the sod shanty or small wooden shack and washing for so many with tub and washboard in insufficient water, every drop of which had to be hauled by hand must have been the worst of bug-bears.

As soon as cream was available butter was made for home use and for barter. Pork was home cured and buried in grain for summer — frozen in winter. Bread was made from home grown and often home ground wheat. Potatoes, turnips and carrots were stored and wild fruit dried or canned for winter use. Soap was made from fat scraps and wood ashes, when available, or commercial lye. Raw wool was washed, teased, carded, spun and knitted into warm winter accessories or woven into cloth. Natural dyes were used. Carded wool was used for filling for comforters. The covers were pieced from cotton scraps, by hand or by sewing machine, depending on the housewife's fortune. Neighbour ladies came for quilting bees, a gossip and a cup of tea. Coarser pieces of cloth were used for braided or hooked mats.

Gradually the shacks were replaced by larger frame and stone houses, with the odd one made of logs. One early house on the south side of the river was built of logs brought from the booms floated down the Assiniboine from the Shell River Valley. Later, the walls were covered inside and out, with shiplap. This place might have been warm but many of the frame houses, large as they were, were freezing cold in winter. One farmer in later years started to tear down the old house he had lived in, and found that the studs had been filled with cement. No wonder the place was too cold to live in.

One of the biggest worries for the people who lived in these big old houses was fire. The long strings of stovepipes often became overheated and caught fire or else a chimney fire started on a windy day. Also, candles, matches and upset kerosene lamps caused many a fire. Sometimes the people got out safely but once in a while a child would perish in the flames.

Many times, places in town were burned. The first flour mill burned in 1887. In 1900 one of the hotels, the bank and Thompson's store burned. In 1907 Dr. Wright's house was destroyed by fire. In 1913 the post office, a drugstore and jewelry store were lost. In later years Motheral's Lumber Yard, Whitcomb's Drug Store and Allan Gordon's Hardware have burned to the ground.



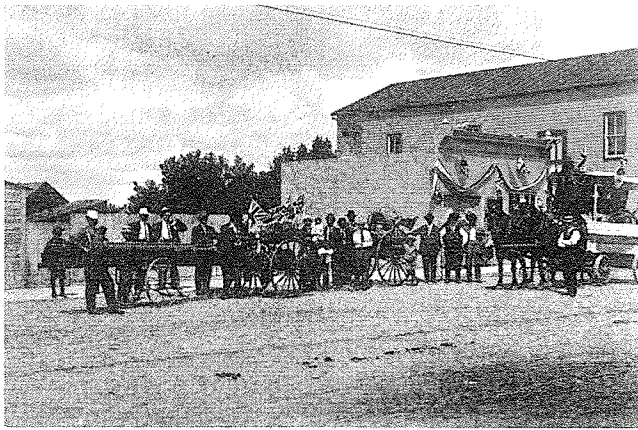
Whitcomb's Drugstore Fire 1962.

Grass fires were and still are a constant threat in the rural areas. The Watson notes tell of one homesteader building his shack and going back to Brandon for his bride. When they returned, they found everything they owned destroyed by a prairie fire. The country south of Oak Lake is still highly susceptible to grass fires and during windy dry springs everyone anxiously scans the skyline for the tell tale billows of smoke. When this happens the people no longer rely on Central's one long ring signalling a fire but they turn out to help as fast as they can.

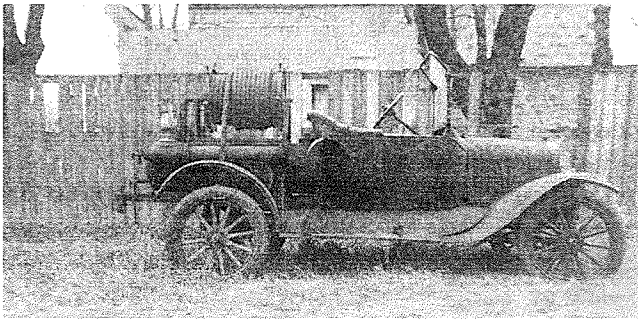
From earliest times Oak Lake has had a fire brigade but they were always hampered by lack of equipment and water. The mill fire was fought by men manning a bucket brigade. In later years they had fire hoses but still no water except that from the C.P.R. water tank. Now Oak Lake and all the surrounding communities have modern fire fighting equipment and a Fire Brigade on call at all times. A serious fire could be fought by fire trucks from two or three surrounding communities.

One of the most heartbreaking situations the pioneers had to face was the fact that often there was no doctor living in the small communities. Countless babies died at birth or a few months later from a childhood disease. Many fathers with small children were left alone when their wives died in childbirth.

For many years, especially before Dr. Wright came to town, certain women of the community acted as midwives and helped out in emergency



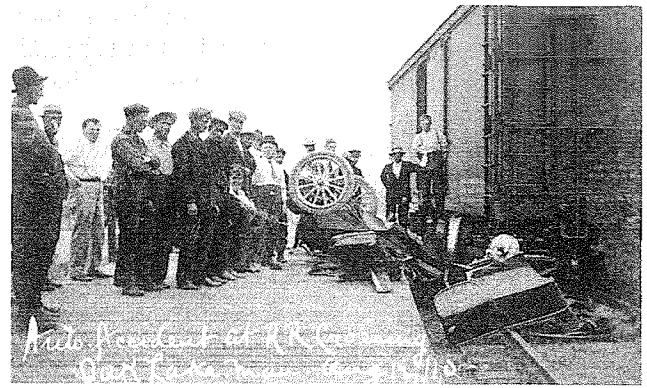
Earliest Oak Lake Fire Brigade 1914.



Second Fire Engine 1930's.

situations. There were many who helped if needed but two attended many births in the community. They were Mrs. Furtney and Mrs. Cooper. After Dr. Wright came, he knew there were some women who could be called on to assist whenever he needed them. One such person was Mrs. Borthwick. She was a nurse and often opened her home to patients. When the Spanish flu was so bad in the winter of 1918-19 her home became a hospital and some of the younger women of the community went there to help look after the sick. In later years her place was called the "Borthwick Home" because she gave a home to World War I veterans who had no family.

Another worry for the pioneers was accidents. People, and children especially, were in constant danger of losing their lives or of being seriously injured. Horses caused all sorts of accidents, partly because they were unpredictable and partly because they were often handled by inexperienced boys trying to do a man's work. As well, children were sometimes left on their own or else parents were too tired and overworked to check them. Many, many families lost a child, often a son, to some sort of accident. Railway accidents were common also. Stories are told of track workers being hit by a train or else falling under it, and the railway crossings have always been real danger spots.



Oh, oh! One incredibly dismembered 3-month-old EMF auto, owned by Ralph Helliwell. Ralph was pulled out from under the box car bruised and shaken. Jock Bell was unhurt. The C.P.R. freight car had been moving slowly but unattended, when it hit the car. August 12, 1910.

Under these conditions, it is no wonder that Dr. H. A. Wright was so loved and respected by the people of this area. He came to Oak Lake in 1886 and lived in the town until 1917. He was married in 1888. A son Harry was born in 1889 but when he was ten he was kicked by a horse and died. In 1891 twin daughters were born but they only lived a few months. Mrs. Wright died in 1910. Of Dr. Wright's family, only one son, Alex, and a daughter, Amy, survived.

Dr. Wright did his own surgery and dispensed his own drugs until Scarlett's Drug Store was opened in 1897. The story is told of Dr. Wright doing an emergency appendectomy in 1910, in the suite above Thompson's Store. Emergency surgery was often performed in the homes because of the near impossibility of getting a patient to Brandon to hospital.

Dr. Alex Wright gives further information about his parents. "Father had some terrible drives in the country there being no fences, or surveyed trails. He had a smart little driving team. On one occasion he got off the trail, and the team buried in a snow drift. He unhitched the team and got one horse out, but the other through exhaustion and cold could not move. Fortunately he was near the farmers house and seeing a lantern bobbing across the farm yard he shouted. The farmer heard him, and came out to help. When they led the one horse away this animal whinnied and this cheered up the teammate to make a further struggle and flounder out of the snow. They had to rub these stiffened legs before the team could return.

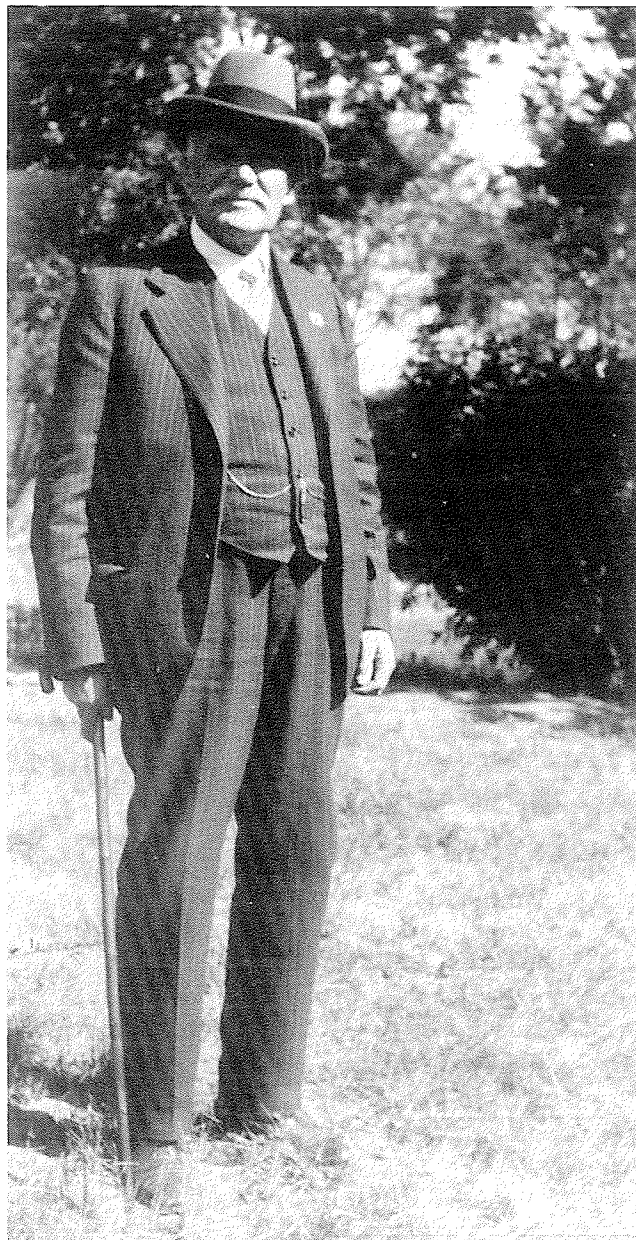
On another occasion he got lost south of town near the Lake. The hay trails were very confusing. The people promised to set out a light. Father could see no light. Finally he found the house. Why did they take in the light? They thought he was not coming because he took so long.

Father and mother were strong liberals. When

Clifford Sifton won an election I remember mother placing all the lamps in the house on the side toward a conservative neighbor. "Let your lights so shine," etc.

Father served two sessions on the school board and was chairman when he left Oak Lake in 1917. He was the councillor on the municipal council when the town was incorporated. He had some very wordy tilts with Jas Gillespie about the roads south of town. He and Dick Leonard surveyed some of the drainage ditches south of town to empty the McLeish sloughs."

When Dr. Wright left Oak Lake he went to Winnipeg. When he died in 1935 he was buried in Oak Lake Cemetery.



Dr. Wright.

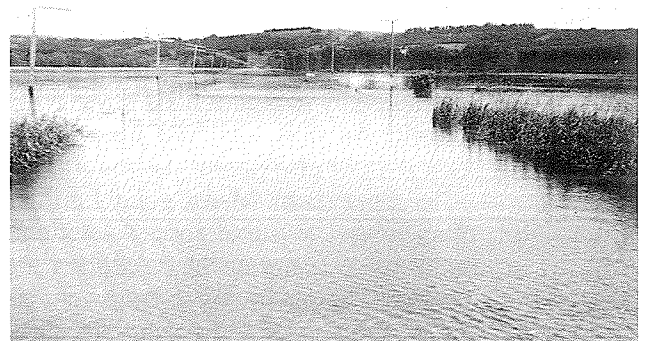
Nature also caused havoc in the lives of the pioneers many times. This area was and is, often the victim of very bad storms, be it tornado, hail, lightning or snow. Also heavy rains or spring runoff sometimes caused serious flooding. In the south the flooding caused inconvenience and loss of hay crops but a flood along the Assiniboine caused all kinds of problems because the two north roads would be cut off, sometimes for weeks.

When the roads were cut off, a ferry service used to be set up by the municipalities. The May 1927 flood must have been of serious proportions, judging from the well organized ferry service advertised in the Oak Lake News. Ferries left Williams' and Harrison's on the north side of the river at 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. and 1:30 and 5:00 P.M. daily. Car service from the fire hall to the south side of the river left at the same time. The fare was 25¢ each way for the boat or the car. All parcels to be delivered were to be left at the firehall and heavy freight such as cans of cream were charged extra. Ferrymen were Jack Harrison and Charlie Williams and taxi driver was Bert Fuller. The boat at Williams' was an eighteen footer and very heavy to row when loaded. Everett still has this boat, which his father bought from the municipality.

In the 1950's Eric Harrison used his motorboat to ferry North Country high school students across the



Flooded Assiniboine 1936. West of Harrison's Bridge.



Assiniboine in Flood. Williams Flats 1936.



flooded Assiniboine morning and evening. At the same time Everett Williams ferried Wynne Hatch and her daughters on their way to and from Johnston School. Cream cans and groceries for other people were usually part of the load.



School Taxi. Assiniboine Flood, 1950's. Eric Harrison, boatman, ferried his own family also Carlyle Smith, Doreen Smith and Wes Tolton.

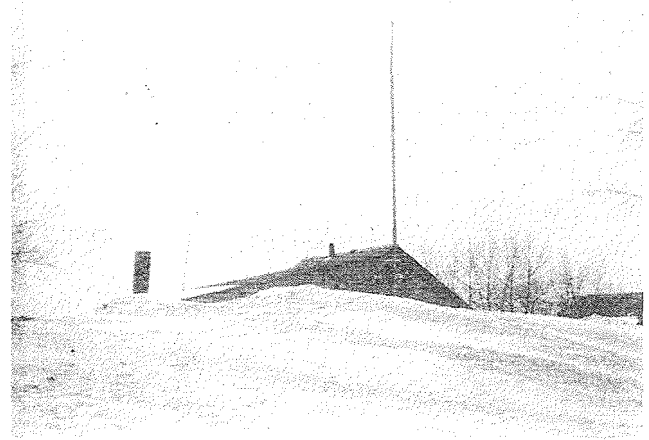


Off to town with team and cutter 1925.

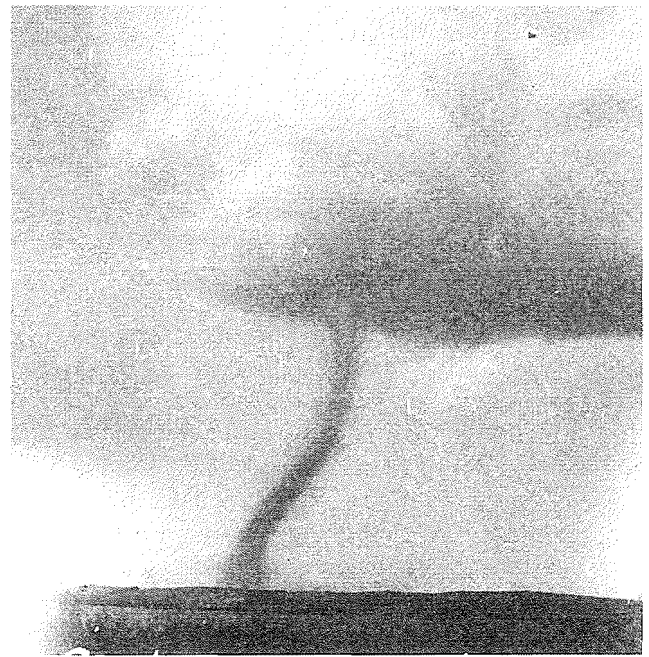
Any severe storm causes all sorts of problems if the equipment is not available to handle the situation. Blizzards used to be much more serious than they are now. The open nature of the countryside allowed blizzards of the kind that are beyond our ken. Stories are told again and again of people becoming lost, of horses getting stuck in snowbanks and becoming so exhausted that they had to be shovelled out and of roads and railways being blocked for days. Imagine the snow sweeping across the fields and lodging in the yards until it was piled to the eaves of the buildings.

Hailstorms and tornadoes can cause untold damage. In 1909 a tornado passed north of the Assiniboine valley. Mr. Wm. Smith's barn was demolished but his house was unharmed.

In 1956 a hail storm accompanied by very high



After a Blizzard 1933.



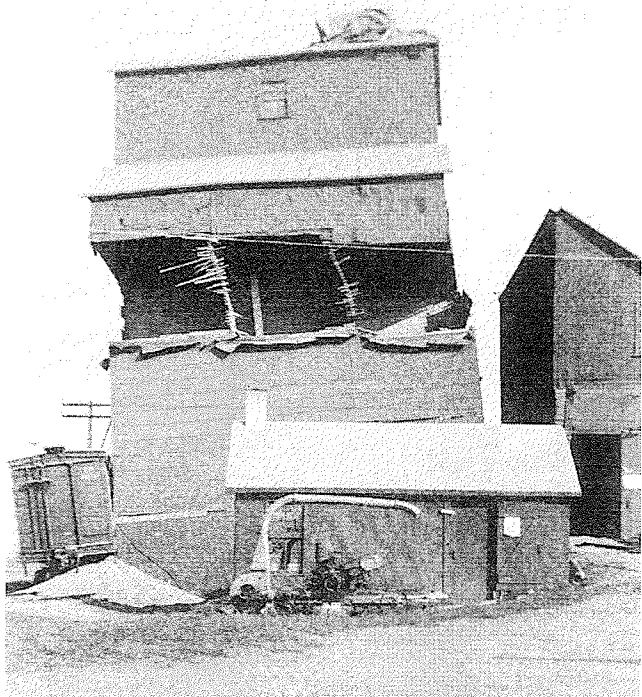
Cyclone Funnel North of Oak Lake, July 25, 1909. Destroyed all of Wm. Smith's outer buildings — did not touch the house. Taken from the roof of Wm. Johnston's partly built house.



Demolished Barn at Fair Grounds. 1956 cyclone.

winds did a great deal of damage. Many buildings were destroyed, one of them being the barn at the fair grounds.





Ogilvie Elevator at Oak Lake burst 1940. Rats were seen running around town the day before, so must have been aware of awesome vibrations.

The relentless, dehumanizing all pervading winds of the Dirty Thirties are hard to forget. Besides affecting human beings, animals and feed supplies, they affected the soil also as this excerpt from Oak Lakes News, April 19, 1934 recounts: "Wind of high velocity has prevailed during the last few weeks causing considerable drifting. Roads in certain districts are practically impassable owing to accumulations of sand. Owing to dust, which permeates the air, spring cleaning is at a standstill." Along with the drifting soil came the rolling Russian thistles. These piled up against the fences and eventually the whole fence line was buried. The loss of top soil was devastating.

At the same time as this was happening the country was suffering a severe economic depression.

Farmers and business men whose parents had been pioneers, were forced to deal with the fact that they might lose much of what had taken years to acquire. Suffering these frustrations it took courage for them to carry on.

The women played an important part in maintaining the family needs. Gardens were essential and vegetables and meats were canned. Saskatoons and rhubarb were part of most people's diet. There was little or no money for any of the extras. Even cotton flour bags were used to make items of clothing, curtains and tea towels.

The depression meant many things to many peo-

ple. Young people were forced to postpone higher education — young engaged couples had to postpone marriage as they were unable to provide and maintain homes and everyone was forced to postpone the improvements they wanted to make to their buildings.

Entertainment in the different communities was provided at little or no cost as everyone donated their time and talents.

Ever since that time there has been a fear in the minds of people who endured the depression that it could happen again.

It took several years after the rains came and the economy recovered, before life as it had been, was once again enjoyed.

In the 1920's a second wave of immigrants came to Canada from Europe. By this time the original pioneers had established themselves fairly well and had come to terms with the country. These new immigrants faced a different set of problems caused largely by differences in language and customs and the hard times, experienced by everyone in the 30's. We are including the Henry I. Tiessen family history because it gives such a good description of the conditions these people faced.

### **The Henry I. Tiessen Family, Routledge written by Harry Tiessen**

My parents, Henry and Helena Tiessen, were born in Southern Russia — Father in the Mennonite village of Neuendorf in 1896 and Mother in Chortiza in 1903. They were married in 1923. The next year they migrated to Canada because of a shortage of food, clothing and money, as well as a lack of employment, brought on by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

Together with my Uncle Peter and Aunt Sarah, and other relatives, they came to Montreal and from there by train to Winnipeg. From there my parents, Uncle Peter and Aunt Sarah went to Sperling to work for a farmer. Our folks went through hard times. They didn't mind the work, but they had only the clothes on their backs and a few personal belongings and no money. They didn't know the English language and they were in new surroundings and had to learn the Canadian way of life. As well, they were lonesome for the Old Country. However, their employer was good to them.

In 1925 my parents first child, Henry, was born but didn't live. A second son, Werner, was born in 1927 but he also died within the week.

In 1928 my father bought a model T Ford car and together with Uncle Peter, Aunt Sarah and their little daughter Ruth, moved westward to the Routledge Area. Here they were hired by a French farmer,

Eucher De Galley and his sister, Celina. They lived separate from the De Galleys and helped look after their large herd of cattle.

On August 27, 1929 my older brother, Herbert, and my cousin, Walter, were born. This was the year the great depression began.

In the spring of 1931 Dad and Uncle Peter decided to start out on their own. Uncle Peter and his family left De Galley's farm and moved to Crandall, Manitoba, while Dad and Mother rented a quarter section of land two miles east of Routledge. They had acquired two cows and a few chickens from De Galleys. Dad worked as sectionman on the C.P.R. during July and August for the next several years. So they managed to survive on that farm beside the C.P.R. main line. Dad had no machinery to work the land but he did have a garden. They seldom ever drove the Model T, because they couldn't afford to buy gas. Dad walked two miles and back to work every day. Then, on November 29, 1932, I, Harry was born.

In 1935 my parents bought a small home in Routledge for \$100.00. Now my parents would have their own home, close to the C.P.R. station and tool house (Dad's job), the Routledge School and the store. They also had a means of transportation.

The property included a garage which we used to store our Model T, and an outdoor toilet. Father built a lean-to, to shelter our cattle and chickens and broke up an acre of ground for our garden. My older brother, Herb, began to attend school.

What he couldn't produce himself, Dad would buy in Virden or Oak Lake — just the bare necessities. A train ride to Oak Lake or Virden only cost 25¢ but more often than not, we got a ride with neighbors. Money was scarce in those days. We had no phone, nor a radio. We got our news from the Weekly Free Press and by meeting with neighbors. However, Dad cut enough firewood for us and got a bit of income from odd jobs, such as harvesting, hauling hay or cutting cord wood and selling it. Everybody "pulled together" and we got by.

In 1939 my younger brother, Henry, was born. Then in September, World War II broke out. The second war didn't affect us children much as our fathers were not drafted but our parents were concerned because the war was taking place in their homeland. However, everyone had to put up with rising prices and the rationing of some foods and commodities. Dad's wages began to rise too, and he put in more time on the C.P.R. so we were better off.

Dad bought the quarter section of land adjoining our property and bought second hand hay making machinery and for us, a new Warner cabinet radio.

Our social and spiritual life was spent with our

friends at the Mennonite Church, first at different homes and then at Pleasant Plain School. By now many of the families owned a second hand car but we travelled by horse and "Democrat", which in our case was the 4 door chassis of the Model T Ford without the top. It was complete with rubber tires and a tongue and whipple-trees on the front to make it horse-drawn.

In 1941 Dad built an addition onto our house. Now instead of a kitchen-living room and two bedrooms, we had a six room house.

In the spring of 1942 the Provincial government ordered all cattle tested for tuberculosis. Dad lost eight cows and two steers out of his herd of sixteen cattle. This was a hard blow because Dad was still working only four or five months each year for the C.P.R. However, we managed and late that fall Dad bought a Model A Ford for \$250.00. What joy! No more travelling by horse and buggy!

The next year we tried something new. My parents wanted to raise hens and sell eggs, so they enlarged the buildings and bought baby chicks. Thus we steadily improved our position by shipping cream and eggs and selling the odd steer. Herb finished Grade 8 that year but continued his education by correspondence at Routledge School. Two years later he quit and stayed home to help my dad on the farm.

In the fall of 1946 I started attending Virden Collegiate. I would take the local train #59 in the morning because I was privileged, as a railway man's son, to have a pass. In the afternoon I came home by Greyhound bus or hitchhiked.

In 1947 Dad was hired as first man on the C.P.R., a permanent job. We rebuilt our outbuildings and **painted** them.

During 1947-48 a great many Displaced Persons from Europe migrated to Canada. So it was that my mother's brother and his family, the Abe Niebuhrs, who were refugees from Southern Russia, came to Canada. They had three sons; the oldest one, a soldier in the Russian army, was missing in action and believed killed in World War II; and two daughters. They rented the De Galley house in Routledge and lived there three years. All except the mother took whatever jobs they could find until they got themselves established.

By 1949 the little school that served as our church was getting too small and old so our congregation decided to build a new church beside the new Trans-Canada Highway. On the construction site of the new church a scaffold broke and three men fell to the ground. One of them, my uncle, Abe Niebuhr, broke his neck and died a few hours later. He is buried in Oak Lake Cemetery. Later the rest of the family moved to Griswold.

In June 1950 I finished Grade XII in Virden and that same year the Trans Canada Highway was opened. The thing that tickles me pink is that it passes right over the spot where I was born and right in front of our doorstep in Routledge.

By 1953 we were grown up and going our separate ways. Herb joined the Air Force and was sent to Quebec for his basic training. Henry went to the Mennonite School in Gretna and I was teaching at Hesselwood School. The next year Dad retired from the C.P.R. He also took over the Routledge Post Office, a position he held until 1960.

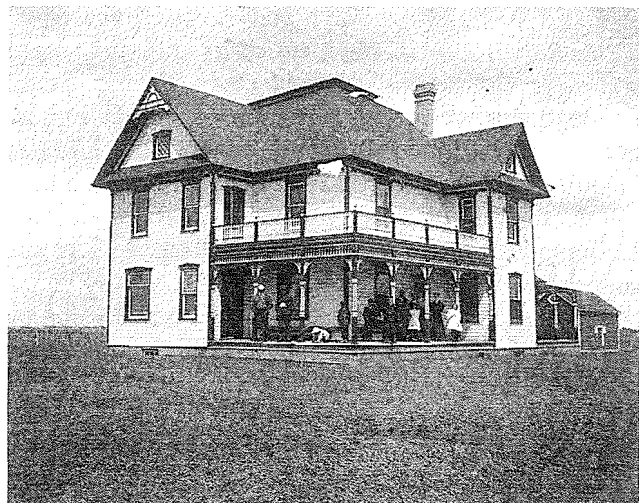
Herb was posted to Belgium, I was teaching at Fork River and Henry was working in the B-A at Virden and helping out on the farm. Then in 1966 Father sold the farm to Mr. Penny and he, Mother and

Henry moved to Winnipeg. Dad died in 1968. In the meantime Henry married Olga Yendries and he and his wife and Mother moved to Vancouver. Mother didn't like it out there so she came back to Winnipeg but she died in 1971.

Herb returned from Belgium and was posted to the Armed Forces Base at Trenton, Ontario. He settled with his wife and two children, Diana and Scott, in Bellville, Ontario. They have two grandchildren, Christina and Larisa.

I worked at different jobs after my marriage to Rose Rempel in 1965. Finally we settled in Winnipeg and I now work in the Post Office. Our son, Bernie, was born in 1966.

Henry and Olga are still living in Vancouver. They have no children except Olga's three children by her first marriage.



The Jim Milne home, 1906.



Jim Katchen's windmill, 1920's.

# Agriculture



**“ . . . But still the land is dear and still  
the wheat  
Waves like a golden banner  
in the sun . . . ”**

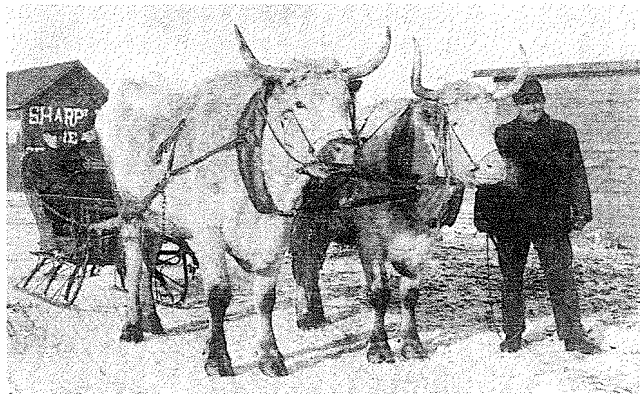
**— Edna Jaques**



## Agriculture

The economy of the Oak Lake trading area has always been based on agriculture. The very early farmers turned their hand in this direction since very few opportunities for other callings existed.

If one intends to farm, one must have power to work the land. The first source of farm power was oxen. The farm oxen may have been agonizingly slow (for nothing could make a short little trip into something so never-ending), unforgivably stubborn, tormentingly unresponsive to people's needs for companionship, and a frightening cause of helpless and furious profanity; BUT, all things considered, he was the best farm power source available to most homesteaders. The ox team was cheaper to buy than horses. In 1880 a beef steer could be bought for \$30.00. As an ox, broken to work, he'd sell for \$50.00, whereas a horse would cost \$100.00. Oxen were very strong and could keep in shape just eating hay, even when working hard. Horses needed grain, which, for a time, was well nigh unobtainable. Oxen didn't seem to hurt themselves the way horses did either. If caught up in some way they would patiently wait to be released, whereas a horse would struggle and injure himself further. Oxen rarely ran away as horses did unless terrified by heel flies. Then nothing would stop them. They'd panic and run, with tails high, into the nearest slough — plow and all.



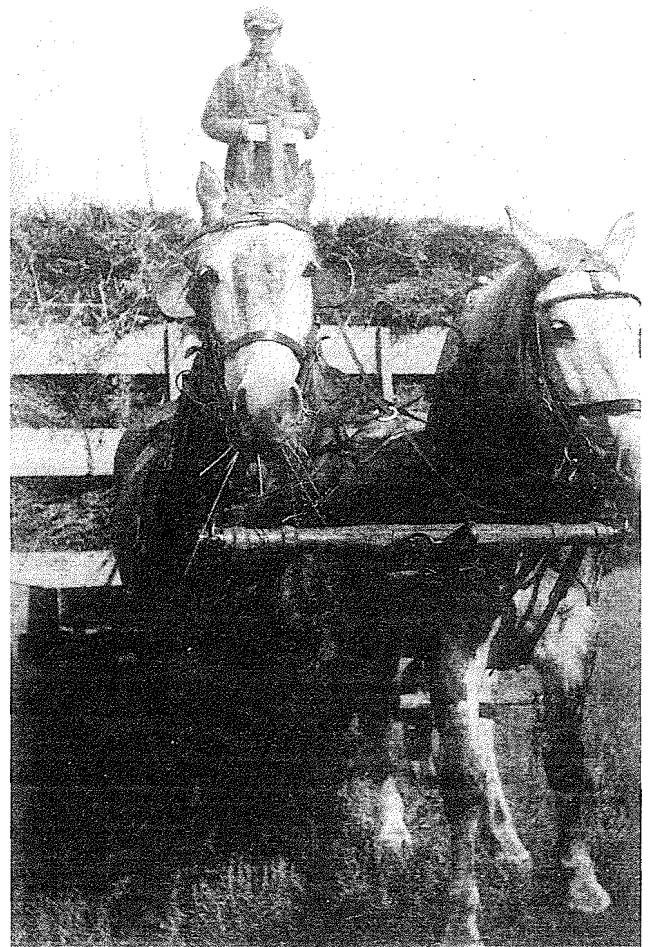
"A Slow Boat To China".

If an ox stepped into a badger hole and broke his leg, he then found himself on the farmer's table the next many months, tough though he may have been. An ox, too old to work, would meet the same fate. A horse, breaking his leg, would be destroyed; a complete waste, as one did **not** eat horsemeat. In either case, essential farm power would be alarmingly reduced. To make up the loss so that work might go on, pioneers often combined their remaining animals with those of a neighbor and one outfit would have to work both farms for a while.

Oxen were not only used in the field but were hitched to wagons, stoneboats, sleighs, buggies and cutters. They hauled grain to market and supplies back. They took people visiting, to church or to meetings. Plenty of time had to be allowed if one expected to arrive on time, but arrive one did. The men perhaps didn't love their oxen the way others loved their horses but they most certainly valued them and were proud of them for their great strength and patience.

Mules, though good and hardy workers, were never popular as farm animals in this part of Manitoba, as they were in other areas of the West. However, they were used in railroad and road construction. Mules were deemed to be tougher than horses, faster than oxen; and could be matched neither for cussedness nor common sense.

The dearest dream of many homesteaders was to own teams of beautifully matched horses for field work or driving purposes. All they needed to make this vision come true was money — hence the dream often had to be deferred.



Loading Sheaves at Threshing Time.

The purchase price for horses was often exorbitant for near empty purses, because the demand far exceeded the supply. In the 1880's a few small horses could be bought from the Indians, some homesteaders from the United States and Ontario brought horses with them, and a very few were available from settled districts like Fort Garry. Horse dealers from the Oak Lake area and other parts of the west saw an opportunity to set up in the horse retail business and went to Ontario to buy stock. Most horses available were old, spavined, foundered or suffered other defects. Many dealers represented these misfits to the buying public as "eight or nine year olds" and tried to gloss over the shortcomings. In the early 1900's people like A. A. Cameron shipped purebred Clydesdale stallions from Scotland for use on Oak Lake farms. Andy and Fred Cairns bought a splendid three year old, "Prince of Brodick", from Mr. Cameron.

A 1911 notice in the Oak Lake News announced that purebred stallions were being supplied by the Department of Agriculture for use by horse companies formed in local areas. Kenton Horse Company in Woodworth Municipality obtained an imported Clydesdale stallion, Lord Collingwood, through this program.

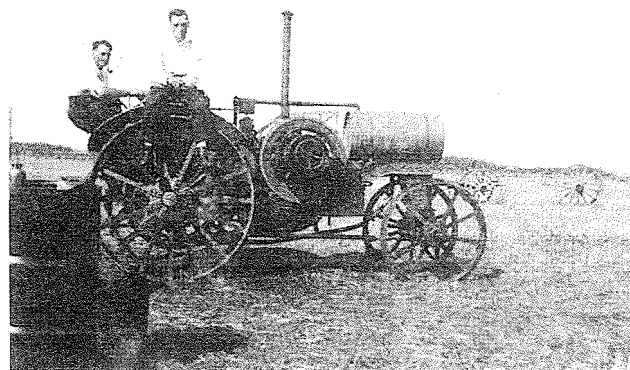
In 1915, ads appeared in the Oak Lake News concerning horses suitable for military service. Without a doubt, fine Oak Lake horses found themselves in many branches of the armed service.

The horse farmers were beset by many worries concerning the health of their animals. They were fortunate to have R. J. Marshal, Val McLeish and T. B. Doll as veterinarians to attend the illnesses of their all-important farm power units.

Glanders was cited as one of the worst problems. In November 1905 a report stated that "\$100,000 is the amount estimated paid or payable as indemnity from the government on account of horses being shot for glanders in every area of The West this year". It can be assumed that Oak Lake was included. Swamp fever was another concern. Lots of folks can still remember the sloppy performance of "drenching" horses suffering with colic. It's safe to say that the farmer got as much medicine down his sleeve as the nag got into its innards. Distemper could also be a serious and infectious disease mainly in young horses. It often developed into pneumonia which was apt to prove fatal. Equine Encephalitis (sleeping sickness) has taken its toll among the Oak Lake horse population. In 1941 when many farmers of the area were still using horse drawn binders the outbreak, coming during harvest, was really quite serious.

Most farmers took pride in their horses and lavished great care and affection upon them. Many

horses responded well to such attention. As farmers prospered, some of them decked their "town teams" in gleaming, well oiled brass studded harness and colourful Scotch tops and hitched them to brightly painted wagons. A well turned out team caught admiring glances and was a credit to the teamster. A skinny, scruffy outfit reflected badly on him. Special pride was felt by those who handled swift, high stepping drivers hitched singly or in pairs to spanking new buggies or cutters such as were available at W. J. Helliwell & Son in the early 1900's. Also, beautiful horses were much prized for riding, whether for pleasure or for rounding up cattle.



1920's McCormick Deering Titan 10-20.

Gradually but inexorably the gas tractor began to steal the limelight from farm horsepower. In the late 1920's tractors were creeping in. Then, when World War II was declared, the demand for meat and cereal grain products took a leap forward and prices began to rise. Therefore tractors were affordable and very necessary as farm help became increasingly scarce. Old tractors were repaired and new ones bought as quickly as possible. These new machines were more convenient and easier to operate with the advent of the self starter. That marvel of ingenuity made tractors safer and easier to start but had taken 10 years or more to come on the market after the first demonstration in 1920. The self starter put an end to broken arms sustained because the motor backfired when the operator was cranking it. The April 7, 1932 Oak Lake News reported on a different type of accident stating that "Adelard Masson received an injury to his eye when the crank slipped while he was cranking his tractor". Allis Chalmers began installing rubber tires on their tractors in 1932, resulting in better traction and faster road speeds. The mechanical lifts, operated by pulling a rope, were far ahead of the manual lever system on plows, cultivators and drills. Later, the hydraulic lift and depth control made the work still more effective.

Mr. Harold Leask, a former Woodworth farmer, wrote an article on the development of farming methods for **Proudly We Speak**. With Mr. Leask's permission we are printing the article.

"The oldtimers who settled these western plains 85 years ago and later would marvel at the changes that have come about over the years. One area in which there has been progressive change has been in the farm machinery field. The early settlers had only very simple machines with which to carry on their tillage, haying and harvesting operations.

Tillage machinery in the early years consisted of a walking plough, harrows, a seed drill and horses or oxen for power. Every farm boasted a walking plough and a team of horses and a yoke of oxen to pull it. As the farmers became established they started to cultivate more acres. The making of larger machines made this expansion possible. The one furrow walking plough was replaced by two-or-three-furrow walking and gang ploughs for field work and they were drawn by three or four horses as desired. With this larger unit one man could do twice as much work in the same time as before. At that time everybody walked behind all implements including the seed drill.



Plowing in Tandem. Three furrow plow.

In time the two furrow riding gang plough appeared and taking one's boots off on a hot day and walking barefoot in the furrow to cool one's feet became a thing of the past. The two-furrow riding gang plough was drawn by four to six horses as the need arose. Some farmers had three-furrow ploughs pulled by seven or eight horses. The general idea was to have one man get over more ground in the same time as before. This idea has carried down through the years and today one operator can have under his control a machine with the power of a hundred horses and be worth more in dollars than some of the farm holdings of years ago. In present times one man can get over more ground in one day than a lot of farmers had in crop altogether years ago.



Plowing the Slopes 1925.

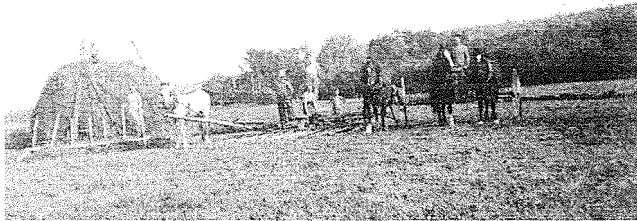
The disc harrow was another machine found on the early farms. It cut a width of six to eight feet. Today the disc harrow has become the one-way disc and the wide level discer with seeding attachment. The field cultivator came into use in the early years as it was much faster than the plough and also sometimes was needed to cope with the noxious weed problem. Changes in cultural practices over the years have made popular the heavy duty cultivator, designed to replace the plough. The drag harrow found on every settler's farm has taken on numerous new forms today.

The seed drills used in the early days broadcast the seed through a gang of boots to the ground and the grain was then covered by harrowing. The broadcast drills were replaced by the shoe drills which put the seed into the ground. Then the disc drill, both single and double discs appeared and were supposed to surpass anything that had gone before. To further speed operations and conserve moisture the one-way disc and wide level discer with seeding attachment were devised. Also the seed drill with press wheels to feed and pack the soil in one operation has come into popular use today.

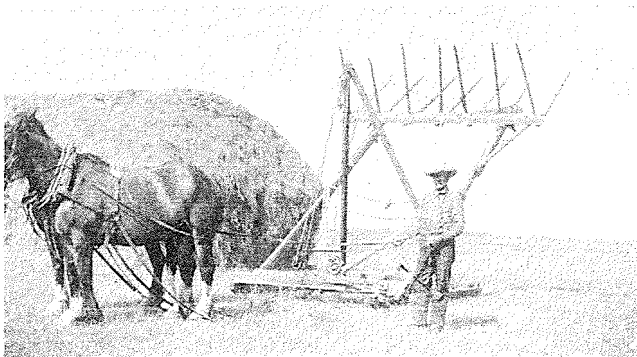
Some people used a roller years ago. This machine had a pair of rollers each about three feet in diameter and about five feet long. They were made of hollow steel drums or a pair of rounded logs. These rollers had a tongue and hitch on them and were horse-drawn. The purpose of this machine was to break up clods and firm the soil for seeding. A present day machine that performs this same function more efficiently is the land packing press drill.

Haying machinery of yesteryear consisted of a mower, a rake, a pitchfork, a hayrack and a strong back. Then some fellow got tired of pitching hay and he invented the hay loader and the side rake to replace the dump rake. Then came the forage harvester, the pick-up baler with bale thrower, the power

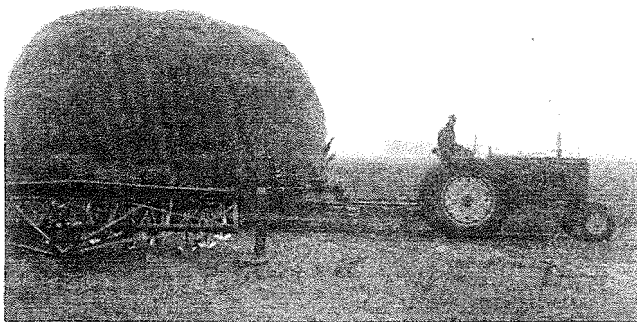
mower, the hay conditioner, the self-propelled swather and a bale elevator that replaces the hay fork, hay slings and track in the barn loft. Some oldtimers I remember would snort in disgust at the performance we go through nowadays to get enough hay for Brindle and Bess. Now that we have the crop in, haying done and have ploughed down a two foot crop of weeds on the summer fallow it is time to go harvesting 'old style.'



Stacking Hay at Herb Taylor's.



John McFarlane haying with horse-powered overhead stacker 1930's.



Stack Moving.

About the time the first settlers came west the reaper was used instead of the scythe to cut the ripened crop. The reaper first cut the grain and it was

tied by hand, using a handful of the cut grain to make the band for each sheaf. The reaper was not used much in the west as it was replaced by the self-tying binder and wire was used as tying material. This wire-tie binder was replaced by a twine-tie binder and was drawn by horses or oxen. The first binders cut a six foot swath, then larger binders cut a seven or eight foot swath and were drawn by four horses. As time went on a ten foot power driven swather came into use. In the early years when binders were used to cut the crop the grain was stooked and left for a time. Then came the stacking of the grain. In those times there were not many threshing machines around hence the grain was stacked waiting for the threshing crews to come and thresh the stacks.



1925 Horse binders cutting oats.



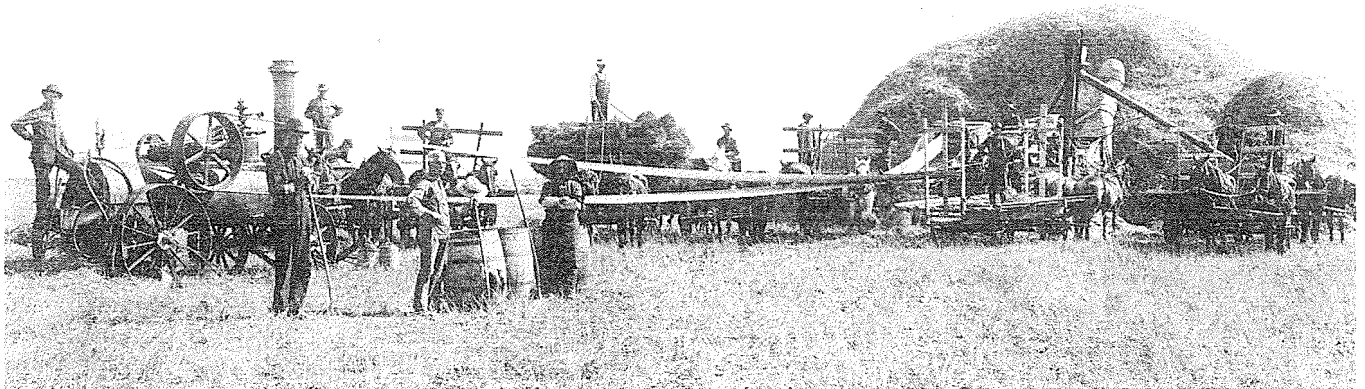
Stooking is Easy according to Robert Taylor and Ralph Helliwell.

The first threshing machine had no self feeding or straw blower. The sheaves were hand fed into the machine and the threshed straw was elevated by means of a straw elevator and dropped to the ground at the rear of the machine. The very earliest thresher was driven by horse power. This unit was powered by twelve horses or oxen who travelled in a circle and they were kept moving by the driver who stood on a

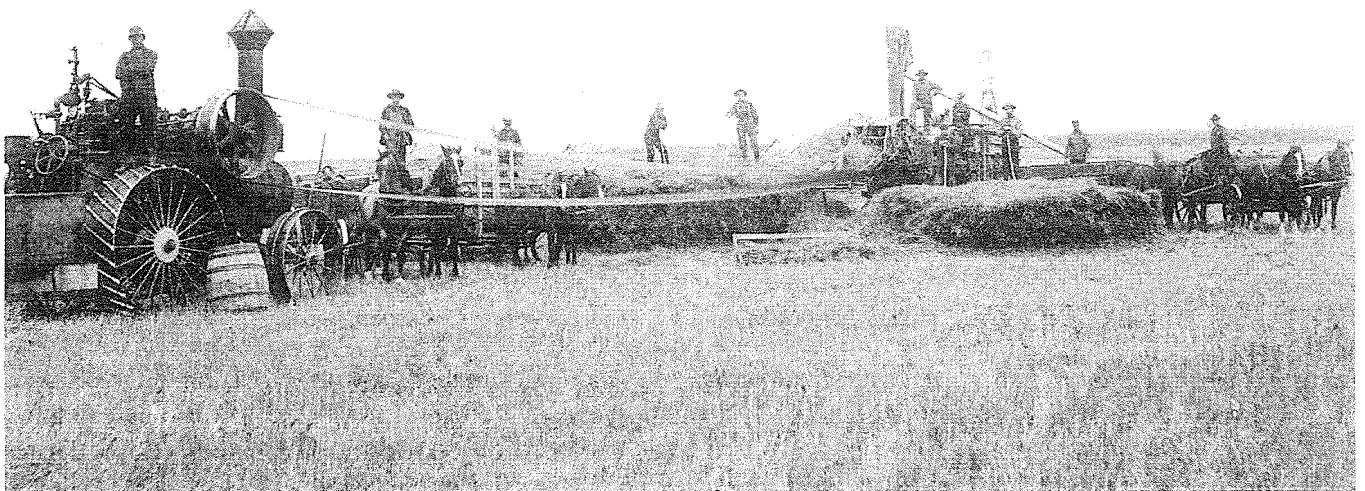


platform in the centre of the unit. The power generated was transmitted to the threshing cylinder by means of a turning rod. The horse-powered machine was replaced by steam engine driven threshers. Stack-threshing was the custom for a time but as more acres were cultivated and more threshing machines came into use stook threshing took over. For a time big machines and crews of from 15 to 20 men handled the threshing.

At harvesting, time is "of the essence." Then gasoline succeeded steam power. The use of gasoline power eliminated a lot of extra labour. Almost every farm of any size had a gasoline threshing outfit on it. These outfits were popular for many years, but change was the order of the day. It was inevitable that the drawn and self-propelled swather would replace the binder and that the power take-off and self-propelled combines would replace the threshing ma-



Steam Threshing before 1900.



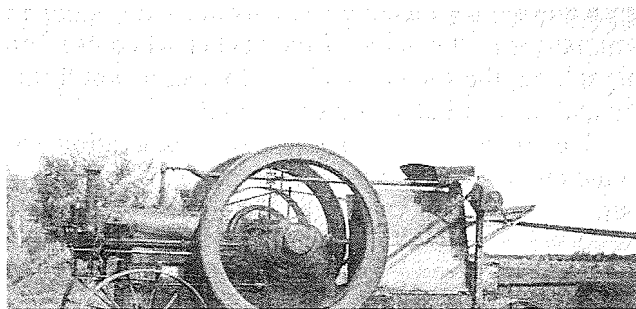
Stack Threshing, 1908.



Stacking Sheaves.



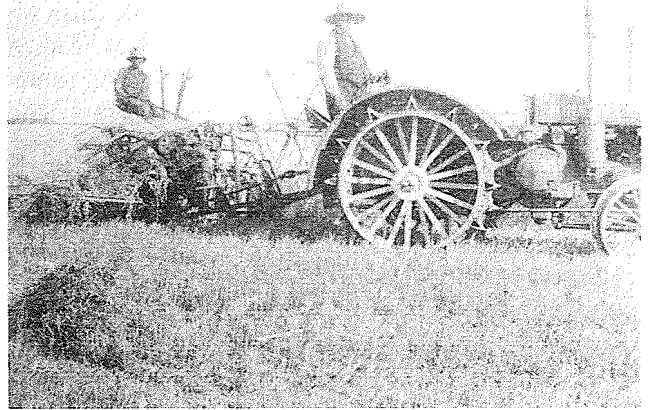
Bagging Grain for Seed —



I.H.C. 25H.P. portable gas engine still used by Wm. Gompf in 1937 for threshing and crushing.

chines. An operation such as threshing had over the years been a more or less community effort. Nowadays it is a family enterprise.

Weeds of one kind or another have been a part of



Transition: 1941 John Deere gas tractor hauling binder, driven by power take-off.

the farm scene since the early days of the west. Hand pulling of weeds or hoeing them became impractical with the increased acreage. Weed eradication by means of cultivation and the use of fast growing crops was only partially successful. Implements in general used for weed control are cultivators of various types, rod weeders, spring tooth harrows and discs of different kinds. In spite of the use of these different machines weeds are still a problem. Eventually the experimenters came up with selective herbicide sprays as a means of weed control. The method of applying the herbicides is by hand sprayer, tractor or truck drawn sprayers and aeroplane spraying depending on the size of the area to be treated. These same machines can be used also to spray insect infested areas.

Other machines have appeared over the years to reduce labour on the farms. Manure spreaders and front-end loaders and bulldozer blades for tractors have replaced the fork and shovel for handling dirt and barnyard manure and the fence maul and crow bar have been sidelined by the power driven post driver and post hole digger.

A spirit of adventure brought the pioneer men and women to the west to win a living from these western plains. They did it figuratively speaking with an ox, a plough and a harrow. Today many of the descendants of the oldtimers are carrying on in the tradition of creating new wealth every year. To do it they have to assume a capital investment that the pioneers could have retired on. Who says the spirit of the pioneers is dead?"

The great changes in the types of farm power led to greater changes in the character of the farming industry in general. More available and handier power resulted in fewer men accomplishing more work. Farms have become larger but require less manpower. Once booming towns have become sleepy villages. Young people have had the time to

become better educated and many leave the farm to work in cities, often in farm-related activities. Today farm work is being done more efficiently and more quickly, the standard of living is higher than ever before, and more farmers have the time and money to travel and follow leisure pursuits. The gulf between the amenities of urban and rural life has narrowed considerably.

So agriculture has changed with the times. The farmers no longer use oxen to work their fields or wagons to draw their grain to town. However, farming still remains the most important industry of this area, even as it was in 1890.

### **The Manitoba Department of Agriculture**

There were several organizations that were under the sponsorship of the Department of Agriculture.

In Oak Lake these were the Agricultural Society, the Farmers' Institute, the Home Economics Club that later became the Women's Institute and the Boys' and Girls' Clubs that later evolved to the 4-H Clubs. The Women's Institute and the Farmers' Institute have died out but the Agricultural Society and the 4-H Club still remain strong.

### **The Agricultural Society**

The Agricultural Society was formed under the sponsorship of the Manitoba Department of Agriculture. Its primary function was to provide information on new farming methods, seed and machinery and to give the farmers a chance to show their products and test their skills.

The annual fall fairs gave the people the chance to show their products, the ploughing matches and summerfallow competitions tested their skills and the Farmers' Institute gave them the information needed to improve their farming methods.

### **The Lansdowne Ploughing Matches**

Until early in the twentieth century, ploughing was the accepted method of working the land. The walking plough, pulled first by oxen and then by horses, was the implement used. There was a real art to using the plough properly so that the end result was a beautiful straight furrow stretching the length of the field. It was the pride of the farmer in his ability to plough a straight furrow and his spirit of competition that led to the ploughing matches.

There are accounts of Ploughing Matches being held in Oak Lake from 1897 to 1901, sponsored by the Lansdowne Agricultural Society.

In 1901 the match was held on the farm belonging to A. E. Hood, half a mile south of town. There were twenty-four contestants from 16 years of age to oldtimers like James Gillespie. The ploughing

started at nine o'clock and continued until 4:30 in the afternoon. There were four men's classes with the walking plough and one with the gang plough. As well there was a class with the walking plough for young men between sixteen and twenty and one for boys under sixteen. Les Wisner of Hagyard was the youngest contestant and James Gillespie the oldest.

Mr. and Mrs. Hood entertained all the people connected with the match at noon. The yard was jammed with buggies and wagons and many more people came on horseback. All in all, a very successful day.

With the changes in farming methods and the introduction of larger machinery, interest in the ploughing matches died out and they were discontinued.

### **The Farmers' Institute**

The Farmers' Institutes were also sponsored by the Agricultural Societies.

There was a real need for information about new farming methods, different kinds of seed, the newest machinery and different breeds of livestock and this organization was designed to fill that need. The Farmers' Institutes were founded in the province in 1890 with government support and encouragement.

There is no information as to when the Oak Lake branch was organized but it was active in the early 1900's. Meetings were organized by the members of the Agricultural Society and held in the winter. Government men travelled all over the province to attend the annual meetings held in March.

Speakers from the Department of Agriculture, Mr. S. A. Bedford, the superintendent of the Experimental Farm at Brandon and local men gave papers at the meetings. Some of the issues discussed and sometimes violently argued were stack threshing versus stook threshing, the value of summerfallow, how to clean your own seed, how many bushels of grain to sow per acre, the value of the packer when used on ploughing, the sowing of clover to restore soil fertility and how to fatten and dress poultry.

The Institute was a popular organization for about ten years and then, like so many more, it died out.

### **Oak Lake Home Economics Society Oak Lake Women's Institute**

The Home Economics Societies of Manitoba were organized in 1911 by the Department of Agriculture and were under the sponsorship of the Agricultural Societies. Local societies were organized in towns and communities across the province. The concerns were the issues affecting women of the times, homemaking and activities outside the home.

Speakers were sent out across the province to attend the local meetings. This group of speakers later became part of the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture. A very important thing about these societies was that they were non denominational and so provided a common meeting ground for all the women of the town and district.

The first account of an Oak Lake Home Economics society is in 1912.

In 1913 the officers were, President — Mrs. W. C. Burns, Vice President — Mrs. J. B. Lang, 2nd Vice President — Mrs. J. B. Cuke, Secretary-Treasurer — Mrs. A. Cameron, Corresponding Secretary — Mrs. Cochrane.

A sample of the activities for 1913 shows the variety of programs they had. A debate night was held in Cameron's Hall, the topic — "Resolved, that immigration to Canada should be limited to British and Teutonic people". The judges gave their decision in favor of the negative. Mr. Clow demonstrated how to cut up a quarter of beef. Mrs. Thomas, a speaker from Winnipeg, spoke on the need of a club room for young men and the need for recreation outside the home for women. She recommended ladies' curling.

In 1919 the Home Economics Societies of Manitoba federated with similar societies across Canada and were then known as "The Women's Institute". The officers for 1919 were — Honorary President, Mrs. Andrew, President — Mrs. W. C. Burns, 1st Vice President — Mrs. Churchill, 2nd Vice President — Mrs. Higginbotham, Secretary-Treasurer — Mrs. Helliwell, Business Committee — Mrs. Banister and Mrs. Jas. McFarlane. Meetings were to be quarterly instead of monthly and one of the concerns was to be cemetery improvement.

At that time the cemetery had been badly neglected so they organized work gangs and raised money to get it in better condition. A note in the Oak Lake News in 1920 complimented the ladies on the new walks and roads that had been laid out and covered with shale. The committee in charge of cemetery improvement was Mesdames Burnes, McFarlane, Borthwick and Blanchard.

The ladies continued their community involvement in many ways. They supported the Great War Veterans when they organized, providing lunches for their meetings and banquets after the Memorial Day services at the cemetery. They raised the money for the flagstaff and the Cross of Sacrifice that were erected on the plot at the cemetery bought by the Women's Institute.

Every year they sponsored short courses given by the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture. These included home nursing, first aid, cook-

ing, the legal status of women, dressmaking and millinery. They tried always to have a guest speaker at their regular meetings. Sometimes these people were from Winnipeg, sometimes closer to home.

In the 30's the meeting accounts are very scarce so we have no way of knowing just how much the women were involved in the community but they did keep up the work at the cemetery. They were still operating in 1938 but seem to have died out soon after.

## Oak Lake Agricultural Society Fair

As were so many organizations and events in the early days, the society was called the Lansdowne Agricultural Society, named for the provincial constituency in which the area was located. Later this name was changed to The Oak Lake Agricultural Society.

There are no records of the society for the earliest times but from information given by old people and the earliest newspapers available a brief idea of events can be pieced together.

The society was evidently organized and the first fall fair held in 1886. The 1901 Oak Lake News speaks of the 15th annual fair so this makes the society 95 years old.

It is thought that Mr. Sam Hannah of Griswold was the first president and Mr. J. W. Helliwell the first secretary-treasurer. The fairgrounds were south of the track in those days and the fair was held in the fall. There were classes for oxen, heavy draft and general purpose horses and cattle. There was a class for saddle ponies and Mrs. Malcolm Leitch and Mrs. Nelson Banister used to ride in that event. There were athletic events later in the day. Races and high jumping were followed by a football tournament. The day was topped off with a dance in the Assembly Hall. Dan McGilvary and Garnet Banister sometimes supplied the music with piano and fiddle.

In 1904 the present fair grounds were used for the first time. The grounds were fenced, pens were constructed and a well dug. The fair was much larger than in the early years. There were classes for draught, general purpose and roadster horses; all kinds of cattle, dairy and beef; sheep, pigs and poultry, and farm and dairy produce. The farm and dairy produce included butter, packed in crocks, in prints and in rolls; bread and buns, catsup, pickles, cheese and soap. There were also classes for grain and garden produce but none for flowers. There was a long list of entries in the ladies' work and in the school children's section. As usual the day ended with a football game, this time between Oak Lake and Griswold.



There have been changes over the years but the pattern of the fairs was really set by 1904 and 1905. By 1912 the barns, poultry, cooking and dairy, and large display building were in use. These buildings gave good service until the Community Centre was opened in 1962. The new building gave ample room for the ladies work, children's entries and all the farm and vegetable produce. As well, there is room on the ice surface area for displays and the meals served by the ladies. The old display buildings were disposed of but the barns are still used.

The format of the fair has changed somewhat as old things are outdated and new ideas are tried. The classes for exhibitors are different. Swine, sheep and poultry are no longer part of the fair and butter, cheese and soap have been replaced by delicious cakes, pies and cookies. Homemade bread is still a standby. Another interesting change is that the prize money for the women's section is paid to the women themselves, not their husbands.

There has always been a lot of interest in horses and cattle. The heavy draught horses have been replaced by the six horse teams and in later years by the gymkhana events. For many years one of the highlights of the fair was the achievement day for the Boys' and Girls' 4-H Calf Club. The young folks showed their calves and had their showmanship and judging competitions that day. Recently the Cattle Breeders Association have been holding a show at the fair. A different breed is featured each year and this event is very interesting. The cow milking contest of years ago is a thing of the past.

Games of chance were allowed after 1934 and of late the skating rink waiting room is used for bingo. Usually there is a small midway. In the 50's and 60's the doll parade in front of the grandstand was popular. Lately there has been quite a large parade to open the fair and it is very well received.

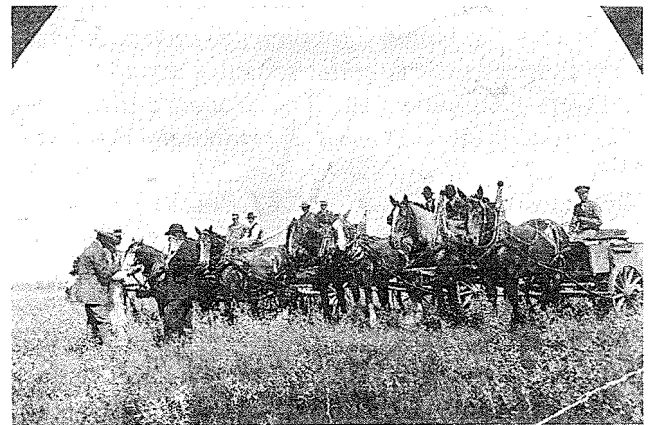
The Oak Lake Ox-Cart Rodeos were first held when the people were trying to raise money to pay for the skating rink. After two years the rodeos were

moved to town and the grounds were set up in the fair grounds. Now the Oak Lake Fair and Rodeo is a two day affair with the Agricultural Fair on the Saturday, the tractor pull in the early evening, a dance at night and the rodeo on the Sunday — all in all, a very busy weekend.

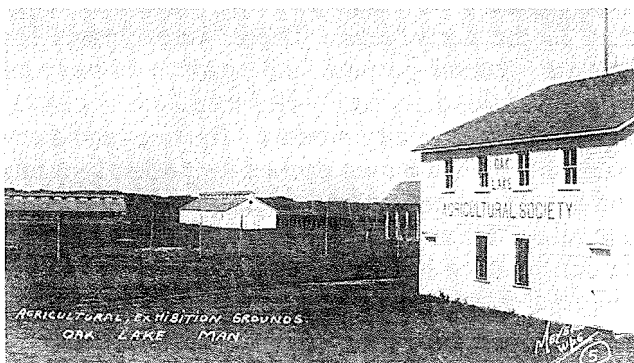
Whatever form the fair weekend takes, it is still the time when people from far and wide come home. Old friendships are renewed and new ones made.



Milking Contest at Oak Lake Fair.



Oak Lake Agricultural Fair class — Draft Team Hitched to Wagon. Note Scotch Tops.



Agricultural Exhibition Grounds, Oak Lake.



Doll Parade, Oak Lake Fair.

## Oak Lake Boys' and Girls' Club

There are no records of this club available but quite a bit of information has been pieced together from personal interviews and reports in the Oak Lake News.

The first account of a club in Oak Lake is in 1918. That year it seems that the Oak Lake Patriotic League organized a club. Mr. J. B. Clarke was secretary-treasurer of the Patriotic League, manager of the Merchants' Bank and secretary of the Boys' and Girls' Club and he seems to have done much of the organizational work.

The Merchants' Bank offered a loan to any child between 10 and 19 years of age. The person had to pay 6% interest and a 50¢ fee to the bank for the use of the money. He/she was required to buy two weanling pigs, one to be raised for meat purposes and one, (a pure bred gilt), to be kept to start a litter for next year. Fifty members applied for this loan.

"The chief object in this loan is to cultivate in the farmer's children a spirit of independent enterprise, and to assist in increasing one of the staple foods, upon which, at the present juncture particularly, so much depends." (Oak Lake News, April 18, 1918)

The pig project seemed to be the most popular but there were other projects as well. The first annual Boys' and Girls' Club Fair was held in October and considered to be very successful, with over 400 exhibits in all. Nineteen pairs of pigs were shown and Ernie Ronberg was declared winner with 91 points. As well, there were classes for vegetables, cookery, sewing and school exhibits.

By 1920 some new projects had been introduced. A prize was to be given for the best garden. Entries had to be in early so that the gardens could be inspected in July. A poultry project was started, with information about poultry raising coming from Winnipeg.

That year saw the introduction of team demonstrations. The first competition was in canning, with the winners going on to compete in Winnipeg, but other competitions were to follow later.

By 1923 the club was very well organized. The members enrolled in one project or several, as they wished. Judging competitions and teaching sessions were held at various farms around the area. Mr. Paul Bredt of Kemnay was the instructor and judge for these sessions and he travelled around to the farms with the members and club leaders, Mr. John McDonald and Mr. George Gordon. The boys judged horses at George Wallace's dairy and beef cattle at Masson's and sheep at Hugh and Jim Gilmour's at Griswold.

Further judging competitions were held at their Fall Fair. The boys and girls showed their pigs which

were judged, and points were awarded to each member. The top members could go on to further competition at Brandon, Winnipeg or even Toronto.

In 1923 a group, Ken McDonald, Johnnie Baillie, Orville Todd, Wilfred Gordon, Ed Masson and Ted Stewart won second prize with their pigs at Winnipeg. Ken McDonald went to Winnipeg twice with his pair of pigs.

In 1925 Nelson Wallace, Maurice Dorval and Bill Graves went to the judging competition at Brandon. Nelson won a gold watch with 467 out of 500 points. They had a good time judging in the old cattle barn at the Exhibition Grounds and sleeping in tents on the grounds.

The club continued in this vein until 1927 when swine became the main project and they were called the Swine Club.



Boy's Stock Club Members at Brandon Fair. They were billeted in the bell tents on the Exhibition grounds. 1920's.

## Oak Lake Swine Club

By 1927 the Swine Clubs had sprung up as an outgrowth of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs. They were operated by the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture with help from the local leaders. The clubs had two main objectives — first, the development of the boy or girl, and second, improvement of the bacon hog industry. The Department of Agriculture hoped that a sense of ownership and a certain business ability would result from the raising of a pen of pigs and that the bacon hog would be popularized in Manitoba. As well, the members could raise a calf as a second project.

In 1927 the officers were: Dr. H. E. Hicks — President, R. A. Montgomery Sr. — Vice President, E. D. Alder — Secretary-Treasurer and George Gordon — Manager. Age limit for club members was ten to twenty-one years.

In 1929, the Oak Lake team of Ken McDonald, Eddie Masson and Wilf Gordon won the judging

competition at Brandon. Each member was awarded a medal and the team got the McKirdy Cup to keep for a year.

This is the last record that we have of special events in the Swine Club. By this time the boys' and girls' interests were changing and the Calf Club was formed. However, there are accounts into the 40's of club members showing pigs at the fair, along with their calves.



Oak Lake Boys and Girls Pig Club Show (about 1915).

### **The Oak Lake Boys' and Girls' Calf Club**

By 1931 calves had become more important than pigs to the young people and the Calf Club was organized.

Several policy changes were made in 1934. The directors of the club decided to extend their fair entries to include all breeds of fat cattle, and the club district was enlarged to include the Griswold area. Boys and girls age 10 to 20 were eligible to join the club. Mr. J. H. Tolton was manager. Sixteen calves were shown in December and Roland Tolton won first prize.

Something new was tried that year. After the judging the calves were taken to the stock yards and, along with fifty other animals, were sold at the first commercial sale of cattle to be held in this district. The top three calves sold for 8, 6½ and 6 cents a pound. Guy Williams sold eight animals and averaged 6½ cents a pound. These fat stock shows were continued until late in the 40's.

The club continued to operate in the same manner for several years. The members raised calves and these were shown at their Club Fair held in late summer or early fall. Judging and showmanship competitions were keenly contested. A member of the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture judged the boys' work. The calves were sent to

Winnipeg to be sold and the day was rounded off by a game of softball in the evening.

In 1939 one important change took place. Until this time the officers of the club had been two or three men with the manager in charge. That year the club members held the offices and fairly regular meetings were held. This was an important step because it gave the young folks a chance to learn parliamentary procedure and to have a voice in running their own club. Officers for that year were: President — Douglas Smith, Vice President — Lorne McKinnon, Secretary — Warren Gordon. Mr. Walter Smith was Treasurer and Mr. Harvey Tolton was manager.

There are no records of the club for the 40's and 50's. However, we know that the club was active and that as time went by changes took place. One change was that the club calves were shown and the judging and showmanship competitions were held in conjunction with the Oak Lake Fair in July. Trophies and show halters were often given by local men or businesses and were eagerly received by the young people.

By the 1950's the Boys' and Girls' clubs had received a new name and the movement had spread all over Canada and much of the United States. They were called 4-H Clubs with their emblem being a large green four leaf clover with a large H on each leaf. The H's stood for Head, Heart, Health and Hands and the 4-H Pledge was:

#### **We Pledge**

Our Head to clearer thinking,  
Our Heart to greater loyalty,  
Our Health to cleaner living,  
Our Hands to greater service,  
For our Club, our Community and our Country.

With the introduction of the 4-H Clubs, the program became much more diversified. The emphasis now was on much more than the project, in this case the raising of a calf, and many members did very well in the different events. Some names are available but others are missing and this is unfortunate. Because the records are so sparse and the time span so long, only a brief record can be given.

The calves were shown at the Oak Lake Fair and judged in their own club. Then each member took his calf to the Virden 4-H Rally. Here the calves were judged in their classes according to breed, against all the other 4-H Clubs in the Virden Agricultural Representative Area. There were many different groupings for the showing and prizes awarded to each group. As well judging and showmanship competitions were held.

A new feature of the Rally Days was the marching competitions. The club members marched in their

uniforms and they were judged for uniform and marching ability. The champion and reserve champion clubs went to the Brandon 4-H Inter-Rally held in conjunction with the Brandon Exhibition in early July. In 1963 the 4-H Beef Calf Club placed Reserve Champion at the Brandon Inter-Rally. Ninety clubs marched that day and it was a stirring sight when the clubs crossed the stage in front of the grandstand. In 1968 they were champions of the 4-H parade at Brandon.

The club continued in this manner until the late 70's. At that time it was disbanded because of lack of members but there is every hope that it will be re-organized in the future.



Oak Lake Boys and Girls Calf Club Achievement Program at Oak Lake Fair. Left to Right — Louise Batho, Bob Gordon, Wayne Gordon, Ron Batho.

### **The Oak Lake Home Economics Club**

The Home Economics 4-H Club was organized in 1957 with forty-seven girls and eight leaders participating. The executive for that year was President — Sharon Hatch, Secretary — Dale Doherty, Treasurer — Marlene Gompf, Press Reporter — Bernice Smith, Scrap Book Convenor — Janice Bothe, Main Leader — Mrs. Lena Taylor. The club was under the guidance of Miss Jean Renton, Home Economist from Brandon.

At that time all the members were enrolled in the sewing project. Because they were first year members, they all made aprons and the next year they made skirts. Soon after that the members were able to enrol in sewing, crafts, home design and foods. Along with the project article, each girl was required to make a project book containing about thirty samples of sewing, crocheting and knitting. These samples had to be in perfect condition and were the cause of much frustration and many shed tears.

The girls held their achievement day in the

spring. The project articles and books were judged in the afternoon when ribbons were awarded and articles picked to go on to further competition at the Virden Rally. The evening program included modelling of the sewing projects, team demonstration competitions, reports from club members and the display that the club had worked on as a joint project. These displays had a theme, perhaps some aspect of safety or 4-H work, and they could go on to the Rally at Virden.

Rally day was a busy one, with the project judging, demonstration competitions, dress revue, judging of the club displays and marching. Older 4-H members were interviewed each year and two young people from the Virden Agricultural Representative area were presented with gold watches donated by Eaton's of Canada Limited. The winners of the various events went on to competition at the Brandon Rally.

Correct parliamentary procedure in conducting a meeting and public speaking were considered important in the training of a 4-H member. The girls were encouraged to take part in club business and to hold various offices. Public speaking was taught at club level and the winners went on to speak offs at different centers in the area. The girls competed with members from all sorts of clubs and especially with the members of the Beef Club. Often some of the girls belonged to both clubs. New interest was generated when such projects as photography, woodworking and hunter safety were introduced and the Home Economics Club was no longer an exclusively girls club.

Quite an elaborate program of exchange and award trips took place in those years. Members and leaders were rewarded for good work in all aspects of 4-H work by being given these trips. Mrs. Betty Olive and Mrs. Marion Scott were awarded the "Know Manitoba Better Tour" for leaders. Marilynne Boys and Sharon Scott went to Toronto one year and Linda Hatch went to Iowa, U.S.A. There were many more members who were awarded these trips and the boys and girls travelled widely in Canada and the United States. These trips were very rewarding but space won't permit listing the names.

In those early years the Home Economics Club won champion of the parade at Virden and reserve champion in Brandon that same year. Linda Hatch and Linda Morcombe were provincial champions with their demonstration "A New Look". The girls spent a very interesting four days in Winnipeg and had their demonstration put on film.

Such was the pattern of 4-H work in both clubs. Not all members competed in all events or completed all the projects, it wasn't humanly possible, but there



was something of interest for every boy or girl. Perhaps this explains the popularity of the 4-H movement in Canada.



Home Economics Club 1958. 1st Achievement Program.

### **The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association**

The Grain Growers' Movement and later the Co-operatives arose out of grievances concerning the transportation and marketing of the farmers' produce. A new product in the economy of Canada had appeared — wheat. Wheat was the farmers' cash crop and millions of bushels now had to be disposed of annually. Some system had to be evolved that would market wheat, and the other grains raised by farmers, economically and efficiently.

There were three ways in which grain could be transferred from a wagon or sleigh box to a box car. One was to load it direct. The grain was scooped or handed in bags directly into the car. This was back-breaking work but it saved the \$18.00 a car that was charged for handling the grain through the elevator.

The second loading method was through the flat warehouse, just a glorified granary beside the railroad track where a farmer could sell his load to a local buyer or hire a bin to accumulate a carload. This method also operated in direct opposition to the elevator.

The third method was to pass the grain through the elevator, where it was handled by mechanical power. The railways preferred loading the grain from the elevators because this method was more efficient. In both the other cases, box cars were tied up while a farmer laboriously loaded his grain. However, the elevators were limited to 25,000 bushel capacity by government legislation and the grain was bought on a first come first served basis so the farmer who got his grain threshed first got some much needed cash and the rest had to wait.

The railways had expanded so fast that there was a real shortage of boxcars. Because the elevators could handle the grain faster, the cars were sent there first and the elevator companies began to control the grain movement; sales and prices. The problem was further aggravated by two bumper crops in 1901 and 1902.

The inability to sell their grain worked real hardship on the farmers. This grain had been hauled over many weary miles in wagon or sleigh boxes, over terrible roads, and the cash was desperately needed to pay the bills. Imagine the anger and frustration these men must have felt when they found that there was no room for their grain or that the price had dropped by 30 or 40 cents a bushel overnight.

From the resentment at the discrimination practiced by the railways and the elevator companies arose the organization of the grain growing farmers, first in Saskatchewan and then in Manitoba. The first local organizational meeting of the farmers in Manitoba took place in 1903 in Virden. In March of that year the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association was formed at a second meeting held in Brandon. J. W. Scallion of Virden was elected President and Roderick McKenzie of Brandon was Secretary-Treasurer.

In 1906 the Grain Growers' Association of Manitoba and the Territories supported the formation of the Grain Growers' Grain Company. The Company was to handle members' grain, compete with the private companies, and pay a dividend, after the fashion of co-operative societies, to shareholders on grain handled.

In 1907 the company attempted to obtain a seat in the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. After much negotiation the Grain Exchange was compelled to admit the Grain Growers' Association but only on the condition that the Company drop the co-operative clause from its by-laws. However, the struggle was an early indication of the power of organized farmers and of their influence on government.

### **The United Grain Growers' Association, Oak Lake Branch**

The problems concerning grain shipment were common to all towns along the main line of the C.P.R. Oak Lake perhaps had one advantage over the surrounding towns in that Leitch Bros. mill was flourishing in the early 1900's and the mill provided another means whereby the farmers of this area could dispose of their grain.

A local Grain Growers' Association was formed in 1904 with Mr. Alex Goodwin president, Mr. R. K. Smith vice president and Mr. George Gordon secretary-treasurer. Twenty men took out memberships at

that meeting. Another organizational meeting is recorded in 1906. That year Mr. R. K. Smith became president and Mr. George Gordon remained as secretary-treasurer. Shares were sold at that meeting and the discussion began as to the advisability of requesting the Grain Growers' Grain Company to build an elevator in Oak Lake.

This discussion about building an elevator in Oak Lake went on for many years. As always, the local paper took an active part in the affairs of the community and very interesting letters to the editor, concerning this issue, were often published. In the meantime, a Grain Growers' Elevator was built in Griswold. The farmers from the Harvey and Ryerson districts now could haul their grain over Skinner's Bridge to that elevator and eventually the idea of building a second one in Oak Lake was dropped.

The Grain Growers' Association remained active in Oak Lake for many years. There are accounts of meetings as late as 1937. Members attended the conventions in Winnipeg and speakers were brought out to the local meetings. The organization provided an outlet for information on marketing policies and problems and helped dispel the isolation that was so much a part of rural living. Accounts in old diaries show that the farmers rarely missed a Grain Growers' meeting and a nomination to attend the annual convention in Winnipeg was eagerly sought. For these reasons, the organization had an important place in the life of the Oak Lake area.

### **The Wheat Pools**

During the years of the First World War, Canadian grain was marketed without any major problems. However, the need for controlled wheat marketing was now recognized and in 1919 the Canadian Wheat Board was appointed for one year. An initial price of \$2.15 was paid for No. 1 Northern wheat at the Lakehead and participation certificates were issued with the value to be declared at the end of the crop year. The Wheat Board fixed the prices between grades, controlled the domestic flour trade and sold the wheat at its own discretion. This was the forerunner of the Canadian Wheat Board as we know it today. The problem was that the Wheat Board was appointed for one year at a time and there was no guarantee that it would be in operation for any length of time.

As far back as 1920 the idea of a single, interprovincial Wheat Pool, covering the entire wheat growing area of the prairies, was being circulated. The idea was that a strong Wheat Pool could give the farmers the price support and market controls that were never guaranteed under the Wheat Board. It was further suggested that the Grain Growers' Associa-

tions of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and the United Farmers of Alberta, with the backing of the United Grain Growers Grain Company, should organize the Pool.

In 1924 the United Grain Growers' Association offered loans to the Prairie Provinces for the formation of the Wheat Pool. A seat for the Pool was purchased in the Winnipeg Grain Exchange and then loans were given to each of the provinces. The loans were used to set up accounting systems and to guarantee the Pool's account at the banks. The United Grain Growers' Limited Elevator Company agreed to handle Pool wheat and soon agreements were made with other elevator companies.

The first Wheat Pool was set up in Alberta but within months a concerted membership drive was on in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The Pools would market the farmers' wheat, pay an initial price and issue participation certificates. The facilities of the United Grain Growers' Grain Company and the other participating elevator companies would be used until such time as the Wheat Pools could build or buy their own elevators and terminals at the Lakehead and Vancouver.

### **The Oak Lake Co-operative Elevator Association**

The farmers of the Oak Lake district met on February 6, 1927, to consider the proposals for securing a pool elevator in Oak Lake. Stewart Gellie of Virden outlined the steps necessary for the formation of the elevator association. He told the people that it would be necessary to sign up 10,000 acres in the wheat pool before an association could be formed. Plans were made for the canvass. The area was divided into sections and a captain appointed for each group of canvassers.

There are no records of the canvass but it must have been successful because plans went ahead and the Oak Lake Co-operative Elevator Association was formed. Andrew Gillespie was appointed chairman and George Gordon acted as secretary-treasurer. Plans went ahead for building an elevator at a cost of \$20,381.00. In the meantime, arrangements were made with Mr. W. C. Burns to handle the grain sold to the pool in 1927-28, until the new elevator could be opened.

The new Manitoba Pool Elevator was ready for the crop year in 1928. A full board was elected and the members for that year were; president — R. A. Montgomery, vice president — J. L. Johnston, secretary — Andrew Gillespie, directors — G. Gordon, R. C. Smith, W. J. Holland and R. Ronberg. The first agent was Mr. V. O. Hollier, and he handled 138,682 bushels of grain that year.

By 1929 the crops were poorer but the year was considered successful. Only 97,802 bushels of grain were handled in the 1929-30 crop year but the operating expenses, 7% interest on capital investment and \$3552.88 on the debt had been paid. A cash patronage dividend of \$1068.00 was returned to the members. An important factor for the farmers was that they received the screenings from their grain.

There were other changes through the years. In 1931 lightning rods were installed on the elevator.

In 1959 a dwelling for the agent was constructed.

A new office, drive-way and scale were added in 1965.

Dust equipment was installed in 1967.

In 1973 a car haul was added.

The "B" elevator was purchased from the Ogilvie Elevator Company in 1960. It was sold in 1979 to Garry Rogers and has since been dismantled.

The present agent is Murray Hagyard and 405,-842 bushels of grain were handled in 1979-80.

### **Manitoba Dairy and Poultry Co-operative Limited, Oak Lake Branch**

Regardless of the type of farming the family was involved in, there were always poultry and milk cows around. The women and children raised turkeys and chickens for home use but the fowl were also looked on as a way of raising money for the extras needed around the home. Eggs and butter were sold, door to door or else traded at the store for groceries or clothing.

A farmer's wife took great pride in the quality of her butter and eggs. Eggs weren't so hard to handle but imagine trying to make butter Saturday afternoon, putting it in pound prints wrapped in butter paper, and then keeping it cool until it could be delivered when the trip to town was made after supper. Remember, all this was done without electricity, so without refrigeration.

Often there was a surplus of poultry and so the need arose for a method of selling the extras. The Manitoba Co-operative Poultry Marketing Association, later known as the Manitoba Dairy and Poultry Co-operative Limited was the organization that filled this need.

The first minute books for the Oak Lake branch of the co-operative are missing, but newspaper accounts for 1927 mention a shipment to Winnipeg and it evidently wasn't the first.

The turkeys and chickens were starved and then killed and dressed at home. A shipping day was set for early December and the fowl were brought to some central place in town. A poultry grader and a government inspector were present, along with the local representatives. The turkeys and chickens were

graded, then packed in boxes, loaded into a box car and shipped to Winnipeg. The Hartney Poultry Co-operative members brought their poultry to Oak Lake to be shipped in the same box cars.

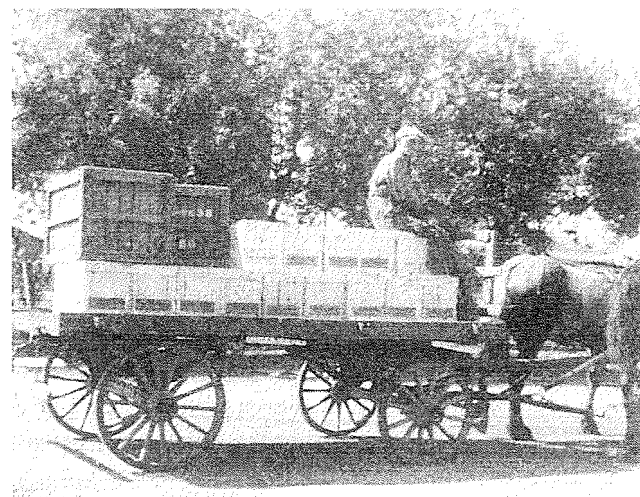
Evidently the quality of poultry shipped from Oak Lake was always good and for some years shipments were high. In 1932, a shipment of 12,364 pounds was made. Albert Mattick from Griswold shipped twelve turkeys which all graded special.

By 1935 the Co-operative included dairy produce and an egg grading station was set up in the shop now owned by Bob Spence. The eggs were brought in by the farmers, graded and shipped to Brandon or Winnipeg on the train. They were packed in 24 dozen crates and often Mr. Hart had them packed higher than the dray when he took them to the station.

In 1937 there were 119 shareholders from the Oak Lake and Griswold districts. That year the officers were; president — Alex McDonald, vice president — A. Gillespie, secretary-treasurer — George Gordon, directors — Ed Valley, T. J. Smith, Ed Johnston and John McDonald.

By 1944 shipments had fallen off quite a bit. That year only 4,657 pounds of poultry was shipped, most of it turkeys. The last record of a poultry shipment was for 1949. Discussion at the 1950 annual meeting centered around keeping the egg grading station open and there is no further mention of poultry.

In 1956 the egg grading station was closed and the property sold to Bob Spence.



All Hart Draying Eggs to C.P.R. Station in the 1940's.

### **Oak Lake Consumers' Co-operative**

The Oak Lake Consumer's Co-operative is not the first attempt at a local co-operative in Oak Lake. In 1897, Mr. D. Moore canvassed for shareholders for the building of the first flour mill in Oak Lake. About the same time a creamery was built with

money raised from selling shares. These two enterprises are dealt with, in detail, in another section of the book so are only mentioned here.

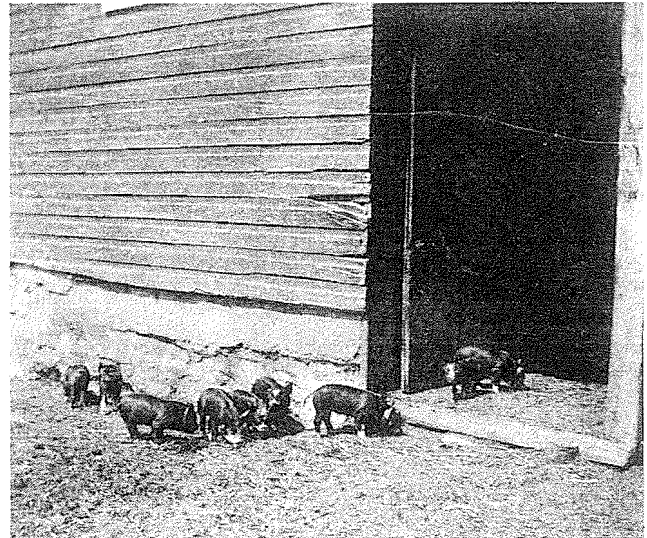
In February of 1961, the store that had been known for many years in Oak Lake as "Andersons" was put up for sale. There was much speculation and worry as to whom the buyer would be, if someone would buy the place or if the store would be closed. Anderson's was the only remaining large store in Oak Lake and it was vital for the community that it remain in business.

Three men, Bob Montgomery, Norris Johnston and Sid Gregson called a public meeting to discuss the purchase of the store and the formation of a co-operative. A committee was formed and a second public meeting was held with Hans Jenson, who was district representative for Federated Co-operatives Limited in District 3B.

A provisional board of directors was set up and the members began to canvass the district. \$9,000.00 was raised in two weeks for the start of a new co-operative store. A further organizational meeting was called and a board of directors elected. They were; President — Sid Gregson, Vice President — Norris Johnston, Secretary — Jim Goodwin, and directors, Kelly Taylor, Mrs. George Gompf, Tom Bailey, Mel Hart and Jim Olive. The original group and the new board of directors raised another \$4,000.00 and the store was purchased. A hurried clean up and paint up followed and the Oak Lake Consumers' Co-operative opened for business on May 5. Ed Beres was manager and Barbara Withers the clerk.

Total sales in 1961 were \$76,067.00. By 1969 sales had risen to \$167,000.00 but expenses had risen also and for two years in a row the store had operated at a loss. Because of this situation the Oak Lake store was amalgamated with the Virden Co-operative in 1970. It was hoped that the increased purchasing

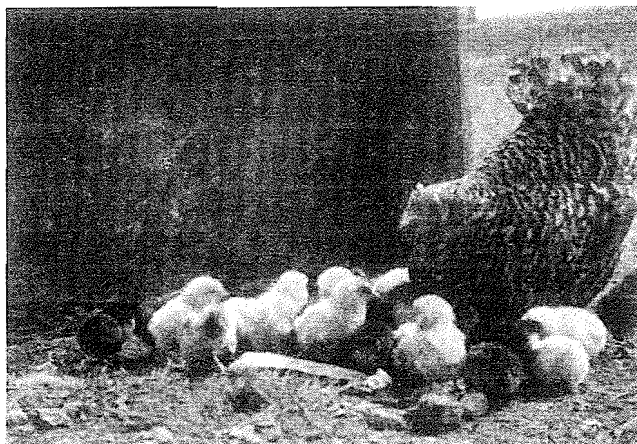
power would result in lower costs and a broader range of service. The Oak Lake store has operated under these conditions for the last ten years and is serving the community successfully.



Chubby Chums.



The Manure pile — a great place to sleep! 1910 note straw stack in background.

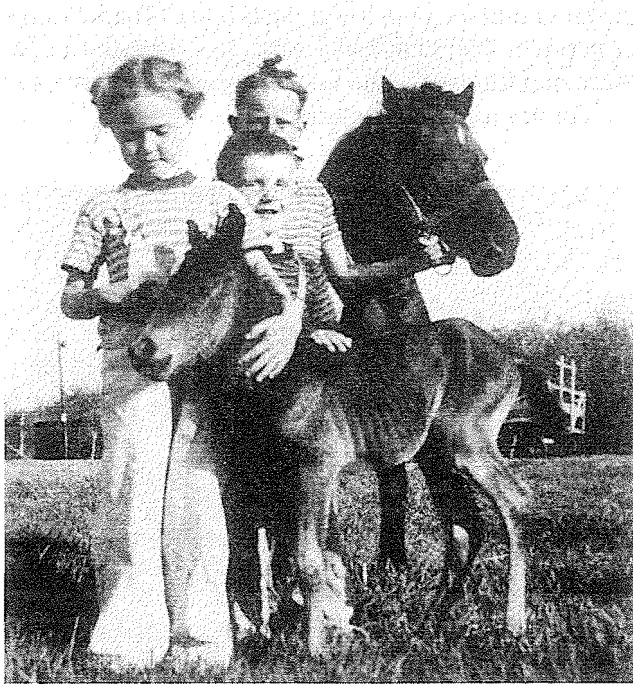


Come, My Dears!

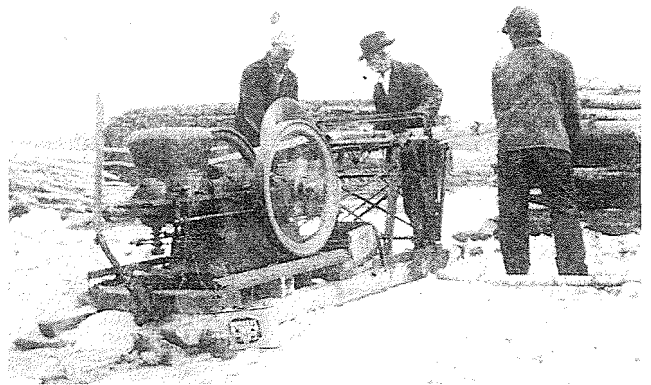


Farm Friends.





Farm Chums.



Sawing the winter's fuel supply with stationary gas engines and circular saw. Left to Right — Cecil Allum, Thos Allum, Harry Allum 1950's.



A lamb and a Kid.



Cutting and Loading Wood in the Bush. Sid Withers in foreground.



Bring in the cows all on a summer's eve. Note pole gate.



Cord Wood for Sale.

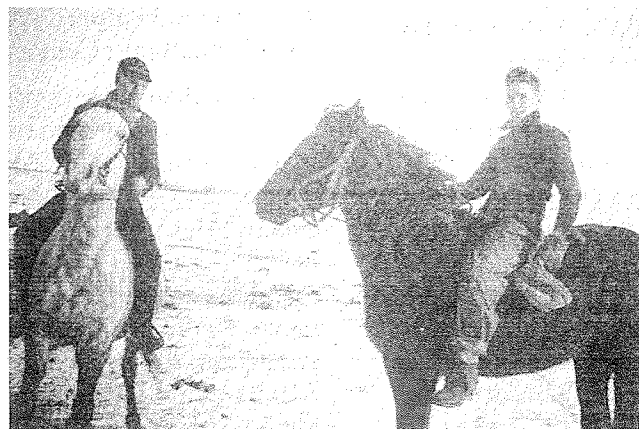


Milking Time.

# Recreation



**A play should give you something to think about.  
Phyllis Bottom**



**I bet my money on the  
bob-tailed nag  
Somebody bet on the bay.  
Stephen Foster**

## Sports and Games

The immigrants to Manitoba and to Oak Lake were a hardy and athletic race. The man who was a good sport, a good shot and a good horseman was looked up to by his community and he carried himself with pride.

Every town had its curling and skating rink to occupy the winter months. Curlers and hockey teams travelled up and down the main line of the C.P.R. or made daring trips in cars or trucks to play a team from a town off the beaten track. The trip often occupied more time than the game. The skating rink was used by everyone and the various functions were thoroughly enjoyed. The town band added greatly to the fun.

Summer sports were varied. Cycling Clubs were very popular at the turn of the century. Tennis was played by men and women and matches and tournaments were held all around the country. Baseball and football appealed to the stronger men and boys. Every town had its team, as well as many of the rural school districts. Matches and games were hotly contested between "town" and "country" and league games were followed by as many fans as could make the trip.

Every community worth its salt had a Turf Club. The members had very valuable horses which were raced at meets all around the area. Each community had its favorite horse and its progress was followed with great interest and often betting on the side.

Rifle Clubs were popular. The men were crack shots and again held shoot-offs in their clubs and tournaments around the country. The finalists often travelled to Winnipeg or Ottawa.

The summer fairs and sports day were the scenes of tournaments, competitions and races. These were keenly contested for trophies or cash. There was often both a baseball and football tournament with a dance at night to round off the day.

Oak Lake was more fortunate than most districts because it was close to the Assiniboine River and Oak Lake. These bodies of water added greatly to the attraction of the area by making available a different range of activities. In later years, if one wished, a round of golf could be played with friends.

Following, in greater detail, are some of the games and sports enjoyed by the people of Oak Lake and District.

### Curling Rinks

As far back as the records go, there have been curling rinks in Oak Lake. In 1901 accounts are given of curling in a rink with two sheets of ice, called the North and the South sheets, but we can't tell where it was built.

In August 1904 a Curling Club meeting was held and the motion passed that a new curling rink be built on lots donated by Dave Lind, adjoining the Victoria Skating Rink. Twenty dollar shares were to be sold to finance the building. This rink was opened in 1905 and had two sheets of ice. The building was used until 1918 when it was condemned. In March 1919 the town council authorized the secretary-treasurer "to prepare a by-law to cover the cost of a curling and skating rink in the town, and to provide a suitable site for same at an approximate cost of nine thousand dollars, and that the by-law be presented to the ratepayers at the earliest possible date" (Oak Lake News, March 6, 1919).

In 1920 the new Municipal Rink was opened. This building housed a good sheet of skating ice and on the north side, two sheets of curling ice, with an upstairs clubroom for curling members and hockey dressing rooms. This rink served the community well but the ice was always crooked and as time went by the waiting room and upstairs rooms seemed to be too small.

Accordingly, in 1960 a committee headed by Sid Gregson and Bill Cowan, was formed to raise money and oversee the building of a new rink. Dances were held all summer in Cowan's barn loft and many other functions were held, as well as the town and surrounding countryside being canvassed for donations. The necessary money was raised and plans went ahead.

The building was erected completely with volunteer labor. The rafters were made the winter of 1961 and then the big push was on. The women helped with lunches and painting and even helped with the shingling. The result was a large new building to be proud of. It has three sheets of ice, a large waiting room and kitchen and an upstairs clubroom, large enough for all sorts of functions. The official opening was held February 14, 1962. It is called the Oak Lake Community Center.

Since then more improvements have been made. In 1976 the curling club raised enough money to have a concrete floor put in. This makes the building much cleaner and now the ice surface is available for dances. Many functions are held here in the summer. In 1981, again with volunteer labor, the curling club members insulated and lowered the ceiling. The money for this project was obtained from a recreation grant from the department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. This insulation should make the building much warmer for curling and along with the rest of the improvements, should make it good for many more years of curling.

## Men's Curling Club

The Men's Curling Club was in full swing by 1901 with A. C. Jex as President and Jas. Gillespie as Secretary-Treasurer. League curling seems to have been called the President's competition. These games went on all winter.

There are write-ups of several bonspiels or special events, some in fun and some serious. G. B. Connor put up four sacks of Leitch Brothers flour and four rinks played off for the prize — won by Anderson over Terry 14-1. Another weekend the married men played the single men.

A New Year's Day bonspiel was held with nine rinks competing in two competitions. The skips were — R. L. Hood, A. C. Cameron, W. Chambers, J. R. Hood, C. V. Anderson, E. E. Orr, Jas. Gillespie, H. F. Terry and G. B. Connor. The first competition was won by Orr, the consolation by Cameron. The next day four rinks were to go to Alexander to play for the Lansdowne Trophy and on January 16 played again in Alexander for the T.C. Norris Trophy.

In 1905 play was begun in the new rink south of the track. The nine skips were chosen by ballot and the rinks were made up by drawing for first choice etc. The skips were — R. L. Hood, E. E. Orr, Jas. Black, G. B. Connor, J. Douglas, Dr. Wright, D. Lind, R. H. Hockin and J. G. Miller.

In 1906 the district matches for the Tuckett and Caledonian trophies were held in Oak Lake on the same day with rinks from Griswold, Alexander, Vir- den, Brandon and Oak Lake playing. The winners of the Tuckett trophy were given a berth in the Winnipeg bonspiel. Oak Lake was represented by Hood (skip) with Steen, Parker and Orr and Douglas (skip) with Lind, Connor and Black. Play went on until 2:30 in the morning. At that time Griswold was to play Vir- den for the trophy and the right to go to Winnipeg. Due to the late hour they flipped a coin and Vir- den won the trophy and the right to go to Winnipeg.

In 1912 a rink made up of J. Douglas (skip), Orr, Steen and Cameron attended the Saskatoon bonspiel. They won 1st in the Citizens (a cup and gold watches), 2nd in the Saskatoon Milling Competition, 4th in the Royal and 2nd in the Grand Challenge.

By 1914 interest in curling was very strong. Old diaries tell of curling almost every afternoon and evening but Sunday. They curled both Christmas and New Years day. Roads were getting better and people had cars so the farmers were starting to curl, also the women were organized and curling regularly.

### We'll All Go Curling Today

The farmer was toiling hard up in the mow  
with dust in his eyes and sweat on his brow;  
And the hay-seeds stuck thick in his sweat-matted  
hair —

As he let out a whoop and jumped in the air.  
"By Gosh! boys," said he as he flung his fork down  
"Let the farm go hang and we'll all go to town".  
"We'll take a day off; pile into the sleigh,  
For we'll all go curling today."

Chorus:

For we'll all go curling today;  
Life's too short for all work and no play.  
We'll leave for tomorrow our care and our sorrow  
And we'll all go curling today.

The merchant was trying to balance his books;  
That they didn't come straight you could tell by his  
looks

When sounds of the game from the rink he did hear.  
Wreathed his face in smiles from his ear to his ear:  
He called to the clerks, "For today that's enough,  
There will come other days to sell all our stuff.  
We'll shut up the store and put business away,  
For we'll all go curling today."

Chorus:

The ladies have caught the infection now too,  
And they said, "A share of life's joys is our due,"  
So they left their cooking, washing and mending,  
The housekeeping cares and work never ending,  
And picked up their brooms and went off to the ice,  
Had the old roaring game full swing in a trice.  
And they sang with joy as they bent to their play,  
"Oh, we'll all go curling today."

Chorus:

David McLeish

In 1920 the club moved into the new Municipal rink. The season was opened with an open bonspiel. Oak Lake skips who won prizes in that bonspiel were — G. B. Connor, L. C. Story, E. U. Steen, N. Banister, J. G. Lamond, J. Furtney and J. McFarlane.

The men continued to play club games and to travel around the country to bonspiels. The Brandon Bonspiel was always a popular event and many attended. Lorne and Fred Story eventually became well known there. They won the Shea Trophy four times at Brandon, the first time in 1924 and the last time in 1940. In 1924 the rink consisted of Lorne Story (skip), Fred Story, Henry Lawson and Alf Lawson.

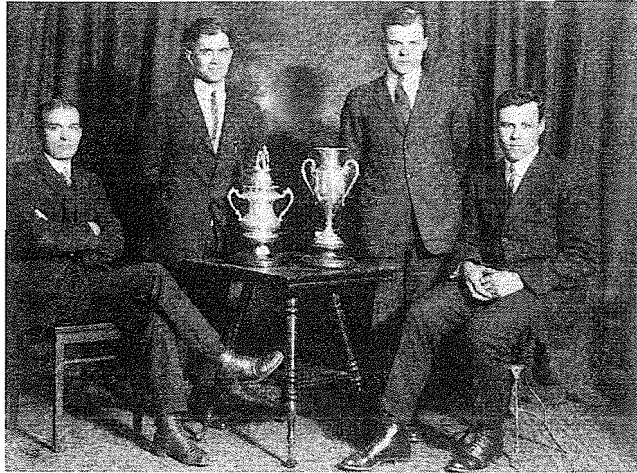
For years Oak Lake and Griswold alternately hosted the Lansdown Bonspiel.

In 1932 a "mixed" bonspiel was held, probably not the first, but one we have records for. The winners of the competitions were — T. Story, F. E. Story, J. S. Armstrong and Nelson Banister. The prize for the losing rinks was won by J. F. Graham over Chas. Williams. Lorne Story's mystery prize — the use of a pair of rocks, box and key for the next season, was won by Mrs. J. M. Knight.



In 1962 the men moved into the Community Center. In 1963 they held their first Men's Open Bonspiel. A big plus for this season was three sets of matched rocks bought by the club. These have proven to be very popular with everyone who uses the community center.

Now mixed curling, school curling and bonspiels are the order of the day.



Shea Trophy Winners, Brandon 1924. Left to Right — Alf Lawson (lead), Henry Lawson (2nd), Fred Story (3rd), Lorne Story (skip).



Oak Lake Mixed Bonspiel. Left to Right — Hannah Joynt, Mervin Walton, Bill Thiry, Hank Lyle.



High School Curlers 1945. Eddy Leronowich, Lloyd Gibson, Nora Olive, Lynne Newton.



Oak Lake Curlers. Left to Right — Wellington Olive, Al Burch, Burt Murray, Wilf Gordon.



Curling Enthusiasts. Left to Right — Jim Olive, Glen Walton, Lena Taylor, Betty Olive 1951.



High School Curlers. Left to Right — Shirley Anderson, Betty Kennedy, Jim Allum, Phyllis Weatherald.

## Ladies Curling Club

The ladies started curling in 1913. That winter two rinks made up of Miss D. Banister (skip), Mrs. Cameron, Miss T. Parsons, Miss Hockin and Mrs. Mundie (skip), Mrs. Leitch, Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Banister, were allowed to curl against the men in the bonspiel. They were put in the draw with the men and provided much discussion around the town.

When the list of rinks was put in the paper the correspondent made the comment that the men's rinks were evenly matched; no such guarantee could be made for the ladies but they could be sure of a large number of spectators. The next week an article appeared in the paper entitled, "The Invasion of the Female". It contained a detailed account of the events of the meeting when the vote was taken to allow the ladies to curl. It ended with the lament, "Where, oh where, is this invasion of the female going to end?"

The ladies didn't win any prizes but a hotly contested game between Dave Lind and Mrs. Mundie caused comment for months. It was all in good fun, as was shown by the poem which appeared in the "News" the next week.

When Dave Curled Mrs. Mundie  
The bonspiel started Monday night,  
Each rink must curl with all its might,  
The Citizen's prize was just in sight,  
When Dave curled Mrs. Mundie.  
Dave had won as much as four,  
While Mrs. Mundie failed to score;  
Then she got one, and then two more,  
When Dave curled Mrs. Mundie.  
Then Mundie said, "I'll beat the lot,"  
Says Dave, "By jinks, you'll not,"  
"And I'll show you what is what,"  
When Dave curled Mrs. Mundie.  
The tally board drew great attention  
Twas pretty even, I might mention —  
But Dave was always in ascension  
When he curled Mrs. Mundie.  
Twas eight to eight and but one shot,  
While Mundie lay right on the spot;  
Twas up to Dave, and he was hot,  
To raise out Mrs. Mundie.  
"Gee-whittaker," Dave had his fill!  
To get the shot required great skill,  
"Yes, I can do it, and I will,"  
When Dave curled Mrs. Mundie.  
The crowd cried out "It can't be done,"  
"Good boy, old Dave, you've got the run."  
He wicked the stone and lay in one,

And Dave beat Mrs. Mundie.  
quoted from the Oak Lake News, February 6, 1913

The next winter thirty-two women were curling. They practiced Saturday afternoon and evening with these women skipping — Mesdames Alquire, Cochrane, Cole, Orr and McLeish, the Misses Banister, Ellis and Tessa Parsons.

In 1920 the Municipal Rink was opened with a big open bonspiel with five competitions — four for the men and one for the women. Mrs. McCubbin won first and Mrs. Walkie second in the women's competition.

About this time play for the Brotherhood Cup was started. The cup was based in Elkhorn and any town within a radius of thirty miles could challenge for it. It was in circulation until 1972 and many friendly games were played for it. Oak Lake ladies brought it here time and again but finally it was sent back to Elkhorn to stay. The first time the cup was brought to Oak Lake was in 1923. Two rinks of lady curlers composed of Miss E. McFarlane (skip), Miss Sadie Boyce, Mrs. Cole and Mrs. Alder and Miss Zoe Lang (skip), Mrs. Piroth, Miss Maud King and Miss Alberta Hood journeyed to Virden and won their games with a margin of ten points.

By 1945 the ladies had a strong club of their own. That year they held a three competition bonspiel. The school girls curled with them. The skips were Mrs. E. Beech, Mrs. E. Batchelor, Mrs. S. P. Fall, Miss M. D. Banister, Mrs. G. Lemaire, Mrs. J. Reeves, Mrs. F. L. Todd, Miss E. McFarlane, Mrs. E. Costley, Mrs. A. Baillie, Mrs. A. Gordon and Mrs. J. Demchuk. The competitions were won by Mrs. Gordon, Mrs. Reeves and Mrs. Beech.

In 1959 a club trophy was bought and given to the rink that won the most games in club competition. It was in circulation until 1973.



Oak Lake Curlers 1958. Left to Right — Jean Walton, Margaret Moody, Mavis Cairns, Donna Hutchinson.

In 1964 the women held their first Open Bonspiel, with 32 rinks curling. These proved to be very interesting events and continued for several years.

Now the women are curling on mixed rinks with the men and the Ladies Curling Club is inactive.

### Skating

In the early 1900's Oak Lake was a busy, growing place. Most of the pioneers had established themselves reasonably well and the pattern of life in the town was set. As always, the two rinks were very busy.

The Victoria Skating rink was built south of the track, about a block south-east of the station, in 1889. Between 1904 and 1912 it was operated by Mr. E. Pepper.

This man worked very hard to keep the rink busy and was very actively involved in the doings of the town. He regularly put notices in the Oak Lake News defending his position in accepting the money of the school children and said loudly that it was the parent's business to see that their homework was done. Public places in town were frequently closed because of epidemics and as soon as the rink was allowed to open after an epidemic he advertised the news.

The rink was a very busy place. The men's hockey team played and practiced regularly, there were both boys and girls hockey teams, private skating parties and public skating as well as the numerous functions sponsored by Mr. Pepper. Within a month, in 1912, three functions took place and events such as these were a regular occurrence for years, long after Mr. Pepper left.

## A BAND BENEFIT

WILL BE HELD IN

### Victoria Skating Rink, Oak Lake

## Tuesday Evening, February 6

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Oak Lake Citizen's Band will give a programme of 15 numbers. As usual the ice will be in first-class condition.

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### EVERYBODY COME

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**Admission 25c. Ladies and Children 15c.**

A Band Benefit 1912.

# First Fancy Dress Carnival of the Season

Victoria Skating Rink, Oak Lake, Man.  
January 19th, 1912

### PRIZE LIST

Gent's Best Costume	Military Hair Brushes
Ladies' Best Costume	Ladies' Dressing Case
Gents' Most Comical Costume	Case and Pipe
Ladies' Most Comical Costume	Ladies' Travelling Case
Boys' Best Costume	Diamond Point Fountain Pen
Girls' Best Costume	Metalography Outfit
Boys' Most Comical Costume	Game of Ten Pins
Girls' Most Comical Costume	Tourists' Toilet Case
Comic, Best Lady or Gent representing Harem Skirt	Woodworth's Poetical Works, Leather Bound
Gent's Greenhorn Race	Shaving Outfit

### BAND IN ATTENDANCE. 12 BANDS.

Judging commences at 8.30 sharp. Ice open for skating from 9 to 10.30

### Carnival Rules

Competitors must leave their names and what they represent at ticket office. No costume to be judged unless competitor is masked. No one allowed on ice except those in Carnival costume until after judging is over when ice will be open to all skaters. Only competitors in each event will be allowed on ice during such competition.

**Admission—Ladies and Gents 25c; Children 15c.**

**E. PEPPER, Proprietor and Manager**

## Leap Year Skating Party

VICTORIA SKATING RINK, OAK LAKE

## WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEB. 14

The following rules will govern this entertainment and will be strictly enforced. All fines will be donated to some local charitable purpose selected by the Mayor.

- 1.—No gentleman will be permitted to ask a lady to skate.
- 2.—No lady allowed to skate two bands in succession with the same gent.
- 3.—No gentleman allowed in the waiting room when band is playing.
- 4.—Two ladies skating together, or two gentlemen skating as partners during a band will each be subject to a fine.  
A fine of 5c will be imposed for each violation of Rules 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- 5.—Any gentleman skating alone or refusing to skate when asked by a lady will be promptly fined 10c.
- 6.—Ladies will not be allowed to occupy seats if thereby gentlemen are obliged to remain standing. Penalty 10c for each offence.

**Admission—25c. Ladies and Children, 15c.**

In March 1912, Mr. Pepper advertised for any kind of summer work. He stated that he might be forced to leave town because of lack of work and that it was up to the people to find him employment. Evidently he couldn't find enough work because in 1913 he moved away. The men who operated the rink after that didn't advertise, but it was still a very busy place.

In 1918 the skating rink was condemned and until 1920 there was no skating.

However, young people are ingenious and ways were soon found for skating. The C.P.R. water tower used to overflow and this ice patch was used. A shelter of railway ties was made and most of the time it was quite satisfactory. However, it was really only a small slough and in early spring it was quite possible to sink through the ice into enough water for good wet feet. Also, there was no warning of when the tank would overflow and if someone was standing in the wrong place they got a good dousing.

Skating parties were often held at McLeish's slough and at the beaver dam at Olive's. The Olive boys still had the scraper used on road building so they were able to clear the ice. Many groups of young people were fed and warmed up by Mrs. Olive before they headed back to town.

In 1920 the new municipal rink was opened. This one was built where Kobialko's house and Oakview Place now stand. This rink had a large skating surface, two sheets of curling ice, upstairs dressing rooms and band room and downstairs waiting rooms. Electric lights were provided by a generating plant. A 5 H.P. Lister engine with a vertical cylinder was used and it putted away at the rate of two putts per step. It was used until hydro was installed in 1935.

The traditional events were continued. There were hockey games a-plenty, public skating with the Oak Lake Citizen's Band supplying the music, private skating parties, moccasin dances and large fancy dress carnivals.

The carnivals were popular events and were often held more than once a winter. Everyone, young and old, dressed up and a great deal of work went into the costumes. As well as the dress events, there were classes for couples skating. People enjoyed skating to music and many of those couples were very graceful. After that came the races. Everyone raced with their own age group but the highlight was always the men's races. A lot of friendly rivalry went on here and elbows were freely used on the corners. It was all in fun, though, and often some dark horse won the race. Mr. Bill Thompson was a very good skater and for years used to put on his own exhibition of fancy skating and stunts at the various events. He was as

good as many professionals. Later broomball and figure skating were added to the list of events.

The Municipal Rink provided good service for fifty years but it was becoming outdated. The ice surface was no longer large enough for the type of hockey played and the dressing rooms were inadequate. Then a heavy fall of snow in 1969 cracked six of the big cross beams and the building was no longer safe.

A committee was formed and plans made. A municipal area was formed, including the town of Oak Lake, the north part of the municipality of Sifton and the south part of Woodworth municipality. \$30,000.00 was to be raised by taxation but the rest had to be collected. Original cost estimates were \$51,000.00 but by the time the building was finished this had risen to \$65,000.00.

A public meeting was called and the work got underway. Cash pledges were taken; bingoes were held monthly; a skate-a-thon and a walk-a-thon were held. \$5,000.00 was raised at that walk-a-thon. The Oak Lake Rodeos were started at that time.

By the spring of 1971, \$21,000.00 had been raised and work was started on the rink. They were still short of money but at that time word was received that the late Arthur Harvey had willed \$10,000.00 to the rink fund so along with a generous donation from Maurice Strong, the rink was opened free of debt. Mr. Harvey was a third generation descendant of the late Dr. Harvey who had come to Woodworth in the early 1880's and he himself had been very interested in sports, especially skating.

The main part of the building, constructed of steel, is 100 feet wide and 190 feet long. The waiting room area is 24 feet by 100 feet complete with water works, electric heat and dressing room facilities, truly a building to be proud of, and one that should serve the community well.

## Hockey

The first record that we can find for hockey is December, 1904.

A meeting was held to organize a Junior Hockey League and to arrange a schedule of games between Oak Lake, Virden, Moosomin and Whitewood. These were the officers — Honorary President, Robt. Bannatyne, Oak Lake; President, W. J. Helliwell, Oak Lake; Vice-President, D. McDonald, Virden; Secretary, O. A. Bretts, Moosomin; Executive — W. J. Helliwell, Oak Lake; Rev. T. M. Marshall, Moosomin; J. A. Scott, Whitewood; Dr. Clingan, Virden; A. S. Thompson, Oak Lake.

There are no records available of league games that year. In a short account of a game between





Hockey, Anyone?

Kenton and Oak Lake the names McIntosh and Campbell are mentioned and W. Chatwin was the goalie.

League play resumed in 1905. A balcony with seating capacity of 70 had been built in the Victoria Rink and they had as many as 150 people at their home games. The games were hard played. There were no nets around the goals so there were loud arguments with goal umpire Caldwell. Referee was Mr. A. S. Thompson. "He showed no favors and made both teams play hockey all the way. He was called upon to place two Virden players on the fence for tripping but with these exceptions the game was a good clean exhibition." (Oak Lake News January 11, 1905) The line up was W. Chatwin (goalie), A. B. Halstead (point), R. Campbell (cover point), C. McLean (right), H. Potts (centre), C. Chatwin (left), J. Chatwin (rover). Goal umpires — A. Houston and J. Caldwell.

The people of Oak Lake took their hockey very seriously. In February, 1905, a special train was hired to take passengers to Virden for a return game and about 150 people went. The game was played; then they all went to the town hall for a dance and at 2:30 the train took them home again. Oak Lake lost that game so was out of the running.

In 1912 there was no league play. Games were played with Virden, Griswold, Alexander and Kenton. The line-up was Dewy Fitzgerald (goal), F. Parsons (point), Wm. Thompson (cover point), Smith Stevens (rover), Bill Hampton (right wing), H. Taylor (center) and C. Williams (left wing).

The accounts of the games that winter were full of complaints of rough play.

By 1925 three teams were playing — Junior, Midgets and Intermediates. Games consisted of three fifteen minute periods and the players had different positions. Now it was the familiar forward and defence positions but they still played with only one line, with one spare.



Oak Lake Hockey Team 1912. Back Row Left to Right — Chas. Williams, Wm. Thompson, Bill Hampton, Frank Parsons. 2nd Row Left to Right — Smith Stevens, Herb Taylor, Dewy Fitzgerald. Stick Boys — Jim Fitzgerald, Russel Bell.

Line-up for the junior team was C. Hamilton, goal; E. Stevens and L. Lawson, defence; C. Helliwell, H. Boyce and E. Ducharme, forward; W. Hollier was the spare.

In 1932 Oak Lake was playing in the newly organized Lansdowne League with games against Griswold and Alexander. They played for a cup donated by D. G. McKenzie, Minister of Agriculture. Play for this cup went on for several years. It was won by Oak Lake in 1939. They also played exhibition games with Reston, Virden, Kenton and Hartney. It was called Intermediate hockey but really it meant anyone who was big and strong enough to make the team, and who had the necessary equipment. The games weren't taken too seriously but they played good hockey. They usually tried to dress about ten players — one goalie, two forward lines, two defencemen and a spare. If they were short of players, they got one or two from the opposing team. Because of this, the accounts of line-ups changed.

In 1932 the players were — goalies — Jack McLeish, Lyle Todd and Roy Hamilton, forwards — E. Ducharme, G. Smith, T. Story, A. Hollier; defence — F. Strong, B. Hollier, T. Story. Subs (2nd line) were — A. Gallant, H. Hollier, E. Boyce, W. Hollier and R. Todd. Referees were A. Millar and H. R. Taylor. These are the names that were given, but probably some have been missed.

Oak Lake had many fine hockey teams but the ones that created the most excitement in the late 50's and 60's were coached by Ray Larway and Dave Thomas.

In 1955-56 players from Oak Lake — Larry Hart, Ted Taylor, Jim Parrott, Clark Story and Neil Reeves played with Virden when they won the Bantam "B" Championship of Manitoba. Laurie Artiss of Virden was coach.

In 1956-57 Ray Larway coached and Matt Kawchuck managed an Oak Lake team to the finals of the Midget B championship of Manitoba. They lost in overtime to Altona. A bus load of people and many more in cars took in a final game at Altona. Personnel of that team were Jim Parrott, Gary Bolam, Doug Lund, Ray Laloyeaux, Neil Reeves, Max Coulter, Larry Hart, Ken Gardner, Ted Taylor, Don Berry and Don Leslie.

In 1962-63 Dave Thomas coached a team to the Bantam "B" championship. Forty-two carloads of people travelled to Neepawa to watch the quarter

finals. Oak Lake played Lundar in the finals and again a large crowd went to the game. Team personnel — Jerry Joynt, Wallace McLean, Chris Bothe, Terry Hart, Allan Ducharme, George Keeper, Heath Whyte, Reg Morcombe, Doug Beasley and Maurice Arnold. Owing to injuries and other causes, the final game was played with seven players. This same team with some added strength won the Manitoba Bantam "B" championship in 1963-64.

Hockey is still played with great enthusiasm today. The new rink and the many coaches give the boys every chance to enjoy the game.

### Girls' Hockey

A girls' hockey club was organized in 1912. Officers were: President — Tessa Parsons, Vice President — Nova Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer — Mary Hockin, Captains — Dorothy Banister and Elsie Parsons. Coach was Mr. Pepper, the same man who worked so hard to make the rink a success.

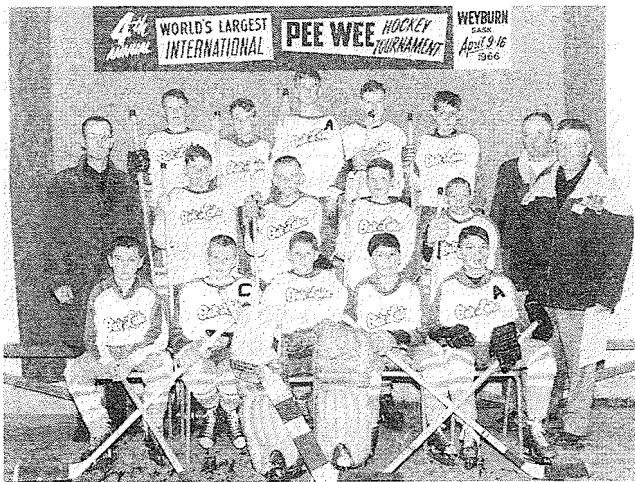
Suggestions from the public were, short skirts would favor the rapid movements and sharp turning necessary for the game, binder twine would be safer than pins to keep hair up during a scrimmage, the rules of the game must be learned — sitting on the puck is not allowed in league play. Alexander had a girls team and these girls along with a team made up of country girls attending the high school gave the town girls good games. They played and practiced twice a week that winter and there was even talk of playing a boys team.

A girls' team played in 1925 but not much information is available. Since these girls were school age Mrs. Maynard chaperoned them when they went to Virden for a game. The rooting was in the capable hands of Adolph Fiori and J. E. Ducharme. The score was 1-1 after an overtime period so the game was called a tie. Miss Bridgett, a teacher in Virden, served lunch to the girls after the game. Evidently it wasn't the first game played that year because it was considered the best showing that the girls had made against Virden in some time.

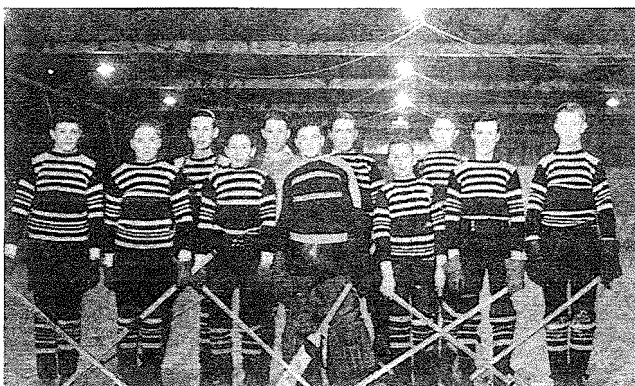
In 1937 Girl's hockey was again being played with exhibition games up and down the main line of the C.P.R. Marguerite Williams, Greta Bourne, Emma Cheasley, Edna and Sadie Boyce, Olive and Phoebe Chapman, Feyrne Story, Marjorie Graham, Madeline Emond, Blanche Ducharme and Thelma Meadows were on the team.

There was a team in 1944 but no names are available. They played Virden girls, then went tobogganing in the hills south of town and had dinner at Cosgrove's Tea Room before train time for the Virden girls to return home.

There were and still are girls' teams organized



Oak Lake Pee Wees at Weyburn Hockey Tournament 1966.



Oak Lake Intermediate Hockey Team 1940. Maurice Emond, Ken Cosgrove, Dave Clark, Guy Costley, Harold Mulligan, Albert Fowell, Smith Williams, Tom Costley, Abe Rempel, Barney Williams, Grant Gosgrove.

from time to time. The girls didn't play in organized leagues the way the boys did but they had a lot of good fun. Hockey games gave the girls a chance to travel to different towns, to meet new people and make new friends.

### **Oak Lake Figure Skating Club**

When Barbara Anne Scott won the gold medal at the Olympics, people, especially young girls, became very interested in figure skating. Until that time girls skated at the fancy dress carnivals and regular skating but it wasn't the same graceful type that can be done with figure skates.

Delma Kilborn and Norma Thompson were very interested in this skating and in 1948 they gathered a group of young girls together and formed a club. Delma and Norma made up their own programs and put on their own ice revues. This got the young girls and their parents interested and two years later the parents formed an organization with Clarence Helton as president. They hired teachers from Brandon to come out once a week to teach the girls. One of the first teachers was Barbara (Hughes) Smith. They carried on this way for a few years until interest died out.

When Fishers moved to town in 1964, Cecile re-organized the club. Fifty-six children belonged to the club that year. Mrs. Fisher was president, assisted by Mrs. Phyllis Weatherald and Mrs. Irene Jenkins. Mrs. Virginia Dickson was instructress.



Figure Skaters — Carol Gordon, Cheryl Fuller 1950.

In 1966 the Figure Skating Club was still managed by Mrs. Fisher with help from Mrs. Jenkins and Mrs. Jack Taylor. This was the first time that instructors from outside Oak Lake were obtained. That year Sandra Fowler and Judy Fontana from Virden taught the girls. They were helped with many long hours of work on the part of the mothers but a very successful Ice Revue was staged.

Ever since then the club has been run the same way. As long as Fishers lived here Cecile was president and then other mothers took over. The Club is managed by the women of the community and they all work together to help the instructors give the young people a happy and profitable year. They even have prospective hockey players in their membership.

### **Bicycling**

For about ten years from 1889 to 1900, bicycling was a very popular pastime. Both ladies and men had clubs and went on excursions, although the ladies' events were not nearly as strenuous as the men's. There were about twenty bicycles in town in 1889 and there was great hope of gaining new members.

In 1889 the members of the Ladies Cycle Club held a meeting at the home of Mrs. Wm. Chambers. Officers were elected — A. C. Jex, president, Miss May Curry, vice president, Miss Mabel Mitchell, secretary-treasurer. Regular meetings were to be held each Thursday and runs and picnics were to be planned.

A list of bicycle rules were drawn up.

- “1. In meeting riders, pedestrians and bicycles, keep to the right. In overtaking and passing them, keep to the left.
2. In turning corners to the left, always keep to the outside of the street.
3. In turning corners to the right, always keep as far out as possible without trespassing on the left side of the road.
4. Never expect pedestrians to get out of your way; find a way around them.
5. Never coast down a hill having cross streets along the way.
6. Never ride rapidly by an electric car standing to unload passengers.
7. Never ring your bell except to give notice of your approach.
8. In meeting other riders ascending a hill where there is but one path, always yield the right of way to the up riders.
9. Bear in mind that a rider meeting an electric car carrying a strong head light is unable to see beyond the light; keep out of his way.
10. When riding straight ahead never vary your

course to right or left without first assuring yourself that there is no other rider close in your rear on the side towards which you turn.

11. Always ring your bell on overtaking riders and pedestrians to give warning of your approach. This does not mean that they are to get out of your way.

12. Do not ride too close to a novice, and on meeting a novice, give plenty of room.

13. When riding after dark always carry a lantern.

The same year the men went to the Griswold Races.

"The Oak Lake boys figured prominently in the bicycle races, in which there were five started and three finished. Walter McNaughton winning with ease on his ordinary road wheel, Melvin Sharpe's chances were good for second up to the time of the mix-up with one of the Griswold boys, which left him out of the finish entirely."

An account in November, 1896 was interesting.

"At present there is considerable talk over the challenge of Messrs. Jex and Chambers in the News of last week. Some of the local men are seriously considering accepting but if they still continue to procrastinate another snow storm will be here and to stay. These challenging gentlemen do not wish any unexperienced riders to take them up, and therefore would respectfully ask any parties thinking of accepting their challenge to seriously consider the fast local records they hold over the road between here and Brandon. They rode the whole distance in two hours and twenty-two minutes. Between Griswold and Alexander, a distance of ten miles, in 34 minutes and the next eight miles in 26 minutes. This is a very fast time for novices."

Most of these early newspapers are missing so we can only guess as to how long the clubs were active.

### The Turf Club, Oak Lake

Many towns in southern Manitoba in the 1890's had a Turf Club. These clubs were organized to promote horse racing. A big Celebration Day or Race Meet was held each summer and the days were planned so that the horses could be raced in the circuit schedule. Each town had its favorite horses and their progress was followed enthusiastically.

The first account of a Turf Club in Oak Lake is for 1897. However, later reports of sports days state that the first July 1st Celebration was held in 1885. There are no records of these sports days but we do know that the race track was across the C.P.R. track on the property now owned by the Golf Club.

The 1897 meeting was held at the Thompson House with Mr. W. Thompson presiding. Mr. Leitch was elected president, Jas. Flanigan vice president

and C. V. Anderson secretary-treasurer. The prize list for the July 1st race meet was planned as follows:

\$25 was to go for football with medals for the members of the winning team,

\$21 was voted for bicycle races, with three races being held; an open, a country and a town race,

\$10 was allotted for Indian races and sports. The remainder of the money, (it doesn't say how much) was to be used for horse racing.

Oak Lake had its favorite horses just as the other towns did. In 1889, J. R. Hood's, Empo H came in third in the 2.25 class, Bon Ton, owned by R. L. Hood came second in the Green Trotting race and in the ½ mile, Pony Clipper, owned by E. E. Orr won first heat, time 1.09. Men travelled from Virden, Griswold, Alexander, Souris and Brandon to race their horses. The races closed at 5:45 and the rest of the day's program got underway. A baseball game was played between Gault and Kinsmore and then a football match was played. This game was played between Oak Lake and the Elkhorn Indian School.

The July 1 Celebration in 1901 was a big day. The streets and houses were decorated with flags and bunting and the stores put on special displays.



Empire Day Procession, Oak Lake School.

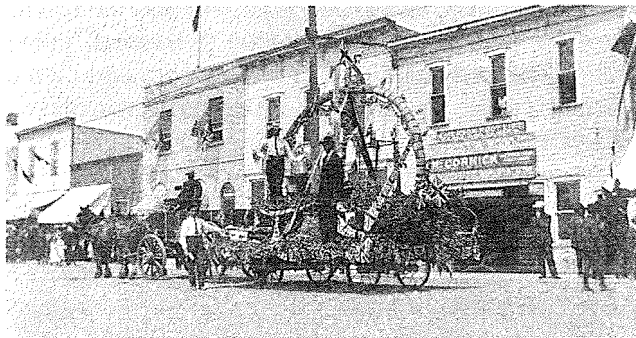
The main feature of the day was again the horse races. The towns represented by the horses aren't given but there are many more Oak Lake names. Some of them are: J. Chatwin's Little Joe, J. Dauphinais' Lady May, Andy Doyle's Juby, George Miller's Rainbow, Chas. Burns' Babe, Simon Miller's Darkey, J. Slimmon's Billy, Alex Waldie's Babe and Vi Hood's Juby.

Baseball was played between Gault, Alexander and Virden. There was no football that year. Food was supplied by St. Alban's Ladies Aid, Mrs. Miller with her booth and Flanigan of the Lelond Hotel. All in all, it was considered a very successful day.

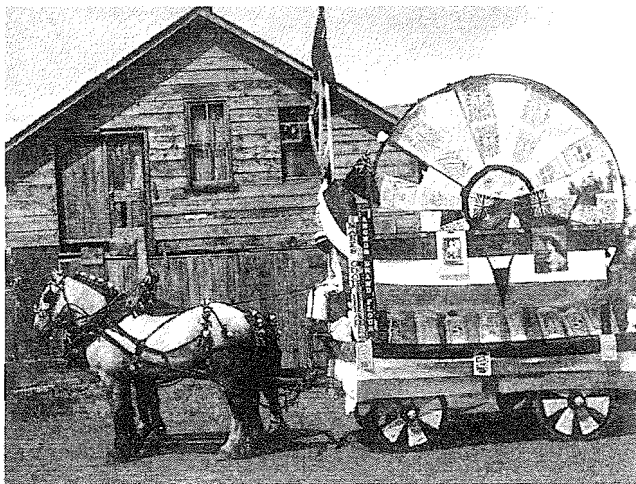
The next account of July 1st celebrations is for 1912. The Turf Club must have been inactive at that



time because the big day was planned by a sports committee. Except for the missing horse races, the day followed much the same agenda with some additions. The town was again gaily decorated and a huge parade was held. Prizes were given for floats in several categories — best business float, best decorated float, best calithumpian, best decorated auto and best decorated boys' auto. An old timer's reunion was held that day and was evidently very well received. Mr. T. C. Norris, the member for Lansdowne constituency and one of the real old timers of this area, was given a golden key on behalf of the old timers present. Dr. Wright, the oldest "old timer" present, gave a speech. The Oak Lake Citizen's Band provided suitable music.



1st Prize Float, July 1, 1912, Oak Lake.



Leitch Bros. Flour Mill Float, July 1, 1912.

The program for the rest of the day included junior auto races, junior and senior baseball, football, pole vaulting and high jumping — by the sounds of things a very interesting day.

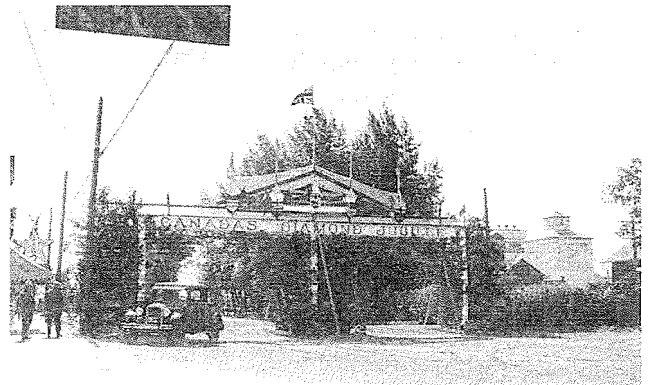
Another big July 1st celebration took place in 1925, the 40th anniversary of the Oak Lake Dominion Day Sports.

The usual parade took place with a prominent

spot being held by all the old timers present in their courtesy cars. These old timers numbered 150 and many the memories were exchanged of former sports days attended in oxen and horse drawn vehicles. This day the key of the town was presented to Mr. Nelson Banister as being the oldest "old timer" present.



July 1, 1925 Parade.

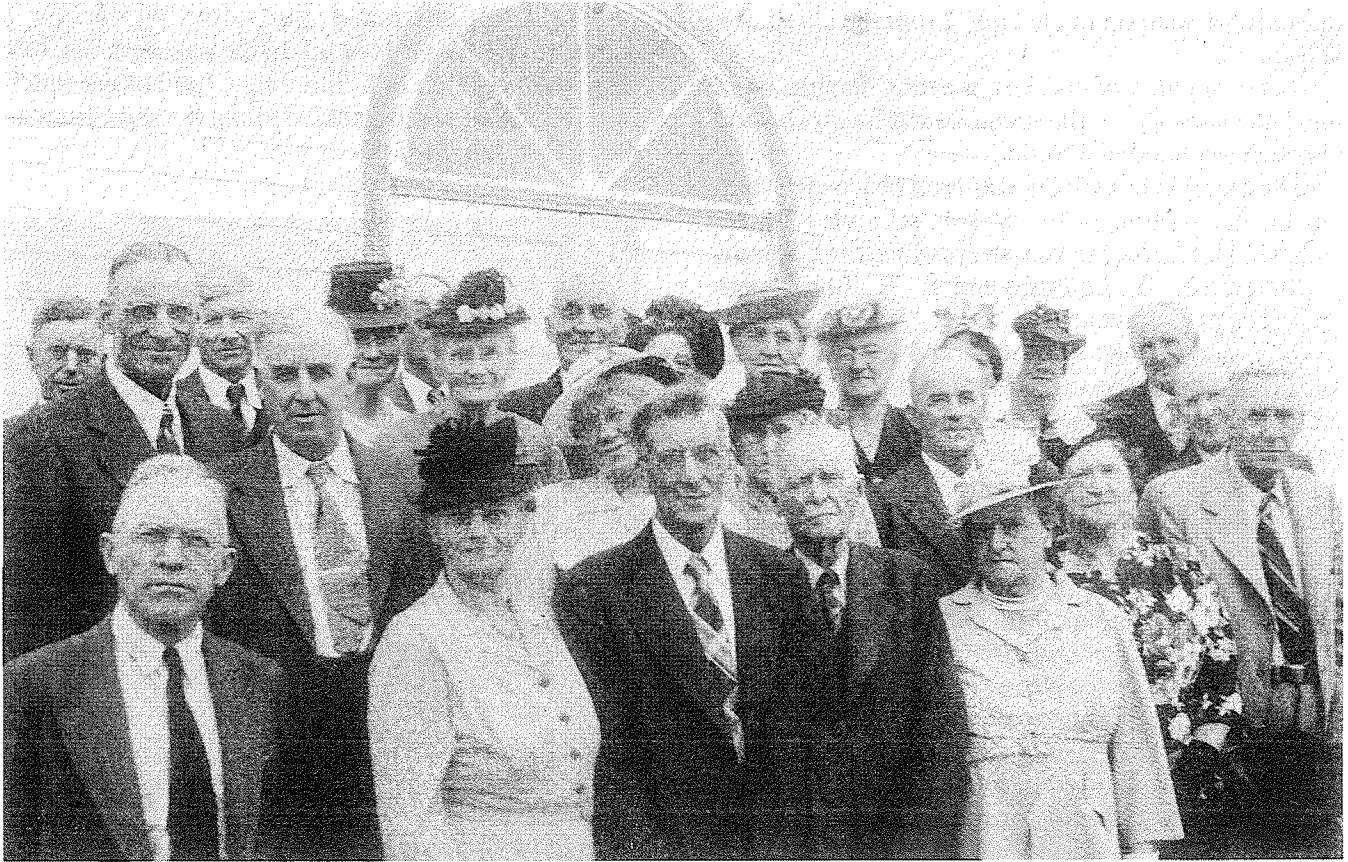


Canada's Diamond Jubilee 1927. Front Street in Oak Lake.

Lunch was served by the Oakland Hotel, Thompson's Restaurant and the Ladies of the Anglican Church and then the events of the day got underway. The sporting events included junior, senior and girls' baseball, basketball and football. In the evening a dance was held in Steen and Lind's hall with music supplied by the Night-Hawks Orchestra.

This was considered the largest ever sports day. 316 automobiles were parked in the grounds with many more outside. Gate receipts amounted to \$1,-006.35.

These annual Sports Days were held for many years and as such were an important part of the community. The old race track property was given to the Golf Club in 1923, and horse racing never really revived. There is an account of a new race track having been prepared at the Agricultural Grounds in 1934 but the races weren't very successful and were dropped.



St. David's Pioneers, 1949. Front Row: L. to R.: Russell Bailey, Mrs. John McD. Smith, John McD. Smith, Walter Forrest, Mrs. Wm. (Rev.) Bill. 2nd Row: Wm. Dryden, Miss Mary Johnston, Mrs. E. Grey, Ed Grey, Mrs. Andy Cairns, Andy Cairns. 3rd Row: Leslie Wisner, Mrs. Haney, Mrs. George Scott, Mrs. Murray McKinnon, Mrs. Les Wisner, George Scott. 4th Row: Ed. Johnston, Dave Goodwin, Mrs. Herb Walton, , T. J. Smith, Mrs. Wilfred Smith, Mrs. John Daniel, John Daniel.



57th Annual Dominion Day Sports at Oak Lake in 1937. Old Timers attending: Left to Right, Top Row — F. L. Todd, F. Parsons, J. R. Kennedy, John McFarlane, J. B. Cairns. Centre Row — R. R. Smith, T. J. Smith, Alex Smith, George Gordon, James Stephens. Bottom Row — Thomas Black, John McDonald, A. Gillespie, William Hatch and D. M. Williams, who was awarded the prize for the oldest old-timer present.

### The Oak Lake Rifle Club

The Club was fully organized in 1904 and probably had been running for some years previous. The members that year were: T. R. Hogg, R. J. Helliwell, James Spencer, Ed. Lund, Nelson Banister, George Spencer, B. Babcock, Alex Jack, William Baker and T. J. Parsons. That year James Spencer and William Baker attended the Winnipeg Rifle Meet. Mr. Spencer won the Hudson Bay Competition and was presented with a silver cup as well as cash prizes of \$40.00, a lot of money in those days. He came sixth in the Grand Aggregate, won the Governor General's medal and was entitled to a place on the Ottawa team — no word as to whether he went to Ottawa.

These people must have been tremendous shots because 1905 produced another group of winners. Fred Simpson, James Spencer, Ed. Lund and T. R. Hogg were chosen for the Bisley Team that was to go to England for the Global Marksmanship Competition. The Oak Lake men didn't attend for lack of money.

The re-organizational meeting of the Rifle Club for 1906 was held in March. The minutes will give an

idea of what went on in the club. From the Oak Lake News.

"The minutes of the last meeting having been read and adopted . . . the financial statement showed a balance on hand of \$16.62.

The election of officers was then proceeded with and on the motion of W. Baker, seconded by N. Banister, R. H. Hockin was re-appointed as Captain.

Messrs. R. T. Leonard and E. R. Lund were appointed as Lieutenants.

On a motion of R. T. Leonard and seconded by N. Banister, Mr. T. J. Parsons was re-appointed secretary and a hearty vote of thanks was tendered him for his service in the past.

Mr. H. Stevens was re-appointed auditor and a vote of thanks was offered him.

The secretary was instructed to write to Mr. James Andrew thanking him for the use of his range.

Mr. R. Bannatyne, through Mr. Baker, generously presented the association with three buttons to be shot for as the committee sees fit. A vote of thanks was passed for Mr. Bannatyne and the secretary was instructed to write him of this and also of the fact that he has been enrolled as a member for this season.

The secretary was instructed to subscribe to the Canadian Military Gazette and this concluded the business."

The membership had increased that year when T. Parr, H. R. Hockin and A. C. Young joined the club. Shoots were held every week and scores kept. The men shot from different distances and from different positions; standing, kneeling and lying down.

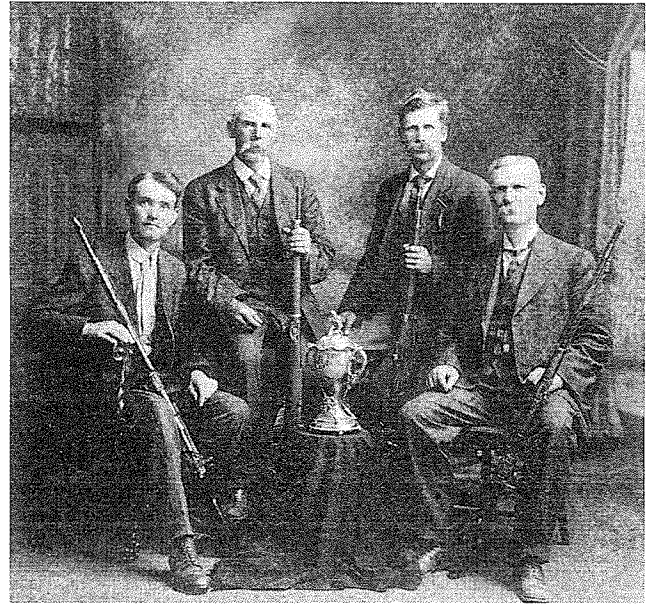
The year 1914 was well reported. The Rifle Club had their first shoot on Victoria day. The custom had been to have what was called the Daily Mail shoot on that day with the results being sent to England. Fifteen men took part in the shooting.

The team held regular shoots each week and kept score, with the top ten shooters being kept on a special list. Some of the names changed from week to week, others were always in the top ten.

At the end of the season a shoot-off was held, with the winner receiving a silver plate. Jim Spencer won the plate, with Fred Simpson and Ralph Helliwell coming in second and third. The top ten in the league were: A. C. Lawson, E. R. Lund, John Story, Jim Spencer, Fred Simpson, W. H. Baker, H. J. Hatch, T. R. Hogg, Ralph Helliwell and P. Paul.

The members travelled to other centers as well. Mr. Lawson and Mr. Story went to Regina. Mr. Lawson won two first place cups. Messrs. J. Spencer, F. Simpson and R. Tillett went to Winnipeg for the provincial matches. Several other members attended the Virden matches and came away with half the prize money.

The Club continued until after World War I started and then it folded up. In the papers of the 30's there was mention of a Shooting Club but not much information. It was organized along the same lines as the Rifle Club.



Oak Lake Rifle Club Members Chosen for the Beasley Team 1905. Left to Right — Fred Simpson, Jas. Spencer, Ed Lund, Thomas Rutherford Hogg.

## Baseball

The first records of baseball in Oak Lake are for 1899. From the Oak Lake News, "A meeting was held in the Manitoba Hotel for the purpose of forming a baseball club. The club was organized with a membership fee of 50¢. A. C. Jex, captain of the Merchant's Club, has issued a challenge to all comers for a game to be played next Tuesday night. A committee has also been appointed to see that seats are provided for the ladies. Full personnel of the association to meet next week." A later issue mentioned a work bee, when wooden backstops were erected, but there is no account of games or team players.

Evidently most of the baseball consisted of challenge games played by pick-up teams. There was usually a team from town as well as one from Lansdowne and another from Harvey available for games. They also played games at Griswold, Alexander and sometimes Virden. These games were often not reported in the paper.

In 1910 the Western Manitoba Baseball League was organized with teams from Oak Lake, Griswold, Alexander, Virden and Elkhorn playing. Personnel of the Oak Lake team were — (no first names given), Medd 2nd base, Gawley pitcher, Corbett left field, Everett catcher, Strong center field, Moore 3rd base,

Whitton short stop, Chapman right field and Helliwell 1st base.

The reporter for that year took his job seriously and the write-ups in the paper are very interesting. A game was played against Alexander and Oak Lake lost.

“Notes on the Game”

“The Alexander pitcher’s wind up was sensational and then after he delivered the ball and Ump said strike one he smiled so sweetly. Our boys in trying to imitate the smile wakened up when the Ump said strike two.

Harold boomed the error column a couple of times.

Whitton’s error let the run in. A grass cutter and his legs too far apart.

1st sack was well looked after by Ralph.

Everett’s three bagger was a beauty but he died on third.

Everett worked the old game, “Heads I win, tails you lose,” neatly twice. The Alexander people must be Scotch, they will have caught on by this time.

Jim got out of a bad hole several times by good pitching with three on bases and one out, the next two were easy.

Those bats with holes in them should be discarded as it is impossible to get a good batting average with them.

Would suggest longer bats for some of the players, reaching is hard on the arm.

The kids swing well at the ball; they will connect some time.

Jim’s bunts did not work, “Hole in the bat.”

No disputes and a home umpire. Well, well, different at Oak Lake; there are some square people in the world.”

A later newspaper report went to great pains to state that Whitton was not to blame for the loss of the game. The winning run had been scored before Whitton made his error. It was suggested that the people owning automobiles should consider attending the games against Virden the next week. Further plans were made for the game against Virden. A special train was arranged for. It was to leave Oak Lake at 2:00 p.m. and return at 10:00 p.m. There were to be two league games against Virden and the bands from Oak Lake and Virden were to be in attendance. No word as to who won the games.

The final home game against Alexander wasn’t started until 8:00 p.m. because the team had trouble getting to the game. First there was an accident with one of the cars bringing the players and then when the team reached Flat Creek they found the culvert washed out and all the players had to walk two miles to Oak Lake. The highway over Flat Creek was never

reliable. There are also stories of hockey players driving down the track in winter because the highway was blocked with snow.

In 1915 the members of the Oak Lake Citizen’s Band formed a team and played challenge games. The first game was between the band members and representatives of the curling club. The bandsmen won 19-4. They had two more challenges, from the hockey players and the Harvey District team. “The game was very interesting and for the first five innings the tide of fortune was with the challengers who at one time were two up. In the last half the musician swatters piled up a hopeless lead and when the game was over the band nine were announced victors, the score being 19-8.” Band master Tipp was umpire.

The third challenge game against Harvey was played the next week and Harvey won 6-5. Art Carpenter’s pitching confused the Oak Lake boys and at one time the Harvey team had a dangerous lead. However, they tightened up their play and only lost by one point. The Oak Lake boys hoped for a return match. The Harvey team consisted of Aime Carpenter, Dave Smith, Arthur Harvey, George Milne, Alan Milne, Cecil Smith, George Smith and Art Carpenter.

Also in 1915, the Lansdowne Baseball League was formed with Oak Lake, Griswold and Alexander entering teams. Oak Lake finished the schedule in second place.

In 1923 there was organized baseball and pick up games. A pick up game between the Harvey “All Stars” and the Oak Lake “Has-Beens” was to be played the evening of the Oak Lake Fair but it was rained out. The game was rescheduled for the next evening and posters were printed and distributed that day. One of the posters was found in an old book and has been reprinted here. From the “News” we have the account of the game. “All Stars Defeat Has-Beens 9-8” “During the early part of the game the “All Stars” had it all their own way, having no difficulty in connecting with pitchers Hogg and Hodgins, but Jack Nolan and Dave Taylor came to the rescue and when the game was called the score stood 9-8 against the town boys. Arthur Carpenter and Alex McDonald twirled for Harvey. Dr. Hicks took charge of the game.”

The next year (1924) Lorne Story pitched nine innings and fanned twenty players so their game must have been good.

In 1927 and 1928 Oak Lake had a semi-professional baseball team. They played league games but they also played in tournaments all around the country. From the July 28, 1927, Oak Lake News:

“One of the best games of the season was played



# EXHIBITION BASEBALL!

Rain prevented the game of Baseball on Fair Night, but this game will be staged on--

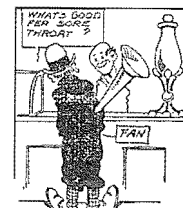
**FRIDAY, JULY 25th. 6.45 p.m.**



Dr. Hicks will Umpire the game



Harvey's "Dark Horse" Base Runner



Rudolph Romberg's Riotous Routers Requested.

## HARVEY "ALL-STARS" VS OAK LAKE "HAS-BEENS"



Carpenter will Twirl for Harvey



Manager Smith will no doubt be in demand with the Camera men.



"Doc" Hodgins is in good form

Entire Proceeds to be handed over to the Secretary of the  
Oak Lake Agricultural Society

Admission 25c, Children under 12, Free. Game Called 6.45

Orchestra Dance after the Game in Steen & Lind's Hall

on the local diamond on Thursday of last week when the strong Virden line-up defeated Oak Lake by a score of 1-0. Armstrong for Virden and Lorne Story pitched great ball, each man striking out 9 batters, and the only run in the game was scored on a passed ball. Line was as follows: Story, Montgomery, McKay, Carpenter, Ducharme, McDonald, McLean, McCubbin, Strong.”

Tuesday of the next week Oak Lake was defeated by Virden 8-0. Lorne Story was hit by a batted ball and had to retire. The resulting confusion was given as the reason for the loss. They were looking forward to the tournament at Melita the next week — prize money \$1,000.00.

The club was reorganized in 1928 with six imported players. Some very good games were played. The line-up was as follows: Managers — Harold Smith, Tom Butterworth. Players — Bill, Jack and Alex Dunn, Fred Graham (all of Solsgirth), Smoky Harris (Winnipeg), and Jack Nolan (Shoal Lake), Tony Ducharme, Dave Taylor, Lorne Story, Cliff Strong, Alex McDonald, Art Carpenter, Russell Bell, Larry Emond.

The team went to Souris to play in a tournament and tied for first place. The game was called because of darkness. That year there were two teams from Canada and two from the United States entered in the July 1st Sports Day Celebrations. Rollo, North Dakota won first place, Oak Lake fourth. This team generated a lot of interest while they played for Oak Lake. There were large crowds at the games and people followed them around the country watching them play.

At the same time, all those years, there were Junior boys' baseball, school ball teams and girls teams. Space won't permit reporting them but this type of ball was popular for many years. Other sports died out but eventually the July 1st Celebrations became ball tournaments, with teams of all ages taking part.



Early Oak Lake Baseball Team.



Oak Lake Girls Softball Team 1960's. Back Row Left to Right — Ernie Woods, Gwen Hart, Inez Iverson, Sheila McLean, , Nora Helten. Front Row Left to Right — Jean McQuarrie, Mavis Cairns, Marion Morrison, Margaret Milne.

## Tennis

Tennis was a popular sport in Oak Lake for many years. It wasn't as strenuous as football or baseball so was enjoyed by a different group of people, both men and women.

Many newspapers contain reports of Tennis Club meetings, tournaments and friendly games. Because of space, we are choosing some of these accounts at random, with the hope that they will give some idea of what went on in the club.

The courts were in different places. The second courts were beside the old race track, then moved to the north side of the athletic grounds, next on the south west corner of the golf course and now in the Junior High School yard.

The first short record we have is for 1897. The President was Mr. R. Hockin, Vice president, Mr. A. Cameron and Secretary, Mrs. M. Leitch.

A 1901 issue of the Oak Lake News says, "The representatives of the Winnipeg Tennis Club who were in Oak Lake, late last summer, inspecting the local club's shale courts, must have made a very favorable report, for the City Club (members) have decided to replace their present grass courts with ones of shale. The material to make them is to be sent down from Oak Lake. Mr. Dan Williams has secured the contract for supplying 300 yards which will probably fill about 20 cars and he will start to ship it in right away."

May 4, 1904.

"Tennis will soon be in full swing. It has been decided to abandon the old courts, which, on account of their low position, are flooded and likely to remain so for some time. A start was made last night on the

piece of ground east of the old race track and it is intended to hustle along with it and make it in a condition to play on shortly."

July 13, 1904.

"The tennis tournament of Wednesday and Thursday last was even more successful than predicted. There were a large number of entries and outside clubs were well represented. There were people present from Virden, Alexander and Brandon. The draw provided some good games from the start and a large number of spectators watched the play with interest. The greatest surprise of the tournament was the defeat administered by Wallace and Thompson to Ryall and Pigott, the latter being looked upon as sure winners. This was a hard match and was one of the best of the tournament, the second set requiring twenty-six games to decide. The finals of the Ladies Singles was also a good game and required three hard fought sets, while the battle for supremacy in the mixed doubles provided another close and interesting match and victory was only achieved by Miss McBride and Mr. Birch after a long three set game. A feature which in no small measure contributed to the success of the event was the tea provided in the large tent and the ladies deserve to be highly complimented upon the excellence of the things provided."

Then followed a long list of prize winners. In the two days Gentlemen's Doubles, Mixed Doubles, Gentlemen's Singles and Ladies' Singles were played.

July, 1929.

"The Tennis Courts are in splendid condition this year, and interest in this fascinating game is growing as can be judged by the number of young folks at play during the evening.

The Courts adjoin the Sports Grounds and the officers and members of the Club cordially invite you to bring your racquet along on July 1st, and enjoy a game of this popular sport."

J. M. Knight, President

A. Cooper, Secretary

May 18, 1939.

Plans for the Royal Visit included a giant Field Day Sports program. A tennis tournament was to be part of the program.

Tennis is now played casually on the courts of the Junior High School. However, the students enjoy the game very much so perhaps a new generation of tennis players is in the making.

## Football

The first records that we have of football are for 1889. The Oak Lake team attended the Griswold races and beat the home team 2-0. The Oak Lake team lined up as follows: W. Edwards, goal; A. C.

Jex. G. B. Connor, fullbacks; C. Cook, E. Todd, George Mason, halfbacks; Wallace McNaughton, Angus Cameron, Melvin Sharp, Frank Todd and Edgar Home, forwards.

In 1897 the team consisted of Wm. Edwards, Kydd, McIlwain, J. Miller, S. Pifer, McDonald, A. Cameron, Young, Leitch, H. Sharp and H. Home.

The 1905 newspapers gave good accounts of sports. The Football Club was active that year and the reports of the meetings and games make interesting reading.

The Club was organized in May and officers elected. They were: President — R. Bannatyne, Vice President — G. B. Connor, Secretary-treasurer — R. J. Helliwell, Executive — R. L. Hood, A. M. Tipp, John Miller and George Wanless. White and blue suits were to be procured at once. The club was to play in the Western Manitoba Football League. This league included Oak Lake, Virden, Montgomery and Elkhorn. The boys played Elkhorn the next week and won 1-0. The reporter wrote "They (the home team) had by far the best of the game and, while we must not omit to give the visitors' defence due credit for some good work, still it was only very poor shooting on the part of our boys that prevented the score being larger." In the second half Bell of Elkhorn defence, while checking an Oak Lake player, dislocated his knee but Oak Lake couldn't improve the score. The line-up was Goal, R. J. Helliwell; backs, G. Wanless, H. Lewis; half backs, M. McKecknie, T. Parsons, John Miller; forwards, J. Lewis, John Chatwin, O. Parsons, P. Teeling. H. Eldred. Referee — R. L. Hood.

Another game that week. "An interesting game of football took place in the Hagyard district when two teams, one comprised of Englishmen and the other of Canadians fought for supremacy. It was a hard fight and the lads from the Old Sod suffered defeat by a score of 2-0. We hear another match between these two will be arranged shortly."

In the June 7, 1905 Oak Lake News —

"Another great match between the Englishmen and the Canadians took place at Hagyard and this time the boys from across the "pond" were able to hold their opponents down to a tie, neither side scoring a goal. As each team is still confident that it is just a little better than the other, another game will have to be played to decide supremacy."

There was no word of a third game but the Oak Lake and Hagyard juveniles played two games that month. A later short item stated that Oak Lake lost the third game.

Griswold and Oak Lake were to play a game after the Lansdowne Fair. Griswold had been defeated the last time at Oak Lake so they had strengthened their

team with three players from Roden. Considerable delay was caused at the start because the visitors objected to an Oak Lake umpire acting. Mr. Blanchard of Bradwardine was selected and the game started at 8 o'clock. The final score Oak Lake 3, Grisowld 0.

Senior league play continued through the summer. Competition was hot and by the end of June, Virden had 6 points and Oak Lake 5. Oak Lake's only hope was for Virden to lose to the home boys or else for Elkhorn to beat Virden but Oak Lake was doomed. Virden beat them 1-0. Oak Lake protested the game because Virden used an unregistered player. The next week Virden was to play Elkhorn but the visitors failed to show up and Virden got the game by default. After all this Virden was declared 1st place winner in league play and Oak Lake conceded that their opponents had a very good team.

Football clubs were organized for many years after 1905 but the games were seldom reported. In 1914 games were played against Ryerson. Also Oak Lake played in a league against Brandon and Griswold.

The July 1st Celebrations always included football games along with baseball. In 1927 the competition was won by Hilton with the Reserve second and Willen third.

In 1929 eleven teams entered the football competition, Kenton, Mentieth, Roden, Lansdowne, Indians No. 2, Riverview, Willen, Indians No. 1, Hilton, Verity and Woodnorth — none from Oak Lake. The play was described "Lansdowne and Willen then met in the second round, the former winning 2-0. Next came Hilton and Verity, and this was by far the fastest game for the day, and was only five minutes started when Stanley broke through the heavy Hilton defence and put his team ahead with a low shot which the Hilton goalie could not stop. But the Hilton boys were not yet beaten, and after some nice combination

work were successful in getting on equal terms again. However, the Verity boys were out to win, and soon broke through and scored again. Try as they did, the Hilton forwards could not break through the Verity defence, and the game ended in a win for Verity 2-1. Willen and Lansdowne then played and were evenly matched and the game ended 1-1, but the award went to Willen on points in the final. Willen beat Verity 1-0, and a most successful day was over. Winners, Willen 1st, Verity 2nd and Lansdowne 3rd.

This sort of play continued for several more years but there doesn't seem to have been any more league play. Gradually baseball took first place at the Sports Days and senior football became a thing of the past.

### Oak Lake Golf Club

The Oak Lake Golf Club was organized, possibly in 1919, and the course was on what was called the Town Section. The players teed off south of Jack Knight's slaughter house. This land is now owned by Mrs. Joan Buckley. Jack McLeish and Mel Hart used to caddy for the men and Jack remembers walking across this course on his way to school. Some of the men they remember caddying for are Mr. Hichin Hockin, Mr. W. Baker, Mr. Peasland and the school principal, Mr. English.

The first minutes available are for 1922. The officers that year were R. C. Naylor — President, J. Lind — Vice President, A. G. Peasland — secretary and Rev. Miller — captain. W. English, H. B. Smith and A. G. Peasland made up the grounds committee. They had the usual problems with the course. They didn't have a caretaker so two members were allotted to each green. These men were to get timber for the sides and ends of the teeing greens and to experiment on the worst greens with the sand and oil process. They tried to set up rules for out of bounds, wheel tracks, gopher holes and mole hills.

In 1923 the golf course was moved to the former race track south of the C.P.R. main line. W. Cameron and Mrs. M. Leitch offered the land if the club would pay the taxes and their green fees.

The new course was opened on Arbor Day, 1923. Officers for that year were President — R. C. Maylor, Secretary-Treasurer — A. G. Peasland, Captain — Rev. J. S. Miller. Mr. W. Baker was caretaker. There was also a Ladies' Golf Club, with the president of the ladies club being second vice president of the men's club.

In 1927 a new clubhouse (the present one) was built. This building was opened free of debt and it was stated that this was largely due to the efforts of the women, who had raised most of the money needed. They had put on functions such as whist drives and dances all year long.



An Early Oak Lake Football Team.



It is hard to imagine life without the machinery we have now. Keeping the grass short was always a problem and a novel solution was suggested in 1929. Miss Dorothy Banister offered sheep if the men would properly fence the course. Evidently the offer was not accepted — no reason given.

The grounds must have been in fairly good condition though. That year, 1929, a special sports issue of the Oak Lake News was printed for July 1st. Someone wrote about the golf course and we are reprinting the article. It should bring back memories.

### **Golfing Going Good**

Just three minutes walk from almost any home in Oak Lake, mostly surrounded by trees, is situated one of the real beauty spots of the town, the Oak Lake Golf links. As one approaches this beautiful little course, attention is first attracted by the suitable little clubhouse, twenty four by thirty feet, nestled at the edge of the trees. A full view of the first tee and fairway is seen from the verandah of the club house, and the home fairway and greens are in close proximity. Spectators on the verandah are thus privileged to witness the start and finish of the game.

This nine hole course, of about 2,200 yards, with a par 30, requires well-placed shots at all times in order to compete with Old Man Par. Each fairway is well bunkered and the trees on the edge of some of the fairways leave room for little other than accurate driving and well played approaches with a premium on direction.

The sand greens are very true with plenty of room for skillful putting. Whilst the course is mostly level, each fairway and hole has its own idiosyncrasies, the seventh hole being the most tricky of the nine. This hole commands a straight well played drive and a perfect second direct for the cup, in order to avoid trouble on both sides and in the rear. The greatest hazards of the course are on this and the fourth where a "pulled" drive into the trees that border the fairway spells a lost ball or other serious troubles. A most beautiful picture may be seen from the third tee, where one commands a full view of the whole course. In the distance is seen the unique little club house in the trees at the first tee and to the left the horseshoe shaped part of the course around four and six holes, surrounded in the background by a bank of trees. As a player looks over this delightful spot one is filled with an unusual amount of pep and he pounds his pill with more than his accustomed enthusiasm.

Weekly during the summer months a very pleasant social evening of bridge, and a luncheon is enjoyed by members of the Club and their friends, to which any and all outsiders are welcomed.

The strong membership of the Club is yearly increasing and this beauty spot of the town is more

and more becoming a most popular recreation ground for our citizens.

Once More

Spring has come to the links once more  
For maytime opens the Clubhouse door.  
Gone is the grey of the winter's gloom,  
Now is heard in the Clubhouse room  
Modest tales from each modest lip  
Of wonderous scores before they slip.  
The old boys smile as they make their bow,  
They know their day is at hand "And how,"  
While the young chaps scamper around the floor  
For spring has come to the links once more.

Dr. H. E. Hicks, President

H. A. Doaks, Secretary-Treasurer

From the Oak Lake News, July 1, 1929



Play continued along much the same lines until the war started in 1939, when hard times fell on the club. That year they had a deficit of \$20.00 when they had to pay the taxes.

They passed a motion to ask Kenton to join for \$25.00 but nothing came of it. Cliff Strong was caretaker at a salary of \$25.00 and green fees. The club was organized in 1940 and then not again until 1947.

In 1947 a determined effort was made to reorganize and play was resumed. The course was in terrible condition and a committee of Wm. Cochrane, J. Wallace, C. Pearsal and Martin Kinnear was appointed to burn and clean up the course. Bees were held all that summer, with these men in charge. The taxes were paid again and fire insurance was put on the clubhouse.

From 1947 on, play has continued without interruption. Work on the grounds and the clubhouse has continued periodically and at present many people enjoy a game on a summer evening.

The officers for 1981 were President — Garry

Morcombe, Vice President — Frank Oko, Secretary-Treasurer — A. A. Hutchinson. Hutch has held this position for twenty-five years. Allan Morcombe, Reg Morcombe, Joe Lewis, Bill Ross and Garry Morcombe make up the executive committee.

The ladies have been active all through the years. They have organized their own club but have worked closely with the men on the different projects. For several years a Ladies Tournament was held but lately things have been different. The women are organized in round robin play and this guarantees games for everyone.

For the season's windup, a joint men's and women's two ball foursome is held, followed by a potluck supper. This has proved to be a most popular "fun" event.

The officers for 1981 were, President — Irene Bender, Secretary-Treasurer — Jackie Lewis, Executive — Shirley Smith, Til Helton and Lorraine Holland.

### **The Oak Lake Shooting Club**

The Oak Lake Shooting Club — sometimes called the Brandon Syndicate and later named the Oak Lake Farming and Ranching Association (not to be confused with the present Oak and Plum Lakes Ranchers' Association) began in the year 1905. A group of a dozen men from Brandon and western Manitoba were concerned about an over kill of birds and the preservation of natural breeding grounds. The group consisted of: J. B. Whitehead, Charles Whitehead, J. J. Skynner, Hon. G. R. Coldwell, P. C. Mitchell, A. P. Jeffery, A. C. Fraser, Fred Nation, Dr. McInnes, Jim Howden, Most Rev. A. U. De Pencier, Judge Gregory Barrett.

These members purchased 6,400 acres of hunting grounds from the Government and Hudson Bay Co. A lodge was built in 1907 on section 7-8-24, along the south shore of Oak Lake. This would be approximately two miles south of the Oak Lake Resort along the dyke road. A game keeper, Walter Jiggins was hired and he and his wife and son James lived in a cottage beside the lodge. Mrs. Jiggins handled the cooking for the hunters at a cost of 50¢ a meal. It was reported that each meal was like a Christmas dinner.

Usually the members took a train to Oak Lake where they kept two teams of horses. One team was kept near town and the other at the lodge. They would hitch a team to a democrat and drive twelve miles to the lodge and return with a fresh team.

A set of rules was set up and strictly enforced. A daily bag limit was set up and there were never more than twelve guns allowed on the marsh at any one time. Gambling was forbidden and there was no

drinking during the daylight hours. Trails were cut through the marsh by Mr. Jiggins with a scythe from a canoe, to gain access to favorite hunting spots. After a hearty breakfast prepared by Mrs. Jiggins, the game keeper would then escort the members to different locations on the marsh, depending on the kind of bird he was after. After a days shoot, the hunter would then paddle back to the lodge.

Occasionally a storm would come up unexpectedly and some had to spend the night in the marsh. A flag flown at the lodge during the daylight hours would assist members to find their way back. This was replaced by a lantern in the evening. In the winter months, a lamp was placed in the window to assist anyone lost en-route from Belleview to Oak Lake.

The club members kept a record book between the years 1907-1946. The book contains the names of the members and guests and shows the number of birds taken each day, as well as the species. Weather conditions were noted each day, as well as when the first birds were seen in the spring and when freeze-up occurred in the fall. The following are a few quotes taken at random from the log.

"October 3rd, 1909 — Planted 50 lbs. of wild rice today in various parts of marsh. Got it from Minneapolis."

"October 26th, 1909 — Hon. Wm. Jennings Bryan of Lincoln Nebraska U.S. and Consul General Dr. J. E. Jones of U.S. arrived at 4:00 p.m. the guests of the club."

"September 29, 1919 — Cold in morning with a little snow, got warmer in the afternoon."

"May 30, 1920 — Arrived by motor this afternoon about 4:00 p.m. 3 hours from Brandon. Roads in fine condition."

"August 8, 1920 — Left for Brandon this afternoon. Found throngs of people on Island, picknicking, bathing, etc."

"November 29, 1928 — very mild 60°."

"October 25th, 1926 — Walter shot banded duck no. 300649 — the first ever shot on club's property."

October 27, 1909 — Bob Dunsire began building ice-house today. Came up on Local yesterday."

"October 4th, 1925 —

"A Thousand Thanks" — by Dr. J. S. Clark

This is a place for rest and quiet thought,  
Where nothing is for sale and no one bought,  
Where problems can be solved and battles won.  
When in the thick of things we see the sun.

I thank the Doctor for this hunting spree,  
And you my hosts, whoever you may be,  
With Walter, Mrs. Jiggins and the dog.  
The thousand things that populate the bog.

The interior of the lodge consisted of two large bedrooms on either side of a huge dining area, also a kitchen and washroom. There were six beds and lockers in each bedroom. It was said that the Grits slept on one side, while the Tories slept on the other side. Mounted birds and fish decorated the dining area, along with a library and fireplace. Wicker rockers, arm chairs and a chamois table cloth placed on a huge table completed the living room.

In 1909 an ice house was built and insulated with saw dust. Huge blocks of ice filled the building which lasted until the following winter. The birds were cleaned and kept on ice until the hunter left for home.

Records and stories of the early years showed the Plum Lakes and adjoining marshes to be rich in water fowl, fish and furbearing animals, which provided a source of food and revenue in the lean years. Large volumes of hay obtained from the area around these marshlands was also an added income for those living in the area.

The dying interests of a second generation of members, along with poor hunting conditions and increased operating expenses, contributed to the sale of this large tract of property to the Provincial Government, for a bird sanctuary. It is now known as the Oak Lake Bird Refuge.

Members at the time of sale were: Dr. M. Matheson, E. C. Whitehead, Whitby Kerr, John C. P. Mitchell, Keith Mitchell, Mrs. Dorothy Waller (Judge Barrett's daughter).

The lodge was later purchased by August and Barbara Valley for a home and moved two miles north of the Oak Lake Resort. It is now the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Henderson.

There were other hunting lodges in the area during the period. Some of these were — Bigelows Lodge, Plum Lakes Lodge (Kerr), Paynes Lodge, Toronto Lodge, Bogers Lodge, Virden Lodge, Thompson's Lodge, MacDonalads' Lodge. None of these lodges exist today, although small parcels of land are still held for hunting purposes.

## **The Oak Lake Rodeo**

Early in 1969 interested citizens of Oak Lake decided to build an arena. One of the many projects started to finance this was the now famous Oak Lake Oxcart Rodeo.

With some renovations by many in the community the corral at J. L. Winters was readied for the big day in June. But it rained so much the day was postponed until July when the weather repeated itself. The third date was a beautiful day. Due to our inexperience, we were ill prepared for the day's pro-

ceedings. The previous Sunday the best of Abe Penner's horses had been selected as bucking stock. In our hurried preparation of the bucking chutes the fact that the gates were on backwards was overlooked. Needless to say, the show was somewhat slowed down due to the fact that each horse had to be turned around before a ride was staged. The sound system was only operational from inside the sound car parked near the chutes. The only person of some 2,000 people on hand who couldn't see the show was the announcer. The results were brought to him by a runner and were often outdated and incorrect.

The program consisted of: bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, cow riding, wild cow milking, calf roping, barrel racing, chariot races, saddle horse racing and a penning competition. A profit of \$800.00 was realized.

The 1970 show had the bucking stock of Ray Arksey, two amateur clowns, pony rides, a crow's nest with a good sound system and a professional announcer. The show went off very well.

In 1971 the rodeo committee decided to finance the building of the World's Largest Oxcart to promote the rodeo. This was done and it was taken in the Brandon Traveller's Parade where it won a plaque for 1st prize. This same year they joined the Canadian Cowboys Association. That spring material for 12 bleachers was purchased and they were built by volunteer labour at a cost of \$105.00 apiece.

The lack of toilet facilities was discussed and it was felt that an effort should be made to correct this. The suggestion was made by Bob McDougall that anyone who had an unneeded out house should donate it to our rodeo. He was immediately put in charge of this department and pursued his task with great diligence. By rodeo time there were 14 buildings transported to the rodeo grounds by Bob. However, these comfort stations were not as comfortable the following years due to the invasion of many hornets. The first unfortunate cowboy up the hill Sunday morning found the outhouse already occupied. Much to the amusement of the gathering crowd he bolted out, pants at his ankles, pursued by angry hornets.

An excellent grill was built for the food concession. The Queen contest was added and lasted for four years.

In 1972 Ladies Goat Tying added a lighter touch to the show. A professional lady trick rider entertained at half time.

In 1977 the association moved to their present site at the fair grounds. The excellent facilities were built with the help of a Canada Works Program.

In 1981 a precentennial project was completed,

and a circular race track now passes through the rodeo arena. Mutton busting was introduced.

Many changes have taken place since the rodeos began. The original meetings were held in the old C.P.R. station which stood on N. Railway Street. Some of the meetings were known to last from 9:00 P.M. until 4:30 A.M. Refreshments were in abundance. These meetings were well attended.

One of the more spectacular events was the hide race. It consisted of a rider towing a green cowhide on a 30 foot lariat rope. The partner lay on the hide face down and was towed around a barrel at each end of the course. This was a timed event.

A song was written to help in advertising the rodeo, to be sung to the tune "Squid Jiggin Ground".

Gather round boys and I'll tell you a story  
About building the biggest oxcart in the world  
With its wheels 10 feet high, she'll sure catch your  
eye

And she stands as a symbol to the brave pioneer.  
On August the 8th in Oak Lake, Manitoba  
You can shine up your boots boys and come to the  
show

You can bring your old lady and watch the bronc  
stompin

We'll see you all at the Oxcart Rodeo.

You can camp right out there on the wide open  
prairie

With the wind blowin through the cottonwood trees  
Next morning at sun up you'll all be there early  
When they're rounding up dogies for the big  
rodeo.

So round up your kids all your uncles and cousins  
And crawl in the front with your ma and your pa  
And if you've got room in the back of your  
buckboard

Here's a big special invite to your mother-in-law.

However, after a perfect tape was created it was found that each performer would have to join the musician's union before it could be played by CKX so the plan was scrapped as too expensive.

The first president was Kelly Taylor and Ron Batho has done the lion's share of the secretarial work. Our rodeo offices over the years have gone from a truck camper to an air conditioned van supplied by Rothman's to a completely air conditioned horse trailer supplied by Batho's.

## Oak Lake

From earliest time Oak Lake and the Island have been important recreational spots. We are very fortunate to have a body of water such as this within close driving distance.

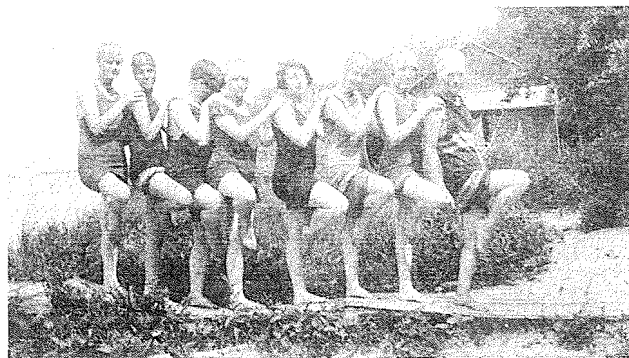
Mab Marion and his wife were the first settlers to live on the Island and they were known far and wide for their hospitality. In winter they entertained in their home but in summer they held their gatherings outside, under the beautiful big oak and elm trees. The gatherings were attended by people from all over the countryside.

By the early 1900's people from town were camping at the lake and a few even built cottages there. Allan Gordon has bricks marked 1907 in his cottage. There were so many campers that there was a column in the Oak Lake News called "Camp Chips," telling of the comings and goings at the lake.

From earliest times picnics were held at the lake. Oldtimers told of loading their families and a rowboat into a wagon and going to the lake or Pipestone Creek for the day.

Later, when cars were available, group picnics were held there. Some of these groups were the Masons, the Oddfellows and Rebekahs and the churches from both Oak Lake and Griswold. One of the big treats for the youngsters of Oak Lake was to be able to ride with Alex Jack in his car. He used to load it full of kids and head for the picnic.

These gatherings provided fun for everyone. The people piled into cars and headed out right after lunch. The afternoon was spent in all sorts of games and contests such as tug-of-wars, three legged races and sock races. There was always a ball game for the men (young and old) and swimming for anyone who was interested, and FOOD. Supper was a basket picnic and many and varied were the goodies served by the ladies. As well, there could quite easily be a peanut scramble and home made ice-cream. Finally, as the sun set over the shimmering water, everyone prepared for home. For children who didn't get around very much, this was an afternoon to be remembered.



Bathing Beauties in the 1920's.

In the late 20's Fuller Bros. had a booth, rented boats and operated a dance pavilion at the Island. Dances were held twice a week and were very popu-



lar. Music was often supplied by the Oak Lake Night Hawks. Later on, John Wallace had a dance floor and booth closer to the main beach.

In the later years Alex Henderson and his family developed the Island still further. Now there are row on row of cottages, a nice government beach and dock, the booth and a new marina as well as the camp grounds. Many people spend hours water skiing, sailing and swimming. Also, the hill at Cherry Point was partially levelled in 1967 and a new government campground and dock were built with the intention of taking some of the pressure off the Island. The campground wasn't too successful but a very attractive group of cottages has been built there lately.

Fishing has always been popular at the lake. From earliest times there have been accounts of many large jack fish caught in Pipestone Creek and in the lake. The lake is shallow and freezes deeply in winter, making it difficult for other fish to survive. However, it has been stocked periodically with pickerel and fishing was good.

In 1964 a dam was built at the mouth of Plum Lake, the shore from the Island to Pipestone Creek (seven miles) was diked and the channel of Pipestone Creek was straightened in an effort to raise the water level. It was hoped that the deeper water would benefit the cottage owners and the fishermen because by this time Oak Lake had become a real holiday place.

All this work provided good fishing summer and winter for quite a few years. The ice surface often looked like a small village with as many as forty fishing shacks at Cherry Point as well as many more at the mouth of the Pipestone.

Mr. A. E. Pigg lived on the Pipestone Creek and operated a small resort there. He rented boats to Americans and Canadians during fishing and hunting season and many the fish was caught in the reeds on the west side of the lake. In later years George Plateau took over the operation and built some small cabins to be rented to the hunters and fishermen. Now ducks and fish are not nearly as plentiful and George is gone, so the cabins are abandoned.

Years ago skating parties were often held at the lake. Often the ice was blown clear of snow or else it was cleared by some enterprising young men and fun had by all. Now you are more likely to see a group of cross country skiers or a long line of snowmobiles. The winding old bed of Pipestone Creek makes a great sheltered place for snowmobiling, with wood aplenty for a bonfire.

For a few years in the 70's the Virden Kinsmen Club held a Snow Festival at the lake in March. These were very interesting affairs with a snow queen, snowmobile races and demolition derbies. However, these events had to be held in March so that

it was warm enough to remain outside for hours and by that time of year there could easily be water on the ice or all the snow could be melted. Because weather conditions were so unpredictable, the Snow Festivals were discontinued.

Before the country became heavily populated, ducks and geese, specially snow geese, came to Oak and Plum Lakes and the surrounding marshes by the thousands. In the early 1900's this was recognized as one of the best goose-shooting areas in western Manitoba.

Shooting was not at all the way it is carried out today. People not only shot for sport, they shot for food. There were no hunting seasons nor bag limits and not much money to spend on ammunition. Much of the hunting was done by local people because cars were scarce and roads were terrible. The snow geese used to feed on the stubble fields around the lakes and marshes in the early morning and again in the evening. It was common to see fifty acre fields white with geese. Much of the shooting was done from pits using decoys and great numbers of geese were shot.

This kind of hunting lasted into the 20's but it couldn't continue. The huge flocks of snow geese disappeared at that time and no one knew quite why. Certainly the heavy hunting was a contributing factor. Smaller flocks still arrived every spring but the thousands on thousands of birds were gone.

The same thing happened to the ducks. At one time they were plentiful over the whole area and the same kind of stories are told about the great numbers that were shot. Now duck hunting is very strictly controlled and the birds are scarce.

In the late 60's the Provincial Government established a Canada Goose Sanctuary at Oak Lake. This sanctuary covered a huge area, bounded on the north by No. 1 highway, on the west by No. 83, on the south by No. 2 and on the east by No. 21. Canadas were never as plentiful as the snow geese but there had always been some around and this bird seems to be adaptable to change. They had done very well when they were introduced to Wascana Lake at Regina so the plan was to stock the marshes around the lake with Canada Geese from Wascana. Government officials hoped that this small flock would form the nucleus of a much larger group that would return each year and so bring some of the waterfowl back to the lake. These first geese were very tame and provided a great thrill when they would stay right beside the road and even lead their young ones walking down the road to the Island. Geese are clever birds and they soon learned that they were protected. The nesting flocks were joined by ones from the north and it was amazing to watch them feed in the

fields a mile inside the sanctuary, seeming to know that they were safe.

In 1980 the boundaries of the sanctuary were pulled back so that it is about half its original size. It seems at the present as if the geese are making a comeback. Nesting pairs of Canadas can be seen on the deeper sloughs all over this area and in the fall there are many more around. People are much more conservation minded also, so the future looks brighter. At the same time the large flocks of Snow Geese seem to be returning. Once again fields are white with geese so people are hoping that they have changed their flyway and will continue to return in the spring and fall.

It seems that the lake was a focal point of early recreation, as it is now. Perhaps the only difference today would be the hardtop highway leading to this natural beauty spot.

### Entertainment

Winters may have been long in early times, distances to nearest towns great and travel slow but that didn't preclude sociable times among neighbors who met in each other's homes, humble though they were. Some settlers had brought violins, tuning forks, accordions and in rare cases, organs with them; hence most gatherings included music, singing, chatting, sometimes games and often dances. Occasionally these dances lasted 'til morning with guests being served breakfast before they began the trip home. Sometimes visiting was spontaneous; at other times the evening was very carefully planned with elaborate entertainment and food. For these socials the women dressed in their finest and one would wonder how they managed to keep warm on the slow trip home.

The building of schools and churches and in Oak Lake, of Cameron's Hall, moved many of the social events out of the home. The country schools became the center of the social life of each district and the events were many and varied. Dances were held regularly and were attended by everyone in the family. The babies slept on the coats in the cloakroom while the older folk danced to music provided by the fiddler and pianist who lived in the district. Everyone from six to sixty danced the Virginia Reel, the Heel Toe Polka, the Waltz Quadrille and the beautiful Old Time Waltz. The real old timers danced the Red River Jig, the Bon Ton, the 3 Step, the 4 Step and the Roberts. "Assemblies" were held in town during the winter season. These were invited affairs held every two weeks. Dance programs were used and a girl was a social failure unless her program was filled. Dress was often formal, long dresses for the women, tails and white gloves for the men.

In talking to the old timers and reading available material one function is mentioned many times. This was a dance called the "Red Pepper Ball". Alex Wright, a son of Dr. Wright of the early days, wrote this account of the ball for the April 14, 1966, issue of the Oak Lake News.

"Shortly after the railroad gangs moved on from Oak Lake there was a large influx of settlers from Ontario and Great Britain. The latter were good middle class English and had friends to sustain them in the new colony. This group established a gay, sophisticated center along the lines of those living in England. Tennis for the summer, garden parties, dances, parties and plays in the winter were theirs. St. Alban's was their church built by them. Its beautiful interior is in a large measure due to their good taste.

The Canadians or colonists, so to speak, interested themselves in other ventures. Baseball, football and poker games were held. The latter were frowned upon by the better people.

This division in the community caused some humorous and unpleasant situations.

Father and Mother (Wright) being Canadians, and nevertheless educated, found themselves between the two groups. One evening the English, as I call them for distinction, arranged for a ball with evening gowns, white gloves, a real cotillion. This was to be held in a machine shed which was large and had a fair floor. Father and Mother were invited. As they had friends in the Canadian crowd one of these advised Father to leave the dance early. So when the evening was at its height Father and Mother retired. They later learned that the rude Canadians who were uninvited had procured bed bug squirters and instead of the bed bug powder they had filled them with red pepper and puffed this between the cracks in the building. All the dancers were completely overcome with sneezing and crying. A filthy trick. Some folks laughed while other swore vengeance on those uncouth men who had perpetrated such a vile joke. Father called it the "Red Pepper Ball."

Many other events of a more serious nature were held at various times. In 1897 the Spry-Palmer Operatic Company played in Oak Lake. The members of this group gave a very enjoyable musical entertainment.

In 1905, Pauline Johnson gave a public performance in Cameron's Hall. She had travelled all over the country and the people of Oak Lake were very fortunate to have her visit their town. Another event of that year was the supper and entertainment given by the Ladies' Aid of the Presbyterian Church. After supper Mr. Nix of Virden, a professional elocutionist, rendered numerous selections. This was one

of the countless functions put on by the ladies of the various churches. The teas, bazaars, socials and suppers that these good women sponsored were social events eagerly attended by many of the people of the community.

In 1906 the entertainment was varied. The Williams "Dixie Jubilee Singers" appeared. This was a group of colored singers and they were very popular.

The Polmatier Sisters sang, gave readings and played the coronet, trombone, tubephone and xylophone.

James Fax made a return performance with a new program. He was a comedian and much appreciated.

Literary Societies grew up at St. David's and Ryerson. These organizations sponsored elocution contests, plays, debates and poetry reading. The Temperance Society was also strong. The schools were great places to hold croquinole drives, box socials, card parties and Christmas concerts for the entertainment of all.

Community and Sunday School picnics at Salt Lake, north of St. David's and at Oak Lake, were social events of importance in the early 1900's. Often the people didn't travel so far for their picnics. A Harvey District news item of 1910 tells of the "five adjacent school districts" holding their picnic at the beaver dam near John McDonald's.

Skating and tobogganing and snowshoeing were greatly enjoyed in winter. Horseback riding was very popular. Ladies, of course, rode side-saddle.

Courting with a snappy team of drivers hitched to



Off to Town.

a shiny buggy complete with a top was as prestigious as driving the most powerful automobile today.

In town James Stephens operated his pool room and bowling alley. The Caledonian Entertainers put on an entertainment. They were billed as the classiest, most beautifully costumed and best Scottish Concert Party to visit the west. Admission 50¢ and 75¢. That same year (1913) Miss Nellie McLung gave a recital in the Presbyterian Church. A three-act play "Uncle" was presented by local talent. The Oak Lake Orchestra gave several musical selections. The next year the Tom Marks Company gave the play "Peg O' My Heart".

Reading has always been a great pastime and source of information for those fortunate enough to have access to newspapers, magazines or books. Many immigrants, hungry for news of people and places they had left behind, received bundles of newspapers from home.

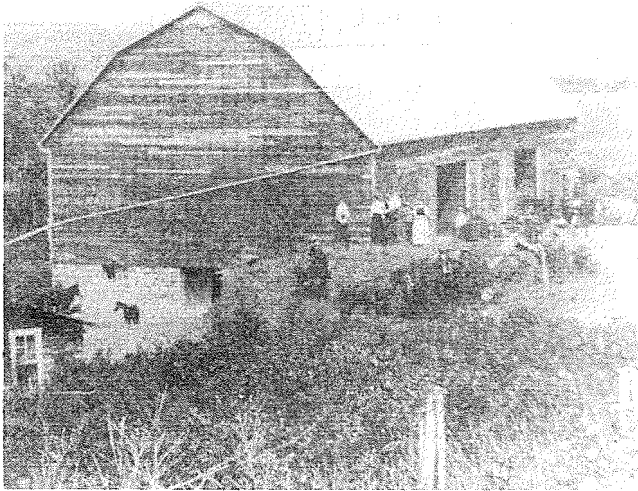
The earliest newspapers available to the people of Oak Lake and area were the Winnipeg Daily Free Press around 1874 and Brandon Sun about 1882; Oak Lake News 1890 and the Farmer's Advocate. Other popular farm publications followed, including The Nor' West Farmer, Western Home Monthly and the Grain Grower's Guide which later became The Country Guide.

The Crank-up gramophone was all the rage by 1908. Some models had disc records, but others used cylindrical ones that fitted over a cylindrical base. These machines afforded great pleasure and good entertainment in the home.

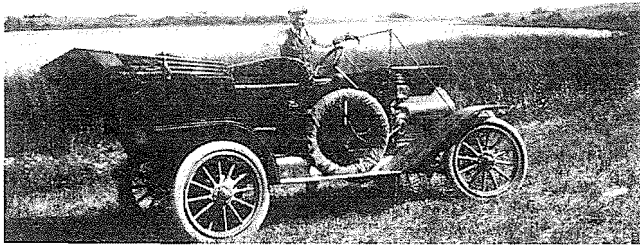
R. J. Grey, Oak Lake merchant, was advertising player pianos in 1911. By 1914 Kodak cameras were in vogue, and some of our sophisticated young people were attending the movies at Virden.

The work bee was a form of entertainment as it afforded people the opportunity of fellowship while working together. Barn raising bees in the 1890's and early 1900's were common as people became financially able to improve. In July 1901 about 60 people gathered for a barn raising bee at F. G. Taylor's farm. In August Mr. and Mrs. Taylor held a big dance in the loft of the barn. A long list of people were invited. There were many kinds of bees held, not always in such a happy vein. Often people gathered to help plant or harvest a sick neighbor's crop. The people participated willingly because they knew that when they, too, needed assistance help would be forthcoming.

The advent of the auto created great excitement. Some folks were tremendously impressed by the mystery and marvel of the horseless carriage, others cursed it roundly as it frightened their horses into senseless panic. Dogs barked at it, little boys chased



Fred G. Taylor Home — Barn built in 1902. Burned by lightning in 1918. Replaced 1924.



Touring Car, 1915.

behind it and old people declared it to be the work of the devil.

The 1909 Model T Ford had a 4 cylinder 22 H.P. motor and a cruising speed around 30 m.p.h., inexpensive and made for farm and family. In spite of this, Jack McDonald and Andrew Johnston are reported to have taken the train to Winnipeg one fine 1911 day and each bought himself a Reo car — the first in the St. David's community. The roads were terrible on the return trip and several times horses were required to pull their beautiful new cars out of the mud. It took two days to get home!

In 1915 A. S. Stewart was selling McLaughlin cars. One could also buy a Ford touring car for \$530.00 or a Ford run-about for \$480.00. By 1918 Addie was selling Ford Coupes at \$970.00 or Sedans at \$535.00. The Ford V8 was on display in Oak Lake in 1932.

The great number of cars forced a change in business. Some of the livery barns sold out and garages took their place. A complete new line of accessories were for sale. Instead of the buggy wheels and horses' harness, Michelin tires were advertised for sale in 1919. John Story was prepared to repair automobiles in his machine shop in 1910.

Many little accidents occurred because the autoist's cardinal rule "keep your attention on your driving" was disregarded. One lady driver is reported to have crashed into the south east corner of the hotel while she was waving to a friend and simultaneously attempting to park. The building needed considerable repair, not to mention the car.

By 1915 Bill Thompson was operating the Star Theater. The movies were nothing like the ones seen today but the people loved them. The pictures were silent and a player piano or a victrola filled in the time between reels. The projector was cranked by hand and the lighting provided by a gas engine. Saturday night was farmers' night and Saturday afternoon was kids' day. A special show was held on Christmas Day. School boys would shout the picture show news up and down the streets. They were paid with a ticket to the show. This was a very important event for young folk at that time.

In the early 1920's the Chautauqua Shows started coming to town. These people brought a very large tent and set it up where Winmill's house now stands. Wooden seats and a stage were placed inside.

Programs were put on for three nights. There was singing, comedy items, jokes and very good elocution. These programs were much enjoyed because the entertainment was high-class and suitable for the whole family. Old diaries tell of tickets being bought for everyone, for the three nights. The children were especially thrilled by the lights, the big tent and the air of excitement that surrounded the whole performance.

By 1934 radios were well established in the Oak Lake area and provided fine home entertainment. But according to the Oak Lake News the television concept was gaining attention and a demonstration at the Toronto Royal was promised that year. The first license for wireless television in Canada was issued in 1926. By 1952 CKX-TV Brandon was entertaining and educating us.

In the 1930's a favourite recreation was to go dancing on a summer evening at Bill Anderson's Maple Grove barn 10 miles north, 1 mile east of Oak Lake. Dancing from 9:30 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., Old Time and Modern. Well known orchestras of the day were always in attendance.

If the Oak Lake people wished to go a little further afield there was always a good time to be had



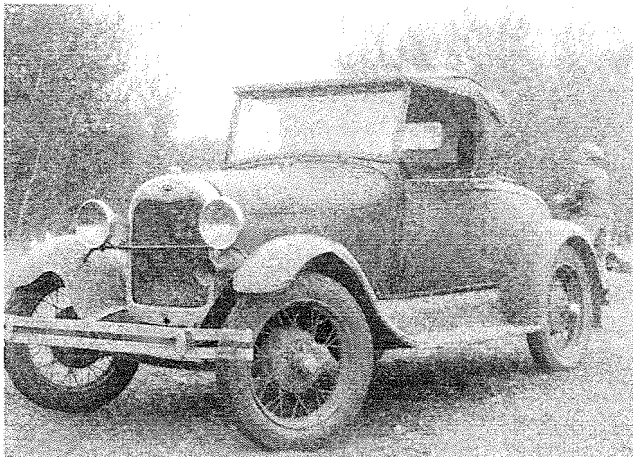
at a popular spot known as Nichols Red Star Barn at Harmsworth. Big name dance bands from as far away as Saskatoon, played there.



Goin' Fishin'.



Pony Taxi in Calling Card Days 1906. Grandma Hood, Mrs. W. C. Burns. Steps at back of cart folded down to make dismounting possible.



Ride In My Rumble Seat.

The boundaries of our communities have expanded so we now are able to travel to any part of the world to be entertained.



The Flappers Outside Telephone Office while on a Sunday Walk 1928. Left to Right — Frances Todd, Gwen Stevens, Margaret Harrison, Nellie Ducharme, Ruth McCubbin, Elva Cole, Mildred Kennedy.



Harvey School District Young People Croquet Players.



Horseshoes. August Valley, August Plaisier, Constant Plaisier.

# Organizations



What is the worth of anything  
But for the happiness 'twill bring  
— R. O. Cambridge

## Oak Lake Citizen's Band

The exact date of the organization of the Oak Lake Citizen's Band is not known but mention of it is made in a 1901 issue of the Oak Lake News. That issue mentions the idea of the members of the band lending their instruments to the boys of the community so that a junior band could be organized. However, the problem was in finding a leader.

It is known that there were three leaders who worked with the band for years — Mr. Tipp, Mr. Russell Hogg and Mr. Russell Stevens.

Always the band was a big part of community life. At first they travelled in a band wagon made by Alex Jack. It had seats all around the sides and the members travelled the country in it. Later they travelled by truck and many stories are told about engine trouble or broken axles, so that they were late for functions or very late getting home. In 1914 the band stand on front street was built by the town of Oak Lake.

Before cars were common the band was an important part of Saturday summer evenings. The band would play and march around the streets. Behind would follow people in buggies, either their own or rented from the livery barn. After the parade, everyone would go to someone's home for a garden party.

Through the years they played many times, at school field days, fairs, sports days, Decoration days, Remembrance Day services and all sorts of things at the rink. They played for skating in the winter. Couple skating was the custom and the members used to spell each other off so that everyone could skate with his best girl.

They didn't confine their activities to Oak Lake. The band was known all around the country and played for many functions in other communities.

From time to time they entered contests. One of these was the Oddfellows Grand Lodge contest at Winnipeg in 1912. Portage La Prairie won first and Oak Lake won second. Mr. Tipp was the conductor.

In 1926 a Massed Band Concert was held in Oak Lake. Six bands from the Western Manitoba Band Association, from Melita, Hartney, Souris, Elkhorn, Virden and Oak Lake played before two thousand people. Mr. Russell Hogg, leader of the Oak Lake Band, was director for the day.

The concert was held in the Exhibition Grounds, with extra seats put up on each side of the grandstand for the band members. The grandstand was full and the cars were ranged six deep around the bands. The Town Council entertained the visiting band members to supper at the Oakland Hotel, the Savoy Cafe and Thompson's Restaurant.

The beginning of World War II meant the end of the band. When many of the members enlisted, the rest tried to carry on but it gradually died.

After the war Lovell Schmaus organized a band under the sponsorship of the Royal Canadian Legion with some of the old band members but it too died out after four or five years. The needs and interests of the community had changed.



Oak Lake Citizen's Band 1912. Mr. Tipp, bandmaster.



Oak Lake Citizens Band 1932. Russel Stevens, Bandmaster.

## Oak Lake Patriotic Society

With the beginning of World War I the life of the community changed. Many men had enlisted and the people of the community turned their efforts to war work.

The Oak Lake Patriotic Society was formed and this organization became the focus for the community work. The Society itself was organized by some local people with the idea of putting on plays to raise money. These were two hour plays and were much appreciated by the audience. From this beginning the organization expanded so that in 1916 they handled over \$2000.00.

Some of this money came from private donations and the rest from things going on in the community. The list of donations for 1916 shows the community involvement —

Miss E. Moore (card party), Oak Lake Sports



Association (1st July sports), Concert, Agricultural Society (concert and lecture), Dance, Girl's Patriotic dance, donation from a curling game, Methodist Ladies' Aid, Painting Class, proceeds Oak Lake Curling Club bonspiel, Young People's Union, Mrs. G. A. Wallace's garden party, Song Recital, Home Economics Society and A. Cameron and Company.

The money was used in different ways. There were many "war widows" bringing up their families alone and some money was used to help them if they were having difficulties. The young girls used to gather and clean tobacco tins; then the ingredients for cakes were bought and the cakes made and shipped to each soldier at Christmas time. Also money was allotted to certain relief funds — British Sailor's Fund, Belgian Relief Fund, Manitoba Patriotic Fund, Women's League and Serbian Relief Fund. In 1918, \$4575.00 was sent to the Agricultural Relief for the Allies Fund. Farmers all over the area had donated livestock and people in town gave whatever they had to a giant auction sale. This money was sent in August and at that time was the largest single donation yet given in Western Canada. This illustrates the tremendous involvement of the people of Oak Lake and district in the war effort.

When the war ended, life returned to normal and the society was dissolved.

### **The Red Cross**

During World War I and World War II war work was carried on through the Red Cross. During the first war the emphasis seemed to be on making and gathering supplies for the soldiers. All the school girls learned to knit and spent many hours knitting socks. The women met every Thursday to cut out patterns and then took them home to sew and return the next week.

Evidently this work was organized under the Oak Lake Women's Patriotic League. From the Oak Lake News, an account of a 1915 meeting of the league shows a long list of articles packed for the Red Cross — nightshirts, pillow cases, wash rags, wipes, quilts and many more. Women who couldn't sew were asked to donate material for bandages and money for surgical supplies. Also, some of the money raised at the Patriotic events was allotted to the local Red Cross funds.

During the Second War the society was active again. A report of the local branch in 1945 states that \$18,000.00 was raised during the six years of the war. Ten thousand articles were sent to Red Cross headquarters and 1¼ tons of clothing to Europe.

Again the women spent all their spare time knitting and sewing and a Junior Red Cross was organized in the schools. The school children started

out by knitting afghan squares, then string wash cloths, which were horrible things to work on, and then the nicest, long grey and khaki scarves for the service men. A lot of social events and donations were necessary to raise that \$18,000.00 and a lot of time was spent packing the parcels that were made up for the soldiers.

### **Junior Red Cross**

The Junior Red Cross was organized in the 20's with the intention of involving school children in service to others. The motto was "Unselfish Service to Others". The children were encouraged to make donations to help crippled children and to safeguard and care for their own bodies by following simple rules of health. These rules were posted in the classrooms.

Local Junior Red Cross groups were organized in the schools in Oak Lake and the surrounding areas. Meetings were conducted, following correct parliamentary procedure, and a regular slate of officers was elected. A monthly magazine was sent out from headquarters. It was full of stories of crippled children and news of other organizations. There were also instructions in their own health care, food choices and care of the teeth.

During World War II the students worked very hard for the war effort. Schools took on whatever projects they could handle, from piecing quilts to gathering scrap metal, bones and newspapers. Along with this almost every child learned to knit, first afghan squares from scrap wool, then wash cloths from string and finally 60 inch scarves used by the servicemen.

After the war the Junior Red Cross returned to traditional projects, such as collecting and raising money for the Crippled Children's Fund. The organization was active in the schools until well into the sixties.

In 1919 one of the chief concerns of the people of Canada and of the small communities was the welfare of the veterans who had fought in World War I and the remembrance of the men who never returned. There were divided opinions as to how this should be done and this resulted in citizens' meetings and editorials to the newspapers.

From these meetings three suggestions were finally formulated.

- (1) a memorial hall should be built, perhaps with a monument in the front yard
- (2) a monument only, should be built and this could perhaps be placed in the school yard.
- (3) a scholarship should be set up for some deserving student in the town or district in Grade VIII



No one plan ever seemed to be finalized but from the interest aroused in the community in 1919 and 1920 and the ensuing years, several things happened.

### **The Oak Lake Great War Veterans' Association**

In 1919 an organization which proved to be the forerunner of the Royal Canadian Legion was formed. Until they got started they were supported by the Masons, the Oddfellows and the Women's Institute.

The first officers of the Great War Veterans' Association were — President, Comrade H. Stevens, Vice-President, Comrade J. McFarlane and Secretary-Treasurer, Comrade R. Munro. Meetings were held in various homes.

They chose as their memorial the erection of a building in Oak Lake for the benefit of returned men. They proceeded immediately to hold functions to raise money for the building.

In November of that year further plans were made. The western half of the Northland Milling office was rented as headquarters.

A Ladies Auxiliary was organized with President, Mrs. J. B. Lang, Vice-President, Mrs. Geo. Wallace, Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Mary Hockin. With the ladies support, plans were made for all sorts of functions to raise money for the new building.

In the meantime the clubrooms were refurbished and readied for social times. A pool table was installed along with games of all sorts. The plans were that the clubrooms should become a drop in centre for veterans and their invited guests. One evening a week was set aside for the use of the Ladies Auxiliary.

The raising of money for a Memorial Hall was their prime project but the members had other concerns as well. Conferences were held regularly in Winnipeg and delegates attended. One of the resolutions discussed in 1920 was that only veterans be employed in positions available on the Soldiers Settlement Board.

In 1921 the Great War Veterans of Canada inaugurated the wearing of red poppies in memory of the men who had fallen in the Great War. The money raised was to provide relief for the unemployed. The idea was first introduced in the U.S.A. by a French woman and the poppies were to be made by French orphans. Later the poppies were made by veterans who remained in Deer Lodge Hospital in Winnipeg.

In 1924, James Black, a veteran from London, England, was killed when he fell under a train at Algar Siding. Because he had no known relatives in Canada, the Veterans' Association members ar-

anged his funeral and bought Plot 91, Block B, in the cemetery and buried him there. Since then, other veterans of the Great War have been buried there.

There seemed always to be dissension over who qualified for membership in this group. In 1924 a second group, The War Veterans' Association, was formed and carried on until the Royal Canadian Legion was formed and the Memorial Hall never became a reality.

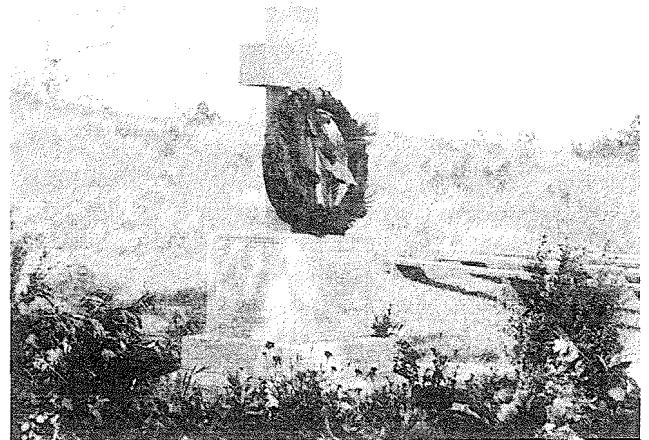
### **The Cross of Sacrifice**

The members of the Women's Institute had always been involved in the upkeep of the cemetery. This seemed to be their special project and they and their husbands did hours of work out there. Their idea was that a suitable memorial to the men killed in World War I should be placed at the cemetery, not in town.

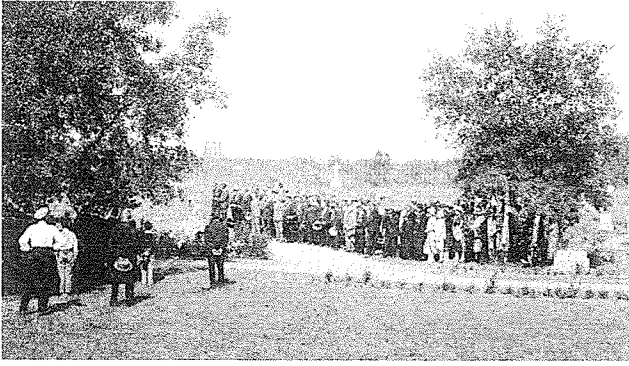
In 1922 they obtained a plot in the cemetery and had a flagstaff erected there. The Union Jack was flown from the flagstaff and a very impressive dedication ceremony was held on Remembrance Day that year.

In 1923 the ladies canvassed the women of the town and district and raised enough money to have a monument, "The Cross of Sacrifice" built. Messrs. J. Daum, T. J. Smith and J. Rozell did the work. The Cross of Sacrifice was placed in the cemetery, in front of the flagstaff erected the year before. For years after that, the Memorial Day services were held at the cemetery.

In the late 1930's the Cross of Sacrifice was moved to the town park. In 1972, the property was sold and the monument was moved to the yard of the Legion Hall.



The Cross of Sacrifice when it was in Oak Lake Cemetery 1932.



Memorial Service at Oak Lake Cemetery.

### Oakwood Memorial Scholarship

Charles Piault came to Oak Lake from France as a young man and worked on the farm of Dave Goodwin. He attended Oakwood School while he was here and won the Governor General's Award for Grade XI. He was killed in action in France in 1918.

When the Piault estate was settled there was a sum of money left to Oakwood School. This happened at a time when people were trying to decide how to honor the men who had been killed in World War I and so the idea of a scholarship was born.

The money was added to by people of the community and by the municipalities of Woodworth and Sifton and by 1930 had reached the sum of \$2000.00. The scholarship was named The Oakwood Memorial Scholarship and was open to any Grade VIII student attending Oakwood or any of the rural schools tributary to Oak Lake. The interest from the fund was used to provide scholarships of \$50.00 and \$25.00 to the two students with highest marks. These prizes were presented each fall, as a memorial to the soldiers who hadn't returned from the war. The first scholarships were presented in 1930-31, to James Slimmon and Evan Littler.

In later years the scholarships were awarded to Grade IX students instead of Grade VIII. Also, all the country schools are closed so the scholarships go to students of the Oak Lake Junior High and they are presented on Remembrance Day.

### The Royal Canadian Legion

On July 25, 1924 a meeting of World War I Veterans was held in the Fire Hall for the purpose of forming a local Returned Soldiers Association. Those attending the meeting were: T. Butterworth, P. W. Paul, E. D. Alder, H. Wilkinson, R. Munro, C. Wanlin, H. Riches, W. Cochrane, Reverend J. S. Miller, F. Watson and H. B. Smith.

Officers elected were — President T. Butterworth, Vice-President R. Munro, Secretary P. W. Paul, Chaplain Reverend J. S. Miller.

This Association held a Memorial Service at the cemetery every summer, and the Remembrance Day Service at one of the churches every November 11th, and looked after the general welfare of veterans and their families until a local branch of the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League was formed. It was called Oak Lake Branch No. 79, and was part of Manitoba and North West Ontario Command. The Charter Members were: H. Wilkinson, W. Cochrane, E. D. Alder, P. W. Paul, Dr. D. F. Gibb, J. L. Sparkes, W. Vallender, G. Scott, E. W. Hallet, S. P. Fall, W. Leach, P. F. Wallace, M. W. MacPhail, H. Fowell, Dr. F. K. Purdie, Lorne C. Story, W. C. Hodgins and F. Graham.

A two roomed building on Main Street was leased from the town for a meeting place.

After World War II ended a good number of the veterans of that war joined the local Legion branch.

They continued to meet in the building on Front Street until 1965 when the house, formerly occupied by the John Cole family, was purchased and remodelled for a Legion Hall. This building was used for meetings, bingos and social gatherings until it burned in December 1968.

At this time the Legion branch was offered the use of the Catholic Hall. Their meetings and bingos were held in this hall until September 1970 when the first meeting was held in the present hall, which had been a store in Bellevue.

In 1973 the Legion branch sponsored a Senior Citizens Home for Oak Lake.

A 24' x 38' addition was built on to the east side of the Legion Hall in 1976 for a Senior Citizens Drop-in Centre.

The Branch had for a number of years given prizes for the best two essays about Remembrance Day written by students attending Oak Lake schools. These were judged at Oak Lake Fair. In recent years these two prizes have been awarded for the two best drawings depicting Remembrance Day. The prizes are awarded at the Remembrance Day Service held at the Junior High School.

Students attending the Legion Athletic Camp at the Peace Gardens are helped with their expenses by the Branch.

The Branch continues to hold a Remembrance Day Service in one of the churches every November 11th, and a Decoration Day Parade and Service the last Sunday of May every year.

# Roll of Honour

Members of the Oak Lake Community who have volunteered for active duty with Canada's Fighting Forces:

## **Riel Rebellion 1885**

Fall, Perry  
Harvey, A. T.  
McNabb, James  
Quincey, Rev. J.  
Sharman, Thomas H.  
Williams, Daniel  
Wright, Dr. H. A.

## **South Africa 1885-1902**

Fall, Perry  
Harvey, J.  
Paul, P. W.  
Roberts, Arthur  
Spencer, James  
Taylor, John  
Watts, A.  
Watts, G.

## **World War I 1914-1918**

Abbott, Douglas  
Aitken, Norman  
Alder, Ellis D.  
Alford, Andrew  
Alford, William  
Anderson, John  
Anderson, Peter  
Anderson, Robert  
Ashdowne, Thomas  
Atkin, Eric  
Barham, William  
Barnes, W.  
Beech, Earl  
Bell, Russell  
Black, James  
Bolton, Fred  
Bonner, Victor D.C.M.  
Bouillion, Rev. J. G.  
Box, Ridge  
Briges, Cecil

Briere, Sinaie  
Brisson, John P.  
Brooks, Frederick  
Brownlie, James  
Buchanan, Harold  
Burns, Charles  
Buswell, George  
Buswell, John  
Buswell, Joseph  
Butterworth, Thomas  
Calvert, Victor  
Cameron, A. J.  
Campbell, Allen  
Campbell, Roy  
Carpentier, Arthur  
Carpentier, Emile  
Carpentier, Omer  
Chambers, John  
Chapman, Robert  
Clark, David  
Clark, Robert  
Clemens, Edward  
Cochrane, Robert  
Cochrane, William  
Cole, Aubrey  
Colleaux, Victor  
Collins, Walter  
Connel, Russel  
Cook, Leonard  
Costley, Eugene  
Coudere, Valere  
Coull, George  
Craig, S.  
Cuke, Duncan  
Cuke, Gorden M. M.  
Currie, Henry  
Currie, W.  
Darling, William

Dauphinais, Henry  
Decroliere, Victor  
DeManby, Wilfred  
Dickson, Jerry  
Dickson, John  
Donaldson, James  
Downie, James  
Eadie, Nelson  
Emond, Lawrence  
Fall, Selwyn  
Findlay, Walter  
Fitsgerald, James  
Fletcher, Frank  
Forrel, Laurie  
Forrest, Clifford  
Forrest, Norman  
Fowell, Herbert  
Fowlie, Hugh  
Fowlie, John  
Gallant, John  
Gatin, Joseph  
Gauvin, Elizee  
Glass, Ralph  
Gibb, Dr. D. F.  
Giles, H.  
Giroux, Alnanie  
Gleason, Gerald  
Goodwin, David W.  
Gordon, Clifford  
Graham, J. F.  
Hagyard, Clifton  
Hallet, William  
Hamilton, William  
Harris, F.  
Harrison, Clifford  
Harvatt, Harold  
Hassington, James  
Hatch, Thomas

# Roll of Honour

Haywood, William  
 Hollis, Arthur  
 Horrex, Richard  
 Hutton, Harold  
 Hutton, Howard  
 Ironside, William  
 Jackson, George  
 King, Sidney  
 LaFournaise, Edward  
 Lamond, Peter  
 Lamond, Robert  
 Lang, Alvin  
 Lang, Ben  
 Leach, William  
 Ledgerwood, Donald  
 Ledgerwood, Douglas  
 Leitch, Jessie  
 Lepine, Narcisse  
 Lemaire, Virgil  
 Loan, George  
 Lugage, Joseph  
 Marty, Adolph  
 Marty, Justin  
 Merrick, George  
 Miller, Derwin J.  
 Milne, George  
 Milne, James  
 Mitchell, Alex  
 Modeland, Seward  
 Modeland, William  
 Moody, Arthur  
 Montgomery, J. G.  
 Morkin, M.E.  
 Morkin, Nora  
 Munro, Ian  
 McCallum, Mervin  
 McFarlane, Colin  
 McFarlane, Donald  
 McFarlane, John  
 McKinnon, Douglas  
 McLean, Norman

McPhillips, Garnet  
 Neville, Allen  
 Olive, Guy A.  
 Painchaud, Joseph  
 Patterson, Donald H.  
 Parsons, Ralph  
 Paul, Percy W.  
 Pault, Charles  
 Pickford, Ernest  
 Pollet, Bert  
 Pommer, Albert  
 Pugh, Frank  
 Rattray, J.G. D.S.O.  
 Richards, John  
 Riches, Harry  
 Roberts, John  
 Robinson, Nicholas  
 Salkeld, J. P.  
 Savee, Leonard  
 Sarkission, Rev. S. H.  
 Scott, George  
 Seymour, J. W.  
 Sharman, Edward D.S.C.  
 Sharp, Hardy  
 Sharp, Roy  
 Sharrat, George H.  
 Shirley, Rev. J.  
 Sloan, Thomas  
 Smith, Alex  
 Smith, Errol K.  
 Smith, Harold B.  
 Smith, John  
 Smith, Melville  
 Smith, Wilfred  
 Sparkes, John  
 Stephens, Smith  
 Stevens, Henry  
 Stivens, Ernest  
 Storey, Lorne C.  
 Strang, Ernest  
 Strong, Alexander

Sullivan, Phillip  
 Talbot, William H.  
 Tape, Ernest  
 Taylor, George D.C.M.  
 Taylor, Herbert  
 Tipp, Alfred M.  
 Vallender, William  
 Vantillborgh, Albert  
 Vickery, John  
 Waldie, Alex  
 Wallace, Percy F.  
 Walsh, John L.  
 Waterman, Thomas  
 Watson, Frank  
 Watson, Gordon  
 Williams, Guy  
 Williams, Thomas E.  
 Williamson, Alex  
 Wilkinson, Harry J.  
 Wilson, Mathew  
 Wisner, Lloyd  
 Wright, Alex D.  
**World War II 1939-1945**  
 Adolph, William  
 Aitken, Lois  
 Allum, Fred  
 Allum, Harold E.  
 Allum, R.  
 Bailey, Gordon  
 Baillie, G. E.  
 Baillie, William  
 Bale, Harry  
 Batchelar, Eric  
 Bell, Alex W.  
 Bell, Murray  
 Bell, Stewart  
 Bernard, Alfred  
 Bernard, Daniel  
 Black, Anne  
 Borne, Cecil  
 Borne, Gilbert



# Roll of Honour

Borthwick, James  
Boyce, John  
Brownlie, B.  
Burch, Alvin  
Cameron, M. A.  
Cameron, Robert  
Carberry, Estelle  
Clark, Edwin  
Clark, David S.  
Cooper, Clifford  
Cooper, Fred G.  
Cosgrove, Grant  
Cosgrove, Kenneth R.  
Costley, Guy  
Cowan, William  
Daniels, John  
Dean, John  
Dixon, Victor  
Doak, James G.  
Doherty, Nora G.  
Dong, Vee  
Driediger, Isaac  
Ducharme, Ernest  
Dufily, Joseph  
Edey, Elmer  
Elkington, E.  
Emond, Garnet  
Emond, Maurice  
Fall, Selwyn P.  
Fiori, Francis P.  
Fiori, Lawrence  
Fowell, Albert E.  
Fowell, Charles  
Fowell, Frank  
Fowell, Frederick  
Fowell, George  
Fowell, Kenneth A.  
Furtney, Cecil  
Gallant, A. J.  
Gallant, A. P.  
Gillespie, Gavin  
Gillespie, Scott

Ginn, Frank  
Goodwin, Franklin  
Goodwin, James A.  
Goodwin, James  
Gompf, Charles  
Gompf, Ronald  
Gordon, Murray  
Gordon, Warren  
Graham, George F.  
Gray, A. E.  
Hamilton, Currie  
Hamilton, Earl  
Harrison, Eric  
Hart, Melville  
Harvatt, Tom  
Hatch, Max  
Helliwell, Arthur  
Helliwell, Jack  
Hewitt, James  
Holder, Ross  
Hollier, Herbert  
Hollier, James  
Hutton, Hazel  
Johnston, Norris  
Johnston, Ross  
Jordan, A. W.  
Jordan, Muriel  
Jordan, Lloyd  
Jordan, Sam  
Joynt, Earl  
Koscielski, Robert  
Koscielski, Stanley  
Kruger, Charles  
Laloyaux, Raymond  
Lang, Earl  
Lawson, Henry  
Lawson, Lorne  
Leach, Lewins  
Lee, Miriam  
Lee, Royden  
Lemaire, Charles J.  
Lesurf, Clifford

Livingstone, Archie  
Lohse, Otto B.  
Lund, Cyril  
Lundy, William  
Lutz, John  
Lyons, George  
Lyons, Leslie  
Masson, Wilfred  
Milligan, Harold  
Millwater, Ernest  
Millwater, Clifford  
Millwater, James  
Millwater, William  
Milne, Allan  
Milne, H. G.  
Millar, Charles  
Millar, J. C.  
Millar, Joan  
Motheral, Clarence  
McDonald, William  
McLean, Norman  
McLeish, Daniel  
McLeish, George  
McLeish, Neil  
McLeish, Roland  
McPhail, Donald  
McQuarrie, Murray  
McQuarrie, Neil  
Olive, Ernest  
Olive, Fred  
Phillips, A. M.  
Phillips, A. N.  
Phillips, Jeffery  
Phillips, K. R.  
Phillips, M. A.  
Plaisier, August  
Plaisier, Richard  
Reeves, Harold  
Robinson, Thomas H.  
Ronberg, Norman  
Ronberg, William  
Rousson, Cleophas

# Roll of Honour

Ruse, Edward  
Sawatsky, Jake  
Schmaus, Lovell H.  
Schmeid, John  
Schmidt, Harry  
Scott, Allan  
Scott, Keith  
Scott, George C.  
Scott, Ord.  
Simpson, J. W.  
Slimmon, Charles  
Slimmon, James  
Smith, Douglas A.  
Smith, Ernest  
Smith, George  
Smith, John G. E.  
Smith, Muriel M.  
Sowick W.  
Sparkes, Evan J.  
Stewart, Donald  
Stewart, Edward  
Stewart, George D.  
Story, Keith  
Story, Walter  
Steen, Ernest  
Stevenson, H. H.  
Stonham, George  
Stonham, Ronald  
Strong, Frederick  
Strong, Walter

Taylor, Garth  
Thomas, David  
Todd, A.  
Todd, Earl  
Todd, Glenn  
Todd, Lloyd  
Todd, Lyle  
Tolton, Roland  
Vodon, Philip  
Wallace, Frederick  
Wallace, James  
Wilkinson, G.  
Wilkinson, L.  
Wilkinson, R. H.  
Williams, Bernard  
Williams, Earl  
Williams, J.  
Williams, Smith  
Williamson, Kenneth  
Williamson, Victor W.  
Killed in Action  
**1914-1918**  
Anderson, John  
Anderson, Peter  
Ashdowne, Thomas  
Atkins, Eric  
Bolton, Fred  
Brownlie, John  
Buswell, George E.  
Buswell, John E.  
Calvert, Victor

Campbell, Allan  
Cochrane, Robert  
Craig, S.  
Downie, James  
Forrest, Norman  
Hamilton, William  
Ironsides, William  
Lang, Alvin  
Ledgerwood, Douglas  
Loan, George  
Montgomery, J. S.  
Munro, Ian  
Olive, Guy A.  
Piault, Charles  
Roberts, John  
Sharman, Edward J.  
Sharrat, John  
Talbot, William  
Vickery, John  
Wisner, Lloyd  
Watson, Gordon  
**1939-1945**  
Allum, Harold E.  
Borne, Cecil  
Bernard, Daniel  
Fowell, Albert E.  
Graham, George F.  
Lawson, Lorne  
Lesurf, Clifford  
Stewart, George D.  
Williams, Smith

## **Ladies Auxiliary, Royal Canadian Legion**

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion was organized in 1948 by a few members. In 1949 there were twenty members.

The first president was Mrs. Bill Houston but she couldn't finish her term so the first vice-president, Mrs. Jean Cosgrove, took over. Therefore Mrs. Cosgrove became the first past president. Mrs. Bessie Beech was the first secretary and Mrs. Norma Goodwin the first treasurer.

Meetings have always been held the first Wednesday of every month. Over the years we have helped with the Memorial Services, The Salvation Army, Heart and Ability Funds, Deer Lodge and the Athletic Peace Gardens sports camp. We give a grade eight veteran's child a scholarship each year.

We presented four of our ladies with life memberships for having thirty years of service with the auxiliary. They are Mrs. Edith Vallender, Mrs. Amy Harvatt, Mrs. Florence Allum and Mrs. Nellie Chapman.

In 1981 our membership is forty-five. Average meeting attendance is twenty. We attend a district rally each year with all the auxiliaries in our zone.

Present slate of officers: President, Mrs. Stephanie Scherz, first vice — Mrs. Donna Hutchinson, second vice — Mrs. Til Helton, secretary — Mrs. Gwen Dean, treasurer — Mrs. Betty Hall.

Our membership fee is still \$1.00, as it was in 1948.

## **The Oak Lake Boy Scouts**

There are no continuous notes on the Boy Scouts available so we have provided a running account of the activities through the years. Please accept our apologies if we have missed some important events but we think the information given will provide a picture of Scout activities.

The Boy Scout organization was founded by Lord Baden Powell. On February 1st, 1911, a number of Oak Lake citizens, Mayor A. Cameron, Dr. Wright, H. Stevens, T. J. Parsons, T. R. Hogg, A. Rogers, Dr. J. Marshall, T. Sandell and H. M. Laing formed a committee to organize a local Boy Scout group.

Dr. Wright was named as the first President and T. Sandell as Secretary-Treasurer. H. M. Laing was the first scoutmaster. (He later became well known for his book "Out With the Birds" which was written about Oak Lake and District.) Incidentally, recently Mr. Laing was bestowed an honorary membership in The Manitoba Naturalists Society at age 98 and mentioned as one of Western Canada's oldest active naturalists. He instilled a love of Nature in the boy

scouts with whom he worked. A. Rogers was named as Assistant Scoutmaster.

There were two Patrols, the Owl and the Wolf. The boys had a summer camp at the Lake (Lone Teepee), and raised money for expenses by putting on a concert which brought net proceeds of \$63.05. Tents for camping were loaned by T. Hogg and Morris Leitch.

In 1915 the names of Rev. J. A. Shirley, Rev. S. Sarkissian and Rev. Osterhout were added to the original committee and Rev. Shirley became the scoutmaster. Fees for the Scouts at this time were set at 10¢ per month.

Another early Scoutmaster was Mr. English, principal of Oakwood School.

**1917**

The Troop was to camp at "Lone Teepee", Oak Lake, from August 11 to 18 inclusive. Rides were to be provided to get to the camp but the boys were expected to provide their own equipment and food. These boys must have been of all ages because on the list of equipment was a razor and shaving soap. Activities started at 6:45 A.M. and ended with "lights out" at 10:00 P.M. — a busy day. W. J. Hatter — Scoutmaster.

**1918**

"The July 1st celebrations will include a parade of all the school children in the district. The parade will be headed by the combined bands of Kenton, Oak Lake, Highland Pipers, Boy Scouts and Mounted Escorts." Oak Lake News, June 27.

A concert was put on in Cameron's Hall. The program consisted of items by the scouts and some of the local girls. Proceeds were \$93.00, to be used for scout expenses and a donation to the Patriotic Fund.

**1962**

The first Oak Lake Boy Scout Troop won the trophy at the Virden Boy Scout Field Day, June 8.

Members who attended were — John Anderson, Allan Jaeb, Doug Beasley, Keith Kreutzer, Ron Beasley, Bob Leach, Don Motheral and Leslie Schmidt.

**1964**

Three Scout Patrols from Oak Lake joined about five hundred other boys at the International Peace Gardens for their annual camping weekend. Later that summer the boys camped at Tokaryk Lake, near Oakburn. They were joined by three members of the Minnedosa Thunderbirds and spent a weekend boating, fishing and swimming.

Leaders were George Matheson and Alvin Yaskiw. The boys who attended the camp were — Reg Morcombe, Don Motheral, Brent Doherty, Allan Jaeb, Doug Beasley, Bob Leach, Don Joynt, Ron Beasley, Leslie Schmidt, Jerry Joynt, George Keep-

er, Allan Ducharme, Bruce Larway and Maurice Arnold.

### 1967

The twelve and thirteen year old Oak Lake Scouts attended the Pan American Games in Winnipeg. They camped at Birds' Hill Park with hundreds of other Canadian and American scouts.

The boys were taken to the various events by bus and acted as ushers and errand boys. They served ovaltine to the athletes, chased balls and generally made themselves useful. In return they were able to see many different events; canoeing on the Assiniboine floodway, kayak racing, boxing, wrestling, baseball, soccer and basketball. It was a very interesting event for these boys.

The leader was Jim Hillyer and the boys who attended were — Dale Smith, Don Larway, Murray Olive, Bill Lewis, Bill Arnold, Gary Morcombe and Brian Beasley.

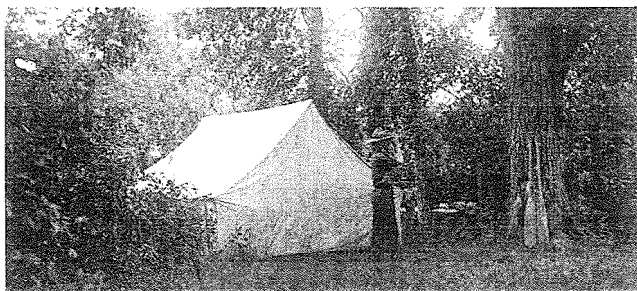
### 1970

The Cubs and Scouts held their Father-Son Banquet in the United Church lower hall. As chairman of the group committee, Mr. A. Hutchinson gave a few remarks, followed by the address by the guest speaker, Mr. Ralph Heard, District Commissioner for the Boy Scouts. Mr. Harry Wiens then brought greetings from the Royal Canadian Legion, the boys' sponsor.

The Boy Scouts and Wolf Cubs are still active and the boys are still enjoying the program provided by their leaders.



Scout Troup at W. Harrison Farm. Rev. J. A. Shirly Scoutmaster 1913-16.



Scout Camp at Oak Lake "Lone Teepee."

## The Oakview Club

In November 1973, a supper was held in the United Church Lower Hall to formulate plans for a senior citizen's club. Approximately eighty senior citizens attended and plans were made for the formation of the club and a Christmas party. Mrs. L. Weatherald was appointed head of the committee to get the plans underway.

By January the club was in full swing. The name "Oakview Club" had been chosen and a slate of officers elected. The officers were — Chairman: Tom Bourque, vice chairman: Jack Harrison, Secretary Treasurer: Mrs. E. Batho, directors: Mrs. Heapy, Mrs. Helten, Mrs. Hart, Mrs. Lenning, Cliff Gordon, Jack Goodwin, Gerry Megaffin and John Brisbane.

That January meeting was sponsored by The Oak Lake Legion Auxiliary and took the form of a party for the people who had birthdays in January. Carnation corsages were given to Mrs. Percy Wallace, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Allum and Mrs. Ronberg. Three of the oldest ladies in the district, Miss Cooper, Routledge, Mrs. T. Wallace, Oak Lake and Mrs. E. Donogh of Griswold attended that day.

From that time on, the Oakview Club monthly birthday parties have been sponsored by different organizations in the town. An addition has been built onto the Legion Hall and this building has now become the club headquarters.

A large pool table, a shuffleboard table and an organ have been placed in the Legion Hall and it is now the drop in centre for the Oakview Club members. Thursday afternoon is "drop-in day" but every afternoon in the winter, the building is open for people to go for a game of pool or shuffleboard or simply a chat with neighbors.

## Oak Lake Toe Tappers Club

The Oak Lake Toe Tappers Club was organized in the fall of 1973 with an enrollment of ten squares. We were fortunate to have Stew and Elsa Fox of Souris as our callers to guide us through our beginning years.

The first executive for 1973-74 consisted of President — Clare and Donna Couling, Secretary Treasurer — Jean and Lyman Smith, Vice President — Pete and Marion Masson, Lunch — Donna Couling and Marion Masson.

A new executive is appointed each year, thus giving all members an opportunity to participate in the welfare of the club.

Since this type of recreation involves husband and wife teams, good interest, through the years, has been shown by many couples and single members as well. Thursday evenings, each week, from 8 to 10:30 P.M. find many enthusiastic dancers, including visi-



tors from other clubs, gathered in our Oak Lake Town Hall to experience a fun and learning time together. Lunch and good fellowship round out our evenings.

Many of the present day calls such as recycle, touch a quarter, ocean wave, zoom and ferris wheel, illustrate that it is a different type of square dancing than that enjoyed in former years. Many of our members also participate in a half hour of round dancing.

In this area, all clubs belong to the Western Federation which publishes the Westman Dancer, our official News Letter. They also present the official president's ribbons. Each club sponsors its own yearly Jamboree. We have a Travelling Banner, on which each club places its own crest. The former is then taken to the next club, promoting invitations. Several work shops are held during the winter months, to provide information on new calls and techniques. Every year the International Square and Round Dance Convention is held, alternately in Canada and the U.S.A. "Hands Across the Border", as it has been titled, is indeed a wonderful project and many of our members have been fortunate enough to attend this gala function.

It is hoped, with the excellent leadership of Stew and Elsa Fox and continued interest on the part of our present members and new dancers, the Oak Lake Toe Tappers Club will see many years of good dancing.

### Maple Leaf Lodge, No. 24, Oak Lake, Oddfellows

The Grand Lodge of Manitoba, Independent Order of Oddfellows was instituted on October 24th, 1883. Maple Leaf Lodge No. 24, Oak Lake, was instituted before 1900 and was active in many local and charitable projects.

In 1904 it was noted that among the Officers of the Lodge appeared the names of A. Cameron, J. W. Newlove, R. T. Leonard, A. L. Crone, G. B. Connor, Chas. Walwyn and J. G. Taylor.

The Oddfellows were well known for their entertainments and one popular effort was the play "The Corner Stone" presented in 1930. The cast for this included: G. C. McLeish, D. Slimmon, P. B. Dickson, W. Clark, J. Fraser, Mrs. J. M. Smith, Miss L. Gompf and Mrs. T. Merryweather. The Director was Rev. T. Merryweather and assisting artists were Miss Elsie Parsons, Miss Tessie Jardine and Mr. Eric Davies.

Maple Leaf Lodge held annual Church Parades and was active in visiting other Lodges including in 1935 a visit to Rugby, North Dakota.

In 1939, Maple Leaf Lodge held its 40th anniversary when Grand Master O. V. Keating of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba gave the address. R. T. Leonard,

the oldest member of Maple Leaf Lodge present, gave reminiscences of the past. P. W. Paul presided and an entertainment and banquet followed the meeting.

Rev. Thomas Merryweather later became Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba.

Maple Leaf Lodge No. 24 became inactive in the 1940's.

### Hearts of Oak Rebekah Lodge

Hearts of Oak Rebekah Lodge No. 66 was instituted on November 2nd, 1921, by Rebekah Assembly President, Sister H. Munn. The first Noble Grand was Sister A. Raddatz. Ten new members were initiated on Institution Night and during the next year initiations were held seven times. The Rebekahs were known for their good works and willing assistance in community enterprises.

During the War a Tag Day was held for the Navy League, cartons of cigarettes were sent to the boys overseas and assistance given with Wartime registrations.

Other organizations contributed to included the Red Cross, C.N.I.B., Cemetery Fund, Children's Aid, Oddfellows Home, etc.

The Rebekahs helped the Oddfellows Lodge to buy an ambulance. They also assisted with the T.B. Clinics held locally and with the T.B. Amateur broadcasts.

Help was given to the Peace Garden Entrance fund and financial and material assistance given to families who were distressed by fires, sickness or accidents.

In 1938, Sister A. L. Dean, 77, was honoured for outstanding service by being awarded the medal of



The Rebekahs out at Tess Wallace's 1934. Front Row (Left to Right) — Mrs. A. Paul, Mrs. R. Leonard, Mrs. Dean, Miss Flora McKinnon. Back Row (Left to Right) — Mrs. Rozell, Miss Lena Johnson, Mrs. A. Gillespie, Mrs. R. Stevens, Miss Beatrice Beech, Mrs. H. Hatch, Miss Edna Plummer, Miss May Goodwin, Mrs. G. McLeish, Miss Elsie Parsons.

the Decoration of Chivalry at the Assembly in Winnipeg.

When the 40th Anniversary of the Lodge was held, only two of the charter members were present, Sister Elsie Parsons and Brother P. W. Paul.

Among the early Noble Grands appear the names of Anne Raddatz (Palmer), Euphemia Gordon, Margaret Lang, Isabelle Leonard, Florence McKinnon (Black), Alice Paul, Lena Johnston, Margaret Rozell, Esther Lesurf, Annie Dean, Agnes Johnston, Elizabeth Furtney, Honor Hatch and Maude Aitken.

In April 1967, Hearts of Oak Lodge No. 66 consolidated with Prosperity Lodge, Lenore, Manitoba.

### **Oak Lake Lodge No. 44, G.R.M. Ancient Free and Accepted Masons**

Dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Manitoba was received in March 1889 to hold a meeting. The organizational meeting was held on May 17, 1889.

The first slate of officers included William Shaw, Samuel English, William J. Helliwell, Charles Oscar Davidson, William Chambers, Robert Neill, Arthur William Kent, Daniel McLaren, Archibald Leitch, John Taylor and William Thompson.

It was agreed at the first lodge meeting that they would meet on the first Thursday of the full moon, so that the members from Kenton and Griswold could benefit from the moonlight for driving with horses. This was changed in the middle 30's to the second Thursday of each month.

The official charter was granted in 1890. From this date on the lodge prospered, and the present building was purchased from the original owners in the winter of 1892-93. In 1895 the upstairs was finished to its present size.

Assistance was given to various Brothers when the need arose. In 1912 a Benevolent Fund of Manitoba was started to help Brothers or their widows. Some members in the area benefited.



Members of the Masonic Lodge, A.F. and A.M., Oak Lake 1937.

In 1898 money was raised to help furnish a wing in the new Winnipeg Hospital.

During the South African War the lower floor was used as an armoury. This continued until 1904.

In 1919 a History Scholarship was started and continued for many years.

1923 saw a very successful picnic at the Lake and this became an annual affair.

Brother T. C. Norris, later Premier of Manitoba, was a member of this lodge for a number of years.

In the many years of this lodge, over 200 members have joined or become associated with the group.

### **Oakwood Chapter No. 46 Order of the Eastern Star**

January 19, 1949, was a bitterly cold night, 40° below zero. Members began arriving by team and sleigh and were joined by several Officers of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, the Officers of Queen Mary Chapter No. 3, Brandon, (our Mother Chapter) and approximately 75 members from various points in Manitoba for the institution of Oakwood Chapter No. 46, O.E.S.

The late Mr. James Compton, who was the Worthy Grand Patron of the Grand Chapter of Manitoba instituted Oakwood Chapter No. 46. Mrs. M. Kinnear was appointed the first Worthy Matron and the late Mr. W. Clark, the first Worthy Patron. Mrs. W. Whitcomb was the first Secretary.

Oak Lake was the last place where west bound ox carts were able to get oak wood for repairs and Oakwood was the name chosen for the Chapter. Gifts were presented to the new Chapter: an altar Bible, given by Grand Chapter, an Oak Gavel made by the late Mr. P. W. Paul, and a Union Jack by Mrs. M. Kinnear.

Many honors have been conferred on Oakwood Chapter and its members. A Life membership was conferred in 1980 on Mrs. Blanche Phillips who has been the Chapter's Organist for over thirty years.

Each year at Grand Chapter Sessions, Eastern Star Training Awards for Religious Leadership are presented. Miss Maureen Trotter, Virden, Rev. Gordon Stevenson (former Oak Lake United Church Minister) and Rev. Harvey Hurren, Oak Lake, have received such awards, Rev. Hurren also having received some from Grand Chapter of Saskatchewan.

A scholarship for the highest standing in Grade XII English has been presented to an Oak Lake student since 1958. After the closing of Oak Lake High School this scholarship was opened to any student taking English 301 at Virden Collegiate.

Oakwood Chapter has made donations to Community projects and to many charitable organiza-

tions. Mending has been done at the Virden Hospital and Westman Nursing Home. Cancer pads were made regularly when there was a demand for them.

In 1982 Oakwood Chapter will celebrate its 33rd Anniversary.



Eastern Star January 19, 1949. Back Row (Left to Right) — Irene Olive, Wm. Whitcomb, Kay Kinnear, Mr. Crompton WPG, Wm. Clark, Martin Kinnear. Middle Row (Left to Right) — Jean Taylor, Jeanne Bill, Blanche Phillips, Alice Black, Edna Whitcomb, May Clark, Edith Schmaus. Front Row (Left to Right) — Louise Haggerty, Arlie Hogg, Edith Gompf, Olive Strong, Irene Costley, Beatrice McLean.

### Canadian Order of Foresters by Jack Harrison

As the pioneers settled the eastern Canadian Wilderness, one of the first needs was an organization mutually contributing to a fund to give aid to the sick, take care of widows and children and provide burial expenses where needed.

The Canadian Order of Foresters came into being for just such a purpose. It also provided social activities for people in a time when communications were by letter, horseback or horse drawn vehicles. Roads were very poor or non-existent.

Pioneer farmers came to the Oak Lake area about 1880, and business men soon had the town laid out. In due course many of the prominent men called in D. Cameron of Winnipeg and on April 3rd, 1889, Court Royal Oak, Canadian Order of Foresters was organized. The original slate of officers were sworn in as follows —

Chief Ranger — Dr. Henry A. Wright, physician

Vice Chief Ranger — D. W. Rowand, flour miller

Chaplain — Rev. D. H. Hodges, Presbyterian minister

Recording Secretary — Jas. Johnston, implement dealer

Financial Secretary — Harry Mottram, miller

Treasurer — Alexander A. Cameron, merchant

Senior Woodward — E. E. Pifer, harness maker

Junior Woodward — Fred Fooks, farmer

Senior Beadle — Jas. D. Alford, farmer

Junior Beadle — Andrew Gillespie, farmer

Court Physician — Dr. H. A. Wright

A committee was appointed and several members were — H. J. Mattick, harness maker, Robert Blair, clerk and James E. George, miller.

After the business of the meetings was completed, a social evening followed. Cards, carpet ball, crokinole, games or dances were held when wives and friends were present.

Lodges continued to be very popular until after World War I. The advent of motor cars, telephone, radio, good roads and better schooling caused people to seek other outlets for their endeavours.

Membership declined and original members passed on. Life insurance and social benefits were becoming popular. The sick benefits and other benevolences were phased out. By the 1940's, attendance at meetings was restricted to a few of the old faithfuls such as Wm. Vallender, Andrew Gillespie, Alf. Hart, Jas. Black Sr. and Geo. T. Scott.

In co-operation with head office, these men held a reorganization drive for members and over 50 new members signed up. Some of these were — Thos., Wellington, Jas. and Jack Olive, Dan and Neil McQuarrie, Jack Dean, J. Ord. Scott, Gavin Gillespie, Walter Bain, Kevin Kearn, Geo. C. McLeish, Tom Story, Elmer Edey and David, Verne Joynt, Eric Milne, Barry, Norris and Ross Johnston, Elmer Gompf, Dave Clark, R. Lorne Boys, Eric Harrison and Jack Harrison who served as Treasurer from 1957 to 1968.

Attendance again declined, and by the middle 60's social life was a memory and the lodge changed to a strictly life insurance company and still has many young and old policy holders.

# Schools



Three Deep and Off To School.

School days, School days  
Dear old golden rule days  
Readin' and 'ritin' and 'rithmetic  
Taught to the tune of a hick'ry stick. . .  
— Will D. Cobb (1907)



## Hagyard School

As you rounded the hill going West, there stood one of those country schools on the north east corner of 28-10-24, Hagyard No. 426. It was named after John Weddel Hagyard, one of the first pioneers in the district. Built in 1885, Dave Goodwin age 5 years, remembered going to school to make up the required number of children. Mr. Campbell was the first teacher.

Soon this school became a place for church services, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists meeting alternately, with everyone attending the services, a truly ecumenical spirit.

A group known as the Patrons of Industry, a sort of consumers Co-op was organized. The school became a distributing centre for goods bought in bulk — raisins, dried apples, brown sugar and molasses, with the much needed coal oil.

The first school was replaced by a larger school in 1907. In the following years oil heating, a hardwood floor and indoor plumbing were added. Dances and various social activities took place in Hagyard School. Many outstanding Christmas Concerts were enjoyed through the years, a tribute to the originality of the teachers and the willingness of the students. Mrs. Morris Forrest, Mary, was pianist for years.

Today those who attended Hagyard extol the benefits of their school. There never was such a hill as theirs just across the road east. Sleighs, even a good sheet of cardboard provided thrills going down that good hill. Fortunate indeed if there was a toboggan. Then there was the creek to the West for summer swimming and fishing, skating in winter. Tragedy so nearly struck, when Melville Findlay got into deep water; Mike Galwin and Maurice Smith rushed to his rescue to be grabbed around the neck. Most fortunately Allen Walton driving by saw the dilemma the boys were in. He was able to save their lives, an unsung hero.

On a morning in the 1940's the school got on fire from kindling left on top of the furnace to dry. Maurice Smith, arriving early, rushed to the Waltons to give the alarm. Fortunately Jack Sawyer and Bert Hicks were in the yard with their truck. Allan and Stuart Walton jumped in with their large fire extinguisher. The school was saved.

Then like many other schools Hagyard was closed in 1963. It was moved to Sioux Valley Reserve becoming a church home for the people there, continuing its usefulness.

Louise McBain taught at Hagyard School from 1935-1937. It was her first school and she writes of some of her experiences:

"I began my teaching career at Hagyard School in the Fall of 1935. What an experience — and what a

wonderful community for my initiation into the teaching profession!

During my two years at Hagyard, the community was really feeling the brunt of the depression — very little money, but lots to eat and we made our own entertainment. I will relate a few of my memories.

One year I had five McKinnons, five Jordans and five Bowlers listed on my register. In the winter each child would bring a potato to school. The water pan in the old furnace was burnt out, so at recess we would put the potatoes in the water pan and everyone had a hot baked potato for lunch. The children took turns bringing a ten pound honey pail full of cocoa. This was heated over the big register in the middle of the room.

What fun we had at the noon hour! All the students, and the teacher, bundled up, and out we went across the road to the hill. Everyone had an old shovel, cardboard box or something and we climbed the hill and slid down until it was time to resume classes. The older students helped the younger ones with their work. There were no discipline problems. How hard everyone practiced for the annual Christmas Concert the school put on at St. David's church and also for the annual Field Day held in Oak Lake.

One year I boarded with Mr. and Mrs. Herb Walton and paid \$18.00 per month. Evelyn and Gladys were at home. What wonderful meals and what an entertaining family around the piano in the evening. Every morning after Stu, Duke or Eldon took out the manure, they would come up to the house with the stoneboat. I would hop on and they took me to school.

How well I remember the Young People's Group, and the Three Act Plays that Mrs. Jack Johnston would direct for us: the Friday night dances at the school where I had the misfortune to catch my spike heel in the register one night — out came the register — down went the teacher. This was the era of the "Bennett Buggy," our means of transportation for everything.



Hagyard School 1935.

The teacher was a valuable babysitter in those days. If the parents had a meeting or funeral to attend, it was just a natural thing for them to drop the younger children off at the school. Of course the teacher was well paid for her services. Every week end someone in the district entertained her.

After twenty-five years teaching, with some great experiences I will never forget, I am now enjoying my retirement, and living at Hartney with my husband, Gerald Bilton”.

### Harvey School No. 1015

In February 1900, with an attendance of ten pupils, Harvey School opened its doors with Miss Grace Mitchell as teacher, receiving \$35.00 per month.

The children of Harvey district had attended Ryerson school, but in 1899 the parents requested a meeting with the school inspector at Virden. A board was elected and the ratepayers were requested to borrow \$600.00 to build a school. Money was borrowed to buy the school furnishings, \$8.15 bought cribbing, lumber and nails for the well. The early records record the school opened, even though the desks had not arrived.

Harvey school received the name after Dr. Harvey, who often assisted in medical emergencies before Dr. Wright came to Oak Lake in 1886. Dr. Harvey died in 1889 and was buried in the East.

Over the years from 1900-1966 thirty nine teachers were employed. A picture taken in 1906 shows the teacher with an enrollment of 30 children, ages from 5 to 17 years. The census report shows there were about 50 children in the district at this time. Perhaps the attendance could have been higher, however at 12 years boys and girls too were expected to help with the many duties and heavy work in the late fall and early spring and this meant falling behind in the classes. There was no compulsory attendance law, so unless parents saw the value of education it was often neglected.



Harvey School.



Harvey School at Field Day Parade 1954.

This one roomed rural schoolhouse held many long lasting memories. Many still remember the school picnics, field days, Christmas concerts, social evenings and dances held within its walls. In these small country schools, where often 8 or 9 grades enrolled, we saw a wonderful example of true co-operation with a bond of friendship between teacher and pupils.

In 1917 the teacher received a salary of \$1000.00, \$700.00 from the district and \$300.00 from the parents of high school pupils. Chemistry equipment was bought. Walter Smith and Alice Carpenter completed grade eleven here.

In 1943 the school was closed, due to low attendance. Mr. George Gompf drove the students to Ryerson in a heated van with a team of horses. Records show the Smith children rode 1½ miles in a cutter, 2½ miles in a van, ½ mile on a tractor through a slough of water, and walked the rest of the way — (a far cry from the luxury of today).

In 1951 with 15 pupils Harvey school re-opened and remained in operation until 1958.

The heating system was important in the story of any country school. Many remember standing around the Quebec heater, for classes, until noon daily, during the winter months, with faces burning and feet freezing. One teacher related she heated the logs for the children to put their feet on while sitting at the desks. I remember one morning arriving early to find the long string of pipes red hot and snapping, drafts left open — one of the Driediger boys was tired of a cold school. He had ridden over on horse back early and lit the fire, going home for breakfast. **One** morning we were comfortable.

On April 8th, 1966, Harvey school district voted to amalgamate with Oak Lake. Many felt the community spirit had come to an end, a new era had begun.

## Hesselwood School District

By the end of the 1880's the frontier land south of Oak Lake had for the most part been homesteaded. For the better part of the next ten years very little attention was focused on formal education for the homesteaders' children. Everyone was fully occupied with the construction of the buildings needed on a frontier farm and the breaking of new land. With these most immediate tasks generally accomplished, homesteaders began making plans for a formal education for their children.

A school house must first be built and an area of land plotted out for which the school would serve. At the residence of Mr. Nicol Robinson, Mr. Robinson's new bride was given the honour of choosing the name of the school district. She named it Hessel after the small town along the Humber River in England from which she originated. Wood was added to Hessel because of all the trees that were around this district. The Provincial Department of Education was contacted and approved the formation of Hesselwood Public School District #913. On March 26th, 1900, at the residence of Moses Courchene, Trustees were elected: Anedee Vachon for a one year term, George Marcotte for a two year term and Senai Briere for a three year term. Moses Courchene, the secretary was directed to call a meeting of the ratepayers of the Hesselwood S.D. to consider the expediency of raising money by way of a loan for the purpose of building a school house and to settle on a school site if possible at that meeting. At the ratepayers' meeting of April 17, 1900, at the home of George Marcotte the trustees were authorized to borrow the sum of \$600.00 for ten years at 6% interest. A site on the SE quarter of 18-8-23 was chosen for the school and on July 17, 1900, tenders for the erection of the school house, porch, closets and the well were let out. On July 31st the lowest tender of \$435.00 submitted by Mr. Napoleon Vachon was accepted and work on the building started almost immediately thereafter. By September 18th the building was completed, a globe, a blackboard, three maps, one of the Dominion of Canada, one of North America and one of South America and four wooden desks and seats were in place and classes began shortly afterwards with Mr. Joseph Arseneault the teacher at a salary of \$35.00 a month. A furnace was installed, cord wood cut, the school house was insured and Aime Painchaud ploughed a fire guard around the school later that fall. Horses being the only means of transportation, the building of a stable was a necessity so in 1901 Amedu Painchaud was hired to build a 12' x 24' barn out of poplar lumber.

By 1906 there were eleven students attending school from the Briere, Courchene, Vachon and

Masson families. Attendance steadily increased until the school year 1918-19 when there were 19 enrolled despite the fact that classes were cancelled for six weeks due to an epidemic of Spanish flu. Enrollment declined gradually until 1928 when the remaining two students were sent to Lansdowne School and Hesselwood was closed.

They attended Lansdowne for one year and then classes resumed in 1929 at Hesselwood. Attendance remained steady through the 30's although the teacher's salary dropped by almost 50% during the worst of the depression. The 30's also saw the beginning of the 2nd generation of Hesselwood School pupils with enrollment peaking in the late forties. Enrollment levelled off and began to decline in the fifties. Up until the early part of the fifties it was not uncommon, however, to have many children, particularly boys attending school only when their duties on the farm were light enough, that schooling could be fitted into their day. For this reason, especially in the early school years, a student making it to Grade VIII was the exception instead of the rule.

Although books and studying formed the major part of the school day, it was not all work. Recesses and the noon hour were times for fun activities. In summer it was softball and games such as Steal the Sticks and Mother May I, and when the weather did not permit outdoor activities, I Spy with My Little Eye was played in the school. Winter presented an opportunity for sliding down the hill about one hundred yards north of the school. Almost every kind of material from homemade skis, toboggans, sleighs, to pieces of tin were employed in this pastime and it was a challenge to see who could slide the furthest and the fastest. Water was even hauled by pail to ice down the slope so that a few extra feet of slide could be maintained.

At the end of the school year an annual event was the school picnic. This was the time for teacher, parents and students to socialize. There were usually games of softball and always plenty of ice cream, cake and sandwiches.

Often teachers came to Hesselwood School as their first teaching position. They were young and many were teaching on a permit. They generally boarded with district families most often being at Robinson's, the Vachon's or at the Masson's which left them some distance away from the school. They either walked or were given rides to school with buggies, carts or sleighs and in later years by car. Wages were not high. The teacher's salary in 1900 was \$35.00 per month while in 1960 the teacher would earn \$2,800.00 a year. It was not until after the thirties that wages began to rise substantially, depending on qualifications of course.

Apart from the daily scholastic chores, every spring the teacher was also expected to get her troops "ready for Field Day" an annual event held in Oak Lake. It was a matter of pride for a school to be chosen the best marchers. Getting ready for field day meant many hours of marching up and down the roads around the school.

By June of 1962 enrollment was declining rapidly, there being only seven students attending Hesselwood School. The ratepayers then decided the time to close the school had finally arrived. Hesselwood School did not reopen for the year 1962-63, instead students were driven to Oak Lake.

In September 1964 the school was rented out as living quarters for Pete Masson and family.

At a ratepayers' meeting on April 19, 1966 a secret ballot vote was taken on a resolution that Hesselwood School District #913 be merged with Oakwood School District #439 to form a consolidated school district. By a vote of 5-1 Hesselwood School District was voted out of existence.

The school house was later sold to Mr. Emery Masson and he moved it to the North Shore of Oak Lake where it is today used as a summer residence by Mabel and Wilfred Masson.

## Johnston School

The Johnston School District at first called River-view, was organized at the home of Mr. William Johnston on January 20th, 1894. Land was donated on the corner of William Johnston's farm for the site of the school and the name changed to Johnston.

Records show that Thomas Bailey was chairman for the first school board with Robert McBeth secretary-treasurer at an annual salary of \$15.00. Trustees were: Thomas Bailey, William and George Johnston and William Fawkes as the auditor. Five hundred dollars at six per cent interest was borrowed to build and furnish the school. The ten \$50.00 debentures were taken out due on May 1904. Mr. William Shaw agreed to build the school for \$390.00.

Mr. Robert Boyes was the teacher when the school opened July 30th, 1894.

Various improvements were made as time went on; a shelter belt of trees was planted, a wood shed and a fence were built.

In 1905 the school became the little red school house when it was painted red with brown trim. It was heated with a small box stove fired with wood. By banking the walls and adding storm windows and a coal and wood stove, the school became more comfortable. Later coal was used to keep the fire on over night. A boy was hired for 50¢ a week to stir up the fire each morning.

In 1911 the school was closed for lack of pupils

and until 1917 the school age children were taken into Oakwood School. A lump sum of \$300.00 was paid to Oakwood.

In 1917 the Johnston School, now transformed with white paint, was opened again.

By 1935 it was necessary to again close the school. During the years 1935-52 the children attended Hagyard, Blair and Oakwood Schools. The board of trustees consequently had many problems including transportation and financing during this period.

After a remodelling job in 1952, the school was reopened and continued until its final closing in 1964. Mrs. Nettie McLean was the last teacher.

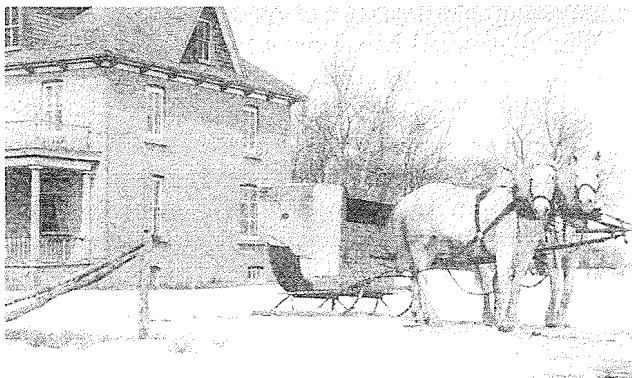
For many years the pupils of Johnston School took part in Field Days held in Kenton and later in Oak Lake. Several times they won awards for their marching and costumes in the Field Day Parade.

In the latter years of the school's history the pupils participated in the Virden Music Festival.

As in all country schools the Christmas Concerts were very special events. For many years the students joined those of Hagyard School at St. David's Church where they presented a joint concert. Many remember the Christmas tree decorations, which included small candles on metal trays snapped on to the



Shari Johnston Presents flowers to Queen Elizabeth II.



Over 5 miles to high school in 1930's. Ross, Barry and Vimy Johnston.



branches, and then lit. It would suggest a real fire hazard. However we don't recall any fires ever being reported.

The visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and H.R.H. Prince Phillip to Virden on July 23rd, 1959, proved a very exciting event for the pupils of Johnston School and their teacher Mrs. Wynne Hatch. It was an honour for them to have one from their school chosen to present flowers to Her Majesty. Shari Lynne Johnston, nine year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ross Johnston, made the presentation. Shari, a victim of polio and at that time wearing a brace on her left leg, managed a graceful curtsy to the smiling Queen.

Johnston School building was moved from its site during the summer of 1981. All that now remains are some of the maple trees planted many years ago.

### Lansdowne School No. 145

The Department of Education records show Lansdowne school district No. 145 was formed June 21, 1883, the oldest school in the Oak Lake area. However, in reality, the school had been in operation since November 22, 1882. The school was situated on the NW quarter of section 27-8-24, the land being owned by Archibald Malcolm. It was built of logs and the plastered walls were painted yellow on the inside. All that remains to conjure up tales of long ago, is a little crockery inkwell, turned up by Lloyd Hatch as he worked the field in October 1952.

A huge box stove stood in the middle of the room with desks on either side. In spite of the stove it was, "cold in winter and hot in summer", according to Mrs. Margaret (Henderson) Hatch in a letter written in 1952. Blackboards and maps were the main teaching tools.

Mr. Andrew Gillespie told of driving his younger brothers and sister to and from school. He remembered a "Miss Cameron" as the first teacher, while in '86 and '87 Miss Mary Scott, a niece of James Scott of the Sandhurst district was the teacher.

The first board members were Mr. Archie Malcolm (Secretary-Treasurer), Mr. John Home and Mr. James Gillespie.

Letters, written at the time of the second school's Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1952, all speak highly of those early pioneer days. They stress the good calibre of education received and several told of the school concerts, the annual summer picnic, the "Box" and "Pie and Weigh" socials. They mention the square dancing, heel and toe polkas and waltzes taught by the Homes boys — "good dancers" — during the lunch hour. Music was made with mouth organs and combs.

Tom Henderson, remembering those days, wired us from Edmonton in 1952, "Best Wishes for school jubilee. Please remember the old log school, with its yellow plastered walls. If you raise the shades of the fiddlers, Dan McGillvary or Pete Sutherland will call for the Red River Jig and Sailors Hornpipe. Grand-maison, Jack Lang or Mab Marion, with his wooden leg, may respond!"

Five Henderson and four Gillespie children walked in good weather, otherwise they were taken in a wagon or sleigh box drawn by oxen.

In 1892 a new frame school house was built on the SE¼ of 27-8-24. It was built mostly by community labour, the cost being under \$400.00. The teacher was Miss Annie Laurie, (later Mrs. T. Griffith) and her salary was \$400.00 per year.

Supplies were extremely limited. The Government grant in 1885 was \$50.00 while the Municipality gave them \$100.00. Account records of that era show July 2, 1884, Christie School Supplies (for the year) \$1.90. The school was scrubbed every 3 months at a cost of \$1.50 each time, while the scrub brush cost 40¢. A careful record of the letters "written on school business" were kept. Stamps cost three cents for local mail and five cents for elsewhere — 24 letters were written in 1885. In 1888, a box of crayons cost 35¢, one blackboard eraser 15¢, two brooms 60¢. In 1889, Mr. G. E. Griffith got \$2.00 to bank the school in the fall. Mr. Malcolm received 5¢ from the Board each year as "rent" — a legal technicality I suppose. In 1911-13 Allan Gordon lit the fires for \$10.00 a year; two years later Harry Hatch received \$15.00 for caretaker — here it remained for many years.

Horses were the main means of pupil transportation — teachers too, and while we do not know when a barn was built, by 1896 it was "repaired". A shelter belt of maples was also planted in 1899, on three sides, north, west and south. This grove, though cut down once, still flourishes.

The school was kept in good condition, possibly partly due to the fact that parents had to "make good" any damage done by a pupil.

In the 1920's and 30's one reads of the cords and cords of wood that were needed to heat the building, of problems with the water supply, getting library books, cleaning the school, barn and privies, repairing stovepipes and windows and so on. However, by the late forties and early fifties many changes were made; a new hardwood floor, wood panelled walls and ceiling, chemical toilets installed and new blackboards. With the advent of electricity, electric lights and an oil burning furnace were further assets. These improvements made it much nicer for both pupils and

the Community social evenings held from time to time.

Lansdowne school district had been adjusted more than once from the original and on April 1, 1959 was included in Ward No. 5 of the Fort La Bosse School Division No. 41. The school closed at the end of June that year. Mrs. Viola Izzard of Griswold was the last teacher, and the last pupils were, Tully, Mary and Fred Hatch, Gene, Merlin and Donna Thiry.

The school still stands — a mute reminder of days gone by. Of the early teachers, Miss McFarlane stands out in pioneer memory. She drove four miles to school every day, "rain, snow or mud". Her faithful horse "Prince" was beloved by the children.

Another teacher, Miss Irene Nelson remains vivid in the mind of Agnes (Gordon) McKenzie. She wrote of her in 1952, for our celebrations — "We learned the three R's and many more cultural subjects as well. She taught us neatness in all our work, besides teaching us to read music in two parts, and all to the tune of a tuning fork. Besides this, she taught us to draw and paint. We also learned to play together without squabbling. There was always supervised play at recess and noon hour. Children were kept busy and interested — no time for mischief". What a fitting tribute to a teacher!



Diamond Anniversary of second Lansdowne School 1952. Mary Hatch (grade 1), Mrs. Ella McLellan (nee E. Malcolm) pupil in 1st school, M. L. Griffith (nee Annie Laurie) taught when second school opened November 1, 1892. Mrs. H. W. Hatch, teacher in 1952.

### Oakview School District

The Oakview School opened in 1899. The early families in this district were Gabrielles, Snelsons, Delarues, Ledgerwoods, Wardmans, Piggs, Wanlins, Dan Eadie and a bit later Gerriers, Brownlies, Katchens and Leachs.

Miss May Snelson, now living in Virden, was one of the pupils in the first class in this school. She recalls that the first teacher was Miss Shaw. Another

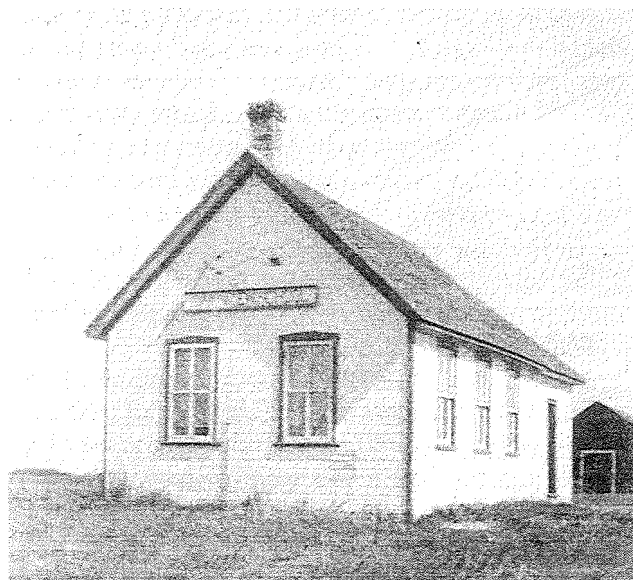
of the early teachers at Oakview was Miss Merle McNiven who, for many years, was principal of Virden Public School, now The Mary Montgomery School. She later married Dr. Carter of Brandon. Her brother, Donald McNiven, also taught at Oakview. He became Judge McNiven. Some other teachers whose names have been recalled are Miss Mickey, Miss Grant, Miss Jackson, Miss McKay (Mrs. H. Pigg), Miss Wiggins (Mrs. Gooding), Jock Dickinson, Lillian Hatch (Mrs. W. Brownlie).

The teachers usually boarded with the Ledgerwoods or the Piggs in the early years — later at Katchens, closer to the school. From Ledgerwoods where the teachers either drove ponies to school or walked to school, the road they followed was the one followed by the Indians as they travelled from the Pipestone Reservation to the one near Griswold. The teachers often passed through the Indian encampments or met the Indian bands along the road.

Messrs. Ledgerwood, Snelson and Pigg were trustees of long standing and Mr. Katchen was secretary-treasurer for many years. A later trustee who served for many years was Mr. J. R. Brownlie.

This school, like many others, was a summer school with the long two months holidays in winter. It was heated, also like many others, by a pot-bellied stove on which lunches were thawed out, mitts dried and around which teacher and pupils gathered until the school finally warmed up.

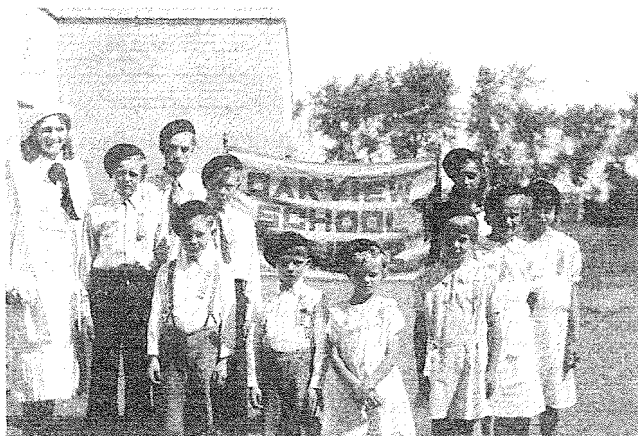
Oakview School was always a community centre where many box socials, Christmas concerts and dances were held. Even after the school was closed, it remained a community centre until it was purchased by Billie Jacques and moved away to his farm site.



Oakview School.

So another era had passed.

Later families who came into this district were the Sims, the Jack Smiths, the Kernels, the Vodons, the Henry Vanderschaeghes, and the Henry Sawatskys.



Oakview School ready for Field Day 1936.

### Oakwood School

In February of 1887 a few of the early settlers met to establish an organization known as a Public School. In the early months of '87 Mr. Perry instructed the children in the Presbyterian Church. (That building was just north of where the fire hall is presently situated.) In the fall of '87 a frame school house was built and the next three years were to prove difficult for both the trustees and the teachers. Lack of funds was a major problem and there were occasions when the teacher received merely a promisory note (often courtesy of the generosity of the trustees). Another problem of the time was the frequent staff changes.

In November of 1890 when Inspector S. E. Lang visited the school, twenty-seven pupils were present and forty-two enrolled. Directly associated with educational matters at this time were James Andrew, A. Leitch and Dr. Wright with A. Cameron as secretary-treasurer of the school board. By this time the school was receiving loyal support from its ratepayers.

In 1892 the attendance increased rapidly and the frame school was remodelled and enlarged by the addition of a second story with Mr. Hogg as principal and Miss Wallace as assistant.

Attendance continued to increase and, at a public meeting of ratepayers at Cameron's Hall, the decision was made to build a brick school. The west three rooms and the bell tower were constructed and by 1898 these three rooms were in service for the one hundred seventy-five students attending regularly. "The building is of white brick and was constructed at a cost, including furnace and furnishings, of \$7,-

000.00 . . . A very important feature of the school equipment is the library, consisting of one hundred and twenty-five volumes selected from the works of the best authors of history, fiction and poetry."

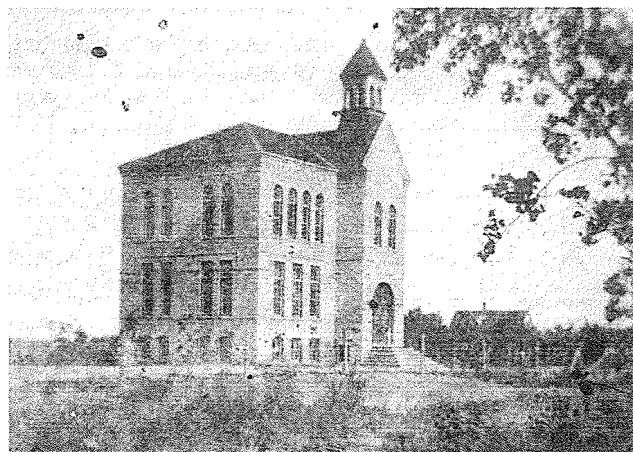
In 1899, Miss L. S. Debb was teacher for the primary grades, Miss A. E. Caverhill was teaching the intermediates and Mr. G. Young was principal. Members of the school board then were J. R. Hood, chairman, T. J. Parsons and W. McFarlane.

Mr. Hamilton Lang, who had studied Art in New York and later became a noted Canadian naturalist, was one of the school's principals in the early 1900's.

According to a historical report written by Mrs. Agnes McQuarrie and Mrs. Lillian Smith, "During the fifty years from 1916 to 1966, Oakwood School was under the principalship of only four men; Mr. English (8 years), Mr. Pearce (2 years), Mr. Stokes (7 years) and Mr. Heapy (33 years). Two other staff members served long and faithfully; Mrs. Waite taught the higher elementary grades for twenty-six years, during which time the school was greatly enriched by her musical and artistic ability. Mrs. Phillips returned to her home town and for thirty-six



Oakwood Choir at Virden Music Festival. Mrs. Waite — Director 1951.



Oakwood School.

years gave unstintingly of her great ability as a primary teacher.

During Mr. C. E. Heapy's years as principal, the scope of Oakwood's influence broadened considerably. For years this school served pupils from fourteen rural districts and, in order that five of these might get their grants, separate records had to be kept for them.

By September 1961, when the Collegiate opened, Oakwood was overflowing. With space for only six rooms, it was necessary to crowd in eight. The total enrolment was over two hundred with ninety-two in the High School.

In July of 1962 a reunion of Mr. Heapy's students was held. From far and near they gathered, three hundred and thirty-five young people came to do honours to the teacher whom they loved and respected. . . Mr. Heapy retired in 1966. In that year, also, the remaining country schools were closed and consolidation became a fact in Oak Lake.

The Indian children first came to Oakwood in 1963. With the building of Assiniboine School in 1968, Oakwood was closed. Also in 1968 the Grades 10, 11 and 12 were moved to Virden and the Collegiate became a Junior High School."

### **Pleasant Plain School No. 819**

Originally the Arsenault School District; Pleasant Plain was not renamed until 1907. It had its beginnings in the J. J. Arsenault residence which is now the home of Kelly Taylor. Mr. Arsenault was a government inspector of homesteads, and when he brought his family to the west, it included their governess, Miss Therin. She held classes in the Arsenault home for two summers. An entry in the Cash Book dated 1894 reads "Salary 21st May to 21st August/94 in full \$45.00" — which works out to \$15.00 per month. The district also paid her board, however, for on the same page "By cash for board 25th August to 25th September/94 \$5.00.

In 1894, John Arsenault, Daniel McLaren and Fred Taylor were elected to the school board and a site was chosen for the school. The tender from R. J. Gray and David Kidd for \$414.00 was accepted. Debentures in the amount of \$498.75 were sold. Stones for the structure were hauled during the winter from the north side of the river. Some interesting entries that year — a blackboard for \$2.00; a pane of glass for 15¢; glass and putty 80¢; a broom 30¢; a pump \$6.00; and the pail 25¢!

And where do you suppose they bought their school supplies? From none other than E. L. Christie, Bookseller and Stationer, Brandon, Manitoba. That store must have always been there! And supplies

were not cheap then either. The account reads "By cash E. L. Christie Acct. maps etc. \$22.50." Labour seems to have been about the lowest paid commodity — "By cash Ch. Smith washing school 25¢."

Some of the teachers over the years included the following: Miss Therin, Miss Jamieson, Misses Helen and Kate Lucy, Miss Jopp, Mr. Montague Shore, Miss Aggie Smythe, Miss Kate McFarlane, Miss Jefferson, Miss Gray, Miss Agnes Scott, Miss Dorothy McFarlane and Miss May Goodwin. Miss Ethel Scott was the last teacher 1931-1933. Since that time, the pupils of the Pleasant Plain District have attended schools in Routledge or Oak Lake.

Evidently there have never been any trees in the school yard. The surrounding land was cultivated up to the yard and a former pupil, who must have been a little rascal, remembers all the children hiding in the crop one morning and not coming out when the teacher arrived and rang the bell. She, after waiting a suitable length of time, finally left. Then the youngsters went home and told their parents that the teacher wasn't there!

After the door closed behind the last class, the building was used as a church. The Mennonite families of the surrounding areas used Pleasant Plain School for their services from 1939 until their new church was completed in 1949.

Later bought by Mr. Dave Taylor and used for grain storage, the little stone school which still stands on its original site, is this year receiving the first necessary mortar repairs, and the north side of the roof will also get its first replacement cedar shingles.

### **Routledge School District No. 818**

The School District of Routledge No. 818 was formed June 20th, 1894, by award of arbitrators appointed by the municipalities of Sifton and Woodworth and Inspector Lang. The district was readjusted from time to time and dissolved by an award of arbitrators dated November 3, 1964, and all lands transferred to the Consolidated School District of Virden No. 144, effective January 1, 1965.

Alpha Bellamy	December 13, 1895	15 pupils
Jessie Cameron	August 15, 1896	34 pupils
Anna Keroach	December 24, 1896	30 pupils
Anna Keroach	July 19, 1897	22 pupils
Anna Keroach	December 22, 1897	22 pupils
Regina Blais	July 11, 1898	23 pupils
Regina Blais	January 11, 1899	24 pupils

Among the first pupils attending the Routledge School were Annie Cooper, Mabel Lambourn (Mrs. J. R. Brownlie), Christie McMillan (Mrs. Bert Oliphant), Ada Stevens (Mrs. Dillon) and perhaps Eucher de Galley. Other names are missing as records of early classes are not available. Of the pupils



mentioned here Mrs. Brownlie is the only surviving member. She now resides in The Sherwood in Virden.

The first four teachers of the school were as follows:

The last available half-yearly report for the Rutledge School District is for the spring term 1962. The teacher was Angeline Hoyak. There were 11 pupils in attendance. Their names were as follows:

James Brent Manning	Grade 1	Robert Lyall Smith	Grade 7
Dale Milton Smith	Grade 2	Steve William	
Douglas Calvin		Ewasko	Grade 8
Lambourn	Grade 3	Roberta Joyce	
Dolores Caroline		Lambourn	Grade 8
Lambourn	Grade 4	Robert John Manning	Grade 8
Bonnie Lynn		George Randall	
Manning	Grade 4	Smith	Grade 8
Brian Ellwood			
Manning	Grade 6		

When the school closed in 1965 the teacher was Mr. Ed. Sloychuk.

The school is now used as a community hall.

### Runnymede S.D. #851

Runnymede School District was formed in 1895. The school was built somewhere in the middle of 20-9-23. Teachers were young girls, sixteen or seventeen years old and the older boys in the school gave them a bad time.

A public meeting was called in June 1906, the purpose — to consider rebuilding or centralization.

In 1907 school opened in the new stone building, built beside the road in the south-east quarter of 20-9-23 on land bought from the Bob Alford.

There are no records of these first years when the school was in operation. The family names that come up in connection with the district in the early years are Allum, Smith, Owens, Garth, John Wallace, Arthur Jackson, George Wallace Sr., Alford, Horrex, Spencer, Black, Coulter, McMeekin and Prentice. Olives and Boys moved in a few years later, followed by Dicks and Friesens, then McQuarries, Olferts, Hydes, Farrows, Stricklands, Grosjeans and McGinns. Not all these people had children attending school, but they all took an active part in the school affairs.

As the years went by other people moved into the district. The late 1930's brought several families from the dust bowl of Saskatchewan; Cumberlands, Storleys and McHatties moved here for a time to get feed for their cattle and their children added to the enrollment.

As early as 1917 meetings were being held to discuss the building of a new school. No reasons are given for the need of a new building but the stone one must certainly have been very cold. The idea was

dropped at that time but in 1929 a new one was built. The contract was given to Mansers of Virden and the money (\$2800.00) was borrowed from Frank Parsons at 6% interest. The old stone school became the barn and the pupils moved into the new frame building with its indoor washrooms and sunny eastern exposure. Later, spruce trees were planted around the yard. This school was large enough for good Christmas concerts and community dances attended by the whole family, with music supplied by people in the district.

The young people were very fortunate in having Mrs. Tessa Wallace living here. For years she travelled back and forth with horse and buggy or walking, to train the youngsters for the Virden festival. At this time, 1936, a piano was purchased for the school — price \$50.00. This piano is still being used at the Oak Lake Junior High.

In 1937, the old stone barn was torn down and a new frame barn was built. Dave Joynt did the work for \$150.00.

Low enrollment had always been a problem in the district. The people on the east side of the district had always sent their children to the larger school in Griswold and the land on the south boundary of the district was poor and sparsely settled. The June meeting minutes of 1942 give shortage of teachers, high taxes and low enrollment as the problems of the day. The school was closed that year and the pupils sent to Griswold, Oak Lake and Hillsdale.

Conditions improved with a new generation of youngsters growing up and the school was re-opened in 1954. The old tradition of Christmas concerts, dances, school picnics and attendance at Oak Lake Field Day were continued. There was one difference now. The barn remained empty. Gone were the days of driving buggies, riding horseback and walking to school. The children were now driven to school by their parents or neighbours.

The problem of low enrollment still remained and in 1961 the school closed for good. The pupils were sent to Griswold and Oak Lake. From that time on the business of the board changed — the concerns shifting to the operation of Oakwood School.

1961 was a busy year for Runnymede. The school was closed, the piano rented to the community centre and the contents of the school sold. That same year the new Oakwood High School was built and each of the schools in Ward 5 were asked to contribute \$50.00 toward the cost of building a higher ceiling in the gym so that games such as basketball could be played. Later that year Oakwood School became overcrowded with the influx of pupils from the closed schools and these districts were asked to help pay the expenses for an extra teacher.



Tug-o'-War at Runnymede School Picnic in the 1930's. Married men versus single men.



Runnymede School District No. 851 at Field Day.

In 1965 the school buildings were sold. The barn was sold to Len Kreutzer and the school building to Emil Gabor, and moved to where Stan Reimer now lives. In 1967 the new Consolidated School District of Oakwood was formed and Runnymede became a part of it.

The list of teachers is long but two have remained with us. Miss Betty Balfour became Mrs. Nelson Wallace and Miss Elsie Henderson became Mrs. Lorne Boys.

### Ryerson School

The school was built in 1886 and opened April 1st, 1887. There were 17 names on the roll and James B. Cook from Maple Hill, Ontario, was the teacher.

There was no stove so it was fortunate that the weather was warm.

Edith Todd and Maggie Little volunteered to sweep the floor.

Through the years there were some outstanding teachers. Mr. Robert Goodwin taught for \$37.50 per month, later he became a doctor; Mr. J. E. Lane, father of Homer Lane, taught for awhile and Mr. Clayton, who helped publish a paper known as "The Ryerson Blizzard". Fuel had to be supplied. It is

recorded that six cords of green poplar wood was bought for \$6.00 per cord. This was split and piled for 75 cents a cord by Thomas Smith. Improvements were made as the years went by — a well dug, a stable built, the school was painted for \$35.00 in 1896.

Some of the first officials were John Higginbotham, Sam Whaley, A. J. Todd and Ben Little. An indication of the low returns farmers were getting for their wheat in 1897 is that we find that they had to borrow \$200.00 at 10% interest to pay the teacher's salary. People were willing to turn their hand to anything to earn a little cash, it seemed, since one item states "when the digging of a well was set up, bidding was lively. Cook got the job at 40 cents per foot — well to be done in two weeks."

One of the best-loved teachers was Miss Patrick, later Mrs. William Cochrane who taught at Hagyard and at Harvey as well. Her salary in 1907 was \$550.00.

Part of the district was taken off Ryerson and joined to Harvey so there would be sufficient pupils there. By 1917 the district had become more prosperous. Wheat was selling for a good price and the teacher was paid \$1000.00 per year, the secretary \$25.00.

All through the years the district and the pupils eagerly anticipated the Christmas Concert and the school picnic. The Christmas Concert was a masterpiece of elocution and acting; the trustees and Santa supplied candies and fun.

Some of the teachers married farmers in the district; some married others so there was a steady turnover of teachers through the years. The school won many medals at sports events and twice won the trophy at the Virden Music Festival for the best one-roomed school choir. Out of the 264 pupils registered since 1892 Ryerson has sent out a Doctor of Divinity, a Medical Doctor, a Veterinary Surgeon, a Bachelor of Science, a Mining Engineer, Ministers, Evangelists, a Missionary, many teachers and nurses.

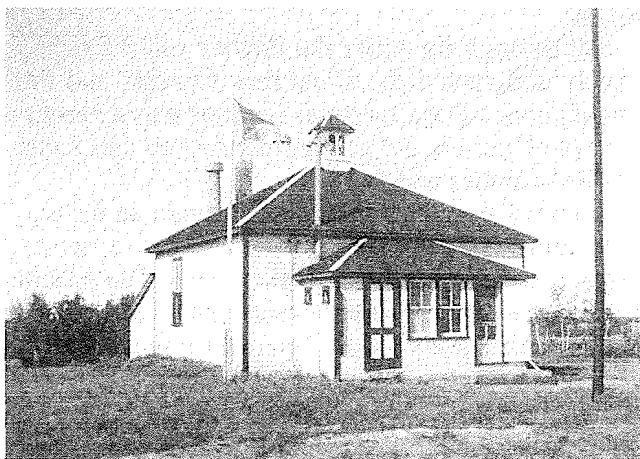
Though the days of the one-roomed school were numbered Ryerson was still operating in 1966-67 with fifteen pupils. The advantages to the children of consolidation seem to outweigh the feelings of many parents but it is certainly with a great many backward glances that we see the country schools close.

In 1956, perhaps anticipating the end, the 70th Anniversary was celebrated. Former pupils and teachers came from as far away as Salmon Arm, British Columbia, and held a wonderful reunion. Mr. Scott Bateman, Department of Education, Mr. F. J. Gould, Reeve of Woodworth, teachers and pupils spoke. We quote from Mrs. Sloan's account written for the occasion: "Ryerson's doors have been open to

Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and United Church Services. Holy Communion, Baptism, Christian Endeavour, Ladies' Aid, W.M.S. and Mission Band all were held here. Political meetings too and Red Cross and Temperance Societies, crokinole or whist drives, dances, farewell parties and showers took place under her roof." Because the future good of the children seemed to be indicated, Ryerson School was closed at the end of the 1967 term. After that time the building was used periodically as a polling place and for different social events. It was finally deemed unfit for any person-oriented activity.



School Transport 1930's.



Ryerson School 1949.

### Sandhurst School

The Sandhurst School District was formed in 1884. The land was donated by Robert L. Lang on the condition that the yard should be fenced. The district was named Sandhurst after a boys' military school in England. The carpenter who built the school was one of the original settlers — Mr. Hamilton Foot, who came from Ontario west to the end of the steel in January 1882. He and Jim Scott snowshoed together from Flat Creek out to locate their homesteads. Mr. Foot built his substantial home west of Sandhurst School on NE¼ 2-9-25. He married a Sandhurst school teacher — Miss Hornibrook. When they were married, the wedding breakfast was held in Sand-

hurst School, following which Mr. Jim Scott, with his four horse team, and two-seated buggy drove the wedding party to the train.

Hamilton Foot later moved west where he became captain of a ship "The Islander", which operated northwards from Vancouver to Alaska. At the time of the 1898 gold rush, his ship carried miners to Skagway. In 1901 he was ship-wrecked and went down with his ship.

Harry Foot, brother, and their mother, lived in a nice frame house on the arm of the lake. She was an invalid and Harry did odd jobs around the district, and some carpentry work. He built Oakview School and was a valuable member of Sandhurst community all his life.

Mr. Knight must have been the very earliest all-white settler in the area north of the lake. He and his wife lived at the eastern end of the sandhills, east side of SE¼ 18-9-24. There was an observation tower beside his house and he kept the weather records for the area. He also ran a herd of cattle. In the municipal files there is recorded the birth of a child in their home in 1877.

Along the southern side of the sandhills lived two Metis families — Adolf Marion and the Dauphenais — both pleasant, agreeable families whose children attended Sandhurst School. These families moved to Saskatchewan area in early 1900's.

Mrs. Speck and three sons homesteaded the SW¼ 12-9-25 in 1882 or 1883 adjoining the Scott quarter. They built their house and other buildings of logs, and planted good windbreaks, which are still thriving. The eldest son, William, homesteaded a few miles farther west. He was the first teacher of Sandhurst School, and his mother, for one summer at least, went across to the school every Friday afternoon and taught singing.

The NW¼ of 8-9-23 was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Testar and their family. They came from England. The small stable stood on top of the bare hill quite close to the road, but the house was nestled in the hollow and sheltered by trees and bushes which still show where the home stood. They had an organ, and were quite a musical family. The eldest daughter, Gertrude, married the Sandhurst school teacher, William Speck. The couple moved to Vancouver and Gertrude's brother, Harry, bought their farm, SW¼ 12-9-25. In 1889 he married Jane Scott, eldest daughter of close neighbors. The next year was a particularly difficult one with no June rains, but heavy night storms in July and August made it very difficult to save what little had grown. A cyclone went through the area one night leaving most of Harry Testar's stooks scattered in the Scott pasture or hanging on the fence. The cyclone also left quite a hole in

the Testar house. At that time the Moose Mountain area (now Stoughton, Saskatchewan) was being settled, so in the fall Harry and his father went west and located homesteads. The family moved there in 1901.

Mrs. Hornibrook homesteaded the NE¼ 6-9-24 with her son and daughter. The son homesteaded the cornering quarter SW¼ 8-9-24. Later the family moved west and James Grant of "Grant and Lauder" fame, owned the place.

James Armstrong and his wife, the former Josephine Oates, came from Ontario and settled on the SE¼ 14-9-25. In later years they moved to the SW¼ where a nice poplar bluff had grown. They had one daughter, Eva (Mrs. Horace Stevenson), and two sons, Albert and Jim, who homesteaded in the west, later moving to British Columbia. The parents lived for several years in Oak Lake, in the house now occupied by Mrs. Della Kruger.

Percy Garland lived on SW¼ 13-9-25 and his nicely finished frame house stood just across the road allowance east of Armstrong's first dwelling. He had been a navy man and after a few years he sold to Mr. Wise, a pleasant well-educated Englishman of private means, who remained until the middle 90's, until James Chapman moved onto the farm with his wife and family of six.

The Hudson family lived in the area north of the island. The two oldest boys, Jack and Bob, started school at Sandhurst in the late 1890's. It was a long distance, and they had no conveyance, so they were very often late. In the early 1900's, the Speck place was vacant for a time, so one autumn the Hudson family moved there. By that time there were two little girls of school age, Maggie and Edith, and another still younger. The following summer Mrs. Hudson and newborn baby died, leaving the family motherless. The family moved to Saskatchewan.

Tom Griffith was a young man who had worked one year with Jim Scott. He married the first Lansdowne teacher and they lived in that district for several years. About 1905 they moved to the Sandhurst district to the Grant farm NW¼ 6-9-24. They had five daughters who all attended Sandhurst School.

Other families in the district during those early years include the Bill Mason family, who married May McFarlane. That house was moved from the now Rousson farm and is the present home of Gavin Gillespie.

In 1906 the first Grade 8 entrance examinations were written at Sandhurst School. Members of that

class were two Langs — Mrs. Wm. Dean (Victoria) and Mrs. Harvey Beare, and Mrs. J. B. McQuarrie and Mr. George Scott.

Sandhurst School was the scene of excellent Christmas concerts, and social events through the years — a very real centre which helped bind families.

Through the years it was necessary to close the school for short periods due to low enrollment.

Interesting in early minutes:

November 14, 1922 — Meeting to discuss using home of George Graves for school, as not enough children.

July 21, 1924 — Slow signs to be posted to warn cars to decrease speed.

July 29, 1929 — Pay A. T. Scott \$3.00 for mowing school yard and cleaning stable.

Sandhurst School was formally closed in June 1964, when it became a part of the Fort La Bosse Division. Since that time, students have been bussed to Oak Lake and Virden.

July 15, 1973 a dedication service was held on Sandhurst School grounds. An exact replica of the school, complete to eavestroughs and drain pipes, constructed by John Sawatsky, stands atop a cement pillar bearing a plaque.

Mention has been given to only the first settlers in Sandhurst District, as related by Mrs. Agnes (Scott) McQuarrie. Later families will tell their own story much better.



Sandhurst School 1906.





Harvey School pupils, 1906. Front row, L. to R.: Aime Carpenter, Geo. Milne, Mel Young, Art Carpenter, Murray Smith, Alan Milne, Ernie Carpenter, Clarence Kennedy. Second row, L. to R.: Edna Findlay, Alma Smith, Elizabeth Smith, Namcy Smith, Grace Smith. Third row, L. to R.: Julia Pommer, Edward Pommer, Ralph Smith, Walter Smith, Eva Kennedy, Alice Carpenter, Emily Young, Ronald Findlay, Minnie Pommer, Dorothy Smith, Louise Kennedy. Back row, L. to R.: Frieda Pommer, Bertha Young, Edith Young, Alice Findlay, Hattie Smith, Charlie Smith, Albert Pommer, Geo. Smith, Cecil Smith, Marion Smith, Art Harvey, Miss Brether (teacher).



Oakwood School pupils, 1908.

# Churches

## St. Alban's Bell

Full many years ago I heard it tolling  
On Sunday Eve, across the valley wide;  
It's full sweet tones came softly, softly rolling,  
Calling to Vespers at the Eventide.

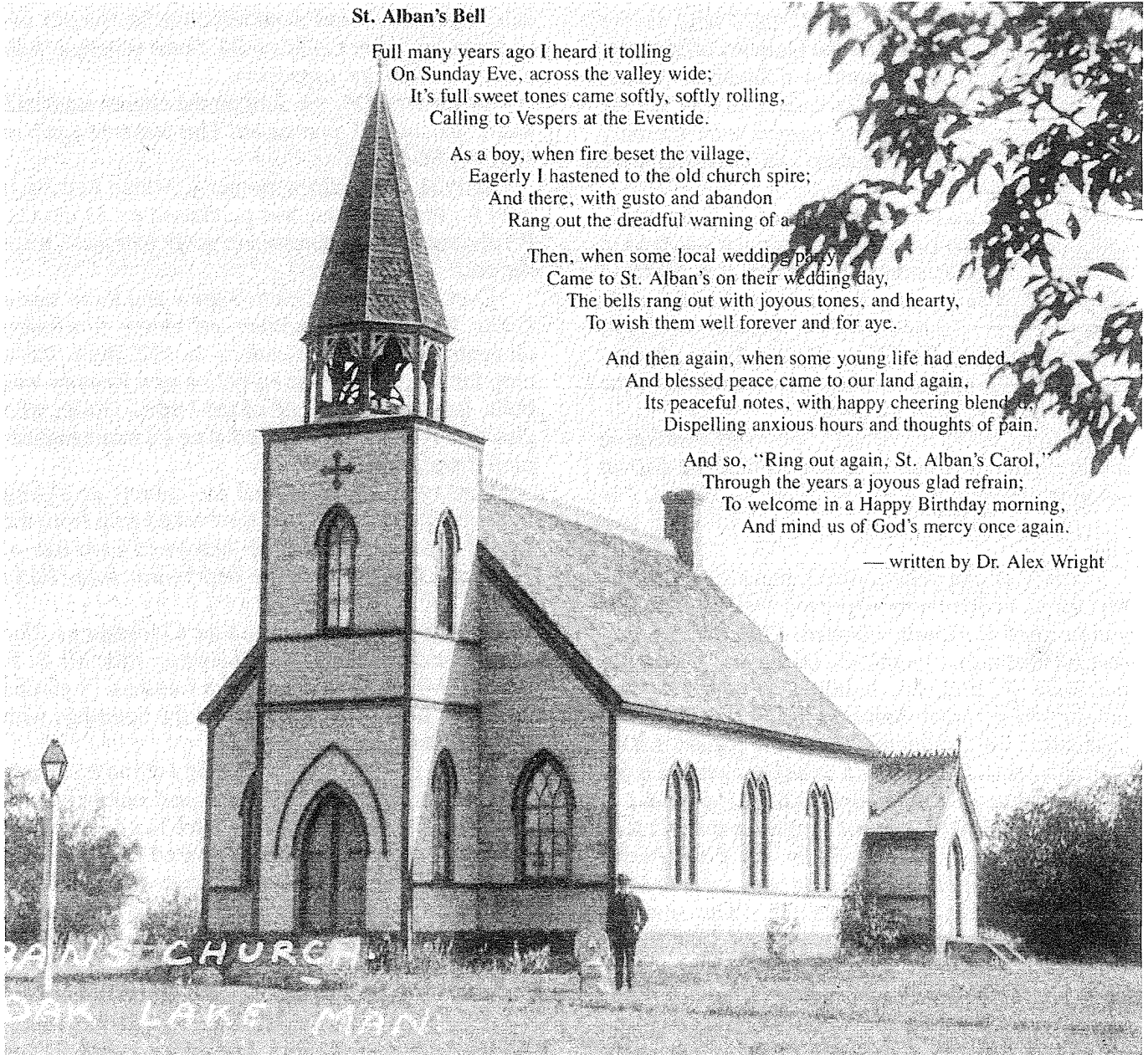
As a boy, when fire beset the village,  
Eagerly I hastened to the old church spire;  
And there, with gusto and abandon  
Rang out the dreadful warning of a fire.

Then, when some local wedding party  
Came to St. Alban's on their wedding day,  
The bells rang out with joyous tones, and hearty,  
To wish them well forever and for aye.

And then again, when some young life had ended,  
And blessed peace came to our land again,  
Its peaceful notes, with happy cheering blend,  
Dispelling anxious hours and thoughts of pain.

And so, "Ring out again, St. Alban's Carol,"  
Through the years a joyous glad refrain;  
To welcome in a Happy Birthday morning,  
And mind us of God's mercy once again.

— written by Dr. Alex Wright



St. Alban's Church

## St. Alban's Anglican Church

St. Alban's Anglican Church is one of the most beautiful little churches in the Diocese of Brandon, especially the interior with its oak panelling and pews of seasoned ash, while the lectern, prayer desk and reredos are all in various types of oak. Crucifix in form with the pointed symmetry of her Gothic windows, miniature belfrey and spire, and set in spacious grounds, St. Alban's offers a pleasing picture to the passing traveller.

The building had its inception at a meeting of parishioners on November 24, 1887, held in the Presbyterian Church, Reverend Quinney officiating. He was serving the communities of Sandhurst, Lansdowne, Brierwood and Bradwardine as well as Oak Lake. By 1889 the first two named were the only remaining but in '92 Hillsdale and Griswold were added.

The Oak Lake Parish was formed on February 6, 1888, however the first Anglican service was held in the Nelson Banister home, June 1884, Rev. Burman officiating. Many names are mentioned in the early records. Names such as Andrew, Spencer, Mitchell, Stevens, Griffith, Davidson, Home, Foote, Speck, Hatch, Stevenson and Banister. Descendants of the latter three are still in the area.

In April 1889, St. Alban's were still meeting in the Presbyterian Church, and paid half the cost of painting that church — \$20.00. They also noted, "no progress to date", in trying to build their own church.

In July of that year however, plans submitted by Mr. James Andrew were approved. All his plans and architectural work were donated. The church was to seat 200 and not exceed \$1500.00 in cost. In September Shaw & McLean, building contractors, were awarded the contract. Stones, sand and labour for the foundation were supplied free by the parishioners.

In October, \$650.00 had to be borrowed to complete the church, with interest at 8% for 5 years.

On April 7, 1890, the last Anglican annual meeting of St. Alban's was held in the Presbyterian Church. The following motion was sent to Rev. Hodge and members of his church. "Our sincerest and warmest thanks for the continued kindness in lending your church for services and meetings, and may the same feeling of Good Will and Christian Charity continue to exist between us." At this meeting it was voted to purchase 12 pews immediately, and Chancel furniture as soon as possible. These 12 pews cost \$11.87 each and were made of ash, no delivery charge. Various gifts of linen, a Communion set, reading desk and lectern were accepted at this meeting.

The church was opened June 22nd, 1890, by the

Most Rev. Dr. Machray, Bishop of the Diocese, assisted by Rev. Chas. Quinney, (Incumbent) and other clergy of the district. The church was reported to be filled to capacity.

In minutes of 1891 we find thanks given to the "Ladies of the Ladies Aid" for their generous contributions to the church finances.

In 1892 the Rev. Quinney's schedule was, holding alternate morning services at Oak Lake and Griswold, with every Sunday evening in Oak Lake and alternate afternoon services taking place at Hillsdale, Lansdowne and Sandhurst, on the Sunday afternoons he was not at Griswold. Some schedule with a horse and buggy, especially.

By Easter 1894, the debt on the church was paid and a "parsonage" purchased. This was sold again in 1897 for \$809.00.

In 1904 the Andrew property, which had been used for the ministers, was purchased for \$1550.00. Parishioners were canvassed to get donations to meet the cost.

Over the years the church grew and there was a Guild, W.A., Girls Auxiliary and plenty of activity, all centered around the church. In 1921 there was a crop failure, but even so in 1922 a new Rectory was built, largely with the aid of the Ladies Guild, who also through the years looked after its maintenance, until it was sold in 1975.

Late 1922 and '23 found the church struggling financially and for the first time asked help from the Synod. However once again they were soon free of debt and came through the depression years fairly well.

In June 1940 they held Jubilee Celebrations. The Rev. Leonard J. Adams was the rector while Mr. S. P. Fall and Mr. R. T. Leonard were wardens. A garden party was held on the grounds on the Saturday, with excellent attendance of pioneers.

Over the last four decades many of those staunch members have gone to their rest and numbers have decreased considerably. The church has experienced ups and downs, and has been serviced from Brandon and Virden at times. In later years we were combined with St. Lukes Mission, but at present are with St. Lukes, Souris, and St. John's, Elgin, with the Rev. Fred Carson, rector, resident at Souris.

This arrangement seems to be working out very well, and there is a renewal in the church once more. We have a Sunday School, Prayer and Praise Group, Altar Guild and small but faithful Anglican Church Women's Group. The original organ is still sounding out its lovely music every Sunday, (though now electrified). There have been several faithful organists, among them Mrs. N. Banister, Mrs. Tessa Wallace and Miss Elsie Wallace. In 1940 the Rev. Adams said,

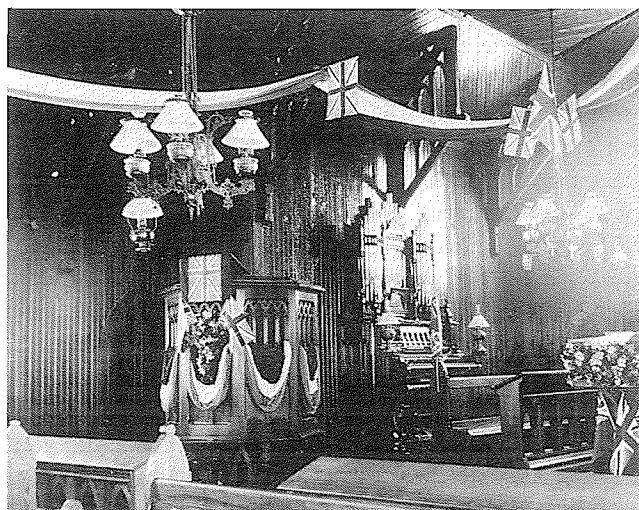


“We heartily thank God for all members of St. Alban’s Church who have faithfully lived and died; may we follow their good example. From them we hold the church in trust for those who shall come after us; but above all we hold it in trust from God and His Christ”.

So in this our town’s centennial year, we pay special tribute to those who built, “far better than they knew”. They have our gratitude for their determination and their faith.

The Rectors of St. Alban’s Church

Rev. Charles A. Quinney	1887-1893
Rev. Samuel Trivett	1893-1895
Rev. J. H. Sykes	1895-1897
Rev. Howard J. King	1897-1900
Rev. Septimus Ryall	1900-1907
Rev. M. A. F. Custance	1907-1913
Rev. J. A. Shirley	1913-1916
Rev. J. W. Hatter	1917-1923
Rev. H. P. Barrett	1924-1926
Rev. C. G. M. Littler	1926-1932
Rev. J. L. Hutchinson	1932-1935
Rev. L. J. Adams	1935-1940
Rev. A. Kemp	1948-1949
Rev. D. E. Ireland	1949-1951
Rev. R. Stephenson	1952-1954
Rev. J. Hopper	1955-1957
Rev. E. H. Hyett	1961-1963
Rev. J. Heald	1963-1967
Rev. Jim Buck	1968-1975
Rev. Donald Pratt	1976-1978
Rev. Fred Carson	1980-



Interior of St. Alban's 1911.

**St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church**

The history of St. Athanasius Church goes back to the latter part of the 1880’s. According to sources of information available, a number of Catholic fam-

ilies lived south of Oak Lake near the lake. They were mostly of French nationality. As new Catholic settlers moved in, they tended to settle along the future route of the railway and eventually a site for a church was chosen in the present town of Oak Lake. As far as can be learned, this church was first an old store building and was used until the fall of 1887. The present building was erected on the site where it now stands.

In the early days a priest from Brandon used to come out to hold services. The first resident parish priest, Rev. Father Athanasius Bernier arrived in 1887. He served the parish from 1887-1893. In his time, one source speaks of about 100 families belonging to the parish.

The story of young Father Bernier, only 36 years of age when he died, intrigued us. Because money was so short, the priest had to farm for a living and Father Bernier lived out by the lake, not in town. People remembered seeing him working in his fields wearing his long flowing black robe. His house was built for him by Mr. Berard, who took the greatest pride in handcarving mouldings. This landmark was later destroyed by fire. The memories related by Mrs. A. Carberry, an early resident, tell us that as a little girl she went in her little white pinny, gathering prairie crocuses. She took the flowers to the home of Father Bernier to give to his housekeeper after his death. The housekeeper arranged them around the casket and Mrs. Carberry remembered they were the only flowers brought. Her father and Mr. Chantiny had been with the dying priest until the very last, doing what they could to ease his pain in the absence of a doctor.

Just what caused Father Bernier’s death is unknown as there was no doctor available. The church which he worked so hard to build was the resting place chosen for this pioneer priest and a tablet to his memory marks the spot.

Some of the earlier priests were Father Leneux and Father Boullion. The latter arrived in 1902. He was an excellent carpenter and with volunteer labor he built the rectory and enlarged the church to its present size.

The last priest to occupy the rectory was Father Harold Roy who left in 1940.

For a number of years this home was rented to different families including John Hughes, Albert Chasse, Adolphe Roziere and Bill Thiry. Later alterations were made to the building and in 1961 it was opened as a Parish Hall.

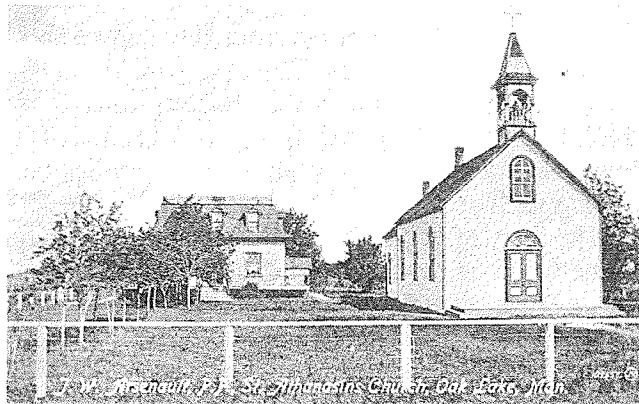
Reverend Father Schrieber served this mission from the spring of 1950 to October of 1970. In 1964 he celebrated his Silver Sacerdotal Jubilee.

Renovations have been made to St. Athanasius



Church at different times; however, they have not taken away from the building the impression that it has a long history. Along with other church buildings in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg it takes its place as one of the oldest in the western part of Manitoba.

St. Athanasius is now a mission of the Virden Parish. The present pastor is Rev. Chris. Soeterboek.



St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church and rectory.

### The Baptist Church

In the spring of 1890, Rev. S. Cripps and his wife and family arrived from Ontario to live in Oak Lake. Families in the Ralpton District, now Kenton, had requested the Baptist Mission Board to appoint a minister. The Board approved but Rev. Cripps, because of railway facilities, was sent to Oak Lake, where a parsonage and a place for worship were obtained.

He drove a horse and buggy many miles over roads which were not much better than prairie trails, through mud and snow, around sloughs and over hills. Country services alternated between Ralpton, Kinsmore and Hagyard school houses.

Passing years brought changes. Baptist families moved away from Oak Lake and in 1902 it was decided to sell the Oak Lake property and build a church on the corner of the SE quarter of 23-11-24, south of Kenton. The church was closed and sold to William Sangster to be used as his home.

### The Methodist, Church, Oak Lake

The Ministry of the Methodist Church was first started in 1883, being held in the pioneers' homes. A church was built in Oak Lake in 1887 and in the same year new school houses were built in Ryerson and Hagyard districts. The Methodist services were held in these schools. In 1889 the boundaries of the Oak Lake Church included Griswold, Alexander, Ryerson, Hagyard and Lansdowne charges.

A parsonage was built in 1892 and in 1895 the

boundaries were again changed. Griswold and Alexander set up a circuit of their own. Lansdowne and Hagyard were closed and a new church, Salem, (in the Blair district) was included in the Oak Lake charge. Salem Church had been built in 1884 and had been served by student ministers prior to becoming part of the Oak Lake Charge in 1895. It remained a part of Oak Lake until it was closed in 1948. Ryerson Church became the strong point of the charge with memberships of — Ryerson 40, Salem 30 and Oak Lake 15.

In 1920 the Methodists consummated a union with the Presbyterian Church.

The church building, which was located on the corner, where Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Joynt now live was moved to a location near St. Alban's Church where it was used for many years as a Parish Hall.

### The Presbyterian Church, Oak Lake

When in the early 1880's the long snake of the Canadian Pacific Railway had crawled westward from Brandon, it paused for the winter of 1881-82 at Flat Creek, and the settlement bore this name until it was changed to Oak Lake.

Missionaries, hardy men, travelled up and down the line and through the settlements, riding or driving a pony and buckboard, holding services in homes and in the station at Oak Lake.

Among the scattered Presbyterian families there grew a strong desire for a place of worship in the faith of their fathers. They all wished for their families the services of their church, even though they were not without religious instruction, for those were the days when parents were exhorted to teach their children the "Shorter Catechism".

On June 28th, 1883, a meeting was held and a congregational committee was appointed. It was in February 1885, that plans were made for the building of a church on lots 19 and 20, block 14 in the village of Oak Lake. First Presbyterian Church, Oak Lake, was opened November 1885, and dedicated by Rev. Dr. Bryce of Winnipeg.

January 18th, 1887 saw the induction of the first minister, Rev. D. H. Hodges. Members of the session were: Robert Lang Sr., Robert Sutherland, James Scott and Duncan McKinnon. Later in the same year a manse was built at a cost of \$600.00. The finance committee were laboring under difficulties and it is recorded that on completion of the house, the contractor, Lachlan McLean, a canny Scotsman refused to turn over the building until paid in full for his work.

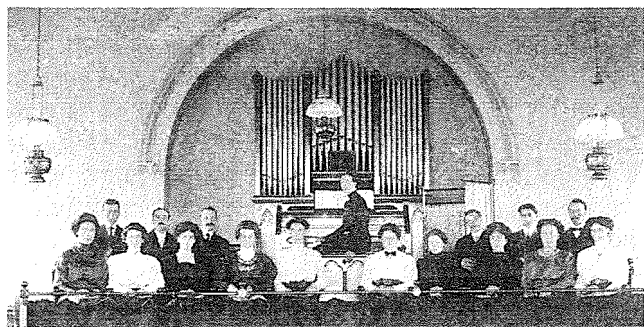
No history of those early years would be complete without reference to the good friends of other

communions, especially those of the Church of England who not only worshipped but worked with the small Presbyterian congregation until their own St. Albans could be built. The first organ was lent by them and played at both services by Miss May Horseman, who later became Mrs. Edward Dickson. It is recorded that the trustees of Oakwood School District asked for and received permission to use the church until a school could be built. The first collection plate was presented to the church by Mr. Henry Hatch.

The years fled by and the little church became too small and people began talking of a larger building, and so it was that in 1896 the congregation moved into Cameron's Hall, and the church was sold.

The illness and resignation of Rev. Mr. Hodges resulted in a call to Rev. W. A. McLean who on February 26th, 1897 was ordained and inducted into the charge of Oak Lake and St. David's. Under the winsome and dynamic personality of Mr. McLean, the congregation grew, and plans were made to build a new church on the present site. The building was erected at a cost of \$3,500.00 exclusive of furnishings and was dedicated on November 18th, 1900, by Rev. Dr. Bryce of Winnipeg, the same man who had dedicated the first church.

Rev. W. A. McLean was succeeded in 1905 by Rev. J. A. Cormie, who after 9 years was called to the newly opened church at Le Pas and was followed at Oak Lake by Rev. S. Sarkissian who with his family was the first occupant of the present manse built in 1913. The friendship between Methodist and Presbyterian congregations was such that as early as 1920 they had agreed on a form of local union, and when in 1925 the United Church of Canada came into being the two churches in Oak Lake had already merged.



Presbyterian Church Choir. Note: hanging lamps also curtain to right of organ behind which the "pump" boy laboured to supply power for the organ.

### Oak Lake United Church

The record of Oak Lake United Church is first of all the record of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches.

The minister at the time of Union was Rev. J. S. Millar. His charge consisted of Oak Lake, Ryerson and St. David's. The beautiful Presbyterian Church was in good condition and it was used as before, except for the change in name. It had now become The United Church of Oak Lake.

The beautiful stained glass window "The Light of The World" given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. C. V. Anderson and their children, has added sanctity to the church. Illuminated at night it gives passers-by its quiet witness "Jesus is the light of the world".

There were many memorial and other gifts placed in the church during the years. One of the most recent was a beautiful window "The Sower Went Forth To Sow" presented in 1979 by the family of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Smith at the time of their 60th Wedding Anniversary and in memory of their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Smith.

A unique service, the first of its kind in a rural area, at a time apart from Conference, was held in Oak Lake United Church on December 1st, 1975, when Gordon Stevenson was ordained into the Christian ministry of the United Church of Canada. Many clergymen including Rev. Stevenson's uncle Rev. S. M. McDowell, chairman at that time of the Montreal Presbytery, were present on this occasion. Rev. Stevenson remained as minister in Oak Lake until 1977.

Mr. Harvey Hurren, while principal of the Elementary School in Oak Lake and a member of the session of the Oak Lake United Church, offered himself as a candidate for the ministry. After completing his studies he returned to become minister of the charge. A few months after his return he was ordained into the Christian ministry.

We are unable to list the organists, choir leaders, board members, Sunday School teachers, officers and the many others who contributed to the work of the church throughout the years. These faithful and dedicated individuals played an important part in the history of Oak Lake United Church.

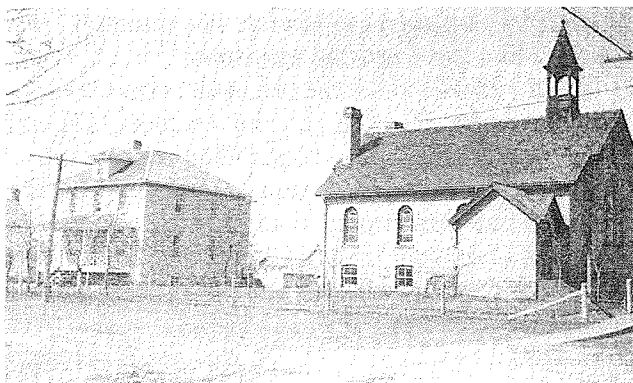
The following are the ministers who served throughout the years —

1887-1897	Dr. Rev. D. H. Hodges
1897-1905	Rev. W. A. Maclean
1906-1914	Rev. John A. Cormie
1915-1917	Rev. S. H. Sarkissian
1917-1921	Rev. A. W. Churchill
1921-1926	Rev. J. S. Millar
1926-1931	Rev. Thomas Merryweather
1931-1937	Rev. D. D. Millar
1937-1940	Rev. Robert W. K. Elliott
1940-1945	Rev. F. W. Lee
1945-1948	Rev. H. N. Burgess
1948-1949	Rev. W. Bill

1949-1950	Rev. K. McKillop — Lay Supply
1950-1954	Rev. James M. Wilson
1954-1957	Rev. Robert McPherson
1957-1959	Wm. Senior — Lay Supply
1959-1967	Rev. Murray Wenstob
1967-1970	Rev. Carol Robert
1970-1971	Rev. Wm. Hunter
1971-1972	Glen Whetter — Student Supply
	Don McIntyre — Student Supply
1972-	Rev. Murray Lake — Interim Supply
1972-1977	Rev. Gordon Stevenson
1977-1981	Rev. Harvey Hurren —
	Dec. 18/77 — June 81



C.G.I.T. Group and leader, Mrs. W. G. Smith.



United Church and Manse 1920.

### The Methodist Church, Ryerson

A small group of people from the Ryerson district gathered at Mrs. E. Cairns' home for church services under the guidance of Rev. R. Avison, the Methodist minister of the Griswold-Alexander mission, in 1884. The following year they started the Sunday School at Mr. William Smith's home aided by discarded books from Walkerton. Ben Little was the

teacher and the following families took part: The Littles, the Shaws, the Cairns, the Higginbothams, Josiah Hummel and the William Smiths.

For three years services were held at Cairns' and then from 1887 to 1901 they were held in Ryerson School. While Mr. Bethel was pastor the people started hauling stones from the Assiniboine Valley to be used in the foundation of their new church. They bought the brick at Carberry but it had to be unloaded at Oak Lake and hauled by team and sleigh to the site. The pulpit was made by Mr. Ed. Lund from cherry wood brought from William Smith's farm in Ontario. The lower hall was of stone lined with matched lumber, the upper part brick veneer construction. It was well and truly built. Much of the work was done by volunteer labour and apparently the church opened free of debt.

Since Methodist ministers moved every three years many ministers guided the folk through the years. The stipend in 1901 was \$900.00 for the minister, \$28.00 for his horse. The membership stood as follows: Oak Lake — 16, Ryerson — 36, Salem — 21.

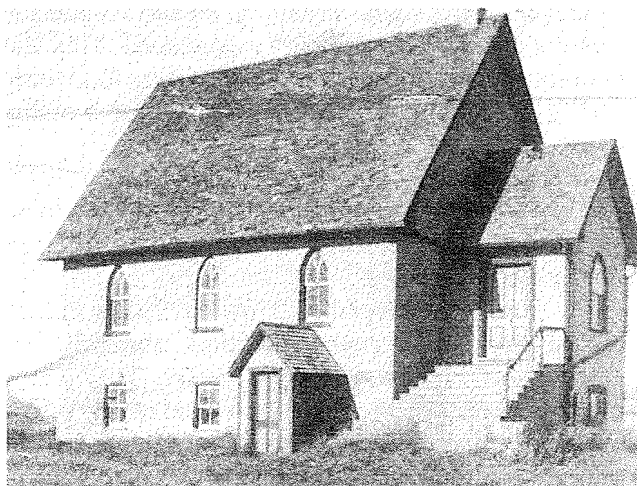
Under Rev. A. W. Churchill a local union took place with the Presbyterian Church at St. David's in 1919, which was several years ahead of general church union. The minister preached at Ryerson in the morning, St. David's in the afternoon and at Oak Lake in the evening. In 1938 under Rev. R. W. K. Elliott, the people of Ryerson decided that they should join with neighbouring congregations and thus close one point on the charge. The church building was sold in 1951 and the money was divided between Oak Lake and St. David's. The Oak Lake congregation dedicated chimes in honour of the pioneers with their part of the money and the St. David's congregation refinished the lower floor of their church with theirs.

Accounts of the early days often mention how lonely the women were in their isolated farm homes, especially in the winter time. No wonder that we read that the women of Ryerson used to hitch up a horse to a buggy and set off for a women's meeting eight miles or more away. This group met in different homes.

After union the group became a Women's Missionary Society. They tried to reach out to all women in the district, Anglican, Mennonite, Pentecostal, as well as Presbyterian and Methodist. They always held the World Day of Prayer with the Indian women of St. Luke's Mission who provided musical numbers and refreshments. Members look back on many laughable and memorable occasions not least of which was getting to and from the meetings, on slippery or muddy roads.

In 1980, on July 29th, approximately 200 people met at Ryerson to commemorate Church, School and Maskawata Post Office, by unveiling a cairn.

Mr. Keith Smith, recalling on this occasion memories of Ryerson Church, mentioned that the Church had served the community well providing church services, Sunday School and a place for meetings, Christmas concerts and home comings for nearly 40 years and that during that time two weddings were performed in the Ryerson Church.



Ryerson Methodist Church.

### St. David's United Church

During the early years of the district that became known as St. David's Church, services were held in the homes and in Hagyard School.

In 1892, a church was built on land donated by David Goodwin, a pioneer settler on SE 27-10-24. The minister's name was David Hodges and hence the name St. David's was given to this Presbyterian Church, in honor of these two men. It was opened in October of 1892 by Rev. Peter Wright.

James Todd and James Goodwin were the first precentors to lead the singing. There were many musical people in this community and soon a choir was organized and an organ obtained. Mrs. Mary Vowels was the first organist.

The first child baptised in the church was Mary Johnston, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Johnston. The first wedding in St. David's was that of Hattie Shaw and E. Waddell.

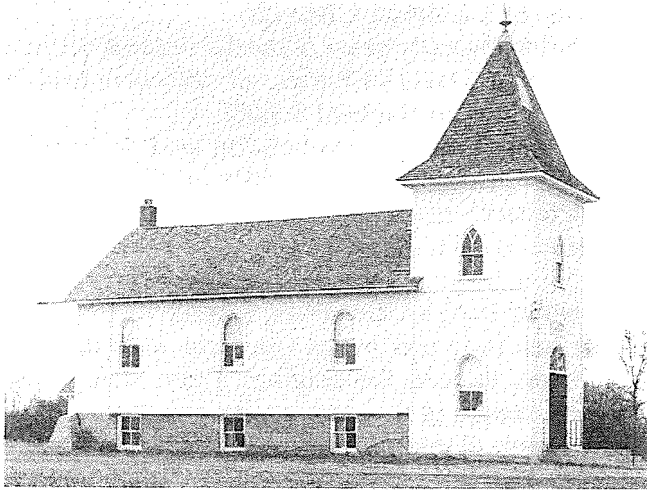
St. David's soon became in addition to a place of worship and Bible study, a centre for community cultural development. A Christian Endeavour Society was organized. Public speaking, drama, musical concerts, study groups and later a young people's union were among the many activities taking place throughout the years.

The women contributed greatly to the work of the



Early 1900's Oak Lake and St. David's Choir. Back Row: Left to Right: Annabel Phillips, Marion Goodwin Uptigrove, Eva Tomlinson, Jack Lewis, Hattie Shaw, Arthur Shaw, Etta Wisner (McGhie), Miss Cambell. Second Row: W. A. Crowley, Millie Goodwin Phillips, Jas. Goodwin, Miss Graham ?. Front Row: Billy Jackson, Rev. W. A. McLean, Mary Goodwin Gregson.





St. David's Church.

church. A women's Missionary Society was organized which supported foreign and home missions. A local girl Margaret Goodwin served as a missionary nurse at Nelson House in northern Manitoba.

St. David's women were well known for the delicious fowl suppers served in the church basement. For these church dinners, in the earlier years, many of the women would cook as many as six or more chickens, along with vegetables, pies, etc. Their working area was very limited in size. All the water was brought to the church, usually in cream cans. The difficulties were overcome and up until this time annual dinners are still provided by the St. David's Ladies and continue to be well attended.

For some years in the 1930's the W.M.S. sponsored what was known as Chautauqua. This special event was held around June 1st and consisted of two special church services on the Sunday. The local choir spent many hours preparing music for these services. The following Monday night a concert was held, with guest artists and a guest speaker.

In October 1942, the 50th Anniversary of the church was observed, with Rev. J. S. Millar conducting the service. Thirteen people were present who had been present at the opening of the church fifty years earlier. They were T. J. Smith, R. R. Smith, J. L. and E. R. Johnston, G. Slimmon, D. Goodwin, Wm. Gompf, Wm. Dryden, L. Wisner, Mrs. J. Baillie, Mrs. J. Forrest, Christina McBeth and R. Bailey.

Soon after electricity was in use, the Herbie Little family of Dinsmore, Saskatchewan provided a generous gift, which formed the nucleus for a fund, which was added to by other members of the Goodwin family and some members of the congregation, making it possible to obtain a Hammond electric organ which is still in use.

The ministers who served throughout the years are listed in the Oak Lake United Church history. Space does not permit the naming of the organists, choir leaders, Sunday School teachers, church board members and others who will be remembered for the part they played during the years to make up the history of St. David's. We are making one exception, in mentioning Mrs. Mary Forrest who was organist for over thirty years.

In 1959 cement abutments were erected at each corner of the church, in the hope of lending strength to the weakening walls. Twenty years later it became apparent that a new foundation was needed. This was accomplished by people who were willing to give, to plan, and to work to make this place of worship durable for future use.

A home coming service was held in June of 1979 when many former members of St. David's returned. The service was conducted by the minister, the Rev. Harvey Hurren.

On Tuesday, November 27th, 1979, the church was moved on to a new foundation, about 30 feet north of where it had stood for 87 years. The heating system was changed to electric instead of oil, which had been in use for over 20 years.

Today, due to the larger farms, the number of families residing within St. David's District have been greatly reduced. Although few in number, the congregation of St. David's continues to hold services with the spirit and determination of those pioneers, who many years ago had established a church in their midst.

### **The Oak Lake Mennonite Church**

The Oak Lake Mennonite Church was formed in the late 1920's when a number of recently immigrated families established a local fellowship. The Rev. Peter Penner was called upon to minister to the new congregation. From its beginning to the present three phases of development can be traced in the history of the church.

#### **Phase One — first decade**

The church met in the homes on a rotating basis. The main sanctuary was the living room, the pulpit a table, the pews plain benches. The hymns were chosen and the tune carried by song leaders. People brought their dinner along and stayed for an afternoon of visiting while Sunday School was being held. Later, lunch for all was supplied by the hosting family. The church was more concerned with people than with programs in its resolve to provide spiritual care and fellowship.

#### **Phase Two — second decade**

The church met in the Pleasant Plain School, generously granted for its use by the district school

board. Soon a platform, pulpit and pews were installed. The men sat on one side and the women on the other. Sunday School classrooms were divided by curtains. A church board was elected. The late 40's showed a marked increase in membership. New facilities were needed and in spring '49 ground breaking ceremonies for a church building took place. Care was taken to preserve the traditional values of soundness and simplicity in the design. The building quickly took shape under the supervision of Mr. Tom Stonham, with volunteer labor supplied by the congregation. A tragic mishap occurred at this time, in which the minister, Rev. A. Niebuhr, died as a result of a fall while working on the church.

#### **Phase Three —**

The church has since met for worship and study in the present sanctuary, dedicated for the Lord's use in October 1949, and extended in 1955. During this phase new features introduced were: singing with piano accompaniment, graded Sunday School classes to include all age groups, women's representation on committees, the position of deacon, etc. Perhaps the greatest change has been the language transition. It took 15 years to complete the changeover from the German to the English language.

The Mennonite Church has a history of lay ministry. Pastors were elected by majority vote from the membership of the congregation, with pulpit assistance being provided by various members as the situation warrants. The Church is affiliated with larger National and International Conferences, who together seek to ensure that as the patterns change, the purpose remains the same.

### **The Oak Lake Pentecostal Church**

A number of families formed the Pentecostal

Church in 1926 and built the church in May of 1927.

The first minister was Rev. Mac McLeod followed by Rev. Harold Graves. Several of the early ministers were women. Misses Olive Garvin and Myrtle Moore pastored the church in 1929. Other lady ministers were Misses Annie Lincoln and Rachel Rasmussen of Saskatchewan. Annie later married Max Gompf and remained in the district. Another lady minister was the late Hilda Fraser who later married Bert Fuller and remained to make her home in Oak Lake. Another early minister was Rev. Bob Parkinson and wife Marion from Virden who also ministered at Oak Lake. They sailed to the mission field on the Lady Hawkins in the early years of the 2nd World War. The Lady Hawkins was torpedoed and Bob Parkinson lost his life. His wife Marion spent many days on a raft before being rescued. Her duty was to bury many at sea who died from dehydration and exposure after several weeks afloat on the raft but she herself survived to return to mission work until the time of her death.

Several ministers and workers came out of the Oak Lake Assembly. Earl Cairns became a minister and taught for many years at Wheaton College. He also wrote several books. One outstanding book on Church history is being used by many Bible Colleges today. Clinton Cairns and Charlie Gompf became ministers for many years and Beatrice Paterson, after becoming a school teacher spent 10 years in mission work in northern Alberta.

The Daily Vacation Bible School was an annual event of the church during the summer holidays. Often over 100 children attended. In later years under the ministry of Bill Borrows a manse was erected and it is now the home of the Gordon Bells of Oak Lake. The church closed in the late 60's and was moved to the Manhattan Beach Camp where it serves as a Youth Chapel.



Wedding Party 1955. L.-R.: Clarence and Ethel Kenndy, and children: Donna, Betty, Maisie and Murray.



L.-R.: Nellie Ducharme and Gladys Valley.



Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Katchen.



Four Generations, 1934. L.-R.: Jenny Johnson, Grace Reid, Grace Lemaire (Reid), Zelda Lemaire (Forshaw).



"Yesterday's Dandies."



Reeves' Children, 1944. L.-R.: Bob, Gwen, Betty, Harold and Neil (in front).



The John Paterson Children. L.-R.: Tom, Emilie, Mary and Minnie.

# Family Histories



. . . the laughter of children growing up . . . of children returning home . . . of parents remembering.

Angus McColl



# Prelude to the Family Histories

## Small Remembered Things

by Keith Scott

My sister will not mind if I share a secret that we have kept between us for almost half a century. A small but very important secret.

It happened years ago one spring afternoon when there were fine frozen ponds lying in the hollows of the land and skating was an all-consuming compulsion. I had brought my skates to school to save time after four, and as I headed for the pond over the hill I shouted to Gwen to bring a snack when she came from home with hers. Two important things had happened at home; Mother had just taken fresh bread out of the oven, and Dad had just come back from town and brought, as a small treat, a head of crisp iceberg lettuce. So Gwen brought lettuce sandwiches, and we sat down on the ice and ate them.

It happened then, a childhood moment of ecstasy, a shared rejoicing, a mutual happiness beyond belief! We knew that we were experiencing more than lettuce sandwiches, that somehow we had discovered a joy too intense to describe to anyone, an exultation of simply being alive.

There have been other like moments in times since, and they have one essential ingredient — simplicity. But it is not easy now to find the quiet moment to rejoice with simple things.

And we look back with nostalgia.

Back in the days when Dr. Purdie practised what we would now call “holistic” medicine, when “organic farming” meant manure, and vandalism hadn’t even been invented, then small things were a large part of our lives. We were set down in a large expanse to face the battering elements barehanded and the broad sweep of horizon made any human effort seem small. So we made small things important, enriching and meaningful — what we would now call “relevant”. Small things established our values, molded our lives and left their imprint.

I was very young that July evening in 1930 when the hail came and we watched it pound a promising rich harvest into the ground. When it was over my sister and I went out into the icy waste of the yard and filled milkpails with hailstones. And then our undefeated family made ice cream. It was a small defiant gesture, perhaps, but a noble one, and it has helped me face disasters in the years since.

My grandfather’s homestead home had meaning for me as a child as I watched the chickens scratch in the rectangle of ashes in our back yard. Great battles

and edicts never stirred my boyhood interest as much as the arrowheads (in my mother’s sewing machine drawer) that my father had ploughed up in the west field. Or the stories that my great uncle Adam told of driving a stagecoach from Denver to Santa Fe in the 1860’s. The Riel Rebellion came alive when my father remembered that as a child he had seen Ambroise Lepine at the Marion’s fireside. Eventually we make the connections that are important; the Napoleonic Wars had made displaced persons of my ancestors in the same way that the Battle of Little Big Horn brought proud old Sitting Eagle (who must, as a young Sioux, have been there) to our door, and the Russian Revolution had made the Sawatskys our neighbours. We were all refugees, coping with history.

We had never heard about “multiculturalism” then, we simply lived it. I learned some basic Sioux from Grandma Goodwin (who chatted over tea with her old friend Daiza when she came) heard German spoken and balalaikas played when the Sawatskys visited, and learned my first French cusswords from the Plaisiers. Early in life, long before “learning experiences” were discovered, I learned that people differed (Catholics could play ball on Sunday afternoons) but differences too were small things. We loved and temporarily hated for personal, never ethnic, reasons.

Education of the formal kind was informal at Sandhurst S.D. No. 362, but it had advantages that progressive educationalists have discovered or defined since. We already had the “open classroom”, and the “teacher/pupil ratio” was ideal — two or three each in grades I to VIII, with a total student body of about a dozen in a bumper year. There was individual instruction, and all the equipment necessary: the library bookcase, the sink and water pail, outdoor toilets, the pot-bellied stove with its pressed-tin guard draped in wet mitts. There was no escape from a solid educational grounding — we simply had to learn, and we learned simply. Nothing was ever quite unfamiliar, since we could eavesdrop on every grade ahead. It was all marvelously uncomplicated and compulsory — the whole curriculum, including dance, music and drama (the Christmas concert) and athletics (recesses and July 1). Transportation meant Shetland ponies and the school cafeteria came in 10 lb. honey pails. For my sister and I education was waking-hour immersion; we lived across the road from the school and the teacher lived with us. It was fine training in poise to face one across the dinner table with a freshly-strapped hand still burning.

In those poor dry years culture was unlabelled, but it was rich, varied, searching and largely home-made. Around the hissing Coleman lamp everyone

read. When the B-batteries on the Atwater-Kent held up there was radio (Vivian Dellachiesa, the Firestone Hour, and on Christmas mornings, George V). There was always the big black piano, a violin, a guitar and singing. The long winters induced a kind of inane hilarity, and we played slightly mad charades, did athletic tricks with brooms, rolled back the carpet and danced, or Dad recited Drummond. On clear nights we would go out and toboggan down the hill from the iced slide off the garage roof. The house seemed always to be humming with visitors — neighbours, relatives, farmhands passing through. I remember a handsome Guyanese named Albert Johnson arriving from the Francis ranch one winter evening, wearing white flannels and playing, beautifully, every instrument in sight. There was, outdoors one warm summer evening, a young ex-hairdresser farmhand who “marcelled” every female head. And often Reg Brennan came with his gun and red Chesapeake for an evening away from his lonely railway cabin at Maon.

At Christmas every school community exploded into cultural activity and there were concerts to go to, in addition to Sandhurst's, at Lansdowne, Oakview and Routledge. Every child learned the anxiety of performance and the seduction of applause, and there was an adult drama at every school, rehearsed from one of French's one-act plays. The best of the country effort often reached the town hall, programmed with the established talents of the Cole-Parsons piano duo playing “Nola”, Mrs. Gibb's “George Washington” or Elsie Parsons' rich contralto “Shortnin' Bread”. I remember one winter when my sister and I reached

dizzying heights of fame, tap-dancing on boards from our dining room table.

These days, when we are so often spectators of packaged entertainment, I am aware of how live and involving our local culture then was. It was part of a community fabric I still cherish. Last week at the Forum, listening to Malcolm Lowe play the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with the Toronto Symphony, I remembered how as a teenager I was equally moved by his father Elman's playing, long years back in Oak Lake. Talents, like value systems, are nourished from small but honest beginnings.

I remember those values too, and I supposed that it is to confirm their survival that I keep going back. It was the value system that prompted Jack Aitken's neighbours, one spring when he went to the hospital, to put in his crop. My mother didn't know that she was “other-oriented” when she nursed Mrs. Mowez for three long winter days, and it was not “inter-cultural relations” that moved her to tears when her patient, recovered by spring, brought her a basket of exquisite Polish Easter eggs she had laboriously painted. These were never great epic noble gestures — they were just little things that people did. Little things with rich significance, that stay in the memory and grow through the year.

Only ten years ago one crisp, bright early-April morning our family was driving back to Winnipeg and the frozen ponds again lay in the hollows of the fields. Again a small boy, I said that they looked good for skating. My sister turned and smiled a conspirator's smile. “Yes,” she said, “It's a good day for lettuce sandwiches.”

## **Douglas and Ethel Abbott** **submitted by Ethel Abbott**

Douglas came from England in 1924 to live and work with his uncle, Mr. Paul Phillips. The following year he went to work north of Brandon, working there until 1934 when he left for Mozart, Saskatchewan.

Douglas met me in 1934, (My home — North Portal, Saskatchewan). We were married March 28, 1938 and came to Oak Lake to rent the farm from his uncle, which we later bought and farmed until 1971 when Douglas died.

I lived on the farm for one year and then moved into Oak Lake buying Mrs. George McLeish's home where I still reside.

Douglas and I adopted our children, Charlie in 1945 and Mary in 1949.

Charlie, Gail and family live at Oak Lake and Mary lives at Victoria, B.C.

## **Charlie Abbott Family** **by Gail Abbott**

As a young child I had often visited Oak Lake to see my Grandma Ducharme. Never would I have dreamed I would marry an Oak Lake fellow and eventually reside here. My mother, Mrs. W. G. Bridgman of Winnipeg, was Lea Ducharme, formerly of Oak Lake. Charlie and I were married in Winnipeg on December 19, 1970 and we moved to Oak Lake in June of 1973.

One year later we were blessed with beautiful twin boys, Blake and Sean, born on September 4, 1974. To make our family complete, our daughter, Tara, was born on September 13, 1978.

Although we are not farming, we do live on the family farm and enjoy all the benefits of country living. Charlie is a building contractor and also does wedding photography. It's great to be a part of Oak Lake's history past and future.

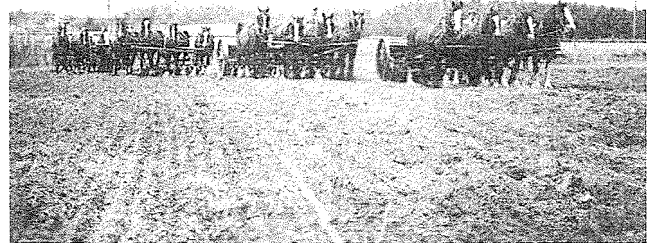
## **John Aitken Family**

On January 25, 1876 at Elora, Ontario, John Aitken was born. He was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. James Aitken who had emigrated from Scotland earlier in the century. In 1905, he travelled west, by rail, and settled at Oak Lake, Manitoba. During his early years in the Oak Lake area, he was associated with Mr. William Clow in a Butcher Shop business. Land, Section 8-9-24, was purchased for a farming operation. The home on the farm had been built by Capt. Perry Fall on his return from the Boer War. For a number of years, John used to accompany carloads of cattle to Ontario in the winter and was thus able to combine business and pleasure and visit with his parents every winter. In 1917, John rented his farm to his uncle, Robert Aitken, and family while he ven-

tured west to Maple Creek, Saskatchewan where he was involved in an Implement dealership.

Adeline Maude Richardson was born January 17, 1883 at Fergus, Ontario. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. Richardson, had immigrated to Canada from Scotland earlier. On May 1st, 1919 at Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, John Aitken and Maude Richardson were married. They made their home in Maple Creek until 1921 when they returned to the farm at Oak Lake.

They had three daughters, Margaret Eleanor born at Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, Helen Lois Jane and Elsie Claire born at Oak Lake, Manitoba.



Lansdowne neighbors put in the crop for Mr. Jack Aitken, who was in Hospital.

John's keen interest in animals, combined with the terrain of the land, set the pattern for a mixed farming operation. During his early years of farming he trained and owned horses of the pacer and trotter calibre. Always interested in community affairs, John was associated with Sandhurst School as a trustee, the Rural Municipality of Sifton as a councillor, a member of Oak Lake United Church, an associate director of the Oak Lake Agricultural Society and at one time a member of Oddfellows Lodge. Maude, also a member of Oak Lake United Church, actively supported the Church's affiliated groups, the Rebekah Lodge and the Ladies' Auxiliary B.E.S.L.

During the 1940's, a home was purchased in Oak Lake (on the north side of the highway — opposite the United Church now known as the Co-op house). Mother moved into this home following the death of Dad and sale of the farm in 1947. Mother lived in this home until her death in 1953.

Elsie was married to Leo R. Corbeil in 1946 and they resided in Winnipeg. Leo died in 1955. Elsie worked in business offices until she retired in 1978.

Lois served with the R.C.A.F. (W.D.) during the Second World War. In 1971, she married Edgar Fast and they reside in Winnipeg. Lois has been a civil servant with the Federal Government for a number of years.

**Margaret** was a business employee in Ontario and Manitoba for a number of years. She married August Horn in 1957 and they reside near Oak Bluff, Man. In 1977, Margaret was the recipient of one of the Queen's Silver Anniversary Medals in recognition of her participation as a 4-H Leader.

Memories — Our country school — Sandhurst; Dad driving us to and from school during the severest weather in the winter when we had heated bricks to keep our feet warm; standing over the register on arrival at the Church for Sunday School, in order that we might 'thaw out'; Sundays when it was deemed too stormy and cold to venture to Oak Lake, Mother had Sunday School for us at home; the School Concerts when we participated in plays, drills, recitations, etc., and the Sunday School Concert with pantomimes and songs; Our School Field Day, held every June, when we proudly marched with our fellow students and teacher; The month of July would take us to the Island at the Lake for our yearly Sunday School picnic; Our attending the Oak Lake Fair and how proudly we showed and raced our Shetland ponies; the School lunch pail — when the Peanut Butter pail was mistakenly taken and how we and our friends enjoyed emptying the pail and then Dad bringing the right lunch pail! One vividly recalls neighbours coming to our home to aid in the search of a little lost girl, Lois, who had been lost for several hours and happily was found by Dad. Also, the spring Dad was ill and our good friends and neighbours organized a bee and put in the crop — how very thankful both Dad and Mother were. During the 1930's we remember the arrival of several hundred sheep, from the Piapot, Saskatchewan area where the drought was so severe, where they were sheltered and fed on our farm.

### **The Robert Aitken Family**

In March 1915, Robert and Evelina Aitken and their six children arrived from Minitonas to take up residence on the John Aitken farm, about six miles south west of town. Barrie was the eldest, then Norman, Laura, Florence, Tom and Kathleen. They lived for a few years on the J. Aitken farm then spent a year on the Anderson farm before moving to the McFarlane farm where the family resided until 1938 when Norman, who was then doing the farming, sold out. This will be known as the Jack McLeish farm, and the same farm house, now over a hundred years old has been in use.

**Barrie** was the first to leave home, working in the bush for one year, then going to Flin Flon when there was nothing there but a few tents. He started working for the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, and was employed by them right until his retirement.

He continued living in Flin Flon until his death in June 1974, at the age of 80.

**Norman** was the son who stayed on the farm. When Robert Aitken died in May, 1929, he took over the management of the farm where he and his mother lived until 1938. At this time they moved to Flin Flon to live with Barrie. Norman also worked for the Hudson Bay Co. until his retirement. He married Ettie Forsyth of Flin Flon in 1960. Norman passed away in Feb., 1974 at the age of 77 years.

**Laura** married Joe Salkeld on Mar. 26, 1924 and moved to Brock, Sask. where they farmed. They had three children, Bob, Evelyn and Hudson. Joe passed away in 1945, but Laura remained on the farm until the fall of 1962 when she bought a home in Kindersley, Sask. where she still lives.

**Florence** took her schooling in Oak Lake, then teacher training in Brandon. She taught locally at Ryerson, and other schools. In 1942 she went to Flin Flon to work for the H. B. Mining and Smelting Co. She remained there and at the present time is residing at the Northern Lights manor.

**Tom** left home at an early age and worked on different farms in the surrounding area. He also moved to Flin Flon and worked for a number of years with the mining company. He married Irene Larock on Dec. 25, 1948 in Flin Flon, later moving to Vancouver, B.C. He visited Oak Lake in 1974 and felt it a highlight of his life. He passed away in 1979.

**Kathleen**, the youngest took all her schooling at Oak Lake. She was very active with the C.G.I.T. as a girl. She took her nurses training at Winnipeg General Hospital and became a R.N. in 1928. She nursed in Banff, Alta., Kindersley, Sask., Brandon and Winnipeg, Man. On Sept. 8, 1935 she passed away in Winnipeg, at the age of 27, the result of an asthma attack.

Mrs. Aitken was a great homemaker. She belonged to various organizations and was always ready to give a helping hand. She lived with her sons and daughter in Flin Flon until she passed away in 1958 at the age of 85.

Mr. and Mrs. Aitken, Barrie, Norman and Kathleen are all buried in the family plot in the Oak Lake Cemetery. Although the family went their separate ways through the years, they always considered Oak Lake to be home.

### **Thomas Henry Allum**

Thomas H. Allum was born in Workingham, England in 1864. He came to Canada at the young age of 17 years. He crossed the Atlantic twice back and forth on cattle boats before landing in Canada, at Toronto in 1880. He got work on construction putting Young Street through Toronto, one of the main



streets today. He came west to Oak Lake in 1884, making his home there and working out on different farms. Next he bought a splendid team of black horses and set up a draying business in Oak Lake.

In 1901 Thomas and Alice Maud Forward were married at her parent's homestead, south of Oak Lake. Alice was born in Quebec in 1877 and came west to Oak Lake with her parents. After their marriage they resided in Oak Lake for two years, then



Allum First Family.

Thomas homesteaded section 4-9-23, southeast of Oak Lake, in Runnymede School District and built his own home. But Alice Maud's life was to be short. She developed pneumonia in 1926 and passed away suddenly at the age of 48. It was an open winter and the funeral was at the family farm. There were 12 children born of this marriage; one died at birth.

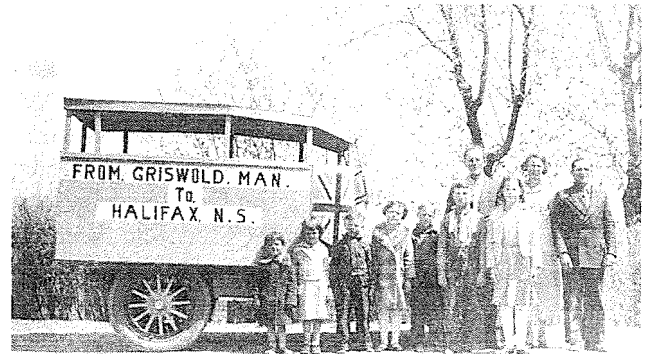
On July 20th, 1927 Thomas married Florence Agnes Badman of Greenwich, England. Florence immigrated to Canada on the Empress of Scotland, landing in Montreal and travelling to Oak Lake by train. She was met at Oak Lake by her future husband; they travelled to Brandon where they were married at St. Matthew's Anglican Cathedral. She brought with her a son, Edward, who lost his life in 1931 at the age of six when fire destroyed their farm home. Florence raised her step-family as well as their own family of five with love and much hard work during the thirties. Mrs. Allum was a very devoted and faithful member of St. Alban's Anglican Church and the Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion; receiving a life membership from the Ladies Auxiliary in 1980. Thomas and his family endured many hardships but their home was always open to happy times in those days when making your own fun was so important to everyone. They purchased a baby grand piano, a luxury, also a violin, a gramophone, and several mouth organs. Thomas was very fond of music, especially the old Harry Lauder records. Many a time, dances were held in the Allum

home and people would come for many a mile, sometimes on horseback. Sometimes dancing lasted until nearly daybreak.

Thomas and Florence farmed until 1944, when they retired to Oak Lake. Thomas passed away in 1953, in his ninetieth year. Florence now makes her home at Hillcrest Place in Brandon.

The children of Thomas H. and Alice Maud are:

**Hazel Irene**, their eldest, born in 1903 married Wallace Glawson on Dec. 10, 1924, living in Griswold for a time, later moving to Halifax in 1936 with a family of seven young ones. They had nine children: Edith (Lottie), Douglas, Elva, (Fraser),



Glawson Family.

Harold, Gladys (Prest), Duncan, Jean (Fraser), Harris and Kenneth, five of whom attended Hesslewood School.

**Laura Jane** born in 1906, married Ernest Grimley on Jan. 28th, 1926. They moved to Toronto in 1928 with their eldest daughter, Dorothy (Vettese). They had three other girls, Muriel (Andreoli), Ruth (King) and Elaine (Paull). Laura and Ernie later moved to Stroud (on Lake Simcoe) where they owned and operated a resort business.

**Charles Lennox** born in 1907, married Kathleen Russell of Alexander on Dec. 9, 1936. They lived in Griswold, later retiring to Souris where Charles died in 1974. They had two children: Evelyn (Skinner) of Brandon and Kenneth of Souris.

**Aletha Florence** born in 1908, married Leslie Alexander Speers on Nov. 7, 1928 and they farmed near Griswold. They later retired into town where they celebrated their 50th anniversary in 1978. They have two children: Edna (Wintle) now of Deloraine and Archie who lives on the home farm.

**Thomas William** (Bill) born a twin in 1910, married Christine Meadows Dec. 30, 1936 of Oak Lake and resided there until they moved to Estevan. Bill worked for the CPR until his retirement. He now

resides in Carlisle, Sask. They have one son, James, of Calgary.

**Harvey Richard Dixon** a twin born in 1911, spent four years with the C.C.O.C. during the Second World War. He returned to Fort William and married June Gibbons in 1945, living there and working for the CNR until his death in 1967. They had two children, Aimee (Gorst) and Paul.

**Harold Edward Dixon** was born a twin in 1911. Rfn. H. E. Allum joined the Royal Winnipeg Rifles at Souris March 1941 and was killed in action in France in 1944. He married and they had one son, Wayne Stanley.

**Frederick Cyril** was born in 1913, later joining the army during the Second World War. He was employed with the Canadian Salt Industry in Neepawa and then the CNR. Fred married Stella Swereda on Nov. 6th, 1943. They had one son, Earle, now of Oyama, B.C. Fred passed away July 26, 1980.

**Gladys Maud** was born in 1915. She worked in her early years at the Anglican rectory for Rev. J. L. Hutchinson, leaving for Toronto in March of 1936. She was an employee of General Electric, retiring with 32 years of service. Gladys married Wallace Broughton of Toronto in 1945.

**Clara Beatrice** born in 1917 married Emerson English of Harding on April 14, 1937. They farmed there until 1965, and now reside in Brandon. They have two children Elspeth (Denbow) and Elwood, both living in Brandon.

**Albert Lewis**, youngest of this family, was born in 1920. Bert spent his earlier working days at farms near Deleau. He has a great love for animals and was especially proud of his team of horses, which was his reliable mode of transportation. Later he returned to Oak Lake, purchasing a small acreage where he hobby farms and is presently employed by Specialized Soil Products.

The children from the second marriage of Thomas H. and Florence are:

**George Alexander**, born in 1928, spent his school years at Runnymede. His earlier working years were spent on the Bill Cowan farm. In 1962 he married Evelyn Burton of McGregor. They now reside in Wainwright, Alberta where he has his own carpentry business.

**Henry Frank**, a twin born in 1930, went to school at Runnymede, Hillsdale and Oakwood. His earlier interests were nature-hiking and hunting. Henry married Lou Ducharme, in St. Alban's Church in 1967. They purchased the old Casey Pearsall slaughter house, now converted into their present home on the south west corner of Oak Lake. Henry is employed by the Sanitation Department of the Town of Oak Lake.

**Harry Thomas**, a twin born in 1930, went to Runnymede, Hillsdale and Oakwood schools. He worked on a farm in Deleau District, taking an active part in 4-H cattle; later moving to Brandon Hills where he worked for the Wilkinsons. Harry married Lorraine Bullard of Belmont at Oak Lake in 1962. They have a family of four: James, Donna, Randy and Ronald. Harry, Lorraine and family moved to Brandon in 1973 where he is presently employed by Cumming Brothers Construction.

**Cecil James**, born in 1932, went to school at Runnymede, Hillsdale and Oakwood. He was first employed by Casey Pearsall at the Oak Lake butcher shop, later working on different farms until employment with the Manitoba Telephone System. He married Mavis Cairns of the Ryerson District in 1960. They had a family of three: Shelley, Kenneth, and Scott. Kenneth died a few days after birth. Cecil and family moved to Elkhorn in 1963, where he started his own carpentry business. They have two grandchildren, Eric and Kevin.

**Doreen May** was born in 1936. She received her education at Hillsdale and Oakwood, later becoming employed by the Manitoba Telephone System as a telephone operator. She married Gaston Plaisier of the Sandhurst District in 1956. They moved to Brandon in 1965 where they now reside. They have three children: Douglas, Deborah and Cameron.

### The Anderson History

On August 1, 1976 the fair ground in Oak Lake was the scene of the first inclusive reunion of the Anderson family. This was a happy choice of location because the grandparents and their children, from Ontario, first settled in the Oak Lake district before homesteading in the Lenore area. Mr. Robert Anderson (uncle of Gordon Anderson and Frances Ronberg) worked for a short time at Leitch's mill.

#### Emma Anderson

Sarah Emily Stewart (Emma) was born July 12, 1881 at Dermerestville, Ontario (near Picton), the eldest of 7 daughters of the late Samuel and Sarah (Gillis) Stewart. She was educated at Ontario schools and came west in 1899. She took her teacher's training at Baldur and taught school several years there, and later at Blair School, Virden. After her marriage to William Anderson at Winnipeg on August 5, 1910, she resided at the farm at Lenore. She was widowed in 1928, and in 1943, she moved to Oak Lake accompanied by her daughter, Shirley, and her son, Gordon. Due to ill health, she moved to Brandon in 1961 and died there March 12, 1968. She was survived by four daughters and one son: Ruth (Mrs. James Taylor), Kingston, Ont.; Frances (Mrs. Ernie Ronberg), Oak Lake, Man.; Mildred (Mrs. Wallace Clark),



Grandma Anderson.

Belleville, Ontario; Shirley (Mrs. Cliff Daniel), Oak Lake, Man.; and Gordon, Oak Lake, Man.

**Shirley Marlene** attended school in Lenore and Oak Lake. She took her teacher's training in Winnipeg and taught for several years. She married Cliff Daniel October 6, 1956 and resided on a farm in the St. David's district until her death in 1978. The children were: Kenneth George (born Jan. 26, 1958) who is presently residing on his parents' farm in the St. David's district, Kathleen Anne (born June 18, 1959) married Dan Fehr July 15, 1978 and presently resides in Brandon; and Stewart Keith (born Jan. 29, 1964) died October, 1978. The children were all involved in the Oak Lake 4-H Beef Club.

**William Gordon** was born October 22, 1919 and attended school at Lenore. He married Kathleen Rolle on October 19, 1945. He is presently residing at Oak Lake and is employed by the Manitoba Dept. of Highways. They had one daughter, Karen Eileen (born Sept. 19, 1948) who attended school at Oak

Lake. She took her R.N. training at Brandon General Hospital and is presently employed as Head Nurse in the Operating Room there.

### John A. Anderson

John A. Anderson emigrated with his parents, James and Janet Anderson, from Kincardine, Ontario around 1880, to Oak Lake, settling south of town. Tragedy struck when their home was destroyed by fire. Later the family moved and homesteaded at Lenore.

John Anderson began his farming at Lenore around 1903 or 1904. He married Lillian Pearl Stevens and they had five children: Harvey, Earl, Elmer, Glenn and Betty.

In the early forties, John with his wife and daughter, moved to Oak Lake and lived for a few years in the Joe Lafournaise house.

### Peter Anderson Sr.'s Family

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Anderson with four of their children, Bill, Mary, John, and Peter, came to Canada from Glasgow, Scotland in 1908. Their oldest son, Donald, had come to Elkhorn, Manitoba in 1906, where he spent a year before coming to Oak Lake and it was here that his parents and family members joined him.

Mr. Anderson Sr. was employed in the Mill during the first winter they spent in Canada. In the spring they started farming west of Oak Lake. In 1920 they moved into Oak Lake, and two years later they purchased the Bake Shop from Mr. Piroth. Their sons,



Mr. Peter Anderson Sr. with sons Pete and Bob and Granddaughter Doris Reid.

Bill and Pete, worked with their father in the business. The Bake Shop was expanded and later became a grocery and dry goods store, which was known as Anderson's Store. In the 1950's, Andersons purchased a larger building next door, however before they were able to move into the premise, Pete's sudden death occurred. In 1956, Bill Anderson and Pete's widow, Irene Anderson, opened the store in its new location, where the business continued until 1960 when it was sold to the newly formed "Co-op".

The Anderson's eldest son, **Donald**, worked for a time on road construction, later moving to Port Arthur, where he died in 1944. His widow, Helen, still lives there.

**John** Anderson was employed by the C.P.R. before enlisting in the army in 1915. At 20 years of age, he was killed in action in June of 1917.

The only daughter, **Mary**, was known as Polly. She worked for the C.P.R. in Winnipeg, where she met and married William Reid. They moved from Winnipeg to Calgary in 1933. Their only child was a daughter named Doris, whose home is in Calgary. She has four children.

**Peter** married Irene Goodwin in 1937. They had three children — Heather, who lives in Pennsylvania, U.S.A., Lynne who resides in Toronto and has a son, Jamie, and John who lives in Winnipeg. Irene is now retired and also lives in Winnipeg.

**William** Anderson died in Brandon in 1977, where he had lived for couple of years prior to his death.

**Robert**, the youngest, was born after the Andersons came to Canada. He is now retired and living in Oak Lake.

Mr. Peter Anderson Sr. died in 1947 and Mrs. Anderson in 1944.

### **James Andrew** submitted by Ada Fall

In 1887, James Andrew and family came from England and settled in Oak Lake. Mr. Andrew was a lawyer. They lived above the Drug Store. He built a beautiful hotel on the west corner next to Jack Dean's Garage. The hotel was to open on Monday morning, but it was destroyed by fire on Sunday night and burned to the ground. Mr. Andrew then built a home on the Marion Homestead (now the Ken Doherty farm). They had one child, a daughter, Blanche (Queenie), who married Nelson Banister.

Mr. Andrew built a home east of Oak Lake and called it Glencroft, (where the Rozieres live) and left the homestead to Nelson.

Mrs. Andrew was interested in all organizations,

and was a member of the Anglican faith. Mr. Andrew drew the blue prints for the Anglican Church.

Mr. Andrew died in 1916.

Mrs. Andrew died in 1920.



Grandfather Armstrong in Oak Lake.

### **J. R. Armstrong**

In 1875, Mr. J. R. Armstrong of Bradford, Ontario, married Josephine, second daughter of Richard Hocking Oates in St. Luke's Church, Toronto. The story is told that Mr. Armstrong was given the opportunity of going into business with his friend, Timothy Eaton, but decided he wanted to go west. Two small children, Eva Josephine and Albert, accompanied their parents to a farm in the Sandhurst district in 1883. A second son, James, was born there.

Mrs. Armstrong was an artist and had shown exhibitions of her work in the Toronto Art Gallery.

**Albert** and **James** eventually moved to homesteads in Saskatchewan. **Eva** married Horace Stevenson of Hillview, north of Oak Lake, in 1903 and spent fifty-four years there until her death. Mr. Stevenson predeceased her in 1945. They raised a family of two daughters and four sons. Two of James' three daughters, Evelyne and Grace spent several of their younger years at Hillview and went to Education Point School with their cousins. They now both reside in Victoria, B.C.

The Armstrongs retired in Oak Lake to the home in which Mrs. Della Kruger now lives.

### **Cecil A. Arthur**

I, Cecil A. Arthur, resided in Oak Lake in 1917 and 1918, with the late Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Smith. During that time, I worked as assistant agent, under the guidance of Walter M. Baynham, Can. Pac. Agent. Incidentally, Mr. Baynham, introduced me to my wife, Eva M. Higginbotham. We were married in the Higginbotham home (now occupied by Mr. and





Cecil and Eva Arthur.

Mrs. Guy Williams) on May 1st, 1922 and recently celebrated our 59th anniversary last May 1st.

Two children were born of this union. **Walter**, in 1924, at present living in Brandon, who was C.P.R. Agent at Oak Lake in the '40's. **Muriel**, born in 1926, living with us, is single. Might add, Walter, married Myrtle Hatch (an Oak Lake girl) and have 4 children.

My sojourn, with C.P.R., from 1917 to 1964, as I retired from the agency at Neepawa, having served as Train Dispatcher, at Kenora and Winnipeg, for over 9 years. We moved as Operator and Agent, many times to better ourselves — and made friends at every point.

Mrs. Arthur (nee Eva M. Higginbotham) attended Oakwood School, at Oak Lake, up to and including Grade 10. Eva was born on the Higginbotham farm, 10 miles north of Oak Lake, November 11th, 1899 and moved to town with her family, who returned to the farm for seeding and harvest times.

Might add, the Smith's moved to Oak Lake from Regina, shortly after the Regina Cyclone in 1912 and lived over the Leitch residence. Mr. Smith managed the store now occupied by Mr. Pennington. A son, Harold, was a druggist in Oak Lake and Brandon.

During our time with CPR, we worked from Fort William (Thunder Bay) to Broadview, gaining much experience in different capacities. We settled in Winnipeg in 1956, retiring in 1964.

## Thomas Bailey 1889-1942 submitted by Thos. Bailey

Thomas Bailey and Margaret McBeth were married at Glenallan, Wellington County, Ontario, March 7, 1877. They farmed in that area for 12 years, coming to Oak Lake July 1889, taking a homestead on NW 14-10-24, the last available, and purchasing NE 15-10-24. A granary was built on the homestead in the fall of 1889, with considerable help from the neighbors.



Mr. and Mrs. Tom Bailey's Golden Wedding 1932.

They lived the first winter in a sod shanty on SW 22-10-24, with their three children, Teenie, Jennie and Russell.

In the spring of 1890 they built a house on 14-10-24. The house and granary were built 6 rods off the road allowance. In 1895 a re-survey was conducted and the road allowance moved over 6 rods, thus accounting for the Baileys' buildings being close to the main road.

Maggie Bailey was born October 1897.

In 1901 they built a large bank barn. In 1907 the

farm was sold to Russell Bailey, their son and they moved to Oak Lake, and built a large house, now owned by Ralph Williams.

They always had a large garden, sold vegetables and tree fruits. The Baileys sold the ponies and bought an Overland car in 1911. This car is now on display at Elkhorn Museum.

They enjoyed living in Oak Lake till December 30, 1939 when Thomas died and was buried in Johnston Cemetery. Mrs. Margaret Bailey died May 9, 1942.

### Russell Bailey 1907-1957

Russell Bailey purchased the farm from his father the spring of 1907 and bached for a few years, then married Mary Ellin Plowman in May 1910.

From this marriage, Tom (November 1913), Gordon (September 1919) and Margaret (March 1921) were born.

Russell Bailey, like his father was very much a mixed farmer, growing corn for fodder, silage and grain, hay crops, and feeding cattle, etc.

Around 1950 his son Tom took over the home farm, and Gordon farmed 17-11-24 at Lenore.

**Gordon** was married to Clara Nixon of Antler, Saskatchewan in July 1947. They have four children, Arnold, Heather, Orville and Glen.

**Margaret** married Alex Daniel, September 1957 and they have three daughters, Mona, Del Marie and Mary.

**Tom** married Margaret Messier at Lucknow, Ontario, August 1957.

Russell Bailey died October 1957. The farm passed on to Tom Bailey.

### Tom and Margaret Bailey

Tom and Margaret farmed happily. **Clarence Russell** was born July 1958 and **Donna Jean** August 1962.

In 1978 Thos Bailey turned over care and management of the farm to his son, Clarence Russell Bailey and Tom built a new house on the farm, and so the circle grows.

1889-1981 Thomas, Russell, Tom, Clarence. Each generation of Baileys has had their turn at being members of the local organizations — school boards, church, fair Board, Co-ops, etc.

### The J. L. Baillie Family

In July, 1889, Thomas and Margaret Bailey and their family came west from Glen Allen, Ontario to settle on 14-10-24. At this time their daughter, Jennie Luella, (later to become Mrs. J. L. Baillie) was six years old. She attended Hagyard and Johnston schools.

Shortly after the turn of the century a young Nova



Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Baillie and Family. Clockwise, top centre, Bill, Jack, Allan, Ivy, Luella, Norman, Muriel and Evan.

Scotian by the name of Will Baillie was employed on the Thomas Bailey farm. In 1901 Will was the victim of a fatal farming accident. His brother, John Logan Baillie, then about 26 years of age, came from their home in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, to tend to funeral arrangements. He had been working at his trade of plasterer and bricklayer in Boston, Massachusetts, but, after burying his brother in Johnston cemetery, he remained to work on the Bailey farm. On November 9, 1904, John Logan Baillie and Jennie Luella Bailey were married. She was 21 years old and he was 30.

They settled on 13-10-24 where they lived for forty years. Here their ten children were born — **William** Thomas in 1905; **John** Russell in 1906; **Alexander Allan** in 1910; **Annie** Margaret in 1911; **Mary Catherine Luella** in 1914; **Ivy** Isabell in 1915; **Donald Norman** in 1917; **Christina Muriel** in 1918; **Robert** Logan in 1919; and **Clarence Evan** in 1921. **Annie** and **Bobby** died in infancy.

Jack and Jennie, as they were known to friends, knew what hard work and hard times were. With eight growing children, a big garden was a necessity, but Jennie always found time for a remarkable flower garden. Lorraine (Johnston) Holland remembers it as a little girl. To her it was "kind of a fairyland, full of little paths and flowers of many varieties". Of course there was an abundance of wild berries to be picked and Jennie picked them by the pail full. The family remembers that most things were preserved in two-quart jars. Jennie was intensely interested in hand-work of many kinds. Her handmade mats and quilts

were objects of great beauty. Family members still use crocheted doilies that she made. Jack left his mark on the surrounding districts. He practised his trade as a plasterer and bricklayer as well as being a busy farmer. Stuart Walton recently mentioned that there are many monuments to his work still around today. Jack also had his own smoke house and won many prizes at fairs for his smoked hams.

Despite the hard work and hard times, family members have many happy occasions to remember. Homemade ice cream made from unadulterated cream and frozen with ice from the ice house was served in generous sized bowls. In winter there were community toboggan parties. Groups would gather to slide down the hills west of the farm home. Only the bravest — or most reckless — went down the steepest slopes. Jennie always had plenty of hot food ready to satisfy appetites whetted by the frosty air. There would be browned pork and beans baked in two gallon crocks, steamed brown bread, a five gallon cream can full of doughnuts, or as Isabel (Matthews) Hagen of Virden recently recalled “a huge gingerbread”. After the older family members were old enough to go to the Ryerson and Hagyard Friday night dances, Jennie would accompany them. The younger members looked forward to an evening of fun with their father — making candy and playing cards. Just staying up late was an event, but they had to be in bed before Mother and the others returned home. After picking up the potatoes in the fall there was always a box of apples opened and there was no limit to the number that could be eaten that night, but, out of necessity, beginning the next day they were rationed. Also vividly recalled are some frightening experiences descending the Beaver Dam Hill with horses and jumper.

Jack and Jennie were both members of Saint David's United Church, and the family attended regularly. Jack was an elder for some years, and Luella played the organ for a few years. Some of the boys remember riding horseback to the church on frosty Sunday mornings to light the fire to warm the building for afternoon service. Jack and Jennie supported the local Agricultural Society and were active in community affairs. Jack was a loyal member of the Masonic Lodge.

After leaving the farm in 1943, Jack and Jennie moved to Oak Lake. They lived in the stone cottage which was located near the golf course. Jennie Baillie died May 30, 1949 at the age of 65. Jack Baillie died October 11, 1950 at the age of 75. They are both buried in Johnston Cemetery.

**William** — after completing his education in Oak Lake High School, Bill was employed in Winnipeg, and was a guard at Stony Mountain Penitenti-

ary. In 1928 he married Mary Ann McFadden. They had two children — Eileen born in 1931 who died at the age of seven, and Glen, born in 1932. Bill served in the Royal Canadian Engineers during World War II. Later they moved to Terrace Bay, Ontario and retired in Scarborough.

**Jack** — received his education in the district and spent a few years working for farmers in the area. In 1936 he married Lillian Gertrude McRae of Wellwood and went to work in Gods Lake, Manitoba. Here, in 1940, their son, John Raymond, was born. Jack's death occurred in 1976. Lill now lives in London, Ontario.

**Allan** — worked on the home farm and from time to time worked for other farmers in the district. He tried his hand at farming, but these were hard times on the farm and he left for Gods Lake to work for the gold mining company. In 1938 he married Louise McBain of Hamiota. Their son, Ronald Allan, was born in 1940. In 1941, in Flin Flon, their eldest daughter, Maureen Rose, was born. In the late forties they moved back to the Oak Lake area and here daughter Janice Louise was born.

Ron married Terry Fulton of Birtle and they live in Winnipeg where they both teach. They have three children — Darcy Jane, Andrea Leigh, and Ronald Mark. Maureen married Wayne Ramage. They are living in Cartwright where they are both teaching. They have two children — Cheryl Christine and Curtis Wayne. Janice is Mrs. Doug Crampain and lives in Brandon. Doug works for Good Roads and Janice is a receptionist. They have one daughter, Stacey Ann.

Allan moved to Camrose, Alberta in the late fifties and married Olive Holt. He died there in 1981.

**Luella** — worked in Winnipeg for awhile and in 1937 she married Frank Ginn of Oak Lake.

**Ivy** — also worked in Winnipeg after attending Oak Lake High School. In 1942 she married Preston McDonald and went to live at Mirror, Alberta. Later they moved to North Star in the Peace River country, lived in a log house and were modern day pioneers. Their six children were David, Terrie, Martha, Freda, John and Bill. They also had eight grandchildren. Ivy died in 1975. Preston returned to live at Mirror, Alberta.

**Norman** — attended school at Ryerson and Johnston and worked on the home farm. He spent some time employed in Vancouver. In December 1943 he married Lillian Thompson and they farm at Rocanville, Saskatchewan. They have one son, Bill, and two grandchildren.

**Muriel** — attended school at Ryerson, Johnston and Oak Lake. In 1940 she married William Cowan who was in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.

While Bill was overseas Muriel helped her mother and father on the farm, as in those days help was scarce. Bill was wounded at Dieppe and arrived back in Canada in 1943. After his convalescence, Mr. and Mrs. Baillie moved to Oak Lake and Bill and Muriel took up farming on 13-10-24. They celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary in 1979. They lived on the farm until the fall of 1980 when they moved to Oak Lake.

**Evan** — received his education at Ryerson, Johnston and Hagyard schools. He spent some time working at home on the farm and working out in harvest time. In 1941 he went to Gods Lake to work for the mining company there. In January, 1943 he married Dorothy Bell of Harding. In September, 1944 they had a son who died in infancy. Evan went overseas, serving in England and on the European continent, returning to Canada with the Lord Strathcona Horse Regiment. Then for 31 years he was employed by the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company in Flin Flon and Snow Lake. He retired in 1977 and Evan and Dorothy are now living in Oak Lake.

### **The R. O. Bain Family** submitted by Louise Robbins

Robert and Emma Bain were relatively late comers to the Oak Lake area. They moved into the St. David's district in 1937 to escape the severe drought conditions in Saskatchewan, where they had homesteaded at Smiley since 1917.

Bob was born at Mt. Albert, York County, Ontario in 1881 of United Empire Loyalist stock. Emma was born at Burnhamthorpe, York County, Ontario in 1877. They were married in 1906 and had two children: Walter and Ona.



Robert and Emma Bain.

They farmed north of Oak Lake for about eight years, but age and crippling rheumatism made it impossible to carry on, so they retired to a little house in Oak Lake, where they lived until Bob's death in 1954.

Bob loved plants and this was obvious by the enormous garden he planted every year. For several years he was caretaker of the Johnston Cemetery, and many of the trees there are ones he planted. Emma, despite a severe back condition and arthritis which limited her physical activities, kept an active mind. She was an avid reader; devouring books on history, philosophy, religion and politics. Coming as she had from the politically-minded Stanfield family, she always expressed a deep interest in the subject and never missed a chance to vote. She had been a professional cook before her marriage, having cooked for several prominent Toronto families, and children visiting her after school found the happy combination of story-telling and a full cookie jar. After Bob's death in 1954, she lived with Walter and his family until her death in 1960.

**Walter** was born at White Rose, Ontario in 1909 and came to the Oak Lake area in 1937 with his parents. He helped on the farm until the war broke out in 1939 and then went to Winnipeg and to Trail, British Columbia, doing munitions work. He married Mary Toseland of Winnipeg in 1942 and they returned to Oak Lake in 1944. Their daughters, Louise and Dorothy, were raised there. Walter



Mary, Walter and Ona Bain 1942.



worked at several jobs over the years. He was a mechanic on Commonwealth Construction for many years and then was employed at Brandon University until his retirement. He and Mary moved to Brandon in 1967 and he died in 1977. One of his main interests in life was travel and he was always curious as to "what was over the next hill". Mary was active in Church work and in the Church choir. She was an avid supporter of the St. Alban's Players for many years. Gardening was another of her chief interests.

**Ona Bain**, born in Ontario, and moving to the district in 1937 with her parents, stayed but a short time. She married Ralph Larson of Wetaskiwin, Alberta in 1944 and moved to Prince Rupert, British Columbia. She has one daughter, Rona, and they now have retired to Parksville, British Columbia.

### **David Banister**

submitted by Ada Fall

Mr. and Mrs. David Banister came from England in 1881. He homesteaded south of town, but Mr. Banister died soon after he came to town and his wife lived with her son, Nelson Banister.

She was a very kind lady and of strong Anglican faith. With the results of her sewing and fancy work, she had the pulpit placed in the church, also the reading desk.

They had five children: Ada, who married George Wallace, Blanche married Alex Smith, Nelson married Blanche Andrew and they all lived in Oak Lake. Lily married Dave Brown and lived in Kalidia, and Clem married Mary McLaughlin and lived in Walpole, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Banister died in 1884.

Mrs. Banister died in 1924.

### **Nelson Banister**

submitted by Ada Fall

Nelson Banister was born in England and came to Canada with his parents in 1881. In 1882 he came to Oak Lake, at that time called Flat Creek, which was the end of the C.P.R. He took up homestead south of Flat Creek with his parents.

In 1888 he married Blanche Andrew and they had one child, a daughter, Dorothy who was loved by all and had a real community spirit. Mr. Banister drew stones for the foundation of the Anglican Church. Mrs. Banister played the organ for years. Mr. Banister was on St. Alban's vestry. He was a very enthusiastic curler and won many prizes at bonspiels. He delivered the first load of renown wheat, which graded No. 1 northern. Mr. Banister also delivered the first carload of wheat which then was comprised of 667 bushels to the Ogilvie Company, the grain was loaded at Griswold. In 1885 Nelson brought the first load of wheat to the old Ogilvie Warehouse. The



Mrs. Nelson Banister — "Gay 90's".

warehouse was demolished shortly after and the new elevator was built. Wilf Gordon was the local buyer in Griswold at that time.

Mr. Banister died in 1944. Mrs. Banister died in 1957.

### **Everett Herbert Batho**

submitted by Everett Batho

Everett Herbert Batho was born and lived for 40 years on a mixed grain and livestock farm at Minnedosa, Man. He married Anna Angell who was born and educated at Virden, Manitoba. On trips to Virden they realized the potential of the south Oak Lake area for a livestock enterprise. In the fall of 1951 they purchased section 10-9-24 and E ½ of 16-9-24 from Chas. G. Scott. In the spring of 1952 they moved their possessions, which included 65 head of registered Herefords and a full line of agricultural equipment, from Minnedosa, Mb., by truck and tractor. The family with 4 children came to stay in June 1952. Ron and Mary Louise attended Oakwood School and the University of Manitoba where Ron received a diploma in Agriculture and Mary Louise (Mrs. J. Fera, Mississauga, Ont.) a degree in Home Economics. Helen (Mrs. Ken Mitchell, Brookdale, Man.) graduated from Brandon College with B.A.

and Bachelor of Education degrees. Dorcas-Anne, a graduate of the University of Manitoba Agricultural College, now living in Winnipeg, took up journalism, writing for **The Manitoba-Co-operator** prior to her marriage in 1953 from the United Church in Oak Lake to Lorne Kristjansson.

The Bathos increased their breeding herd and expanded their acreage by purchasing the Aitken farm, section 8-9-24 and N½ 9-9-24 and the Valley quarter S.E. 9-9-24. In 1961, Anna and Everett purchased the Lloyd Iverson property and moved there (3-9-24) when Ron took over the home place. In 1966, he married Sheila Webber from Crandall. When Anna and Everett took semi-retirement in Oak Lake in 1979, Ron sold his holdings north of the CNR track to Lyall Croy and along with their two girls, Michelle and Tracy, they moved to Sec. 3-9-24. The farm was incorporated in 1967 under Batho Farms Ltd. The firm became widely recognized as breeders of registered Polled Herefords, winning many awards for Records of Performance at the Douglas Sire-indexing Station and shipping females to many parts of the world. When the Bathos came to Oak Lake, their method of raising beef cattle outdoors in winter attracted much attention from livestock farmers who followed the conventional method of housing their cattle in barns. Within 5 years most farmers were following the outdoors winter method. Their management practises on the grass and sandy loam, which brought the land into higher livestock productivity, have been recognized over the years by the many tours held on this farm from the University of Manitoba Agriculture College and from other farming areas in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. A tour has been arranged for the summer of 1981 for the Diploma Students.

Everett's mother, the former Ivy Louise (Lulu) Blackwell, was born at Marquette, Man., in Jan. 1878. At an early age she moved with her parents to the Blair District where she attended Blair School and later Normal School at Virden, Man. Her brother, Francis (Frank), born at Virden, worked many years for the Findlay family.

### **Herman Battersby**

Herman Battersby was a nephew of Mrs. R. T. Leonard. He was born in Montreal, May 23, 1902, later his family moved to New Brunswick. Herman's mother died when he was four and several years later it was decided he was to go west with his Aunt Belle. He arrived in Oak Lake February 1910.

Herman went to school at Lansdowne and Oakwood High. Very early he became interested in birds and nature. He spent hours looking for arrow heads. Aunt Belle told him to watch for a gold ring lost by

Mrs. Speers, who lived on the east ½ 22-8-24. He never found the ring while searching for arrow heads, but 60 years later he found it just outside the yard, as she had gone through the trees. The ring was just like new.



Herman Battersby Fishing.

Living only a half mile from the marsh, Herman became well acquainted with its treasure of wild life. He met Hamilton Laing, the naturalist, who taught him many many things about birds.

In 1921 he worked for the Canadian government, travelling with Hayes Lloyd as his supervisor. They went west and up into the North West Territories banding birds and collecting specimens. They drove a car and lived in a tent. After his trip he returned to the farm, but continued to carry on with his dream.

He married Mersetta Richardson, who was born at Harding. Aunt Belle and Uncle Dick Leonard retired to town and Herman and Mersetta took over the farm. They had four children, Phyllis, Leonard, Arthur and Kathrine.

**Leonard** — married Bunnie McLaughlin of Onanole, Manitoba and they have two children, Pamela and Brent. Leonard works for the Department of Highways and they make their home at Chater.

**Arthur** — married Delores Lowen of Brandon, and their children are Brooke and Carma. Arthur has the "Cardinal Muffler Centre" in Brandon, but resides in Chater, also.

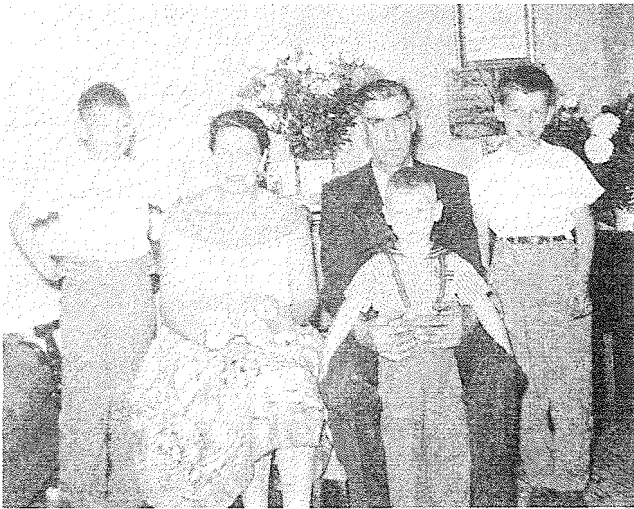
**Kathrine** — married Roger O'Donnel of Brandon, and they have two children, Corey and Lacey.

**Phyllis** — married Lionel Weatherald of

Wawota, Saskatchewan and lives in Oak Lake. Lionel works for the Fort La Bosse School Division and Phyllis nurses at Reston, Manitoba.

They have three children, Eileen, Barbara and Bryan. **Eileen** married Earle Calcut of Trinidad, West Indies. He works for Chimo Hardware in Virden, and Eileen nurses there. They have one son, Curtis Ryan. **Barbara** married Marcel Tousignant of Winnipeg, and he works for Lansard Roofing of that city. They make their home in Oak Lake. **Bryan** is at home, active in Scouts, hockey and most things boys like.

Herman retired to Oak Lake in 1970 and later moved to Oakwood Place. He passed away September 19, 1981.



Beasley Family.

### **The Beasley Family** written by Jean Beasley

Strictly speaking, Walter and Jean Beasley are not Oak Laker's, both having been born and grown up in Saskatchewan. Walter's family were early settlers near Lemberg and Jean's earliest memories are of Jasmin, post office near Ituna.

They met previous to the Second World War and their marriage took place at Jean's home on May 25, 1946.

Walter owned his own business, a garage and a truck. So it was at Pope, Manitoba, the family were born, and received the names of Ronald Hugh, Douglas James and William Brian. Walter dreamed of owning a business on a highway and he ventured to buy some land at Oak Lake on No. 1 in 1953, and started to build a garage. The family moved the next year, 1954, the end of June, the boys then being ages 4, 3, and a baby of one month.

The family continued to grow. The boys all at-

tended Oakwood School, also the United Sunday School and were active in the 1st Oak Lake Scout movement.

**Ronald** found employment with the Highway. **Douglas** attended the Red River College, taking a 2-year Civil Technology Course, and moved to live in Edmonton, getting his start with the Chevron Co. There he met Nadine (nee Linden) Maclean. They were married in July, 1972, and still live in Edmonton with two sons, Jordan, aged 13 and Quinten, who is 6.

**Brian**, completed his Gr. XII at Virden Collegiate, graduating with the highest mark in Science. He also attended Technical School, taking a 2-year Course in Instrumental Engineering. This was in Edmonton.

Brian and Nancy Johnston were married at Camrose, Alta., and have two children, a daughter, Charity, and a son, Scott. They now live at Bruderheim, Alta.

Ronald, lives in Regina, and married Lavonne Reich. He drives a tanker for the Co-op.

Walter Beasley and wife, Jean, have moved to Oakwood Place and were amongst the first of the residents there.

### **The James Black Family** submitted by Ethel Mooney (Black)

James Black was born December 14th, 1867 at Toronto, Ontario and came west to Oak Lake, Manitoba arriving March 17th, 1889. His first employer being Mr. R. K. Smith.

Mary Atchison was born December 1st, 1870 at Hereford, Ontario and came to Oak Lake in 1889. She was a seamstress and boarded with Mrs. Millar who at that time had a boarding house in Oak Lake.

On December 26th, 1892, Mary Atchison and James Black were married and raised a family of nine children.

Mr. Black held many prominent positions during his 58 years of residence in Oak Lake and district, and played an important part in the welfare of the community for many years. After farming for two years he accepted a position as a grain buyer and elevator inspector, up and down the Kirkella Line for Leitch Brothers Milling Company of Oak Lake. He held this position for 25 years. Later he took up farming again retiring in 1941.

Mr. Black served for several years as councillor and mayor of Oak Lake, and also as a trustee of Runnymede School. He was an assessor and weed inspector for the Rural Municipality of Sifton. He was an honorary director of Oak Lake Agriculture Society. Mr. Black was also a member of Oak Lake United Church and its managing board, and acted as

Justice of Peace. He was a life member of the Liberal Association of Brandon. A past Master of Oak Lake Masonic Lodge. A member of Court Royal Oak Number 19. C.O.F. and a former member of the Orange and Oddfellows Lodge.

Mrs. Black, busy with her large family, in her quiet way did much for the community. She taught the beginners class of the United Church Sunday School for ten years. Many of her pupils loved her and never missed an opportunity to call in for a visit. She took an active part in the Ladies Aid and Women's Missionary Society. Both Mr. and Mrs. Black were faithful supporters of the United Church.



Mr. and Mrs. Black.

Mr. and Mrs. James Black celebrated their golden wedding anniversary at their home in Oak Lake on December 26th, 1942. Mr. Black passed away April 24th, 1947 and Mrs. Black passed away November 3rd, 1953. They are buried in the family plot in the Oak Lake Cemetery.

James and Mary's children are as follows: Mary, James, Carrie, Lois, Emma, Mabel, Annie, Ethel, and Harold Hugh.

#### **Mary**

Mary Martha Black was born October 23rd, 1893. Mary was educated in Oak Lake and taught school several years before training for a nurse at the Winnipeg General Hospital graduating with a scholarship. She attended McGill University in Montreal. She was the first director of Nurses at the University Hospital in Edmonton previous to her marriage to Mr. T. E. Black (no relation) on July 6th, 1927. They had one adopted son, Donald, of Hereford, California. Mary passed away in Calgary, April 24th, 1972 and her husband passed away October 7th, 1956.

#### **James**

James Norris Black was born February 21st, 1895. He was educated in Oak Lake. He worked in Leitch Brothers' Office. James served overseas in World War I. On his return he was a bookkeeper for

Canadian Wool Growers' at Portage la Prairie before taking up farming. He farmed in the Oak Lake district and then at his homestead at Grahamdale, Man. James never married. He passed away February 5th, 1962.

#### **Carrie**

Carrie Victoria Black was born November 4th, 1896. She was educated in Oak Lake and also became a teacher. Carrie married Harold Wesley Glydon of Kipling, Saskatchewan on October 27th, 1920. They had four children, Wesley, John, Joyce, and Stanley. Carrie passed away February 5th, 1933 and is buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery. Her young family was cared for by her parents for a few years, then they returned to their father at Kipling. Harold passed away February 12th, 1979.

#### **Lois**

Lois Ellen (Nell) Black was born August 14th, 1898. She was also a teacher and educated at Oak Lake. Lois married R. M. Sutherland at Dubuc, Saskatchewan on December 22nd, 1919 where he was a Bank Manager. They lived in Winnipeg, Swift Current and Calgary. They had two sons, Fred and William. Lois was in an automobile accident and passed away December 25th, 1963. Her husband passed away August 28th, 1967.

#### **Emma**

Emma Laura Black was born December 9th, 1900 and passed away as an infant January 12th, 1901.

#### **Mabel**

Mabel Minerva Black was born June 2nd, 1905. Mabel was also educated in Oak Lake and took her training for a teacher in Brandon. She taught for several years and married Preston Matthews on September 3rd, 1930. They moved to the United States in 1936 becoming Americans. They had two children, James and Lois. Preston passed away February 13th, 1966.

Mabel was a baby when a cyclone destroyed the log house on the farm east of Oak Lake. It happened about 4 a.m. No one was hurt but the roof was carried a mile away, and the iron bed twisted and the wooden beds splintered. Mr. Bob Alford living across the road came as quickly as possible to the family rescue. They had taken shelter in the barn. The log house was destroyed, and eventually the present house was built.

#### **Annie**

Annie Gertrude Black was born March 22nd, 1908. She was also educated at Oak Lake, and started her varied career by teaching. She took her B.A. at Brandon, and her Masters from McGill University. She held many interesting positions, spending two years in Indore, India. Just before retiring she was again affiliated with the United Church at the beauti-



ful new University at Hiroshima, Japan, Annie never married and now lives in Vancouver.

### **Ethel**

Ethel Jean Black was born June 7th, 1910. She was educated in Oak Lake and chose to be a book-keeper. She married Joseph Mooney on November 6th, 1928 at Cartwright, Man. They had one daughter, Mabel Lois, Joe passed away December 6th, 1954. In Winnipeg Ethel was accepted by the Winnipeg Police Department as Police Matron, holding that until she retired in 1973. Ethel now lives in Cartwright, Man.

### **Harold**

Harold Hugh Black was born August 27th, 1916. Ethel can remember Mrs. Millar, Mrs. Lind's mother, coming out from Winnipeg to be with her mother at that time. On September 24th, 1941, he married Alice Clark. They had two children, John and Arleen. They moved to Winnipeg December 1st, 1953 and Hugh worked with Nelson River Construction Company as foreman until he passed away September 21st, 1972. His family all live in Winnipeg. John is with the fire department and Alice lives with her daughter.

The Black farm still remains in the Black name — over 65 years.

### **Thomas and Annie Black by Claris Gray**

Thomas and Annie Black retired to Oak Lake in 1939 from their farm at Harding. Mrs. Black died in 1942. Mr. Black remained very active for his years. I remember one day when I came to visit, he and Mr. Borthwick were bucksawing wood, one eighty-six years old and the other eighty-seven.

Mr. Black was remarried to Florence McKinnon, who predeceased him. Mr. Black died in 1952 and the property passed to his daughters, Jessie Bell and Emma McMillan.

**Jessie Black** married Delbert Bell and they moved in 1937 to Oak Lake from their farm south of Harding. Delbert worked for Tom Olive for two years. In 1939 he went to Oshawa to work at General Motors and Jessie followed in 1940.

Delbert died at Courtice, Ontario in 1970. Jessie returned to Oak Lake in 1975 and built a new house on the property formerly owned by her father, Thos. Black.

### **William Borthwick**

William Borthwick, originally from Fergus, Ontario, came to this area from Alberta where he had been employed on the Triangle Ranch, situated at the junction of the Belly and Old Man Rivers.

His interest lay in the feeding and marketing of beef cattle. He and Jack Aitken worked together for

several years using the farm which formerly belonged to Captain Fall, 8-9-24, as their headquarters.

During those years, they unloaded stock, both cattle and horses, at Maon Siding on the CN line and drove them the few miles east to the farm. Many of the horses were range broncos bought in Alberta, branded, and almost "halter broke".

On June 8, 1909, William Borthwick married Clair Bartlett, a girl from Newfoundland who had completed her nurse's training in Brandon Hospital, and was nursing for Dr. H. A. Wright in Oak Lake. Their home was the former Anderson property, now much enlarged and the home of Dr. and Mrs. Scherz. There was a stable on the property then, and Mr. Borthwick's little black mare, Babe, was known for miles in any direction of Oak Lake, as summer and winter he bought cattle for marketing.

Their home was a delightful place where they enjoyed the company of many good friends. But Mrs. Borthwick's profession was always a large part of her life, and during the 'flu' epidemic of 1918-1919, she turned her home into a temporary hospital and nursed as many patients as she could accommodate.

During the '20's, Mr. Borthwick bought beef stock for a Brandon firm. For this period they lived in Brandon, but returned in the mid '30's and farmed on the former Wm. McFarlane homestead.

During the Second World War, Mr. and Mrs. Borthwick retired to live in town. Mrs. Borthwick was accidentally killed on the highway by a passing car in December of 1952. Thereafter, Mr. Borthwick lived in the Eventide Home in Brandon until his death in 1957.

### **Bothe Family**

The "Bothe" family consisting of Chris, Rosina, Gordon, Linda, Darlene, Janice and Fay came from Brandon and bought a farm north of the river belonging to Mr. Driediger in 1949. That summer they bought the Brown's ¼ section in Oak Lake. The house was remodelled and the family moved in, October 1949. Chris Jr. was born the spring of 1950.

1951-1960 Chris served as trustee of Oakwood School. 1956-1958 Chris served on the Pool Elevator Board. 1960-1974 he was a councillor for the R.M. of Sifton. From 1974-1977 he served as Reeve.

Chris and Rosina are now retired and still reside on their ¼ section in Oak Lake.

**Linda** attended Oakwood High and went to Agricultural School in Brandon. She completed a secretarial course and moved to Dawson Creek. In 1958 she married Hans Roder of Dawson Creek and they moved to Edmonton. From 1965 to 1980 they homesteaded near Edson, Alberta. Linda and Hans have

four children, Leslie, Lorrie, Darin and Terri. They have now retired to Nanoose Bay on Vancouver Island.

**Darlene** attended Oakwood High and continued on to Brandon College where she received her teaching certificate. She began her teaching career in Sinclair, Manitoba. In 1964 she married Ray Bright (Oliver Bright family, Sinclair). They now live in Minnedosa with their three children, Ken, Susan and Janet. Ray is a medical doctor and Darlene is working toward her Arts Degree.

After completing her high school at Oakwood, **Jan** attended Brandon College and received her teaching certificate. She began teaching in 1962 at Kenton. In 1964 she taught in Nanaimo, B.C. In 1966 she married Eldon Iverson, who was a member of the RCMP. Eldon now practices law and Jan teaches in Port Hardy, B.C. They reside there with their five daughters, Janelle, Dana, Krista, Jill and Robin.

**Fay** attended Oak Lake Collegiate. She completed a secretarial course at Wheat City Business College in Brandon and began teaching in Minnedosa. She married Terry Tegg (Clarence Tegg family, Brandon) in 1973. They have two boys, Tyler and Brody, and are expecting their third child in fall. Fay is now teaching half-time and Terry is employed by Utah Mines in Port Hardy, B.C.

**Chris** completed high school at Virden Collegiate. In 1969 he joined the RCMP and was posted to Vancouver. Chris married Pat Bulloch (William Bulloch family, Reston) in 1971. Chris, now a Cpl. and Pat and their four daughters, Michelle, Lisa, Wendy and Lyndee, reside in Peace River, Alberta.

**Gordon**, was born at Brandon March 1st, 1935, attended Oakwood High and shortly after began working in the oil fields of Virden. In 1956 he married Anne Gompf (Lindsay Gompf family, Oak Lake). Anne was born at Oak Lake on May 2nd, 1937. She took a business course at Wheat City Business College after completing her schooling at Oakwood, and worked for Mutual Life of Canada before her marriage. Their wedding took place at Oak Lake United Church on October 20th, 1956. Gordon worked for the Toronto-Dominion Bank, Brandon and later worked on the Oil Rigs during the Oil Boom in Virden and area. He later became a contract pumper for Sun Oil, Fargo Oil and now Canadian Reserve Oil and Gas Co. Ltd. He also farms as well. Gordon was engaged in a mixed cattle and grain farm, showing cattle at the different fairs in the area and encouraging his children in 4-H. In 1967 the new curling rink was built in Oak Lake and Gordon and Anne along with Terry Hart and Donald Joynt scored the first "8 ender" in the new rink.

They have three children, Debbie, Kelly, and

John. They all showed cattle at many fairs and took part in many competitions where they did very well. Gordon farmed in the Harvey District when first married and later purchased the Elkington farm (14-11-24) in 1965 where he is still farming. He is an avid sportsman and enjoys hunting, fishing, curling, hockey, and most sporting activities.

Debra (Debbie) born November 30th, 1957 married Louis Schwindt on July 27, 1974. They live at Port Hardy, B.C. and have three children, Angela (Angie), Carie, and Jason. Lou is employed at Utah Mines there.

Kelvin (Kelly) born October 3, 1959 married Lorna Shaw from Cardale, Man., on August 2nd, 1980. Kelly is presently employed as a grain buyer for Manitoba Pool Elevator at Netley, Man., north of Teulon. Lorna graduated as a R.N. on June 26th, 1981.

John born August 24, 1963 graduated from Hamiota Collegiate on June 26th, 1981 and is presently employed by Manitoba Pool Elevator at Oak Lake, Man.

### **Maurice Bourgeois** submitted by Louise Lenning

My father, Maurice Bourgeois, was born in Matzigny, Switzerland on November 28, 1888. He came to Canada in 1912 and worked on farms for a few years around Sperling. My mother, Helene Derez, was born in Floreffe, Belgium on June 6, 1897 and came to Canada with her parents and a sister in 1902.

They were married in 1916 and took up farming at



Bourgeois Family 1938.

Swan Lake, Rosenort, Aubigny and Sperling. During the depression years Mother sold cream, butter and eggs in order to buy groceries. My father drove the school van for a few years in Sperling.

In 1942 they moved to Oak Lake, renting the farm of Dr. C. W. Burns of Winnipeg. Dr. and Mrs. Burns returned each summer with their two sons to holiday on the farm, living in a small cottage reserved for them. Land being lighter, crops were good and they built a good herd of cattle. The future looked good to them for the first time.

As we never saw deer before, we all grew to have a great love for them and hated to see them killed. We would see as many as fifteen in a herd and often some would come down to the ravine and eat with the cattle. One morning Dad was going for the milk cows when he heard a cry. Going towards the sound he came upon a fawn with a broken leg. Bringing it home, he made a splint for it and so the leg mended itself. That deer lived with us nearly two years. One day it was gone but several times this one deer came to eat with the cattle and Father called its name, which was "Bambi". He would raise his head and if you would walk towards him he would just wander away.

My parents retired to Brandon in 1947. They had seven children, Marsel — died accidentally at an early age, Louise — Mrs. Albert Lenning, Oak Lake, Isabelle — Mrs. J. Nicholson, living in Morden, Rene — Mrs. F. Shaw, living in Brandon, George — living in Souris, Irene — Mrs. K. Kullen, and Leo — living in Brandon.

Albert and Louise had two children, Mable — has two girls and one boy, and Arthur — has one girl and one boy. They were both raised in Oak Lake and attended Oak Lake schools. They both live in Alberta.

Mother suffered a stroke and passed away on June 3, 1965 and Father passed away after a brief illness on December 4, 1973. They are at peace in Brandon Lawnsite cemetery.

### **J. Thomas Bourque**

J. Thomas Bourque was born in Bonaventure Gaspé, Quebec in 1904. At the age of 19 he came to Dunrea, Man. and worked as a farm hand. In 1927 he moved to Storthoaks, Sask. where he worked in a general store and implement business. In 1931, he married Hedwige Beaudoin and they farmed for two years. He worked in a garage and in 1936 he opened his own garage business in Tilston, Man. In 1951 he purchased a general store in Oak Lake and operated it until his retirement in 1971.

Tom served on the Oak Lake town council. He took an active part in curling and golf and gave his



Mr. and Mrs. Tom Bourque, on their Wedding Day.

untiring support to the many hockey teams. He was the first president of Oakview Club and has guided many of its activities. Mrs. Bourque has been the leader of the crafts of Oakview Club and has been a member of the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Legion.

Their son, Paul, daughter-in-law, Glenda, and three children, Geoff, Gayle and Bonnie, live at Kamloops, B.C. Their daughter, Madeleine, son-in-law, J. Tvedt, and sons, Thomas and David, live at Logan Lake, B.C.

Mr. and Mrs. Bourque celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1981. The accidental death of Mrs. Bourque occurred on July 16, 1981.

### **Boyce Family History**

**submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Herb Hollier**

George Boyce who was born, raised and married in southern Ontario, moved to Elkhorn, Man. in the early 1900's where he farmed for several years before moving to the Oak Lake district, where he purchased the Cameron farm half a mile west of the town during the First World War years. Gordie, as he was known,

and wife, Esther, raised a family of seven sons and three daughters, Norman, David, John, James, William, Harold and Elmer, Edith, Lou, and Sadie, who are now all deceased.

**Sadie** — worked for a number of years as a telephone operator and later in Steen and Lind's store before her marriage to Bob Stephenson of Brandon. They had two children, Gwen in Alberta, and Cam, who is now deceased.

**Lou** — married Don Haggerty and farmed at Lake Valley, Sask. before moving to Oak Lake in the early thirties and farmed the Boyce farm, and later moved into town for a number of years before moving to Oak River. They had two children, a son, Bill, and a daughter, Georgia.

**William** — (Billy) with his wife, Alice, farmed two and a half miles south of Oak Lake (along the then called lake road) where they raised a family of five before moving to Lake Valley, Sask. Billy shortly after passed on. His wife now lives in Chilliwack, B.C.

**Harold** — Harold and Elmer, the youngest of the George Boyce family, played hockey in Oak Lake and I think were best known for the Shetland ponies they rode when coming to town. Harold moved to Winnipeg and was employed by the Shop Easy Stores, and later owned a business in Belmont, Man., retiring in Winnipeg.

**Elmer** — lived in Winnipeg and was employed at the Winnipeg Electric Co. Elmer passed away at the early age of 32 years leaving his wife, Isabel, and five children.

**Norman** — and wife, May, moved from the Elkhorn district to Oak Lake in 1919 where he owned and operated one of the two Livery Stables for a number of years, and during this horse age period also had the driving of the Hearse for the funerals in town, and later was in trucking business before moving to Winnipeg in 1936, and was employed as a maintenance man for Shop Easy Stores until his death in 1954, and his wife, May, in 1961.

They had six daughters and one son, who were all raised and attended Oakwood School. They are all married and live in the following locations: Gladys Humphrey and Norma Brown in Hope, B.C., Elsie Cosco in Kelowna, B.C., Esther Phillips in North Bay, Ontario, Sadie Hannah in Chilliwack, B.C., Edna Hollier and John Boyce in Winnipeg, Man.

## Lorne Boys

My father, James Richard Boys, was born in January, 1873 at Fergus Ont., and my mother, Margaret Jane Armstrong, at Arthur, Ont., at approximately the same date. They were married at Arthur,



Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Boys.

Ont., in 1898 and of this union, four children survived.

They journeyed, in 1904, by train, bearing the usual settlers effects, to the Elkhorn district with their two small daughters, Blanche (Wallace) and Hazel (Olive). No difficulties were experienced on the trip, to my knowledge. They took up residence on 27-10-28 where my brother, Arthur, and I were born.

The fall of 1918 we moved to the Oak Lake area to carry on farming operations. My father and I arrived in a box car, in the middle of a very cold December night, along with a bunch of horses. It didn't look good. I wanted to go back to Elkhorn. We spent the first winter of '18 on 29-9-23 and in the spring we moved to 22-9-23. Art and I attended Runnymede School. I went to school when there was nothing else to do.

I believe we had the last working horse-power in this part of Manitoba. People passing on No. 1 Highway would stop and come in to see why ten horses were running around in a circle. Griswold was our town then, and at that time it was really booming. There were three stores, two livery barns, two black-



smith's shops, two elevators, cafe, etc. There was always something going on in Lansdowne Hall.

In 1928, we moved south to 8-9-23 on the edge of the sandhills in the Runnymede district. The land, in the '30's, was too light for farming so we raised cattle. For about thirty-five years I ran a pasture, taking in cattle from Elgin to Oak River to the Sask. border.

Winter brought along lots of activities — house parties, concerts, and dances in the school. I remember one house party when the host discovered an uninvited guest selling homebrew in an upstairs bedroom. So he threw the man and his jugs out the window.

Along about 1940, Elsie Henderson, from Crandall, came to teach at Runnymede School. She was the first teacher I ever saw that thought I might amount to anything. Elsie was born of Swedish parentage in 1919 and came from Chilliwack, B.C., at the age of four, with her adoptive parents, George and Lena Henderson of the Crandall area. Here she received her schooling, graduating with Grade XII in 1939. She later attended Brandon Normal School. Prior and after our marriage on Aug. 14, 1943, she taught school and attended Brandon University becoming a certified Special Education teacher. She retired in June, 1981, from active teaching duties, following 25½ years in this profession.

We resided on our farm in the Runnymede district until 1976 when we moved to our home in the town of Oak Lake. We always enjoyed participating in activities in our local school area and in Oak Lake. I was a trustee of the Runnymede School for several years, a member of the Royal Oak Canadian Order of Forresters, and am presently involved with the Oak Lake Rodeo Association. Elsie and I also enjoy participation with the Oak Lake Toe Tappers Square Dance Club, the Golf Club, and are adherents of the Oak Lake United Church.

Our son, **Gareth**, was born in 1945. He received his high school training at Oakwood School, participating in sports, especially track and field. He was a 4-H member and attended Sunday School at Oak Lake. He and his wife, the former Linda Mellstom of Salt Springs Island, B.C., were married in the Oak Lake United Church, July 9, 1966. They were both supervisors at the Indian Residential School, Brandon, later graduating as auto mechanic and business secretary respectively. Gareth now owns his own business, Key City Automotives, in Brandon and Linda is employed as a secretary at Westbran. They have two daughters, Angela (1968) and Tania (1972).

Our daughter, **Marilynne**, was born in 1947 and also received her high school training at Oakwood

School. She attended Oak Lake Sunday School and 4-H Clubs. Later she obtained her Bachelor of Arts, Teacher's Training and Bachelor of Education at universities in Winnipeg. She taught school there prior to and following her marriage to Kenneth Waithman of that city in 1971. They have two children, Joel and Carrie Lynn. They now reside in Toronto, where Ken is an employee of the Wedgwood China Co.

### **Mr. and Mrs. Sinai Briere Sr.**

The family moved to Oak Lake from St. Anne des Plains, Quebec in 1889. There were seven children, Marie, Joachin, Marguerite, Isaie, Arthur, Joseph, and Francois.

Mr. Briere bought his farm from Mr. George Marcotte, south of Oak Lake, SW 19-8-23. As time went by, there were seven more children added to the family. They were Rose, Jean, Michel, Phileas, Clovis, Sinai Jr. and Elodie.

It was fortunate that the parents were strong and healthy because they had to do everything for themselves. The mother baked 110 loaves of bread a month, besides all the washing and cleaning for a large family. There was no school near the farm so the father acted as teacher, in French, as that was his language. Times were hard, money scarce, shoes for all could not be bought, so the young ones went barefoot, and had to stay in the house all winter.

The family travelled eight miles to St. Athanasius Church in Oak Lake every Sunday and missed very few trips.

One son, Joachin, died from T.B. in 1907. He contacted the disease from a boy he slept with. The parents did not realize it was contagious.

Marie married Ernest Colleaux and Marguerite married Charles Van Eslande. Later Isaie and Joseph married the Mongeon sisters, Albine and Valeda.

In 1913, Mr. Briere sold the farm to Mr. Valere Couderre for \$2600.00. In November of that year they moved to Monsota, Saskatchewan.

### **John Brisbane**

John Brisbane was a quiet and kindly man who emigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1930, coming to the Griswold area. Here he found work on the John McMeaken farm, staying there for twenty-five years.

Following the death of his employer, he moved to the S.E.¼ 16-9-23 and made a living from hay and livestock.

He finally retired to town, where he lived for some years on Oak Street. John later became a resident of Oakwood Place, until ill health forced him to enter Assiniboine Centre in Brandon.

He loved music and joined the United Church and Community Choirs. He played the organ and his accordion for his own enjoyment and anywhere else

that it gave pleasure, such as at the Citizens Drop-in Centre or in the Assiniboine activity room.

John Brisbane died there March 9, 1979 at 72 years of age. He had no family in Canada, but had two brothers and a sister in Britain. John's sister visited Oak Lake the summer following his death.

### **James R. Brownlie** submitted by Lillian Brownlie

Mr. James R. Brownlie came from Glasgow, Scotland, to the Oak Lake district in 1901. He later spent some time as a life guard in Chicago where he won many medals as a swimmer.

On returning to Canada he married Mabel Lambourn of Routledge, living first in the Scarth district, then moving to Virden where Mr. Brownlie was in the auto business. Later they moved to the Blakeman Ranch, then to the Oakview district where they farmed SW 16-9-25 until their oldest son, Ronald, married Margaret Hallett of Routledge, in 1945, and took over the farm.

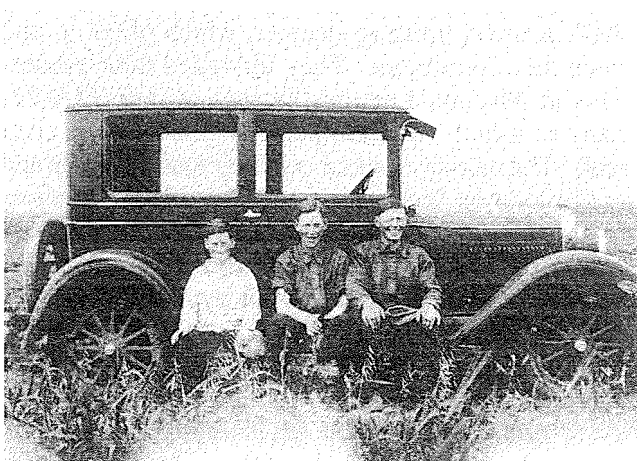
In 1955, Ronald and Margaret moved to Winnipeg where they now reside.

Mr. Brownlie retired to Virden and lived an active life, enjoying his hobbies, cabinet making and bowling, until his death in 1972.

Mrs. Mabel Brownlie remained in the old Virden home until ninety-three years of age. She now resides in the Sherwood and enjoys good health at the age of ninety-nine.

Kenneth, the third son, married Beth Lobel of Scarth. During the war he was in the Royal Canadian Navy. They had two sons, Steven, now deceased, and Leonard, attending Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. Kenneth and Beth reside in Winnipeg.

E. William Brownlie, the second son, left the farm to join the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942. In 1945, he married Lillian Hatch of Oak Lake. When



Ken, Bill and Ron Brownlie.

Bill returned from England after World War II, he remained in the R.C.A.F. They have two children, a daughter, Faye, and a son, Brian. This family moved to Virden in 1962.

Bill was employed as an aircraft engineer at Virden Airport and later at Brandon, with the Brandon Flying Club.

Mrs. Lillian Brownlie retired from teaching in Virden, in 1973. The Bill Brownlie family reside in Virden.

### **Jim Buck Family**

Rev. J. M. Buck, Mrs. Buck (Betty), and two of their sons, Paul and David, left Swan River, Man. to come to Oak Lake in Oct. 1968. Mr. Buck took charge of the parishes of St. Alban's, Oak Lake, St. Paul's, Alexander, and St. Luke's on Sioux Valley Reserve.

Paul went to Virden Collegiate starting in Grade X and David started Grade 3 Public School in Oak Lake. Both eventually received their Grade 12 diplomas from Virden High School.

In 1969 Mrs. Buck started working as Nurse's Aid in the Virden District Hospital, taking the L.P.N. course at Red River Community College in 1973-74. She is still nursing full time at this date.

In 1971 the opportunity was given to Mr. Buck by Bill Ross, to demolish the C.P.R. station house. The job was finished in 1972. Knowing that retirement age was fast approaching Mr. Buck decided to build a home in Oak Lake, using his share of the material salvaged from the station house. A building programme was begun and the Buck's moved into their present home in March, 1976. The house is a brick veneer on a full foundation. Some of the bricks from the station house were used, though not enough red bricks were salvaged to do the complete job. The white stone wainscoting, the stone windowsills and the front door (once 8' 2" high) are the visible parts of the old station house. The house plans were drawn up by the Buck's with help from Adolph Roziere.

Other members of the Buck family include Robert, on a farm near Haywood, Man., Sgt. Ken Buck with the R.C.M.P. at Langley, B.C. He has two children; Richard, organist and choir director at Sparling United Church, Winnipeg, also does professional repair work and tuning pipe organs; Joanne, an R.N., married living in Winnipeg, has two children; Cpl. Paul Buck with the R.C.M.P. in Edmonton, is married with one son; and Cst. David Buck with the Winnipeg City Police, also is married.

Mr. Buck retired from active parish work in 1973 but is still called on to assist in other parishes.

## Alvin Burch

Alvin Burch, son of Mr. L. C. Burch and the late Laurena Poole, was a soldier in H.M.S. Winnipeg Grenadiers. He served 18 months in Jamaica and was a prisoner of war for four years in Japan, after the fall of Hong Kong, returning to Winnipeg in 1945.

Alvin married Ruth White of Winnipeg and a few months later moved to Oak Lake, taking over the former Borthwick farm west of the fair grounds. He later became Postmaster and they moved to town. Alvin enjoyed curling, was a member of the Legion and took an active part on the school board. Ruth was a nurse at the Virden District Hospital. They were members of the United Church. Alvin and Ruth retired to Victoria, B.C.

Alvin and Ruth had three children, Evelyn, Janie Lee, and Jim, who received most of their education in Oak Lake before Alvin was transferred to Emerson. **Evelyn** received her B.A. and M.A. degrees in Vancouver. She married Clark Cook and has two sons, Shane and Jesse. **Janie Lee** received her B.A. from the University of Manitoba, married Martin Watt of Emerson and has two sons, Russell and Christopher. **Jim** graduated from Red River College. He married Debbie Ramsay of Dominion City and they have a daughter, Kelsey, and a son, Keith.

## L. C. Burch

Mr. L. C. Burch was born near Ottawa and came to Manitoba in 1888. He married Laurena Poole, daughter of Timothy and Francis Poole, Neepawa-Brookdale area, in 1908. They had two children, Edna (Whitcomb) of Oak Lake and Alvin Burch, former Postmaster, Oak Lake. Laurena passed away in 1918.

From Lanty's second marriage to Amy Derry, there were four children, Marjorie, Betty, Lucille, and William.

Mr. Burch came to Oak Lake in his senior years. He was an avid gardener and for several years was caretaker of the Oak Lake and St. David's cemeteries. He passed away December, 1966, age 82.

## Mrs. Eleanor Cairns, Her Father, John Bell Her Son, Andrew R. Cairns submitted by Phillis M. Cairns

In April 1882 the Cairns family established themselves in the — now — Ryerson District. This family of five children — Eleanor, Jack, Jennie, Andy and Fred — was headed by their widowed mother, Mrs. Eleanor (Bell) Cairns and their grandfather, 77 year old John Bell. Eleanor Bell had married John Cairns of Morpeth, Northumberland, England, July 13,



Grandma Eleanor Cairns.

1860. Their marriage certificate is the prized possession of her grandson, Henry Cairns.

After landing in Montreal in April 1882, the Cairns family travelled by C.P.R. to Brandon. While the family waited there in a tent Grandpa Bell, Duncan McCallum and J. Ward selected homestead land in what is now Woodworth Municipality. On his return to Brandon, Grandfather Bell and the family loaded all their possessions, including a team of oxen, a cow, farm implements, household supplies, furniture and lumber for their home on "The Alpha", a wood-burning steamer, which plied up and down the Assiniboine. They unloaded their possessions at Mission Landing located on NE 32-9-23, many of which were temporarily piled on the river bank. The family walked north across an open and lonely land to their claims — SE 30-10-23 (Eleanor's) and adjoining claim NE 30-10-23 (Grandfather's). There they set up housekeeping in a tent until the homestead shack, built by A. J. Todd, was ready of occupancy (just west of Harold Cairns' buildings now owned by Blair Fordyce). Built of shiplap inside and out and boasting no insulation, the shack proved to be well nigh unbearably cold in winter, despite the fact that all cracks were sealed with mud.

May 22, 1882 Grandpa Bell walked 30 miles to Brandon registry office to file the homestead claims. Regulations required each homesteader to build a dwelling and live on the claim for six months of every year for three years, as well as to attend to improvement and cultivation. Grandma Eleanor could not afford a separate dwelling. She wrote the Minister of the Interior at Ottawa asking special consideration for her situation. This was granted and the family remained in Grandpa Bell's home.

**Eleanor** — the oldest daughter, soon moved to the Ainsworth-Nelson area of British Columbia where she married and remained for many years.

In 1882, Grandma Eleanor or her father made several trips on foot to Brandon for supplies — a two day round trip. All purchases had to be carried. The walking was necessary as the oxen were kept busy plowing.

Their first wheat crop, 30 acres of Red Fife (seed bought from R. Findlay at SW 16-10-23), yielded 20 bushels per acre. Wheat for grist was hauled to Souris Mill and a year's supply of flour brought home. The rest was ox-teamed to Brandon during the winter and sold.

Three good years gave way to dry years and the Bell-Cairns farm was in trouble. Grandpa thought the only way to farm was the English way — plow deep and leave the soil standing on end. Finally the family was debt ridden, in danger of losing everything, and Grandma was in despair. At 16 years of age, Andy assumed management of the farm and gradually pulled them out of debt.

Grandma Eleanor Cairns' home became an important centre in the community as Methodist Church services began there in 1884 with The Reverend Avison of Griswold-Alexander Mission. All denominations were welcomed. Grandma had the first organ in the district which helped with church services, musical evenings and dances held at her house. Even before the organ, part singing was enjoyed, A. J. Todd lead the group with his tuning fork.

Andy procured a violin which he loved to play and later bequeathed to his son, Henry. Henry also has the letter of appreciation, written January 1, 1887 to Grandma Eleanor by the church elders, when the church was moved to Ryerson School (built in 1886 on the SE corner of her homestead).

Grandma belonged to the first ladies' group in the district, which through the years evolved into the W.M.S. and then U.C.W.

October 5, 1893, John Bell Cairns (Jack) bought NW. 19-10-23 from the C.P.R. It is not clear when Grandma Eleanor moved to this land from Grandpa Bell's, or who built the new house and barn. (The house was later moved to the Wm. Cowing place and

became Maskawata Post Office). However the place did become the family home. A shelter belt still marks the location.

**Jack** — married Florence Todd and established his home on NE 28-10-23, (homesteaded by S. A. Haight in 1882).

**Jennie** — the second daughter, stayed with her mother all through the years. Between 1915 and 1920 Grandma Eleanor and Jennie retired to Oak Lake. They bought the house now owned by the Lionel Weatherald Family. The exterior of this house is reported to have been originally of bricks made at Mab Marion's Cherry Point brickyard in the late 1880's.

In 1928 Grandma Eleanor Cairns died at 87 years of age.

**Jennie** later married Jack Scott of Ainsworth, British Columbia, but died in 1944. Both ladies were buried in Johnston Cemetery beside Grandpa John Bell, who died in 1896.

**Andy** fell heir to Grandpa Bell's homestead. Later he successfully bid \$10.00 per acre for NW 29-10-23 at a School Lands Auction held at Oak Lake, June 5, 1900 — T. C. Norris, Auctioneer. By November 3, 1906 inflation would seem to have set in as Fred Cairns paid \$26.50 per acre for the adjoining NE 29-10-23 (now Henry's farm). Through the years Andy also acquired title to 4½ more quarters of land.

As a young man, Andy invested in a Garr-Scott steam tractor, the pride of his life, and a Sawyer-Massey threshing machine and made a business of custom threshing. He also loved horses and for years bred good Clydesdales upon which he squandered nearly as much attention and affection as on his family!

Andy was a great person to "dicker". To him it was a real challenge to try to make "a good deal". He would dicker on anything — a house, a horse or a set of harness — it mattered not.

In the winter and spring of 1907, Andy built a good frame house and a fine barn on NE 30-10-23 (Grandfather Bell's homestead).

June 5, 1907 he married Frances Townsend from Elkhorn, who came with her parents and three sisters from Acton, Ontario in 1897. They had two sons, Harold (1908) and Henry (1910).

As a young couple, Andy and Frances entered into the affairs of the community, were members of the Ryerson Methodist Church, used Ryerson Beef Ring, sent their sons to Ryerson School, often boarded teachers and served on school and church boards. Frances was a member of Ryerson W.M.S.

Andy also served as Roadmaster, laying out and building many roads north of the Assiniboine Valley — all with horses.





Mr. and Mrs. Andy Cairns and sons Harold and Henry.

He deplored the passing of the flesh-and-blood horsepower era. He worried that total mechanization would be too expensive and that farmers would soon find themselves in bankruptcy.

Andy and Frances retired to Oak Lake in 1939 where he died January 25, 1953 at the age of 78. His wife, Frances, lived to be nearly 85 and died in Brandon General Hospital in January 1969. Both are buried in Oak Lake Cemetery.

**Fred** — the youngest of the Eleanor Cairns family, married Millie Gompf and settled on SW 30-10-23, the homestead of Wm. Shaw, the Younger. He also acquired his mother's homestead SE 30-10-23 and NW 19-10-23 when Grandma moved to Oak Lake.

### Harold C. Cairns

Harold Cecil, oldest son of Andrew and Frances Cairns was born at the farm home (NE 30-10-23) March 31, 1908. He started school at Ryerson and took the higher grades at Oakwood. He completed his B.A. at Brandon College about 1929. Harold decided that farming was the life for him so helped

his brother, Henry, and his father in the operation of the home farm, to which several parcels of land had been added. In 1939 he took full control when his mother and father moved to Oak Lake permanently.

Harold was a fine skater and enjoyed "band nights" at the rink. He was also interested in curling in his younger days.

November 6, 1939, Harold married Irene Winifred, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Meadows of Oak Lake.

They were always interested in community affairs and were active church members in Oak Lake United Church and later at St. David's. Harold acted on the Ryerson School, beef ring and St. David's boards. He, like many farmers, was a good mechanic and repairman and handy at carpentry.

Irene was a member of the W.M.S., U.C.W. and sometimes boarded the Ryerson teacher. Harold and Irene enjoyed travelling and in various trips had motored coast to coast and to New York in the days when such trips were considered unique. They were enthusiastic square dancers and were among the first members of the Oak Lake Toe Tappers.

One day in the 1940's Irene and Mr. Brown the dog were sailing along the gravel road in the little old Model T (transformed into a truck) when she lost control and upset in the ditch. Irene survived unscathed after wriggling out of her coat, which was pinned under the truck. Mr. Brown suffered a facial cut and lit out across the field in great confusion.

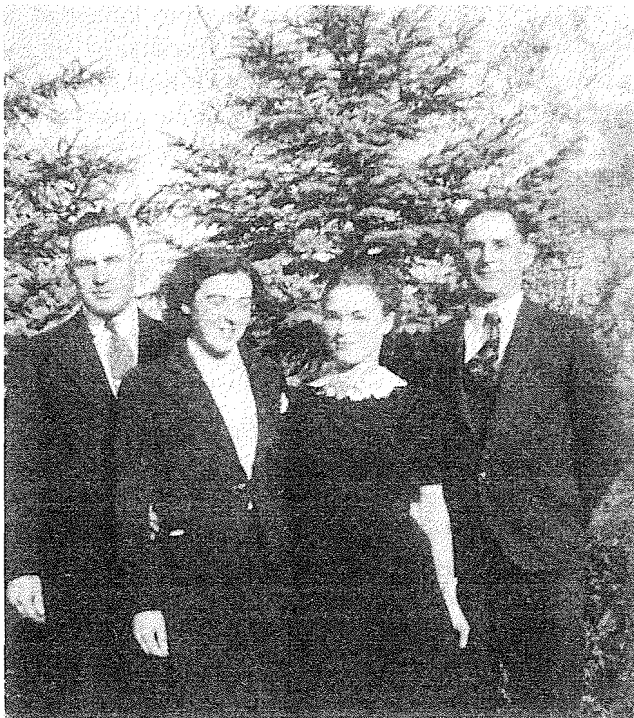
Harold's and Irene's family consisted of two chosen children — Dennis Harold and Debra Winifred.

Harold and Irene farmed until Harold's ill health forced retirement to Brandon in 1976. Irene also became ill in 1978. Harold passed away in February 1979 and Irene the following June. Both were interred in the Oak Lake Cemetery.

Dennis and Debbie took their schooling in Ryerson, Oak Lake and Virden. Dennis farmed briefly after his dad's retirement then sold the land to Blair Fordyce. Dennis married Darlene Curry of Killarney, Manitoba and has a son and a daughter. Debbie married Eugene Sturby (a welder), has one son and lives in Brandon.

### Henry Cairns

Henry Robert, second son of Andrew and Frances Cairns, was born August 10, 1910 at their farm home NE 30-10-23. For several days prior to the event, his mother with horse and buggy and two year old Harold, followed Andy's binder around the wheat field — she was afraid to stay alone and the harvest couldn't wait! Dr. Wright attended the birth and at the same time was receiving urgent telephone calls from



Henry and Phillis, Harold and Irene Cairns.

Mrs. A. A. Cameron who was awaiting her son Bob's imminent arrival. The boys were born about an hour apart.

Henry attended Ryerson and Oakwood Schools. He thoroughly enjoyed playing on the Ryerson baseball team, manned mainly by Todd boys and coached by their father, Frank Todd. He also played for Oakwood High.

Henry joined the Oak Lake Citizens' Band in 1923. He credits Mr. English, the Oakwood principal, with helping him understand the cornet, and for many years he helped supply band music for skating, Saturday night band concerts, Brandon Fair and other guest appearances.

Like many other young people of his day Henry's main winter activities were skating and curling.

Henry sang tenor in Oak Lake United Church choir for years and later joined St. David's choir, participating also in the 1967 Centennial Choir.

As a small child Henry liked to call at Maskawata Post Office (the Wm. Cowing home) for the mail. He remembers standing one day, with his hands on the sorting table, and Helen Cowing stamped him as well as the letters.

Henry was greatly intrigued by his Dad's steam outfit. He likes to recall the hurry-scurry of threshing with the big crews, the thrill of the piercing whistle and the banter of the hungry men devouring huge helpings of steaming food.

Run-a-ways were also such unscheduled events,

creating great excitement, sometimes injury and always additional work and expense for someone. Henry will never forget how helpless he felt that day in 1931 when his Dad was badly injured by a kick from Charlie, the Clydesdale stallion, who had gotten out of hand.

He recalls, too, a long-ago harvest episode when he'd stopped to tinker with the binder. The horses stood, the picture of weariness, with heads drooping to their knees. Without warning or apparent cause the four-horse team exploded into action and galloped wildly across the field with the binder jouncing and bouncing behind them and Henry coming in a poor second.

That was less disastrous than the eight-horse team which ran blindly toward a disc standing in the field. The outside horses pulled around it, but the centre ones, obliged to leap across the disc, couldn't make it. The result was a great tangled mess of broken harness and injured horses.

Henry married Phillis Johnson of Elkhorn, Manitoba, and established their home on NE 29-10-23 where they have lived since July 1938. Phillis taught school at Burnbank and Ryerson rural schools and retired in 1976 after commuting to Brandon schools for 18 years.

Henry and Phillis are retired but remain in their farm home. Their greatest joy is having family and good neighbours close by and grandchildren dropping-in often.

They have three children, Enid, Rodney and Tom who were educated at Ryerson and Oakwood schools. Their transportation to the rural school was by means of a two wheeled cart in summer and a cutter in winter with "Mr. Punch" between the shafts.

**Enid** — born in 1942, completed her grade IX piano as well as high school and University to become an elementary teacher. In 1963 she married George Dorward of Killarney, now a computer programmer and analyst with Manitoba Telephone. They live in Winnipeg and have two children, Kurt Gary born in 1969 and Melanie Lisa in 1974. Enid is now receptionist/resource librarian at United Church House.

**Rodney** — born in 1944, and employed by the Crown Lands Branch of the Department of Agriculture, was transferred from Winnipeg to Brandon in 1979. This move enabled him to assume the management of the home farm. He and his wife, Mary Shears of Lyleton, and their children, Wendy Lee (1969) and James Robert (1975) live on SW 28-10-23 pre-empted in 1886 by James Cochrane. This land was later owned by Rodney's grandfather, Andy

Cairns, then by his Dad. Mary is a legal secretary with a Virden firm.

**Tom** — born in Winnipeg in 1949, resides in Oak Lake. He is a trucker employed by G. N. Transportation, Virden, an oil trucking company. Tom is a motorcycle, snowmobile and photography enthusiast.

### **Fred Cairns Family**

Fred married Millie Gompf 1908 or 1909 and settled on the former Wm. Shaw, homestead SW 30-10-23. He also acquired his Mother's homestead and NW 19-10-23 when Grandma moved to Oak Lake.

Fred served on Ryerson School Board and on the Oak Lake Pentecostal Church Board. Millie devoted her time to church and family. If asked how to do this or that her explanation always began "Well you just go to work and . . ."

They raised four sons, Earl (1910), Clinton (1913), Cecil (1918) and chosen son Raymond (1936). All attended Ryerson School. One daughter, Marjorie, died in infancy.

Fred and Millie Cairns retired to Oak Lake in 1944, purchasing the house built by a Mr. Mortram who worked at Leitch's Mill.

Fred died suddenly in July 1946, in his mid sixties. Millie moved to Hillcrest Place, Brandon, in her late 80's where she resided until her death at 94 years in March 1978.

**Earl** trained for the ministry, obtained his doctorate in Greek, taught at Wheaton College, Illinois, for many years and wrote several books on the history of religion. He is now partially retired. He and his wife, Helen Purdie, of Winnipeg, had one son, Bruce, in 1944. Helen died in the late 1960's. Earl later remarried.

**Clinton** served as pastor of the Pentecostal Church at Morden, Manitoba, for many years. In 1962 he graduated as Manitoba's first male nurse, retiring in 1978. In 1943 Clinton married Vera Cromarty of Brandon, stenographer and part-time L.P.N. They live in Winnipeg.

**Cecil** remained on the family farm in Ryerson. He married Naomi Stockford of Holland, Manitoba, in February 1945. Cecil's carpentry hobby helped him remodel much of the old farm home. Naomi divided her time between home and family and like many other farm wives, trucked grain for hubby during harvest, Cecil, Naomi and family are Pentecostal Church members. In 1973 they sold the farm to Jerry Vollmer of California and moved to Brandon in 1974. Cecil has since been employed at the Department of Agriculture Research Station.

Cecil and Naomi raised two daughters, Marilyn

(1947) and Darlene (1952) who were educated at Ryerson and Oakwood Schools. **Marilyn** became a trained nurse. She married Wayne Phillips of Forrest, Manitoba in 1969. They have three youngsters, Tracy, Jason and Stephanie Laura and live in Brandon.

**Darlene**, a lab technician, lives and works in Vancouver.

**Raymond** married Ruth Beeby of Saskatoon in 1957. They live in Calgary where Raymond works for Triline Trucking Company. They have three daughters — Darla, Donna and Jackie.

### **John B. and Jim Cairns' Family submitted by Mavis Allum**

Andrew Cairns, a grocer in England, had a son, John, who married Eleanor, daughter of John Bell, July 13, 1860. In 1882, Eleanor, a widow, brought her three sons, Andrew, John and Fred, and two daughters, Eleanor and Jennie, and her 77 year old father, John, from Morpeth, Northumberland, England. They homesteaded in the Ryerson District, the NE ¼ of 30-10-23.



Mr. and Mrs. Jack Cairns, Jim on pony, hired help, Jessie (Todd) Edwards and boys.

**John Bell** (Jack) Cairns and Florence Isabel Todd were married in 1904. They had four children — Ernest, James, Jean, and John. Ernest died when he was a small child. John died in 1980. Florence Isabel Cairns died December 11, 1918. John Bell remarried, Jennie Hamilton, a widow from Brandon, who had three children from her previous marriage. She later moved to Saskatchewan and then to Winnipeg. John Bell died May 22, 1947.

**James Walter**, second son of John and Florence, born December 12, 1906, farmed NE 21-10-23, one mile south of the homestead. This farm, owned by John Bell, was previously rented by Mark Jordan, until James moved there. James' school years were

spent at Ryerson when he wasn't home farming. As a young lad, James learned to butcher, be a mechanic and farmer. In 1934, James married Gladys Basaraba of Dauphin. They had three children — Harvey, Melvin and Mavis. James was the district's unofficial veterinarian and was always willing to lend his neighbours a hand. Gladys worked hard on the farm. Her many geese and ducks made warm down comforters and pillows. Her green thumb made for bountiful harvests and her beautiful flowers adorned many a home. She was a generous neighbour.

**Harvey James** — born May 23, 1939, spent his school years at Ryerson and Oakwood. He worked in the Bank of Montreal for one and a half years before becoming a mechanic. He is presently employed by Nield Brothers of Virden. His interests are photography, square dancing and wilderness activities. Harvey married Bridget Archibald of Lenore. They have three children — Leah, Lorena and Sean.

**Melvin James** — a twin, was born April 19, 1941. He received his schooling at Ryerson and Oakwood. On leaving school, he was employed with Manitoba Hydro several years until becoming an electrician. He is presently employed in Brandon. He is an active hunter and fisherman, with an interest in model airplanes. Melvin married Linda McEachern of Neepawa. They have three children — Sheri, Leanne and Richard.

**Mavis Jean** — a twin, was born April 19, 1941, receiving her schooling at Ryerson and Oakwood. Her younger years were spent playing ball with the Oak Lake girls. Mavis married Cecil Allum of Oak Lake. They lived at Oak Lake three years while Cecil was employed with the telephone and on farms. They moved to Elkhorn in 1963 with their two children, Shelly and Scott. An infant son, Kenneth, died in 1962. They farmed and when Cecil started his own carpentry business, moved to town. Mavis works at the Elkhorn Hospital, is very active in community affairs, the volunteer Ambulance Service, Chamber of Commerce and in the church. They have two grandchildren, Eric and Kevin.

### **Jean Elnor Cairns**

I was born in the Ryerson district, was educated in Ryerson school, Oak Lake and Winnipeg. I was christened in St. David's Church later attending Ryerson Church. I graduated as a Registered Nurse from Regina General Hospital in 1932.

I returned to my home in 1935, and spent the next few years nursing for Dr. Yule in and around Kenton and Harding districts until my marriage to Thomas W. Lyall. We farmed northwest of Kenton until his death in 1967. I moved into Kenton where I still reside. We had one son, **Gordon Wayne Lyall**, who

teaches in the Hamiota Collegiate. Gordon married Karen Heape of Deleau. They have two children, Bradley Todd and Tracy Lee.

### **John Francis Cairns**

John was the youngest son of John Bell Cairns and Florence Isobel Cairns (Todd). He attended Ryerson School travelling with his sister and brother with a horse and cart. They had many struggles in their early years as they lost their Mother when she was a young woman. She spent several years in Ninette Sanitarium, suffering from tuberculosis and died the year of the bad influenza epidemic.

In 1940 John married Gladys Jordan, daughter of William and Cora Jordan. John farmed with his Dad until 1947. They raised a family of four.

**William John** — who married Pat Taylor of Sioux Valley. They are raising a family of five girls Yvette, Angela, Nicole, Roxanna and a niece Candice Williams.

**Sandra Gladys** — married Nick Hnatiw, Oakburn, Manitoba.

**Sharon Beth** — married Wayne Hjlmeland, Brandon. They have one son, Wayne and two daughters — Teresa and Amanda.

**Colleen Debra** — married Merlin Buskas, a widower with two children, Shannon and Darryl. Colleen and Merlin have two daughters Glenda and Lomi. They live at Fernintosh, Alberta.

John and Gladys lost an infant son in 1951. They served as foster parents to a large number of children as well as raising their own family.

In 1977 John and Gladys bought a house in Oak Lake which had been owned by the late John and Ethel Bell. They continued to operate the farm until 1980, when due to ill health, John rented the farm. On November 12, 1980 cancer claimed his life. Gladys continues to live in their home in Oak Lake.

### **The Cameron Family**

**Contributed by: Air Vice Marshall Robert Cameron, Washington, D.C.**

**Mrs. H. H. C. Rutledge (nee Anna Beatrice), Ottawa, Ont.**

**Mrs. Robert MacNeill (Helen Gertrude), Winnipeg, Man.**

Alexander Anderson Cameron, born Aberfeldy, Scotland, 1864 — died Oak Lake, 1948.

Katherine Rebecca Steen, born Streetville, 1877 — died Winnipeg, 1956.

Alex Cameron was born in Aberfeldy, Scotland in 1864. We have few recollections of his childhood. He obtained what was the equivalent of a grade eight education, and was later apprenticed in his father's drapery shop.



At this time in history there was a great migration of young people to the New World, and Father chose Canada. Other than, that he settled in Eastern Canada with cousins, Rutherfords, we know little of this time in his life. He returned to Scotland and later returned to Canada and the West and Winnipeg, where he was employed with a merchant, Jerry Robinson.

Several years later he went further west and settled in Oak Lake. The C.P.R. was rushing at all possible speed for the west coast, and Oak Lake was the end of steel at this time, and Father set up his own store here.

From the late 1890's until the late 1920's, he carried on his business in conjunction with Ephriam Steen who had come west from Streetsville, Ontario. He met and courted Katherine Steen who had come west to keep house for her brother. They were married in 1906 and took up residence in the home he had built that became known as "Lochiel".

The social life of the time centered around Cameron's Hall, and the church. Formal dances were held in the 'Hall' attended by beautifully dressed ladies and gentlemen. Calling cards were in use, and each lady had her day at home, when she received her friends.

Alex Cameron, as well as running the local store became interested in the breeding of livestock, was involved in the running of the town's affairs, and served as Justice of Peace, school trustee and elder of the church. Father was a "tree man" and planted many trees about the town to add to its beauty. He donated to the town, property which was to become the memorial park, and also the property for the golf course.

Mother adapted well to her new life and also became deeply involved in the community life. She became an ardent horsewoman and curler. She also sang in the church and taught a Sunday School class known as the Alpha class.

In the early 1920's Father turned over his business to Mr. Steen, and retired for a time. Then he became associated with Traders Finance Company, to be, what in those days was called a business Doctor. This involvement entailed a great deal of travel and with the children reaching University stage in their education we spent the winters in Winnipeg. It was during this period that Father bought the Lepage store in Medicine Hat, and which he ran until his retirement in 1943.

Father died at his home in Oak Lake in 1948.

Mother continued to live at Lochiel, spending part of each year with her three children, in Ottawa, Port Credit and Winnipeg. In 1954 it became impossible for her to maintain her home and she went to Ottawa to live with Anna Beatrice, and later in Winnipeg, where she died in 1955.



Grandma Campbell 1926.

### **The James Campbell History** by Lillian Campbell

Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Campbell came west in 1883 from Guelph, Ont. and were married in Portage la Prairie that year.

In a couple of years they moved to Oak Lake where Mr. Campbell was employed as a tin-smith with C. V. Anderson.

He later opened his own tin-smith shop in Moosomin, Sask., but only stayed a few years when he moved the family back to Portage la Prairie, while he set off for San Francisco to open an outfitting establishment to outfit the men who were rushing north to the Klondike.

Mr. Campbell met with an untimely death in Montana so never realized his dream.

In 1897, Mrs. A. H. Campbell was offered the postmistress job, which she accepted, so the family moved back to Oak Lake, accompanied by her mother, Mrs. Smith, to help care for her four children, Roy, Allan, Nora, and Will.

Their first home was one half of the "Unique Building" across the track; the other half was occupied by Leitch Bros. Flour Mills' office staff. When Leitch's required all the space, they moved to the "Marshall house", now the Anderson home.

The first office was in connection with Robin Hood's General store, however, the Campbell's moved into a small office between Jas. Andrew's and the stone store and this was used until 1913, when it was gutted by fire.

Mrs. Campbell and Will, who was assisting her by now, built their own office between Lamond's Meat Market and T. J. Parson's Hardware, and this office served them well until they sold to Wm. Cochrane in 1928.

The family had scattered by this time. Roy, who trained as tin-smith with T. J. Parsons had gone on to

Vancouver. **Allan** who learned to set type at the News Office under Norman Casey's teaching, had gone to Elgin, Man., and **Nora** helped in the office with her Mother and Will until 1912 when she married Tom McQueen and moved to Vancouver.

Roy and Allan both served in the first World War, Allan being killed at Vimy Ridge.

Roy returned and finally settled in Portland, Oregon, where he lived with his wife, Edith Sutherland, until he passed away in 1942.

Nora passed away Jan. 1969.

Mrs. Campbell retired to Vancouver when she sold the office in 1928 and passed away in 1946 at age 86.

Will left the Post Office in 1926 and with wife, Lillian (Gordon), opened a General and Hardware store in Morwayne, Alta. retiring to Edmonton in 1954. He passed away in 1978.

The Campbell's last home in Oak Lake was the cottage now owned by Marguerite (Joynt) Wallace. This cottage had been built by Mrs. Campbell's father some time in the early 1890's and Mrs. Smith, her mother, lived there for some years. It was then sold to Jack Hood and later Will and Mrs. Campbell. Mrs. Hood was also a daughter of Mr. Adam Smith, so this home up until 1928 had always been in the hands of relatives.

### **Carberry History** submitted by Cec. Keough

I am the oldest in the Carberry family. We were five girls and one boy, Cecile, Estelle, Jean, Clara and Isabel, Maurice the youngest was the only boy. My Dad was born in Hull, Quebec, named Arsene, but his name was really John, born of an Irish father, John Carberry, from Belfast, Ireland and a French mother, Josephine St. Louis of Hull. They came to Oak Lake, before the railway was built and settled three and a half miles straight south of Oak Lake, on a homestead and in the district of Lansdowne. In my Dad's family there were five children, Mary, Arsene (John), Tom, Patrick, and Albert. They are all deceased, of course.

The place was taken as a homestead by my father's uncle whose name was Grandmaison. Dad was just a young boy and he, his sister and brothers all went to Lansdowne School. Finally, when my Dad's uncle passed away the farm was left to my Dad. Sec. 3-9-24 was the half section's number and later he owned another half section near the large lake, west of our place. I think Roussons own it. Mr. Batho lives on our old farm place. My Dad was married in 1900, in the little Roman Catholic Church. He married Rosalie Berard from Winnipeg, Man. I was born in 1904. People who first bought our home, Iversons,



Mr. and Mrs. Carberry and Children.

built another house just a bit farther south, from the first one. We were all born in the first house. I was the oldest, a teacher for a number of years and married William Keough, from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island who was also originally from Belfast, Ireland.

**Estelle**, the second girl in the family worked for the Saskatchewan government, went to Whitehorse, Yukon to work as a steno. there and married Robert Lynn. She now lives in Vancouver.

**Jean**, the third girl, married Robert Blackwell, from Harding, Man. and now lives in Brandon, Man. She had one daughter, Roberta.

**Clara**, the fourth girl, married Edward Elliott, lives in Winnipeg, Man., has one daughter, Janice, and two grandchildren.

**Isabel**, the fifth girl, lives in Vancouver, married Hector MacLachlan, has a son and two daughters and two grandchildren.

**Maurice**, was the last and only boy. He died in an accident in 1953. He lived in Calgary.

My father died June 5th, 1940 and Mother died Oct. 4th, 1954.

I am a widow, having lost my husband four years

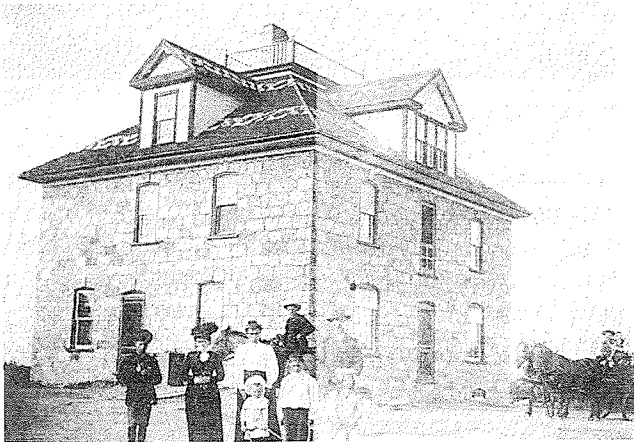
ago. Whenever I have an opportunity to go East, my heart is always set to stop in Oak Lake, although this is not often. I often wish I had relocated there after I became a widow. The scenery is so lovely and you are to be congratulated in keeping your town so beautiful. Two years ago, Estelle and I made a quick trip to Oak Lake and we were highly received at Mrs. George Smiths, Mr. and Mrs. Kinnear's, and we also visited friends that used to be neighbours at the Senior home, Clifford Gordon and Herman Battersby.

### **The Carpentier Family**

Aime N., Arthur H., Ernest R., Eve M., Alice N., Phillip J. (Died 1914), Wilfred G., George L. (Died in infancy).

#### **Joseph L. Carpentier**

Born in Riviere du Loup, Quebec, worked his way west with the railroad, arriving Flat Creek, (now Oak Lake) in 1881. After spending the winter in Brandon, he borrowed a boat to cross the flooded river, walked up the hill and located his land on the N.W. quarter of 4-10-21. He built a log cabin and batched for nine years, then married Adelia Filteau, sister of his best friend, Napoleon Filteau. In 1904



Joseph Carpentier's Home and Family.

they built a large three storey stone house complete with the first acetylene lights in the district. He bought two more quarters adjoining his original quarter. Later Aime bought the fourth quarter to complete the full section. After leaving the farm, Mr. Carpentier was "Weed Inspector" for Sifton Municipality for several years. He was indeed one of the true pioneers of that part of the West.

A brother of Dad's, Nazaire Carpentier, farmed for a few years in the Lansdowne district on NW 34-8-24 before moving on to Saskatchewan.

#### **Mary Adelia Filteau Carpentier**

Born in Three Rivers, Quebec, she came to Oak

Lake with her brother, Hormidas, and step-mother, in 1882. Later she lived with another brother until her marriage in 1890. She was known and respected for her gentle nature and courage, raising a large family in those difficult times marked her as another true pioneer of the early West. She died in Brandon in February, 1951.

#### **Aime N. Carpentier**

After attending Harvey School, Aime later studied at St. Boniface College and the Agricultural College in Winnipeg. For some years, he worked with his father before acquiring his own land, adjacent to the home farm. He married Clara MacDougald, former school teacher, a very talented and capable lady. Their daughter, Shirley, now Mrs. Harold Allen, lives in Oceanside, California. After his wife died, Aime sold the farm and now lives in Victoria, spending part of the year with the Allen's in California.

#### **Arthur H. Carpentier**

Like brother, Aime, Arthur attended Harvey School, St. Boniface College and the Agricultural College. He served overseas in the First World War, with the Imperial Corps. Following his discharge in 1919 he spent the next several years in Geraldton, Thunder Bay and Rivers, Manitoba. A keen sportsman, his hobbies were golf, skating and baseball, along with good cars and fine horses. He died in Brandon in February, 1960.

#### **Ernest R. Carpentier**

Following schooling at Harvey, Ernie took a business course in Winnipeg and then joined the Bank of Montreal. Later he graduated from the Veterinary College in Ontario and located his practice in Minnesota Lake, Minnesota. He married Cecile Carey, of Toronto. They have one daughter, Yvonne (Mrs. (Dr.) David Stenzel), who reside in El Cajon, California. Dr. Carpentier died in Minnesota Lake, Minnesota, in June 1964. His widow lives in San Diego, Cal.

#### **Eve M. Carpentier**

Following grade schooling at Harvey, Eve attended St. Michael's Academy in Brandon, followed by a term in Home Economics in Winnipeg. For several years she was associated with Smith's Drug Store, first in Oak Lake and later in Brandon. In 1943, she, with sister Alice, opened Eve's Gift Shop on Rosser Avenue in Brandon. This successful venture continued for twenty-six years, after which it was sold and Eve and Alice moved to Victoria, in 1969. In the early '50's Eve and Alice bought a property on Richmond Avenue, with accommodation for their two riding horses. The latter won many awards. Since residing in Victoria, Eve has been very active in artistic circles, has joined various Art

Clubs, and was awarded a bursary to study at San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

### **Alice N. Carpentier**

Like all members of the family, Alice first attended Harvey School. Following a business course in Brandon she joined the Bank of Montreal in Oak Lake, where she worked until the family moved to Brandon. As a partner in Eve's Gift Shop, Alice devoted her spare time to their riding horses, competing in many shows, and attending shows in Canada and the U.S. Now living in Victoria Alice pursues her chief hobby of wood carving. Her earlier years in Sidney and Victoria were occupied mainly with golf and gardening.

### **Wilfred C. Carpentier**

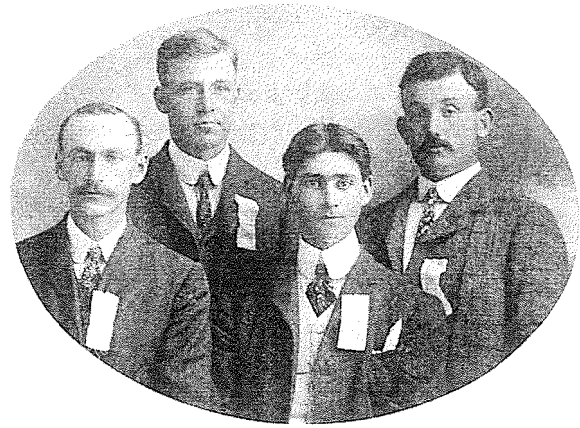
Before joining Radio Station CKX, Brandon, "Wilf" played piano for orchestras at the National Park and in Regina. From CKX he transferred to CKY, Winnipeg in 1939, where he held various positions before joining the CBC in Toronto in 1950. In 1953 he was appointed Director of Television for the Prairie Region, with headquarters in Winnipeg. As such he was instrumental in the introduction and development of the television service in Winnipeg, and later in Alberta and Saskatchewan. In April, 1942 he married Grace Paterson of Brandon. They lived in Winnipeg, Toronto, and back in Winnipeg, and in 1962 upon an early retirement, moved to Victoria, B.C. where they now reside.

### **Chapman History**

#### **submitted by Ruth Story (nee Parsons)**

The Chapman family arrived in Oak Lake on April 17, 1905 from their farm near Dundas, Ont. My Grandparents, Alexander and Melissa Jane, their three daughters, Edna, Alice, and Grace, and their nephew, Bob Chapman, coming by train; Charlie, the older son, travelling by freight with a carload of household effects, four horses, one pig, twelve hens, one rooster, two ducks, one drake, a cultivator, democrat and buggy, and his camp bed.

Frank, the younger son, had come out "west" in March to look for land. They settled on a farm on the eastern outskirts of town on the north side of Hwy. #1 or the "Griswold Trail" as noted in my Uncle Charlie's diaries from which I take information. They also purchased hay and pasture land from John Cameron and rented land from a Mr. Coulter. Their first Sunday here was Easter and all attended the Presbyterian Church. Church services were held both morning and evening. Sabbath School in the afternoon and Christian Endeavor Meeting after the evening service. There was also a regular monthly missionary meeting for the ladies. Rev. W. A. McLean was minister, having been there since 1897.



Chas. Chapman, John Scott, Stan or Norman Carey, Philip McLeish.

Prayer meeting was always attended on Wednesday evenings and in May, Chas, Alice and Edna were invited to join the choir. Mr. E. U. Steen being choir director and Ella Parker, organist.

The Chapman home soon became a popular place for visiting and coming for tea, and many nights were spent in singing. Their early friends and neighbours were Stewarts (Addie's family), McCallum, Banister, McLeish, Lamond, McFarlane, Carey, Thomas, Currie, A. Hard.

Edna soon became very busy sewing for the families of the town and country. Family names where she sewed were McCallums, Scarlett, Williams, Careys, McKeever, two families of Smiths, Williams, Findlays and Milnes. Grace became employed in Aug. 1905 as stenographer at Leitch Flour Mills being just eighteen years of age.

The first fall the Chapmans threshed with Banisters finishing in Nov. In Sept., according to the diary, "There is a gang of men pulling up telephone poles past our place".

In April 1906 there was a recital given on the new church organ. A Mr. Gee was the organist with twenty-one choir members. The diary also mentions a hockey game in March between Broadview and Oak Lake. For two days in March the mill was closed due to the death of Angus Leitch. Uncle also mentions watching curling in 1906 and several Carnivals were held during that winter. The diary of 1907, states there was the first band practice July 31st — fourteen members (Uncle playing tenor horn). Mr. Tipp was band leader, also tailor in town. The band played regularly at the skating rink.

In Oct. Frank married Helen Ross of Dundas, Ont. and they lived on his farm across the road, where Chris Bothe now lives. In Dec. 1917, he sold the farm to a Mr. Paterson of Kenton and returned to Dundas. He had been Superintendent of the Sunday



School for a number of years. He died in 1952. They had four children.

On Nov. 10th, my mother and father (Frank Parson) were married at her home and they lived on the valley farm where Kelly Taylor now lives. Mother was always very active in the Women's Missionary Society. Also the U.C.W. and was a teacher in the Sunday School for a number of years. During W.W.II she sewed for the Red Cross.

Further information is given in the Parson's history.

Edna, the middle girl, besides her dress making, looked after the home after mother married and Grandmother having suffered a fatal stroke in 1911. Grandfather died suddenly at home in May 1909 at the age of 63. Edna was employed at Portage in 1909 and in Moose Jaw in 1913-14 in a dress shop. She married Tom Parsons in March 1919 and they made their home in Indian Head, Sask. She continued with her church work there and sang in the choir for a number of years; was active in the W.M.S. and later the U.C.W. and also sewed for the Red Cross during the war years. Her life ended tragically in a car accident in Man. in Oct. 1959 at age 75. They had no family.

Grace worked for short periods of time at the mill again in 1914 and 1916. She also worked in Moose Jaw for a wholesale Grocery and was also employed at the Merchant's Bank in Oak Lake in 1918. Jan. 1st, 1919, she married Addie Stewart at her home and they lived in the Stewart home. Grace was always very active in the church and the W.M.S. and later the U.C.W. She enjoyed the game of curling and first curled in 1914. She was also a staunch worker for the Red Cross. She continued living in the house she came to as a bride, after her husband died. Then due to ill health, spent her last years in a nursing home in Brandon, dying a few months before her 88th birthday. They had no family.

Bob Chapman was employed as "Wire Chief" with the Telephone Company until he enlisted in 1917, going overseas in Nov. After returning home in 1919, he again worked with the telephone company, later working in California where he died. He never married.

After the two sisters married in 1919, Charlie continued on at the home hiring help for the house. His whole life centered around the church and he was a member of the choir from 1905 until his death. In 1909 he became secretary treasurer of the Sunday School and held that office till shortly before his death. My mother then took over these duties till 1958. He was a member and clerk of the session for a good number of years as well. He was also a member of the School Board for several years. Charlie never

married and passed away at the home of his sister, Grace, in May, 1940. The farm was then sold to Mr. Fred George and son, Art, and family.

### Tom Chrisp

Tom, eldest son of Jack and Carrie (Hay) Chrisp, was born in August, 1928 in Pipestone. He attended Findlay, Belleview and Oakview Schools. The family lived on a number of farms in the area before purchasing one in 1947, SE 32-8-25.

In May, 1956, Tom married Audrey Carter. She had taught in Oakview School during its final year in operation, 1953-54. Tom and Audrey lived on the home farm with Jack until October 1962. While living there, they had four daughters: **Linda** — born April 1957, now a Computer Analyst Programmer in Winnipeg; **Joanne** — born September 1958, married May 1980 and living in The Pas with her husband, Nelson Fulford, formerly of Swan River; **Marlene** — Medical Receptionist-Clerk working in Winnipeg, born April, 1960; and **Shirley** — born June, 1962, employed as an office clerk in Winnipeg.

When Tom and Audrey left the Oak Lake area, they moved to Petersfield, Manitoba and lived with relatives until July, 1964 when they acquired their own, relatively small, mixed farm in Clandeboye.

Since moving to this area, the Chrisps have had three more children: Roger, Carolyn and Greg.

### William S. Clark

William S. Clark, more familiarly known as Bill, came to Canada from Ireland early in the 1900's working in the Ryerson district. He married May Harvatt in 1913 and they worked on the farm for Mr. Andy Cairns, later moving and working for Mr. George Smith. Several years later they moved into



Five Generations: Verna Hays, Mrs. T. Paterson, May Clark, Richard and Shirley Thiry.

Oak Lake where Bill did carpentry and was always willing to help where needed.

Both Bill and May (often called Grandma Clark) were willing workers for their community, especially their fraternal organizations. Bill died in 1960 and May passed away in January, 1976. They had four children, Verna, Dave, Edwin and Colin.

**Verna** — married Robert Hays (deceased), resides in Penticton, British Columbia. They had a family of five: Shirley (Mrs. Art Thiry), Helen, Gladys, Morley and Edward.

**Dave** — married Gertrude Battersby and they reside in Regina where Dave is employed by Ramsey Construction. Gertrude and their son, Ron, work for the Provincial Government.

**Edwin** — after serving in World War II, settled in Toronto and was employed by the T. Eaton Co. there. He now resides in Oak Lake.

**Colin** — married Evelyn Armstrong. They reside in Oak Lake and have two children, Debbie and Scot. Colin operates his own Backhoe Service. Evelyn, a former telephone operator, now works for Hutchinson's Insurance.

### **Joseph Cochrane William Cochrane, Nellie Patrick, Walter Patrick**

Joe Cochrane homesteaded and pre-empted N½ 32-10-23. He built a set of good buildings and ran a very successful farming operation. He was joined by his nephew, William (Bill) Cochrane.

Bill Cochrane married Nellie Patrick, a school teacher. Miss Patrick taught at quite a number of schools north of Oak Lake.

After a few years on the farm, they moved to Oak Lake and started a livery and feed stable, along with Walter Patrick, Mrs. Cochrane's brother.

Bill Cochrane was the constable for Oak Lake for some years. He joined the army during the war 1914-18. On returning, the Cochranes took up farming in the valley across from the Pumphouse.

Walter Patrick took up farming farther up the valley to the west, on a quarter now owned by Maurice Williams. His speciality in farming was the raising of sheep. Walter Patrick never married and in later years moved to Oak Lake to retire.

Meanwhile, Cochranes moved their buildings and built a new house on the south slope of the river hill to avoid the floods. The house and property is now owned by Fred Eade.

About 1928 or 29 Bill Cochrane got the job of postmaster in Oak Lake. Later he retired in Oak Lake. Bill died in 1963. Mrs. Cochrane lived for several years in Oak Lake, with her sister, Elizabeth

Patrick, and moved to a home in Winnipeg where she died in 1968.

The Cochranes were a wonderful couple, and much loved and respected in Oak Lake and district.

### **John Henry Cole submitted by Elva (Cole) Gordon**

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Cole came to Oak Lake in 1908. Mrs. Cole whose maiden name was Ethel Harrison, came from New Brunswick to Elkhorn, Man. as a child. John Henry Cole, known as "Johnny" came from Woodstock, Ontario.



Mr. and Mrs. Cole.

The Coles bought the original C.P.R. station, which was situated on the south side of the tracks, and moved it farther south for their home.

Their family consisted of Aubrey — deceased, Lenora — Mrs. Guy Williams of Oak Lake, Ralph — deceased, Lorne — deceased, and Elva — Mrs. Allan Gordon of Oak Lake.

The Cole family all went to Oakwood School.

Johnny was an engineer in Leitch's mill, later



Cole Family.

constable for the town of Oak Lake and also caretaker of Oakwood School. He died in 1936 and his wife in 1954.

Their home was purchased by the Canadian Legion for a hall, but was destroyed by fire a few years later.

**Glynn Ralph Conway**  
submitted by Reginald B. Conway

Glynn and Myrtle Jane and sons, Reginald Bruce and Brian Douglas, moved to Oak Lake from Robinhood, Sask. (north of North Battleford) arriving on or about September 1, 1957. Our first home was located on the N.E. corner lot of the same block that the old Lund house is located. That house was torn down and a trailer moved on location later.

Dad worked as truck driver in Virden — water truck servicing for the oil fields. He later worked at odd jobs in the village, full time employment was gained as custodian and bus driver for the local high school. He retired from that job.

Our family bought the old Laidler house in 1960 (I believe) and lived there until 1979 when the house was sold to one of the Kennedy boys.

Mother died in August, 1977. Dad remarried in 1979 and moved to Winnipeg. In June, 1981 Dad moved to Fruitvale, B.C. and resides in the Beaver Valley Manor.

Brian and I both attended the Oak Lake schools. Our family church was the Oak Lake United Church. As a high school student I worked for the Oak Lake Co-op and later joined the Virden Co-op. I left the Oak Lake area in 1965 and moved to the Trail, B.C.

area where I gained employment with Cominco Ltd., the large Smelting, Milling and Fertilizer Complex. (I began employment with Cominco as an operator, apprenticed as an Assayer, later working in various departments as Analytical Labs, Technical Research, Technical Development and Safety.) My present position is Biological Monitoring Co-ordinator and I am in charge of the biological monitoring program for 4000 employees at the Trail operations. On April 13, 1968, I married Gayle McCullough and we have two sons, Shawn Patrick — born in 1970, and Kevin Ryan — born in 1972. Both boys attend the Fruitvale Elementary School.

Brian left Oak Lake in 1965 to work on a farm in southern Saskatchewan. He moved to the Trail area in 1967 and worked for Cominco Ltd. for a couple of years before moving to Vancouver. He held various jobs in the Retail Paint business before taking employment with I.C.B.C. holding various Insurance Adjusting positions to date. He still is single and fancy free.

Incidentally, Fruitvale is a small town nestled in the beautiful Beaver Valley only ten miles from Trail.



Cooper Family.

**Arthur Cooper**  
**Clifford Cooper**

Arthur Cooper with his wife and three children left England for Canada in 1913 arriving in Brandon where they lived for three years until moving to Oak Lake. The family lived at first on the south side of the tracks next to Jack Knight's residence then moving to a small white house beside the Masonic Hall. In 1918 they purchased and built on a lot facing the skating rink, which house, now faces the Senior Citizens home.

Edna, Doris and myself attended Oakwood School. I joined the Bank at Oak Lake in 1926. Both

sisters are married. Fred Cooper and a sister were both born at Oak Lake. Fred passed away in Brandon and the sister is buried in Oak Lake. Mother and Father both passed away in Brandon where my father had a contract painting the interior of the General Hospital. Edna is in Winnipeg, Doris in Carson City, U.S.A. and I am in Brandon where I retired to from the Bank at Fox Valley, Sask., moving there with my wife, Jessie.

### **James Cosford** submitted by Helen Cosford

Among the pioneers who came from Ontario to seek new land and a promising future in the west was the Cosford family. James Cosford was born in 1855 at Glenallen, Ontario, second oldest in a family of six. In 1880 he married Margaret Mitchell of Wellington Township in the County of Peel, Ontario and they moved to Greenock in Bruce County where they farmed for 14 years. They had two children, a son, Alexander, born in 1882, and a daughter, Margaret, born in 1885. They received their early education at Enniskillen School, near Greenock.

In March, 1895, the Cosford family arrived in Oak Lake by train. They brought only the necessities from Ontario to begin a new life in the west. Among their possessions were a few head of livestock, a bed, two chairs and a table, cupboards, a rocker, the cradle, and 'Minty' the dog. They came to the Johnston district where they erected a 12' x 16' shanty on the west half of 17-10-24. This served as their first home, and from here Alex and 'Maggie' attended Johnston school. (Alex later served as trustee of Johnston school for many years).

The Cosford family were members of St. David's Church and attended regularly. Mrs. Cosford was well known in the community as a fine hostess. On many occasions folks for miles around came to their home to enjoy their musical talents, Mr. Cosford on either the bass fiddle or violin, Alex on the violin, and Maggie on the lyre harp. Sing songs, dancing and card games were enjoyed by all. A cup of tea and fine homemade biscuits topped the evening.

Mr. Cosford's brother, Edward, who also came from Ontario, lived on the east half of 17-10-24. He died tragically in 1901 when the seat of his drawn binder, broke off and he fell backwards breaking his neck. James later purchased his farm, completing the section. He also purchased a further half section, 8-10-24 from the Hudson Bay Company.

In 1905, Maggie married Edwin Slimmon. They lived on a farm located just south of St. David's Church. During the same year, the huge Ontario style barn was erected on the Cosford farm. It stabled many fine teams of heavy work horses — Mr. Cos-



Cosfords Breaking Land.

ford took great pride in his horses, spending the early hours of each morning grooming them before they were harnessed for the day's work. In 1908 the large frame house was built, the original 'shanty' thereafter served as the 'summer kitchen' of the house. Interestingly, about this time Alex received the United States Certificate of Invention for his Grain Measurer.

Mr. Cosford, a Mason and a Shriner, was known to all as a truly kind and generous man, willing to help others in the community when in need. He and Alex travelled throughout the neighbourhood with their huge Case Steam Engine, purchased in 1908, and threshing machine outfit helping out with the annual harvest. The Steam Engine and threshing machine are now part of the Manitoba Agricultural Museum, Austin.

In 1911 the family was grief stricken when Maggie, at 26 years of age, died only an hour after the death of her firstborn infant son. The feelings of those who knew and loved her were expressed in her obituary — "Her bright disposition and cheerful personality will never be forgotten".

In 1914 Mr. Cosford purchased his new McLaughlin touring car. (This car is now on display at the Western Development Museum, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan). Due to illness, Mrs. Cosford was forced to retire in Virden, where she could receive the medical care she required. Mr. Cosford and Alex took turns from the farm work to stay at her side until she died in 1932. During this time spent with his mother, Alex took a keen interest in fretwork as a hobby, and made many fine pieces of work.

In 1934 Alex married Helen Sawatsky in Winnipeg. On the very morning of their wedding day they received the grave news of the sudden death of Mr. Cosford. They returned to the farm immediately to assume their responsibilities.

Alex and Helen had two children, a son, James, born in 1935, and a daughter, Margaret Alexandria,



born in 1938. They attended Blair School, riding their Shetland ponies, Fibber and McGee — and finished their public school years at Hagyard, travelling by buggy in summer and cutter in winter. They attended Oakwood High School in Oak Lake. James is married and now lives in Vancouver. He has two sons, Jeffrey Louis, born in 1957, and Mark Lionel, born in 1960. Margaret is married and lives in Stayner, Ontario, and has one son, Keith, born in 1957.

Alex lived on the Cosford homestead for a total of 61 years. He sold the farm to Richard Franke of Wilke, Saskatchewan in 1956, and retired in Brandon. Unfortunately, due to illness soon after retirement, he passed away in 1961. Richard Franke's son, Martin, is the present owner of the farm.

### **Cosgrove Family**

submitted by Alice R. Cosgrove

Alexander Grant Cosgrove was born in Melita, Manitoba, Dec. 9, 1897, the son of James Bruce Cosgrove and Matilda Veil Cosgrove. His wife, Jean, was born in Lucknow, Ontario, April 9, 1892, the daughter of John McDonald and Mary Lockhart. She came west to Reston, Manitoba, with her parents in 1903 and the family moved to Tilston, Manitoba, in 1907. Alex and Jean were married March 1st, 1921, and lived in Lyleton and Tilston before moving to Oak Lake in the spring of 1933. They had two sons, Douglas Grant, then 10 years old, and Kenneth Russell, who was then 8 years old.

On arriving in Oak Lake, they rented a garage and service station on Main Street from Mr. Nelson Banister. The next year, they purchased the property and opened Cosgroves Tea Room and Service Station. Along with this business in 1934 they ran the Bus Depot for the Manitoba Motor Transit which was owned and operated by Mr. Phil Geiler in Brandon. This Manitoba Transit bus run, was later purchased by Greyhound Bus Lines of Canada Ltd. and the Cosgrove family continued to operate the Bus Depot in Oak Lake until 1960, a total of 26 years.

In 1946 the buildings on Main Street were sold to Jack and Gwen Dean and the Cosgroves built and opened up their new B.A. Service Station, Snack Bar and Bus Depot. Due to ill health the business was sold in 1960. From 1960-64 Alex and Jean lived in the house they built which is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. T. Bourque. They moved to Brandon in 1964 and Alex died November 14, 1965. Jean presently lives in Princess Towers in Brandon.

**Grant** attended school in Oak Lake until completing Grade 12 in 1942 when he joined the Royal Canadian Navy, serving in World War II until 1946. Following his discharge he joined the Manitoba De-

partment of Highways Brandon Branch and is still employed in the Engineering section. In 1951 he married Alice Ruth Avery Harrold of Brandon and they were blessed with two daughters, Carolyn and Sandra.

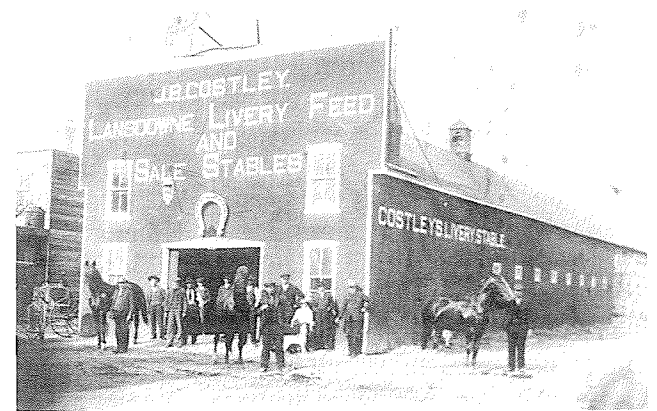
**Kenneth Russell** Cosgrove attended school in Oak Lake until he joined the army in 1941 during World War II. He served overseas until the fall of 1945 and following his discharge he was employed by the C.P.R. Telegraphs. He died in a tragic accident while at work near Kenora, Ontario, February 4, 1948 at the age of 23 years, 4 months and is buried in the family plot in the Brandon Cemetery.

During their residence in Oak Lake the Cosgrove family were active in most community events and several organizations including the Royal Canadian Legion, the Oak Lake Golf Club, and the United Church. Jean was a member of the Oak Lake Curling Club, a past noble grand of the Rebekah Lodge and a member of the Oakwood School Board.

### **John B. Costley**

John B. Costley was born in Stranraer, Scotland, in 1861 and emigrated to Arthur, Ont. with his parents, Robert and Mary Costley. He married Annie R. Boyes of Hawkesville, Ont. They and their infant son, Eugene, arrived from Arthur, Ont. to the St. David's district in 1897 where they were engaged in farming on section 16-10-24.

Mrs. Costley's two brothers, Robert and Charles Boyes, were the first two teachers in the Johnston School. They returned to Ontario to further their education. Mrs. Annie Jackson is a surviving pupil of that area. In 1903, Mr. Costley purchased the Livery, Feed and Sales Stable in Oak Lake. The same year,



Livery Stable.

he joined the Maple Leaf Lodge No. 24 I.O.O.F. and was a lifetime member. In politics he was a supporter of the Conservative party.

In 1910 when cars and telephones were coming

into use, he sold out to William Cochrane and Walter Patrick and returned to farming west of Oak Lake. Mr. and Mrs. Costley were Presbyterians by faith and later United Church. They retired to live in Oak Lake in 1923. He died in 1933 and Mrs. Costley in 1935.

They had one son, Eugene, and one daughter, Irene (Mrs. Thomas G. Olive).

**Irene** married Thomas G. Olive in 1925. They retired in 1968. Tom died in 1973. Irene still resides in their home in Oak Lake.

**Eugene** was a veteran of the First World War. He married the former Irene Olive in 1923. They were engaged in farming and highway construction until they retired in 1966. Fraternally, Eugene was a member of the Masonic Lodge and Mrs. Costley a member of the Order of the Eastern Star and the Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1973. Eugene died in 1978 and Mrs. Costley in 1980. They had three sons: Guy, Tom and Fred.

**Guy** is a Royal Canadian Air Force Veteran of the Second World War. He married Harriet McQuarrie of Brookdale, Man. and is the principal of the Yellowquill School in Portage la Prairie, Man. They have two sons, Wayne and Gary.

**Tom** married Kathaleen Smith of Winnipeg, Man. and is the chief chemist for Gainer's Corporation, Edmonton, Alberta. They have a daughter, Catherine, and two sons, Reid and Cameron.

**Fred** married Sandra Fletcher of Winnipeg, Man. and is the accountant for Felton Industries Ltd., New Westminster, B.C. They have a son, Bryan, and three daughters, Teresa, Kimberley, and Heather.

### **Couling Family**

In 1965 Roy and Gladys Couling moved to the Lansdowne district from the Forrest community, to the farm owned by Fred Mackie, who had returned to the Strathclair area. This farm, Sec. 24-8-24, had been the William Davey farm and in 1882 the NW¼ had been the original Hatch homestead.

Clare Couling, son of Roy and Gladys, married Donna Shenk, a nurse from Brandon in 1965. They have a daughter, Carole Ann, and a son, David.

The Coulings run a mixed farming operation, with the emphasis on cattle.

In 1969, Gladys Couling died, and Roy retired to Souris in 1971. However he still made himself useful back on the farm for a number of years, and curled in the winter, until poor health restricted his activities. He died in 1980.

### **William Cowing**

**submitted by Margaret Carter**

In the spring of 1886, William Cowing got off the train at Griswold and walked 23 miles northwest,

through the Sioux Valley to the home of Mr. Goverenlock. Here he spent the summer as herdsman, looking after the livestock and keeping them together as fences were unknown in those days.

Being a fair-skinned, red-headed man the mosquitoes made life very miserable but being very determined not to go back to the coal mine in Northumberland, where his father had been killed, he decided to make Canada his home. That fall he moved to the home of Asahel Bond. Here he helped at Shiloh Church, singing in the choir and reading the scriptures. All the time he was settling in Manitoba, he continued to write his Scottish sweetheart.

Papers and reading material were very scarce in those days. Mr. Bond and Grandfather would almost race to see who got to the oxen first to go for the mail at Hillview. My Grandmother sent a paper every week very much like today's "Free Press" with a continued story. Who ever got the mail would have it read about the time they got home to Bonds on the steady old oxen.

The Scottish sweetheart was — May Blyth — a teacher in a girls' school in Edinburgh. She came out to Canada in July of 1888. They were married on August 8th, 1888 at the manse in Oak Lake by Rev. Hicks, back when this was still "county Denis". Mr. and Mrs. Bond were witnesses. They left Oak Lake in the late afternoon heading north to the Shiloh district where Grandfather was homesteading on 4-11-23. A kindly neighbour, Mrs. Sanderson had them stop for supper. The evening grew cooler till it froze that night. Their wheat was in the early milk stage and was ruined. This was a terrible way to start married life, but Grandfather set out trapping gophers with their little fox terrier dog. The tails were turned in at the municipal office for 1¢ apiece. The money went to buy tea, sugar, and flour, they survived the winter.

By next summer people had learned the new immigrant was a teacher, and Grandmother was hired to teach at Ryerson School in 1889. Though still very scared of horses, she managed to drive through a deep ravine to Sandersons, where a young lad drove the rest of the way.

Five years went by before a family was born. Jean Moncrieff was the first born, then Harry Blyth. About this time the Cowing family moved south west of Oak Lake lake, where Grandfather looked after the community pasture. Here Annie Josephine was born, then in 1901 they moved back to the Ryerson district and settled on 29-10-23, right by Ryerson School and Church. When Jennie and Harry were school age, Helen McDonald the last of the family was born.

Grandfather was a very enterprising man. He had

a great love for reading and bettering his education by often reading late into the night by candle light. He was a trustee of the school for many years. He was a strong believer in Temperance and scripture reading. He had the first herd of Holstein cows in the district, which were all hand milked in those days. He was the postmaster of Maskawata from 1904 until his death in 1924. The post office stayed in the family until it closed in 1939. Mrs. Cowing died in March, 1942.

**Jennie** — stayed at home, running the house, and looking after the teachers that boarded there. She helped in the post office and was secretary of the Ryerson W.M.S. for 32 years. She married Tom Sloan from Chesley, Ont. They had one daughter, Margaret, who married Harvey Carter of the Shiloh district and raised a family of five.

**Harry** — was a keen sportsman, full of fun, started farming on the S. Whaley farm. He married Gertrude Hyson of Griswold, and raised a family of three daughters, Shelagh, Trudie and Blyth who have all married and raised families. Harry was a trustee and the chairman of Ryerson School for years. He raised purebred Yorkshire pigs. He retired to Brandon to manage a tire shop. He died suddenly in 1959.

**Annie** — became a school teacher. Teaching at Hillsdale, Breadalbane, Wheatland, and Ryerson, before she married George Bicknell from Wheatland. They raised a family of three boys. Mrs. Bicknell lives in a home in Russell, Man.

**Helen** — trained for a nurse in Brandon General Hospital. Later working in Souris Hospital, where she met and married Dr. D. J. Fraser. Mrs. Fraser still lives in Brandon.

A great-grandson, Jim Carter, is now living on the farm where the Cowings started off in August, 1888.

Harry Cowing Sr., the youngest brother of William, left his home in Northumberland, England to come to Canada in the early 1900's. For awhile he worked in Oak Lake at Leitch's, till he was able to save enough money to buy 32-10-23 from Dr. Stewart. "Uncle" as he became known to his friends and neighbours of Ryerson district was a very fine violinist. He smoked a white clay pipe, that were sent a dozen at a time from England. It became his custom to have supper every Sunday night with the Cowing family and to call Wednesday afternoon for his mail and week's supply of bread that Mother had baked.

He died suddenly in 1935, while hitching up his team. His faithful dog sat holding the lines and guarding the body, letting no one but my Dad come near.

### **The Crump Family**

Stan, and Myrtle Crump moved into the Hagyard District from Lenore, to rent the Edward McBeth

farm, 20-10-24, in the spring of 1944. On August 16th of that year, a tornado struck the district, destroying the loft of the barn. At that time this barn was one of the largest in the Municipality of Woodworth.

Two years later they purchased the adjacent farm, SW¼ 21-10-24, which Stan still farms. This quarter has supplied an ample amount of saskatoons, raspberries and stove wood over the years.



"The Winters Fuel Supply".

After using horses to work the farm, in the spring of 1945 Stan purchased a new Model B John Deere for \$1,120.00. This was the first tractor bought through the Farm Improvement Loans, Bank of Commerce, Virden. This tractor, which is still in working condition, is now owned by Stan's brother, Art, of the Blair district.

As there was only house and granary on the farm, friends and neighbours, including Bill Jordan, Sam Jordan, Bob Anderson, Ned McBeth and Bill Pierce helped to build a 24' x 28' stable, in the fall of 1946. Norris Johnston came to tell Sam Jordan not to fall off the barn roof, because, he gave him the news, that he just had a son, whom they called Blair.

In 1947, the Crump's only child, Irene, was born. She received her education at Hagyard School, Oak Lake Collegiate and Virden Collegiate. Various modes of travel were used to get to and from school. In the spring and fall, a bicycle or car, but the winters were more difficult and neighbours took turns getting to school with horses. Later, when the roads were kept open and buses were used, the task was much easier.

In 1968, Myrtle passed away and was buried in Johnston Cemetery. Later that year, Irene married Morris Clarke of Virden and they have two daughters, Lynne and Leanne.

In May, 1977, Stan married Bertha Durston and they reside in Oak Lake.

### **Jack and Minnie Daum**

submitted by Lena Taylor (niece of the Daums)

Jack Daum moved west to Manitoba with his wife, Minnie (Gompf) from Listowel, Ontario, in the



Mr. and Mrs. J. Daum.

late 1890's. They settled in Harding in 1902. Jack was a blacksmith by trade. He also ran a dray business in this area, before moving to Oak Lake around 1920 to 1921. He was the town night-watchman in Oak Lake for a time, caretaker of the skating rink, and looked after the farmers' needs when there was a plow share to sharpen or a team to be shod. This work was carried on in a shed at Wm. Gompf's farm, 8-10-23. Jack liked to hunt, and had a trap line in the winter. He was fond of sport, and won many curling trophies. The Daums had two sons, Albert and Charlie, and ten grandchildren. They also raised their first granddaughter, Minnie, from a small child until she married Norman McLeish from Oak Lake and they moved to B.C.

**Albert** married Venetta Woodean from Portage la Prairie. He was an engineer for the Breweries at Portage and Brandon, lived in Oak Lake a few years then settled in New Westminster, B.C.

**Charlie** was a C.P.R. station agent for 45 years. He married Clara Johnston of Bradwardine and raised two children, Mervin, a druggist, and an adopted daughter, Eleanor — she married and settled in Los Angeles.

Jack Daum was a quiet, honest, friendly man, always willing to help anyone in need. In harvest time he would walk out from town on a Monday morning (6 miles — after helping his wife with the washing) and be at the Gompf's in time for breakfast. The Daum residence is now occupied by Mrs. E. Kruger, Sr.

They were a thrifty couple and always had a garden and a few chickens — which became pets and each had their own name.

Jack Daum was born in 1860 — Died 1927 at Oak

Lake. Minnie (Gompf) born 1869 at Listowel — Died 1946 at Oak Lake. They are buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery of Sifton Municipality. Minnie (Daum) McLeish died in B.C. as did her father, Albert Daum, and Charlie, her uncle.

### The Dean Family History

Anne Louisa Brennan, daughter of Robert and Louisa Brennan was born February 14, 1861 at "West Park" Bantry, County of Cork, Ireland.

George Francis Dean, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Dean of Lichfield, Staffordshire, England, was born in 1856.

Anne Louisa Brennan and George Francis Dean



Mrs. George Dean 1945.



were married at "West Park", Bantry, County of Cork in 1887. Coming to Canada in 1896 they located on a farm in the Oak Lake area.

Mrs. Anne Louisa Dean gave birth to the first pair of twins born in Brandon General Hospital in 1898. They were boys but did not survive. However, Mr. and Mrs. Dean adopted two sons, William A. and John A. (Jack). Mr. George Dean died in 1927 after a brief illness.

Mrs. Annie L. Dean as she was known in later years, and son Jack spent a year with Mrs. Dean's brother William Brennan in Australia, after the death of Mr. Dean, returning to Oak Lake where they made their home.

Mrs. Dean was a staunch member of St. Alban's Anglican Church, the Women's Auxiliary, and was a member of the Choir for thirty-four years. Mrs. Dean was also a dedicated member of the Hearts of Oak Rebekah Lodge, No. 66 and member of the Rebekah Assembly. For outstanding service in the Rebekah Order, Mrs. A. L. Dean, at the age of 77 years, was awarded the coveted medal of the Decoration of Chivalry at an assembly held in the Odd Fellows temple, in Winnipeg. Mrs. Dean did beautiful crochet work, and all who knew her will remember her best with her work in her hands. Mrs. Dean died May 6, 1950 at Brandon General Hospital.

**William A.** Dean married Vera Davina Lang, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Lang, July 8, 1914 in the First Presbyterian Church, Oak Lake, with the Rev. J. A. Cormie as the officiating clergy. At the time of his marriage, Will was a grain buyer for Leitch Bros. Mill. In 1915 he owned a garage in Oak Lake and advertised in the Oak Lake News — "Auto Accessories and Good Work". In 1917 another ad said he was the dealer for Overland cars which sold for \$1,110.00. In 1920 he went to Winnipeg with the Ford Company. 1921 saw the family off to Vancouver, and from there to Honolulu, where Will worked for the Harbour Board. Returning to Vancouver, Will worked as grain buyer for Terminal Pool for many years until retirement when they went to Victoria, British Columbia, where he died in 1969. Vera died July 17, 1980.

One daughter Vivian was born of this marriage, at Oak Lake, and she and her husband Earl Mills reside at Victoria, British Columbia. They have two children, Dean and Darcie, and one grandchild Karen Mills, all residing in Victoria, British Columbia.

**John Arthur** Dean received most of his schooling in Oak Lake and country schools. When he was six years old, the family was living near the lake, on what is now the Charles Plaisier farm. The school teacher, Miss Ellen Cook boarded with them, and one hot day she took Jack and a neighbor girl, Connie

Graves, for a boat ride, in a flat bottomed boat powered by oars. When they were out on the lake a sudden storm came up and the boat overturned. The teacher got the children up on the bottom of the boat, and they held on. The wind carried the boat to the far side of the lake, where family and neighbors found them sometime in the small hours of the morning.

Jack worked at many jobs, for several years at Anderson's store, and at the Masson and Herb Taylor farms. From there he went to Winnipeg in the fall of 1940 and took an Aero Engine Mechanic course, and then joined the R.C.A.F. in January 1941. In 1942 he married Mary Gwendolyn McQuarrie, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. McQuarrie, and they lived at the Old Flying Club while Jack was stationed at No. 12 Service, Training School at Brandon. Jack received his discharge from the R.C.A.F. in September, 1945, and April 1, 1946 opened his business, known as Dean's Service Station, which he had purchased from Mr. A. G. Cosgrove. Jack has always been a conscientious workman, due, no doubt to his Airforce training when you worked on an aeroplane, you had to take it up for a test flight. Jack is also community minded, and has served for 23 years on Oak Lake town council. As well, he has served on the Board of West-Man Nursing Home, and Virden District Hospital Board, where he was instrumental in acquiring the Ambulance for Oak Lake.

Jack served a good many years as Fire Chief and Fireman in Oak Lake. For more years than we care to remember, the question always came up on Christmas and New Years day, "where will the fire be today?" as there was always a call it seemed, just at dinner time.

Jack was a member of the Independent Order of Foresters, and received his 25 year pin. He is a member of the Masonic Lodge No. 44. In his younger years he was always an avid hunter and fisherman, and now enjoys golfing.

Two children were born to Jack and Gwen Dean, Dorothy Gwendolyn and Patricia Anne. They received their schooling in Oak Lake. **Dorothy** is a Registered Nurse, and took her training in St. Boniface General Hospital. She married Allan H. Robbins and they live in Winnipeg. They have four children, Steven, twin girls, Anne and Laura, and Brian. **Patricia** married Torrance Carter and they have two daughters, Cheryl and Colleen. Patricia is a licensed insurance saleslady and works in Virden.

Gwen ran the Tea Room next to the Service Station for two years, and besides raising her family has always been busy in works of charity. She also enjoys golfing.



Victor, Irma, Lambert and Marie De Crolliere.

## Decrolieres

submitted by E. Emond

In May 1907 Lambert Decroliere and daughter Marie arrived in Deleau, Manitoba from Marchienne-au-Pont, Belgium. They were later followed by his wife, Irma, and son Victor. Their stay in Deleau was for three years when they moved to Oak Lake in June 1910.

Staunch citizens and hard workers with a love for music, they assisted whenever they could to support and develop anyone, so interested.

Lambert and Victor worked in the Leitch Bros. Flour Mill before taking on positions as sectionmen with the C.P.R. In these positions they remained until retirement.

Lambert passed away in June 1943 and Irma in March 1949.

In November 1916 Marie was married to Ed Emond. Their story is covered under "Emond's".

With the declaration of World War I, Victor felt that he owed a duty to his country, his countrymen and their freedom. The result was his enlistment in the Belgium Forces.

Following his return from War and to work, he became a member and supporter of the Oak Lake Citizen Band. When neighbouring bands needed assistance Victor was only too happy to round up a group to help out. Not only band but also orchestra saw Victor in his hey-day. To see others enjoying themselves meant much to him. Wherever music was needed he was more than happy to provide.

On 28 October, 1952 Victor was married to Lucina Vodon. They lived in Oak Lake with a family developing to three — Mary who married Fred Demare on 26 May, 1979 and now live in Snowlake,

Manitoba. Her forte is best exemplified in determination — first in Figure Skating (she turned professional and teaches) and next in her loving care and interest in patients assigned to her nursing care.

Denis and Marcel since completing their schooling have been self-employed as heavy Equipment Contractors and farming.

Hockey — a sport which both boys enjoyed, played and coached, was their winter's pastime.

Victor passed away during a Community Walk-a-Thon on 1 May, 1971.

## Eucher De Galley

Eucher De Galley came to Routledge, Manitoba sometime in the early eighties. He and his sister, Celena, remained in the Routledge district, helping out in the life of the Community.

Eucher is especially remembered by numerous Mennonite and other settlers for his kindness, generosity and helping hand to get them started in farming.

Eventually Emile Wanlin took over the De Galley farm and they moved into Routledge. Both are deceased.

## Demchuk Family

John and Helen (Koscielski) Demchuk moved to Oak Lake, from Elgin in 1936. John had a shoe and harness repair shop on the east end of front street — Merv Duffily's present home, all renovated and made like new. Here John catered to the livestock trade, doing business with farmers who wanted show harness for their horses or halters for showing some of their cattle. In that "hard time" era he often took payment for his labours with a load of wood or a steer.

Helen took over the little Tea Room, beside the drug store from Mrs. Cosgrove, and it continued to be the place to chat and eat.

The Demchuks had two daughters, Joyce and Diane. The former took both Elementary and High School at Oakwood, as well as working after four and on Saturdays, in the drug store, from grade seven through twelve. Diane finished Elementary before her parents decided to move to Brandon in 1959.

John passed away in 1967 and Helen in 1981.

Joyce is Mrs. David McConkey and lives in St. Albert, Alberta. They have a daughter Melanie.

Diane is Mrs. Ken Cullen of West Vancouver, B.C. They have two children, Lindsay and Erin.

## Anson Dixon Family

Anson Robert Dixon, the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Dixon, was born at Georgetown, Ontario, in 1851. Anson lived and farmed there until 1881, when he moved to Walkerton, Ontario.

In 1894, he married Elizabeth Jean McDonald of

Riversdale, Ontario. Elizabeth, who was born in 1874, was the daughter of Neil and Hannah McDonald.

In November, 1896, the Dixons' son, Truman was born. The following spring, March, 1897, Anson, Elizabeth, and small son, Truman, came to Oak Lake by train. They bought land now owned by the Tom Paterson family (36-10-24) and began farming in the West.

Two more sons were born while the family lived in the Ryerson district — Norman in 1900 and Alexander in 1902. The Dixons attended Ryerson Church and their three sons attended Ryerson School. During this period, Anson served as a School Trustee.

In 1910, the family moved to Indian Head, Saskatchewan. Their son, Victor Connell, was born there in 1912. For eighteen years the Dixons farmed near Indian Head and Sintaluta, returning to Oak Lake in 1928.

Anson died in Oak Lake in 1937. Elizabeth, who moved to Griswold with sons, Norman and Alex, died in 1958.

Anson's brother, **William**, wife, Jane, and three daughters — Olive, Bertha, and Verna — also settled north of Oak Lake on the farm now owned by Albert Fordyce (30-10-23). William died in 1902. In 1919, his family moved to British Columbia.

Anson's sister, **Hester Ann**, the wife of Schuyler Teneyck, also resided in Oak Lake. Hester died in 1927. Schuyler, a photographer and cabinet maker, left Oak Lake in 1937.

The two brothers, Anson and William, along with their sister, Hester, lie buried in Johnston Cemetery.

Elizabeth's sister, **Sarah**, wife of Theodore Koesler, lived with her husband and children in Oak Lake and district at one time. Several years later their daughter, Nell, taught at Ryerson School.

Anson and Elizabeth's eldest, **Truman**, lived in Oak Lake until 1939. It was in Oak Lake that Truman began his 33 years of employment with the Highways Department. For those first ten years, he operated a horse-drawn grader on #1 Highway — long before it was black topped!

In 1930, Truman married Thelma Beryl Olive. Thelma, the youngest child of William and Sarah Olive, was born at Tyndall, Manitoba in 1909. She came to the Oak Lake district from Elkhorn, with her family, in 1917. Truman and Thelma had two children, Fay Alexandra and Douglas Anson Ian.

After leaving Oak Lake, Truman and family lived in Brandon and Nesbitt, Manitoba. Truman eventually retired in Brandon, where he died in 1977. His wife, Thelma, still lives in Brandon with her daughter, Fay.

**Norman** and **Alex** Dixon lived in Oak Lake until 1940. They operated Dixon Bros. Garage in the stone building now owned by Robert Spence. They moved to Griswold and were in the garage business there for several years. Norman died in 1956 and Alex died in 1960.

**Victor** Dixon left Oak Lake in 1939 to join the R.C.A.F. He returned in 1945 after World War II. He was accompanied by his wife, "Bobby", the former Evelyn Sproule of Calgary, Alberta. Vic and Bobby farmed 3 miles east of town, on the old Spencer place (20-9-23). In 1964, Vic sold his farm to Allan Hutchinson and moved to Victoria, British Columbia. While there, he worked as a Navy Commissionaire. Since 1969, Vic and Bobby have lived in Salmon Arm, British Columbia.

Truman and Thelma's children, Fay and Doug, were born in Oak Lake — Fay in 1931 and Doug in 1932. Both attended Oakwood School for a short time.

Fay, an Assistant Manager Operator Services with the Manitoba Telephone System, lives in Brandon with her mother.

Doug is a Special Representative with Gardner-Denver, Cooper Industries. He, his wife, the former Jill Hayter of Winnipeg, and their three children — Trevor, Diane and Sandra — live in Burlington, Ontario. Without planning it, Doug now lives within 50 miles of his Grandfather Anson Dixon's birthplace!

## **Edward Dickson**

**compiled by grand niece, Beverly Sheard —  
Maryfield, Sask.**

Edward Dickson was the eldest of five children born to Thomas and Jane Dickson at Wendover, Ont. in 1855. He was a tall man. His ancestors came from Scotland.

He received a diploma from the Ontario Commercial College, Belleville, Ont. He graduated with honour in Commercial Education, May 10, 1875. Ed. Dickson was bilingual in English and French.

Ed came west in 1877 as a bookkeeper and time keeper with the C.P.R. He ran supply stores for the railroad. On Aug. 9, 1881 he was 300 miles from Winnipeg. He went as far as Swift Current in 1882, then back to Oak Lake.

In 1881 his brother, James, was putting up hay for the railraod. He drove Parker and Dickson's team. Parker was Dickson's partner in the first General Store in Oak Lake. Parker and Dickson got \$3.50 a day and board, for team and man.

The Dickson store was next to one from the corner on the site now occupied by the R.M. of Sifton office.

Ed Dickson married Emma May Horsman in 1890 at St. Alban's Church. They had no family. May was the first bride in the Anglican Church.

He was a busy fellow in his time at Oak Lake. He served as county clerk, J.P., first Reeve of Sifton R.M. and was appointed a Commission for taking affidavits in and for the Courts in Manitoba, Oct. 17, 1888.

Mr. Dickson represented Lansdowne as M.L.A. in Mr. Greenway's government in 1888-89.

His home was near the Pleasant Plains School.

Edward Dickson invented the smokeless gunpowder, following his observations. He'd been sweeping up the floor and threw sweepings from some wheat flour, from the Oak Lake mill into the fire, which exploded in his face without smoke. Mr. Dickson was a chemist and he moved his operation to Winnipeg where he had the "Robin Hood Powder Co." He worked hard and long at his invention to within hours of his death at 48.

In 1900, he along with Sir. Wm. van Horne of Montreal and Governor E. C. Smith of Vermont as its chief directors, established the Company, the "Robin Hood Arms Factory" at Swanton, Vermont. This was sold to Remington 1915.

Edward Dickson is buried on the shores of Lake Champlain near his factory in 1903. He got very little for his work. His widow, May, was left with nothing and somehow managed by teaching piano lessons and sewing. May lived in Vermont and came back to live in Oak Lake when her husband died. She lived in B.C. while teaching piano then returned to Oak Lake. May died in 1928 and was buried at Oak Lake.

### John Baillie Dickson Family

John Baillie Dickson and his wife, Catherine Brodie Dickson, with their son, Peter, came to Canada about 1907. Son George Dickson came in 1905. Mr. Dickson was a miller by trade and his sons were educated in Scotland.

The family came to Oak Lake and settled on a farm near Algar where they made an early beauty spot by planting various evergreens, other trees and shrubs which still stand today. The bare prairie blossomed!

Son **George** was employed in Winnipeg and later moved to Regina. He married Lilly Henderson in 1911 at Oak Lake. He worked for the Saskatchewan Government for many years until his retirement to the Coast in 1949. George had two daughters, Norma, who lives in Toronto after retiring recently from employment in an executive position; and Catherine, who is employed with the Canadian Bank of Commerce in Vancouver.

Son **Peter** worked on the farm before becoming

employed as Wheat Acreage Inspector, then Assessor, then taking over as Secretary Treasurer of the Town of Oak Lake and the R.M. of Sifton.

Peter married Emily Paul in 1947 at Brandon. She had worked as Assistant Secretary since 1939 and later was appointed Secretary Treasurer of the Town of Oak Lake and the R.M. of Sifton.

Peter sang at many weddings and entertainments in the earlier years and both he and Emily were active in many community projects. They were members of the Secretary Treasurers Association and Peter was a member of the Oddfellows and Masonic Lodges. He also worked on the Red Cross and Childrens Aid committees. Emily was an active member of the Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion, the Rebekahs and Order of the Eastern Star. She was also a member of St. Alban's Anglican Church Vestry and the Secretary of the Oak Lake and District Cemetery Committee for many years.

### Doyle Family

submitted by Mona Canning (Doyle)

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Doyle came west in 1891 from Galt, Ontario. Mrs. Doyle was the former Annie Dryden of Galt. They homesteaded eleven miles south east of Oak Lake, on NW¼ 14-8-23. To the Doyle family were born eleven children.

Grandpa and Grannie (as every one called her) made their living by having beef cattle, milking cows and taking cattle in for summer pasture. The cattle were chased on horseback from as far west as Virden,



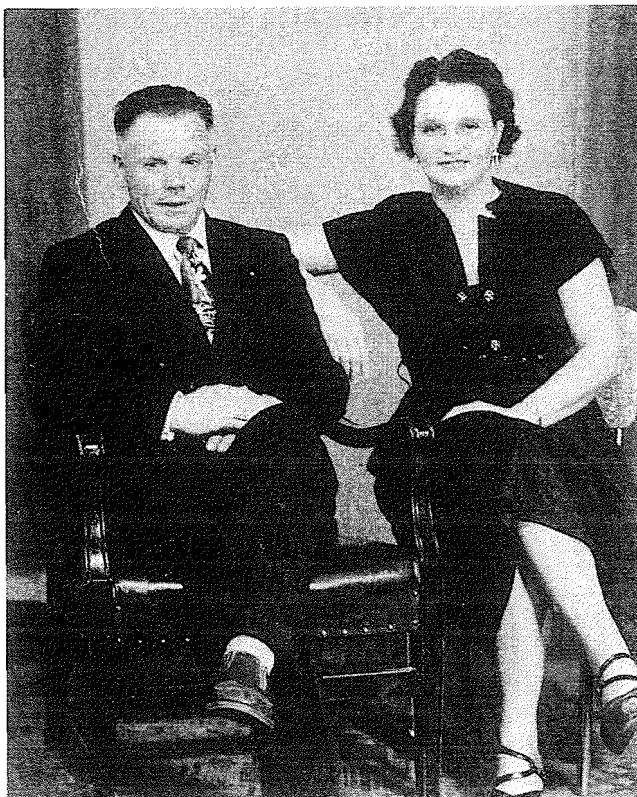
Doyle Family 1904.



as far south as Regent, and east of Souris. They herded as many as five hundred head all summer. This was a big job because there were no fences. My father, Jim, mentioned many times how the boys would take turns herding the cattle, then bring them into the corrals at night.

Most of the Doyle family were educated at Maffam School which was only three miles south of the home farm NW¼ 3-8-23. The Doyles were very musical and played for many house dances. They were sports-minded, especially interested in ball and horse shoes. They liked to play pranks and each one of them had a nickname.

In 1910 Grandpa Doyle decided to move on further west to Lancer, Sask., leaving behind Grannie and the boys to manage the farm. As the family grew up and left home, **Edward**, one of the first to leave, was never heard of again. **John** followed Grandpa to the farm at Lancer, where he married and raised a large family. **Percy** stayed at home and helped Grannie on the farm for sometime. **Florence** married Charlie Nickol, **Mary** married Ed Taylor, **Elizabeth** married Bill Stewart, **Ethel** married Jack Johnson, **Edith** married Roy Hawes, **Eva** married Bill Doherty, **Norman** married Ruby Duncan, and my Dad, **Jim**, married Sadie Meadows. The only living Doyles at the time of this writing are Elizabeth Stewart and Norman, Souris, Man., and Edith Hawes of



Jim and Sadie Doyle 1951.

Kelowna, B.C. Mary (Mrs. Ed Taylor) died very early in life of diphtheria leaving behind two of a family, Chester and Esther, who were raised by Grannie Doyle.

Grannie was a great provider and made many trips to Oak Lake with her horse and buggy to Lind's store with a week supply of home-made butter which she exchanged for groceries. Oranges were always one of the priorities on the grocery list.

By now there was only Grannie and Percy left at home with Grannie carrying much of the load, so she asked my Dad (Jim) in 1937 if he would come home and take over the farm, which he did. I (Mona) was young when the move took place along with my brothers, Dennis (Buck) and Donnie, my youngest brother, Wayne, was born after the move. Grannie continued to live with us. My Dad (Jim) continued farming much the same way, milking cows and taking cattle in for summer pasture, which was still an important income. When I became old enough to help Dad (at 12 years of age) we would leave on horseback very early in the morning to round up cattle from farmers in certain areas and chase them home the same day — many a day we spent 16 hours on horseback.

Sunday was always a big day for Mum during the summer. Many people, that had cattle in our pasture would come and see them, often staying for dinner and the afternoon. "They were always Welcome." The school district had been changed from earlier years and with Maffam school closed my brothers and I travelled 4½ miles on horseback to Hessewood.

One of the very fond memories I have was with Dad hunting foxes, coyotes and trapping. We would run them down on horseback or Dad would shoot them from his horse. Dad was very fond of wolf hounds and we always had three or four. We had a sleigh (jumper) pulled by a team of horses. We would tie the hounds in the jumper, when we got close to a coyote we would let the hounds loose and they would catch the coyote. The pelts were worth about \$8.00-\$12.00 during the 30's and it was a good day's pay when a fox or coyote could be caught. I quite often helped him skin the animals.

In 1947 Dad took sleeping sickness and was very sick for some time. He was left with a very severe asthma problem, so in 1950 the doctor suggested he try a different climate. Dad and Mum had a sale in the fall of 1950 and left in the spring of 1951 for Alberta where he gained great relief. That meant the Doyle homestead after 60 years was left empty and eventually the farm was sold.

I (Mona) was married in 1947 to Clayton Canning of Deleau. The memories of my younger days are

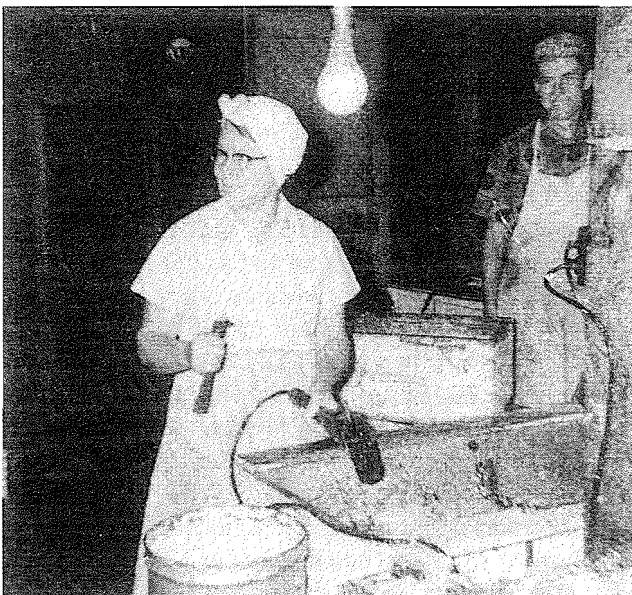
treasured, the time spent with Grannie and my Mum and Dad could never have been more pleasant.

### **Ben K. Dueck** by Verna Thiessen

In 1949, for want of a bigger business and income for his growing family, Ben K. Dueck started turning his eyes away from Kleefeld, where there were already enough beekeepers, and listened to the call "Go west, young man, go west". He saw the potential in Oak Lake but unfortunately the government would not let any bees into the area because it was infected with American Foul Brood. Dad, who was a bee inspector for the Department of Agriculture at the time, decided to buy Driediger's bee equipment anyway, and with perseverance he managed to rid the area of the disease.

During this clean-up period he boarded at the Harry Gompf home. In the summer, he moved his wife, Helen, and their four daughters from Kleefeld into the John Wallace house on Main Street. This was to be the start of moving to Oak Lake every spring and back to Kleefeld in the fall after the honey was extracted and the general fall clean-up was done. This was also the start of very busy summers when by 1960 he was operating 1200 hives.

Every spring after his family had settled in at Oak Lake, he would make his trip to either Alabama, Mississippi, or Georgia to get his bees. The second summer the hatchery, owned by Mr. Woods on the west side of town was purchased and this was to be the summer home for many years. This place was also more convenient because Dad rented the agricultural building on the fair grounds for the extracting, which would begin a few days after the summer fair and last until mid September.



Mrs. Dueck in Extracting Plant.

In the early 1960's he purchased the John S. Williams property and built his own extracting and storage building. Dad has now reached retirement age and sold most of his bee equipment. The youngest son, Earl, has started his own operation. He can still be seen buzzing around the Oak Lake area either checking his hives or chasing some bear. Last summer, 1980, they did a lot of damage among the bee hives in the area.

Life in Oak Lake was different from what we were used to but making friends with the neighbours and school mates was surprisingly easy for the shy German girls. We must say it would not have been so easy if the people in Oak Lake had not been so friendly and willing to give of themselves. While spending the summers here we attended the Pentecostal Church.

As Dad's business grew, so did his family. It must have seemed to the people of the town that each spring the Duecks returned, they brought a new "Dickie Bud" with them. The family now consists of six daughters — Verna, Mrs. Pete Thiessen; Phyllis, Mrs. Reg Toews; Sharon, Mrs. Lloyd Lesy; Janice, Mrs. Vern Falk; Ruby, Mrs. Ernie Hildebrandt; Pat, Mrs. Reg Morcombe - two sons — Wes and his wife, Jerlene, and Earl — fifteen grandchildren and one great grandchild.

"Kindness is a loving guide that shows us how to live

A treasure which the more we spend, the more we have to give."

### **Fred Eade**

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Eade arrived in Oak Lake in 1969 from Regina, purchasing the West ½ of the Oakwood School grounds. In April, 1970 they started building F. and M. Drive Inn the "Creemee" and opened up for business June 1st, where they operated a successful business until August 1976 when they sold to Leo Reboul of Brandon. In 1973, one hundred and twenty feet of this property was sold to Jack Smith, where now stands the J.n A. tea-room and store.

August 1970 they bought part of the Cliff Harrison farm, 2-10-24, when they rebuilt the house, moving there to live in March 1971. The grounds today are truly a beauty spot, where Margaret and Fred put in many long hours of hard work. They have an orchard with many varieties of apples and crab apples, plums, currants, raspberries and strawberries — even pear trees, on which in 1981 they produced a pear weighing 7 ounces.

I'm sure the Eades will be remembered for their beautiful flowers, gladioli, sheaves of them. One year they planted over 2000 bulbs. Fred has another

sideline, a hobby he calls it, he is a qualified first aid instructor, giving instruction and help to ambulance personnel in surrounding areas.

Fred and Margaret were born in Saskatchewan, Margaret at Bengough, and Fred at Ogema. They have two sons, Albert and Austin and twin girls, Bertha and Beatrice, and nine grandchildren.

### **Elder Family**

Marvin William Elder is the only son of Mr. and Mrs. William Clifford Elder, formerly of the Harding district.

Marvin received his education at Stratherne and Education Point Schools, and his high school training at Harding. He purchased the former Harry Cowing farm W½ 33-10-23 in 1960.

On August 20, 1960, Marvin married Carolyn Marlene Kilmury, oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Lawrence Kilmury of Deloraine. They had three daughters: Debra Arlene — Mrs. Jas. Byczkowski, Brandon; Maureen Carolyn — Mrs. Kent Mathieson, Cromer; and Evelyn Gladys at home. On January 30, 1969 Carolyn passed away with leukemia.

On April 17, 1971 Marvin married Margaret Louise Lelond, oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas William Lelond of Arrow River. They have three children: Louise Mae, Ernest William, and Brian James. They also have one grandson, Jeremy James Byczkowski.

The older three girls received their elementary and Junior High education in Oak Lake and attended Virden Collegiate Institute for their high schooling. The younger three children are attending Assiniboine School in Oak Lake for their elementary education. The older girls were all very active in 4-H and St. David's Junior Choir.

Marvin is a member of many community organizations. He is President of the Pool Elevator Board and has been a Pool Delegate for this area for 10 of the last 12 years.

In recent years, Marvin formed a partnership with a friend from Minnedosa in D.R.S. Enterprises Ltd., an insulation contracting and energy conservation company.

### **John Eluik**

John Eluik was born at Insinger, Saskatchewan, son of Alex and Sophia Eluik. In 1935 he married Katrina Stadnyk of Edmore, Saskatchewan and they started farming with \$35.00 between them.

They moved into a vacant house, using a door for a table, wood blocks for chairs, they bought a bed for a dollar and an old cast iron stove for a dollar. Cutlery came from a second hand store. Along with two loaves of bread at 5¢ a loaf and a few groceries, some

linens, quilts and pillows — Katrina's wedding gift — they set up housekeeping.

Their farm was in the Foam Lake area, and during the depression years they could often not afford 2 cents to post a letter. Eggs sold for 5¢ a dozen, men's work gloves cost 99¢ a pair, coveralls \$1.95, shirt 99¢, 100 lbs. of flour \$1.95.

Many men, after doing chores, took an axe and bucksaw and worked all day cutting cord wood. A load was one and a half cords — worth \$2.25.

In 1936, their daughter, Myrna, was born (now Mrs. Walter Churchill of Virden). In 1938, their son, Nick, was born. They moved to Swan River, and farmed there, where in 1948 Mervin was born.

In 1951, John and family moved to a farm at Oak Lake, known as the International Experimental Farm, in the Runnymede S.D. Here Mervin went to school. For some years they boarded the school teachers.

In 1956 John acquired 1120 acres in the Huntington S.D. north west of Souris. Times started to improve, and they farmed that land for 19 years. In 1968 the family bought the Story farm, bringing their acreage up to 2240, and times continued good for the Eluiks. However in 1970 Katrina passed away and in 1980 John sold the farm and retired.

### **Alfred and Lillian Elkington**

Alfred Elkington was born in London, England August 11, 1891, and orphaned at the age of five. He then entered the Dr. Bernardo Home and at the age of ten was sent to Canada to make his home at Whitewood, Saskatchewan.

In 1909 he filed for a homestead at Readlyn, Saskatchewan, where he lived for several years.

On July 17, 1918 he was married to Lillian Shambrook of Crystal City, Manitoba, who was born in Hertfordshire, England April 10, 1900.

Fred and Lillian made their home on a farm near Whitewood, Saskatchewan until 1944, when they arrived in the St. David's District. They had purchased what was known as the "Old Mickie farm" from Harvey Tolton, 14-11-24, and in a very short time the old red brick house had a new coat of stucco and an attractive modern interior. They soon became popular and active members of the community and played an active role in St. David's Church.

Their youngest son Howard was the only member of their family with them as their daughters Lucy, Mabel and Joyce were married and their eldest son Everett was overseas in the R.C.A.F.

Howard attended Verity School and assisted on the farm until 1954 when he went to Victoria to work. It was while working there he met with a fatal accident in June 1959.

Fred and Lillian moved to Brandon in June 1959, residing there until June 1971, when they moved to Victoria, British Columbia, their present home.

### The Emond Family

The story of the Emond family in Oak Lake dates from the early 1890's to late in the year 1970.

In the early 1890's Grandad Edmundum (1852-1925) Emond trekked from Crookston, Minnesota with this wife, Louisa (1858-1941) Vallee and their, then existing, family to Oak Lake. Here he took up the Blacksmithing business. They lived in the log house adjacent to the Blacksmith and Woodworking shop. In 1905 they moved to the big house in which members of the Emond family resided until 1956 when it was sold to the late Mr. Roy Morcombe and Mrs. Mary Morcombe.

The living family consisted of six sons and two daughters.

**Joseph Henry Edmond (Ed)** (1881-1970), son of Edmundum and Louisa, in his youth was a helper wherever and whenever needed. It was during a severe blizzard in the late 1890's that he was forced to spend two days in the shelter of a hay-stack. The result of this experience was frost bites and the loss of one-half of his left foot. He later took over the Blacksmith business. In 1916 he married Marie

(1889-1975) Decroliere. Their family totalled two boys and two girls:

Emmanuel — teacher, living in Shilo, Man. married Mildred Malcolm in 1944 and raised a family of seven. At the time of writing this family is dispersed from sea-to-sea, namely Sable Island to Vancouver Island.

Madeline — telephone operator, housewife and hostess married Henry Milne in 1944 and emigrated to Manchester, England. They now reside at Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands. Their family is comprised of two daughters.

Maurice — following his service in World War II, moved to the Toronto, Ont. area and worked with the Ontario Hydro. In 1948 he married June Kemp. They have a family of three girls and one boy. They reside in Oakville, Ontario and Maurice works with the Oakville Water Works.

Theresa — eggrader, clerk and bookkeeper was married to Ernest Mulcahy in 1948 and they have settled in Saskatoon, Sask. Their family numbered two daughters and two sons.

**Osias** (1883-1959), second son of Edmundum and Louisa, was a carpenter in Oak Lake, Kennedy, Sask., Shaunavon, Sask., and Vancouver, B.C. In 1905 he married Josephine (1886-1971) LaValley and raised a family of five girls and one boy:



Emond Family: Back Row (Left to Right) — George, Ed, Olive, Nathalie, Osias, Albert. Front Row (Left to Right) — Lawrence, Edmundson, Louisa, Orpha.



Edith — teacher, married Joseph Morrissette at Shaunavon in 1926. Their family count was two sons and one daughter.

May — housekeeper, married Wilfred Wilson in 1935 at Shaunavon. They had a family of one son and one daughter.

Blanche — hairdresser, married in 1936 to Stanley Wilson at Shaunavon. Their family — three boys.

Osaline — housekeeper, married at Shaunavon in 1935 to Stewart Wilson. Together they raised two sons and two daughters.

Victor — baker, served overseas during World War II, betrothed to Nora Philcox in 1949. They are living in Vancouver, B.C. and have one daughter.

Margaret — homemaker, now residing in Vancouver, B.C. with her husband, Clarence Kristianson. They were married in 1941 at Shaunavon and had five daughters and one son.

**Albert** (1885-1949), third son of Edmundum and Louisa, was a farmer in the area neighbouring Willow Bunch, Sask. He enjoyed a bachelor's bliss.

**Olive** (1887-1962), daughter of Edmundum and Louisa, was a housewife, married Julius (1882-1963) Godin in 1904 at Oak Lake. They later moved to Montreal, P.Q. Complete data on their family of eleven is not available.

**George** (1889-1974), son of Edmundum and Louisa, was a labourer, farmer, engineer, married May (1895-1971) Roberts at Brandon in 1914. After farming for several years in the Oak Lake-Griswold area, they moved to Winnipeg in the early 1930's. Here he worked as a caretaker and furnace-man at St. Paul's College. The family totalled two boys and two girls:

Louise — housekeeper, married William Little at Winnipeg in 1934, had two children — one son and one daughter. They reside in Bracebridge, Ontario region.

Irwin — R.R. Cartage, is living in Winnipeg.

Garnet — horologist, living in Toronto, Ontario with Marlene Hatch whom he married in 1965. The family consists of two daughters.

Enid — homemaker, married in Winnipeg 1946 to Melvin Freese. They have a family of one boy and three girls.

**Nathalie** (1893-1981), daughter of Edmundum and Louisa, was a housewife, married William (1890-1965) LaValley at Oak Lake in 1914. They farmed at Griffin, Sask. until retiring in Weyburn, Sask. There was no family.

**Orpha** (1895-1954), son of Edmundum and Louisa, was a drayman, carterer, hauler, lived in Oak Lake with his wife, Albina (1895- ) Valley. The wedding was celebrated in 1923. There was one daughter:

June — housekeeper, married Norman Sexsmith in 1948 at Virden where they still reside. Their family consisted of two adopted daughters.

**Lawrence** (1898-1981), youngest son of Edmundum and Louisa, was a barber, served overseas in World War I and was wounded. In 1926 at Oak Lake he married Lena (1903- ) Fiori. During World War II he barbered at #10 Manning Depot in Brandon, Man. After the cessation of hostilities they moved with their son to Vancouver where he continued his trade.

Ronald — printer, married Beverley Duff in 1956 at Vancouver. They have raised a family of one son and one daughter.

The curtain falls on the Emond's in Oak Lake when the little house was sold and Ed and Marie journeyed to Shilo, Man. and took up residence with their son and his family.

### **Abram Enns Family**

Abram Gerhard Ens was born in Nurendorf, Russia on March 28, 1907. He came to Winkler, Manitoba in July 1923 and to Oak Lake in March, 1930. He worked for Gladstone Slimmon for two years. He married Agneta Warkentine on June 16, 1932 at her home north of Oak Lake, NE 25-10-24. Agneta was born September 9, 1910 at Omsk, Russia. She moved with her family to Mexico in 1924. She came to Rosisle, Manitoba in 1926, then to Oak Lake in 1928.

After Abram and Agneta were married, they lived north of Oak Lake, 25-10-24 where Egon Isaac was born March 1933, Bruno Gerhard — August 1935 and Ronald Paul — January 1939, on 23-10-24 (across from St. David's Church). Ina Agnes was born October, 1943 on 6-9-24 (south of Oak Lake). She died January 2, 1946.

The Enns family moved to a farm on sec. 36-9-23, north of Griswold, in October, 1945.

While there Elona Alvina was born April, 1946 and died in March, 1948. Leona Esther was born in January 1949.

They moved to the village of Griswold in 1959. Their house burned down in January, 1963. They had a new house built in Winkler and moved it to its present location in June 1963.

Abram changed his name from Ens to Enns in 1928.

**Egon** married Erna Fast from Steinbach in 1965. They have two children, Vivian and Carl and are presently living in Winkler. Egon is an administrator and caretaker of a home and Erna is a nurse in a nursing home.

**Bruno** married Anna Grosjean of Griswold in 1959. They lived north of Oak Lake from June 1973 to April 1975. They have four children — Brenda,

Barry, Sharon and Wendy. All attended Oak Lake School. Bruno presently owns and operates Griswold General Store and Anna is the Griswold Postmistress.

**Ronald** married Helen Izzard of Griswold in 1962. They have six children, Brian, Dennis, Diana, Cheryl, Ronald and Jefferey. Ron and his family are presently living west of Oak Lake on 28-9-24. Ron farms and operates Enns Feed Lot Cleaning.

**Leona** married Don Crampain of Griswold in August, 1968. They have three children, Timothy, Corie and Melanie. They are living in Brandon. Don is presently employed by the Manitoba Department of Highways and Leona operates a home Day Care Centre.

### **Jacob and Annie Enns** by Jacob and Annie Enns

Jacob Enns was born in Russia, he is of German Mennonite descent.

In 1923, at the age of 9, he came to Canada with his mother and stepfather, I. Chetter. They settled in Southern Manitoba where Jacob got the rest of his schooling.

On a cold wet day in March 1929, we arrived at Algar C.N.R. station with three boxcars full of cattle, horses and machinery, that had to be transported by wagon load to the Tom McGhie farm nine miles N.E. of Oak Lake, in the Ryerson district. We stayed on this farm until my stepfather's death in 1932.

For the next four years, I worked on the farm. The first summer in 1932 for Clarence Kennedy, in 1933 for Arthur Harvey and 1934-35 for Cecil Smith.

In 1935 I married Annie Warkentine.

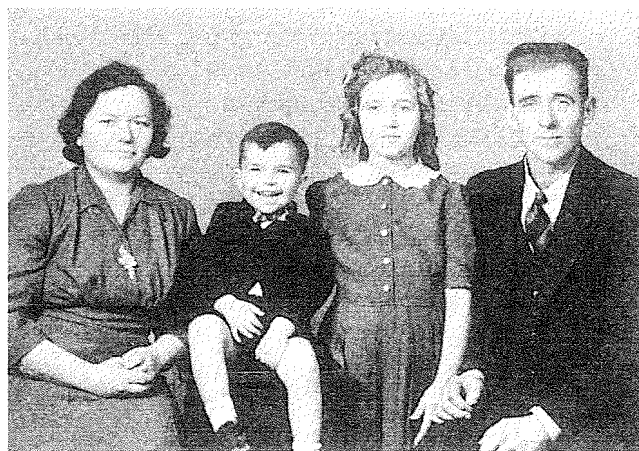
Annie Warkentine was born in Russia, she is of German Mennonite descent.

She left Russia in 1924 with her parents, after two years in Mexico, she arrived in southern Manitoba, at the age of 13, where she had two years schooling. In the fall of 1928 the Warkentine family moved to the Speers farm nine miles N.W. of Oak Lake, from there they moved to Winnipeg in 1934.

After Annie's marriage to Jacob Enns in November 1935, she came back to the Oak Lake District. They rented the Tom Harvey farm for three years. What a start that was! Jacob shot rabbits to supply us with meat that first winter. In the summer, going by horse and buggy, it was quite a chore to get the butter to town before it melted to exchange it for coffee and sugar.

Our daughter, **Edith**, was born October 1937.

In April 1939, we moved with our little daughter, Edith, to a 40 acre farm with a run down house, beside the track east of Routledge. For the next five years, I worked on the section for C.P.R., my starting wage was 30¢ per hour.



Jacob and Annie Enns, Erwin and Edith.

Our son, **Erwin**, was born November 1943.

Due to the fact that the Trans-Canada highway was coming through our farm and yard, it was necessary to relocate, so, in 1945 we purchased another half section adjoining our land in Pleasant Plains.

In 1946, it was a hard and busy summer living in a shack while the old house was torn down and the new one built. Mr. Tom Stonham and his son, George, were the carpenters.

Times got better as the years passed. Edith and Erwin attended the Routledge school, later they both went to the Oak Lake school, from there **Edith** chose the Hairdressing profession. She is married to Douglas Walker and at present they live in Abbotsford, British Columbia.

In 1955, I was ordained as a Minister of the Mennonite Church. In 1963 we sold our farm and went into full time ministry in British Columbia. At present we live in Abbotsford serving the Clearbrook Mennonite Church.

Our son, **Erwin**, worked on the farm until it was sold in 1963. He moved to British Columbia with us, where he met and married Lillian Livingston in 1967, after which they returned to the Pleasant Plains district. They have three children.

### **The Etsell Family**

Thomas Etsell, of English descent, was born in Walkerton, Ontario in 1864. In 1882 he came out to the St. David's district accompanied by Joe Guinn who had been out west during the Riel Rebellion. Joe Guinn received script land and Thomas Etsell took the north east quarter of 4-11-24 as his homestead. They had to walk 60 miles to Birtle, the site of the land titles office. He also purchased the west half of 10-11-24 at a later date.

Thomas Etsell built a wooden shanty for his wife, Alice, and baby son, Henry, who came from Walkerton by train to join him. The first winter, they worked for English farmers at Arrow River. When they re-

turned to their homestead in the spring, they found a prairie fire had destroyed their home.

The Etsells attended church at St. David's and their school was Hagyard. They owned the first team of horses in the district.

Alice Etsell was well known for her duties as a midwife during those early days. Her daughter, Mary Ellen, was the first white baby born in the district.

Thomas Etsell died of tuberculosis in 1914 at the age of 50. His wife, Alice, died in 1934.

The Etsells raised a family of two boys, Henry and Earl, and four girls, Mary Ellen, Clara, Pearl, and Lulu. **Henry** — remained a bachelor all his life, farming the section across the road from his father's. Salt Lake, a favourite picnicking and swimming spot for the people of this area, was located on this land. Henry lived in the white house across the lake which had been built by the Wright family, the first farmers on this section. After his retirement in 1949, Henry lived in Virden until his death in 1958.

The three older Etsell girls worked as seamstresses before their marriages. They learned this trade from their aunt (Mrs. McVicker) and travelled to homes where they would stay for several weeks and sew for the family. **Mary Ellen** and **Clara** married two cousins, Ed and Stanley Gray, in a double wedding in 1908. The two couples celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1958.

Mary Ellen and Ed. Gray lived in the Ryerson district. Mary Ellen died in 1974.

Clara and Stanley Gray farmed in the Harding district. Mrs. Gray (Clara) is at this time, a resident of the West-Man in Virden. She celebrated her 97th Birthday in 1981. Mr. and Mrs. Gray had two children — Violet (Mrs. David Cole) and Wallace.

**Pearl Etsell** married Harry Johnston of the Bradwardine District. She died from the result of a tragic fire in 1935. They had two children — Earl and Helen (Mrs. Jay Anderson).

**Lulu**, the youngest daughter, married John Leask of the Breadalbane District. They raised a family of five — George, John, Garth, Dorothy (Mrs. Verne Mitchell) and Edward.

**Earl** took over the operation of the home farm at the age of 15, due to the illness of his father. He married Marjorie Leask from the Breadalbane District, who had been a school teacher.

The Etsell family home was again destroyed by fire in 1937. At this time not by a prairie fire, but by a spark from the chimney on a windy day. The neighbours came to help, but were unable to save the house. Earl had to rebuild his home as his father had in 1884.

He farmed the home farm and an additional three quarters until his retirement in 1969, at the age of 75.

Earl passed away in Kenton in 1976. His wife, Marjorie, died in Virden in 1981.

Earl and Marjorie Etsell raised four daughters, Margaret, Marjorie, Jean and Elizabeth.

They attended Hagyard School. Due to the bad roads in the winter time, the girls were unable at times to get the three miles to school. Their Mother, a school teacher, helped them at home in order for them to keep up with their studies. Margaret recalls driving various horses and vehicles to school. "Once," she says, "I managed to upset both cart and horse upside down in a ditch in front of Hagyard school — I can still see the teacher running toward us, as we crawled out from under."

**Margaret** — a laboratory technologist, married Gordon Newton, whose family lived for a few years at Algar when he attended high school in Oak Lake. Gordon is now school superintendent in St. Vital. Their family are — David, Barbara and Kathy.

**Marjorie** — lab technologist also, married Arnold Jones from Virden. They have four children: Bruce, Evan, Dianne and Darwin. They live in Devon, Alberta.

**Jean** — a school teacher, married John Langetgraber, from Austria. They have two sons, Keith and Kevin. They live in Kelowna, British Columbia.

**Elizabeth** — a school teacher, married Robert Woods. They have two boys, Earl and Sean. They live at Leduc, Alberta.

### **William and Mary Ewasko**

William and Mary (Shewchuk) Ewasko were married in 1934 and farmed around Newdale, Manitoba. In 1941 William started work for the C.P.R. He was section man at Routledge for ten years, coming there in the early fifties. The family went to school and they all helped with the flower gardens which won C.P.R. prizes.

William and Mary and family settled at Basswood in 1963, he died in 1978. Mary still resides there.

They had three sons, **Arthur** — married Janice Lumby of Onanole. They presently live at Fort St. John, British Columbia and have four children, Gary, Diane, Craig and Penny. **Joseph** — worked for the C.P.R., then moved to Fort St. John, British Columbia. He married Irene Thompson of Elkhorn and they have two sons, Allan and Randy. **Steve** — had a B.Sc. from Brandon University. He married Denise Robinson of Rapid City. He died in 1972 of a brain tumor.

### **Captain Perry Fall submitted by Ada Fall**

Captain Fall was born in Lalerton, England in 1865. He came to Canada in 1884 and settled in



Mr. and Mrs. Fall's 50th Anniversary.

Brandon for one year. In 1884 he married Agnes Baker. Later he farmed south of Oak Lake until 1889, when he was commissioned for service in the Boer War. He served for the duration of the war and was awarded King & Queen Medal with 5 bars and was awarded the Honorary rank of Captain in the British Army.

After returning from Africa with his wife and family in 1907, he farmed in Bethune, Saskatchewan until his retirement to Oak Lake in 1945.

Captain Fall took part in the Rebellion of 1885. He was one of the party to escort Reil Lepine and Dupont to Regina for trial. They went by open wagons and at night they handcuffed the prisoners to the wagons. It took days to get to Regina, but they had no trouble with the prisoners. Captain was a member of the Royal Canadian Historical Society.

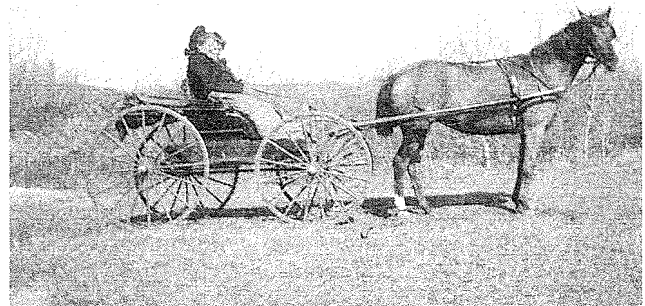
Mrs. Fall was born in England and came to Canada with her parents in 1884. She married Captain Fall in 1884 and they had four children, Florence, Eleanor, Selwyn and Eric.

In 1959 at Brandon, Captain Fall was presented to Her Majesty the Queen as the oldest Canadian veteran. With medals gleaming and very excited, he sat

with his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Ada Fall, waiting for the Royal Train. After a few moments, an old soldier's dream came true. As Her Majesty and Prince Philip came down the platform they turned, smiled at him and waved.

### Selwyn Fall

Selwyn Fall came to Oak Lake in 1924. He married Ada Wallace in 1924 and they farmed north of town on the Slimmon farm for three years. "S.P." as he was called, took over the garage from Alex Wanlin and was agent for Massey Harris Company and G.M.C. cars. He enlisted in the 1st World War and was sent overseas. He enlisted in the 2nd World War and was in Ottawa for sometime, then sent back to Brandon as a link trainer and became a Lieutenant. He was officer in command at Neepawa and closed up the station. After he returned from the war, he worked for Veteran Affairs. He then became landman for Dome Petroleum, but when they decided, at that time, not to buy anymore land in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Selwyn went into real estate with Braun & Braun Real Estate, Brandon.



Ada Fall and Dot Banister.

Selwyn was the Past Master of the Masonic Lodge in Oak Lake. He was also a member of Oak Lake Golf Club, and president for a number of years.

Ada Fall (Wallace) was born in Oak Lake and spent her life in the area. She is a member of the Anglican Church, sang in the choir, belonged to the Anglican Young Women's Association and was President of the Parish Guild for a number of years. Ada was also president of the Royal Canadian Legion and an active member of the Oak Lake Golf Club.

Selwyn and Ada have one daughter, Patricia. She took all her schooling at Oakwood winning the Cora Hind scholarship in her final year and graduated from the University of Manitoba as a Home Economist. She married Gordon Graham and they farm at Newdale, Manitoba. They have two children, Perry and Nancy.

Mr. Fall died in 1973.

Mrs. Fall resides in Oak Lake.



## Donald H. Findlay

Donald H. Findlay married Mary Barbara Robertson in Griswold, Brandon County, 1887. One of the witnesses was a relative, a Mrs. Alex Leitch, a victim of the Frank Slide, British Columbia.

Donald worked in the Leitch flour mill under A. P. McNabb, who later became Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

Mrs. Findlay was well known for her hospitality and loving care in the village. She presided as mid-wife at many of the births in the community.

The family included four children, born in Oak Lake — Walter James, Cora Lillian, Kenneth Robertson and George Stanley.

The whole family moved to Saskatoon about 1910.

A brother Robert Findlay farmed north of Oak Lake.

## Melville Finlay

Melville Finlay was the oldest son of Robert and Ida (Anderson) Finlay, who came from Orangville and Lucknow, Ontario. Mr. Robert Finlay was employed by the McBeth family when he first came to Manitoba, later buying a farm 25-10-24 in the Blair District. Mel married Dorothy Dryden of the Breadalbane District, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Dryden. Her grandparents were first settlers in that district, coming by Red River cart.

Grandmother Fraser (Mrs. Dryden's Mother) told of making suits for the men folk, when all the sewing was done by hand. They would buy material and have a tailor cut it into pieces ready to use for the making of suits. They also baked bread when they stopped to rest on their journey by cart.

Mel and Dorothy came to the Johnston School District in 1939 to farm on the E ½ of 16-10-24.

They had five children. The three oldest attended Hagyard School and the family attended St. David's Sunday School and Church.

They moved to the Breadalbane District in 1944, buying S ½ 7-11-24 which had been owned by Mel's grandparents James and Janet Anderson and later by their son John. Mr. and Mrs. Mel Finlay now reside in Brandon.

Members of the M. Finlay family are:

**Douglas** — of Red Deer, Alberta.

**Myrna** — (Mrs. E. Mitchell) of Brandon.

**Anne** — (Mrs. W. A. Forsyth) of Virden.

**Gail** — (Mrs. K. Hickson) of Winnipeg, was born at home while the family lived in the Johnston District. Gail's name was chosen by Lorraine Johnston (Holland) and when Gail was married Lorraine was soloist at her wedding.

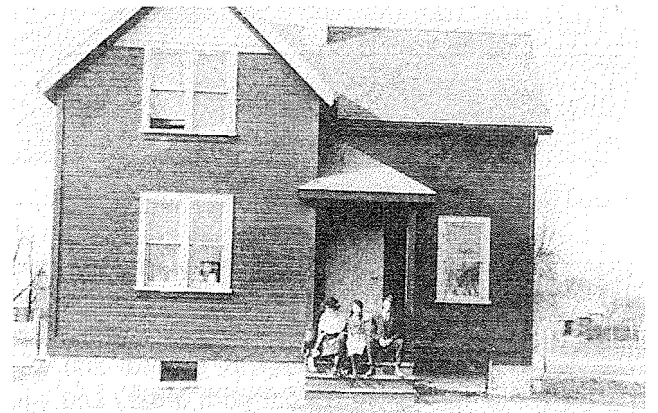
**Linda** — Mrs. B. Chrisp, lives at Dauphin.

## Peter and Marguerite Fiori by son, Francis

My Dad and Mom came to Canada and Virden in 1905. They had been farmers in Tuscany, Italy and settled in a one room shack, given to them by a sister and brother-in-law, August and Georgina Fontana, who had come to Virden ten years earlier. They farmed in a small way, but eventually Dad got a permanent job with the C.P.R. Early in 1913 he was made foreman of a gang in Routledge and the family moved into the section house.

My Mother had worked in various jobs, and my sisters minded children, to help augment the family income, especially before Dad got to be a C.P.R. foreman.

In 1919 the family all moved to Oak Lake, with the exception of Janet. In 1922 the section house burned down and "The Pauls and Wanlins" cared for us until the small house next to the blacksmith shop was made available. A new section house was erected and here Francis (that's me) was born — the last of the family.



Our Home — the section house.

I remember our home had no electricity — we had a beautiful lawn and flower garden, and a huge vegetable garden. The latter was watered from the C.P.R. water tank. We had a huge kitchen stove and another stove in the dining room in winter. We used wood from railroad ties (which were not creasoted at that time).

Being Italian Mother spoke both English and Italian, unfortunately hearing French both at church and school, we learned that better than Italian.

Janet had made her home in Port Arthur and was Santa Claus and the Easter bunny to we younger children. We visited her once or twice a year.

My Dad retired in 1940 and the family moved to Port Arthur. He died in 1948 and Mother in 1971.

Some things I recall from my days in Oak Lake

— Saturday was the big day of the week. I worked in Anderson's store from 8 o'clock in the morning till 12 at night on Saturday. The farmers used to phone in for groceries, which other people would pick up. I took a call one day and got everything right but forgot who called in the order, and who was to pick it up!

I remember the ball games in the yard, singing in the choir and duets with Fern Storey, the sand hills with a shack we built and considered a masterpiece. How we used to play hockey in the street with horse manure for pucks — and they were the greatest. We got our cream from Mrs. Maziary who lived south of town. It was 25¢ a quart and was practically whipped when it came out of the bottle.

I remember playing the piano with my sisters Amelia and Lorraine. I could step dance at that time — took a few lessons from Ruth Parsons, 25¢ a lesson. My practise was when I went to lessons.

Sunday was a grand time when all the farmers came by horse and buggy or sleigh to church. After Mass everyone stood around and chatted and were not anxious to get home.

There were ten children:

**Adolph** — (1900-1980) became a section foreman at sixteen. He carried on the Fiori tradition for about another ten years after his parents left Oak Lake. He retired to Thunder Bay.

**Anetta Janet (Reid)** — born 1901, worked out at a very early age, later becoming head waitress at a C.N.R. hotel in Port Arthur. She resides still in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

**Lena** — born 1903, took her elementary schooling at Routledge. Married Larry Emond — now lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

**Amelia** (Harphan) — 1906-1970) worked in Souris, then in Winnipeg, married in 1930.

**James (Jack)** — (1908-1962) also worked on the section becoming a foreman also.

**Hilda** (Donate) — (1910-1956) worked in Souris after her school days. Married in 1934.

**Mary** (Murray) — born 1913, educated at Oakwood School. She was married in 1937, lived in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

**Lorraine** (Kirkwood) — born 1916, educated at Oakwood School, married in 1939, lives in St. Thomas, Ontario.

**Laurence** — born in 1921 played hockey, golfed and curled, remained single. He lives in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

**Francis** — born 1923, took grades I-XI in Oak Lake, moved to Thunder Bay with his parents. Served overseas. Flew our own aircraft home after the war and went back to the Grain Elevators — married Edgar Laprade's sister (hockey player).

## John and Christina Forrest

John Forrest was born at Glenallen, Ontario in 1868 and came to Manitoba in 1890.

He was at Portage La Prairie for two years before coming to Oak Lake where he took a farm on section 33-10-24, just one half mile west of the former Hagyard School site. In July 1898 he married Christina Bailey (eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bailey), born at Glenallen, Ontario in 1879 coming to Oak Lake in 1889. They were always faithful to St. David's Church and its organizations and lived on the farm where they raised their five children. In 1928 they retired to live in Oak Lake where they continued to be active community workers in their own special ways. John's death occurred in 1941 and Christina's death in 1949.

Their family consisted of:

Ruby — (Mrs. Erlin Noecker) Moorefield, Ontario.

Norma — (Mrs. James Goodwin) Brandon, Manitoba, deceased 1981.

Luella — (Mrs. Harold Brunt) Arlington Heights, Illinois, U.S.A.

Morris — Kenwood Courts, Kenton, Manitoba.

Christina (Mrs. Richard Whyte) White Rock, British Columbia, remarried to George Pedley of White Rock, British Columbia, November 1979.

## Morris Forrest

Morris Forrest, only son of John and Christina Forrest was born and raised in the St. David's District, where he attended Hagyard School. In 1928 his parents moved to Oak Lake and Morris took over the operation of the farm. In 1930 he married Mary Whyte of the Verity District. Mary and Morris played an active part in the St. David's Church and the affairs of the community. As well as being church organist Mary shared her musical talent on many occasions.

They sold their farm in 1967 and moved to Kenton. Mary died in 1979. Morris resides in Kenwood Court in Kenton.

The Forrests had three children Del, Jack and Marie. They all attended Hagyard School and Oakwood High School.

Del — (Trewinnard) is a nurse and lives in Calgary. Her children are Melanie (Michaels), Jeffrey, Susan and Ian.

Jack — married Judy Duncan of Virden, where they lived until 1978. They now reside in Drayton Valley, Alberta, where Jack works in the oil business. They have four children — Shonda (Ashcroft), Bradley, Craig and Sherrilyn.

Marie — Mrs. Peter Siemens lives in Kenton where Peter operates a "Repair and Tire" business.

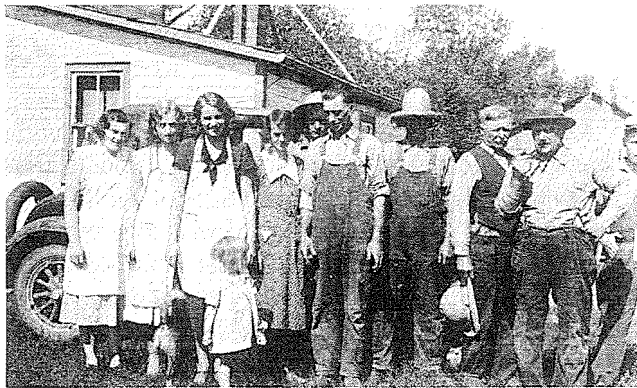
They have three children — Scott, Wanda and Denise.

### Walter Forrest Family

Walter Forrest, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Forrest of Moorefield, Ontario came to the Oak Lake area in the early 1880's where he farmed in the Hagyard district one mile west of St. David's Church and one mile south of Hagyard School, on W ½ 22-10-24 where he found a scenic location along a creek for his farmsite.

His brothers, John, James and Charles, and sister Janet McCrone, all located on farms in the same area. One sister, Agnes Scott, remained in Ontario. In 1891 Walter married Caroline Almeda McDonald, who came to Oak Lake area in 1888 from Canfield, Ontario. Her brothers, John and Dougal, farmed in the neighbouring area, Duncan lived in Winnipeg, and sisters, Mrs. T. Brown and Mrs. Murphy, remained in Ontario.

Oxen were the "power" used at the beginning of the farming operation which were later replaced by horses. In the earlier years, Walter's threshing was done by a steam outfit owned by John McDonald.



"Harvest Gang" Left to Right — Ivy Baillie, Hazel (Forrest) Finlay, Kay Forrest, Almeda (Forrest) Sinclair, Bill Sinclair, Alec, Walter and Bill Forrest. Foreground — "Snooks" (dog) and Verle (Sinclair) Muirhead.

Later Walter purchased a portable Fairbanks-Morse gasoline single cylinder engine with a 48 inch fly-wheel and a 28 inch cylinder McDonald-Decker threshing separator.

He was an avid livestock man. He took pride in raising Registered Clydesdale horses and Registered Shorthorn cattle and Yorkshire swine. All the grain sold was delivered to the elevator in Oak Lake by team and wagon or team and sleigh in approximately 60 bushel loads. On the return trip, farm necessities were brought back in form of flour grist mill, coal for supplementary heating, barrels of apples for winter, coal oil for light, etc.

Both Almeda and Walter were active in community life in St. David's Church, Hagyard School, and Oak Lake Agricultural Society. Both were members of the Presbyterian Church which became United in 1925. Almeda was active in the Women's Missionary Society. Walter was on the Board of Managers and served as treasurer of the Church. He was a trustee of Hagyard School and served as treasurer for several years, also serving as Councillor for the Municipality of Woodworth with Council Chambers in Kenton. They took an active part in exhibiting at Oak Lake Fair, Almeda winning prizes in the Domestic Section and Walter with his Clydesdales and Shorthorns.

Like many other housewives in this era, Almeda did her share of preserving home grown vegetables, fruits and berries, making butter, baking bread and preparing the poultry that they raised. Almeda who was born in 1871, passed away after a lengthy illness in 1931. Walter born in 1864 passed away suddenly in 1952. Both rest in Johnston Cemetery.

They had five of a family who are listed in order of their birth.

1. **Alexander** — born 1892. Alex took over the farm from his father upon Walter's retirement and farmed until he retired to Virden. He passed away in September 1973 and is buried in Johnston Cemetery.

2. **Norman** — born 1894. Norman left the farm to join the Army. Before embarking on the boat for overseas at St. John, Quebec, he died from the flu epidemic and was the first flu patient to be buried in Western Canada. He had a Military funeral at Johnston Cemetery.

3. **Charles** — born 1901. Charlie attended high school in Oak Lake, and stayed on the farm until going to Regina in 1922. In 1931 he married Catherine (Kay) Hasenfratz of Regina. He was employed, prior to marriage by the Sales Division of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creamery in many branches in Saskatchewan and The Pas, Manitoba and, after marriage, had his headquarters in Regina until retirement in 1967. After retirement, Charlie worked 10 years in Robinson Machinery, Regina. His wife, Kay, passed away in 1977. He is still residing in Regina as well as their two sons; Robert and William.

4. **Almeda** — born 1904. Almeda lived at home until she married William Sinclair in 1928. They farmed on S ½ 28-10-24. William Sinclair came to St. David's district in 1920 from Forres, Morayshire, Scotland after having served in His Majesty's Forces on active duty during the First War. They were active in community affairs and were members of St. David's Church. Almeda spent many hours at the Oak Lake Agricultural Fair as director and won several prizes in earlier years. They retired to Virden in

1961. Bill passed away in 1968, and Almeda in 1973. Both are buried in Johnston Cemetery. They had three children.

a) Verle — attended High School in Oak Lake and Normal School in Winnipeg, later teaching 2 years at Montifore, (Goodlands) and Summerville respectively, where she met and married her husband, Leonard Muirhead, of Carberry in 1951 and resided on the farm. They had four children: Iris, Gwen, Thomas John, and Arla, and one grandson, Aaron.

b) Robert — Bob met Caroline Jensen at Tabor, Alta. while working with an irrigation project. In 1954 they married and lived in Virden until they took over the operating of Bob's parents' farm in the St. David's district, and continued farming until selling in 1978 and moving to Virden. Bob contracted as mail courier and Carol operates her own beauty salon. They had a family of five: Yvonne, Kenneth, Darren, Melanie, and Allan.

c) Myrna — attended High School in Oak Lake and Normal School in Winnipeg, teaching at Kirkella, Elkhorn and Winnipeg. She married Roman Evancic of Virden in 1957. Myrna helps Roman operate his private practise as a Certified General Accountant in Maple Ridge, B.C. They have four children: Kevin, Verle, Trevor and Dorlyn.

5. **Hazel** — born in 1911. Hazel looked after the Forrest household during her mother's illness and after her death until 1935 when she took a Hairdressing Course at Regina, residing with her brother, Charlie, and family. Her hairdressing occupation took her to Winnipeg, Calgary, and Vancouver. She married Harold Finley in Vancouver, after he returned from Italy, where he had been wounded while serving with the United States Army in the Second World War. They now live in Mesa, Arizona and are U.S. citizens. They have no children.

### **Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fowell Sr.**

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fowell Sr. were married in Leicester, England in 1871 and came to Canada in the early 1900's. They resided in the Oak Lake district until their deaths in 1935 and 1938. They had five children, three sons and two daughters who are now all deceased.

Grandpa Fowell is well remembered as an ardent gardener and Granny Fowell left loving memories in the hearts of all who knew her.

**Herb** Fowell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fowell came to Canada as a young lad in 1907 and was employed for some time with Nelson Banister of Oak Lake and Oliver Dunn of Alexander.

Mr. Fowell enlisted in the First World War in 1916 and while stationed in England, met his future wife,



Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fowell on their 60th Anniversary.

Edith Watts. They were married in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1919 and homesteaded in Chatfield, Manitoba before moving to Oak Lake in 1927. While in Oak Lake, Mr. Fowell was employed by the Manitoba Good Roads. In 1950 they moved to Winnipeg where Mr. Fowell was employed by Parkhill Bedding Co. until his retirement in 1954.

Upon retirement they enjoyed travelling and took part in many volunteer services, especially the Royal Canadian Legion for which Mrs. Fowell received a Life Membership Pin and Certificate.

They moved to Brandon in 1977 where they resided until their deaths in February 1980 and October 1980.

They had two children, **Mr. K. A. Fowell** of Charleswood, Manitoba and **Mrs. Alice Summers** (Hardy) of Brandon, also ten grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

### **Fred Fowell Jr.**

Fred Fowell Jr. came to Oak Lake, Manitoba in June 1911. His wife Ellen and family, had remained in Bristol, Leicestershire, England until he could find work and make a home for them in Canada.

He joined his parents, Fred and Elizabeth Fowell, a sister Sarah, and her husband Vincent Hollier, their three children and his younger brother Herbert, who had all arrived the previous year.

Ellen and their three children Lilian, Eveline, and Fred sailed on the S.S. Canada in August 1912 to join her husband. They were scheduled to have sailed on the Titanic but fortunately Fred became seriously ill, postponing their voyage.

One of their first homes was the old bank building



situated near the old fair ground. At this time Fred worked at the Leitch Flour Mill. Then he tried his hand at homesteading near Ericksdale, Manitoba. This wasn't suitable so the family moved back to Oak Lake where he was employed by the C.P.R. as a pump man.

There were hard times for Fred and Ellen when the pump house burned down and he was out of work. He had to do odd jobs, such as shovelling coal, chopping wood etc. Later he got a job with the "Government Good Roads". While on this job he and his brother Herbert planted trees along the highway, near Flat Creek, which have acted as a snow guard for many years.

During the years they lived in Oak Lake, Fred and Ellen had four more boys, Charles, George, Albert and Frank.

They celebrated their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary in the town, as did his parents, Fred and Elizabeth.

### **The Fry Story as told by James Fry Jr., now 90, residing in Kelowna, British Columbia**

Yes, our parents came from London, England to Oak Lake in 1886, with Lilian, Thomas and Gertrude. The boat trade in England was depressed, and Mother's health, being poor, the Doctor suggested a sea voyage to Canada. Also the C.P.R. told of the wonderful choice land for \$10.00 and tales of being well off in three years.

In those days it took about two weeks to cross the Atlantic, and they had to take their own food.

On arriving in Brandon, they were advised, by a Mr. Clifford Sifton, I think, to choose Oak Lake area with its lighter soil — as the heavier land was more subject to frost.

In August of 1886, Mother and the children went on to Oak Lake, while Father bought a team of oxen, wagon and plow and drove to the homestead. It was SW ¼ of 4-9-25 south of Routledge, and one and a half miles from the lake.

The first winter was spent in the town of Oak Lake, where Father did boat repairs. He said there was lots of work, but no money. The spring of 1887 they went to the homestead, living in a tent until they built the house.

One time Father and a neighbour went to Oak Lake for lumber — a long day with oxen. They got back after dark and called for Mother to put out a light. She, becoming afraid of Indians, blew the light out.

The first crop in 1888 was good, but frost came in July, and there was little from then on. The sand

drifted, and they just existed with some crop and cream cheques.

Father was on the Sifton Council and was also Justice of the Peace, until he resigned to move into the North West Territories, later Saskatchewan.

On my sixth birthday in 1897 Mother was baking bread. She lit a glass lamp and went to look at the baking, when the lamp exploded. The house was made of dry lumber and the fire spread so quickly they only saved a few things. They had just been paid for cream, also had sold two steers, and got in a supply of groceries and dry goods, which were all burned. They had a little insurance which helped buy lumber for a new house.

The reason for going west was my brother Thomas was taking a homestead on good land, so Father sold the farm for, I believe, \$300.00. Because the Oak Lake homestead had been sand, the Government sold him 160 acres for \$1.00 per acre. He borrowed the money, paying 20% interest until fall. That was in 1900 and in 1908 the C.P.R. put in a siding on his place and called it "Frys". He had the Post Office, was on the Antler Municipal Council and was also Justice of the Peace.

Later Father had a general store. He sold out his interests and retired in 1916. He passed away in 1924 in Transcona at 69 years of age. Mother passed away in Vancouver in 1945 at 92.

I was only 9 when at Oak Lake, but some of the neighbour's names were: Snelson, Ledgerwood, Wardman, Tester, Crump and Lancing. Father sold to Paddy Noon.

### **Jake Furtney**

Jacob Furtney was born in Plattsville, Ontario on May 3, 1875. His wife Elizabeth (Noble) was born in Singhampton, Ontario on April 5, 1878.

Jake and Elizabeth Furtney with daughter Iva arrived in Oak Lake on December 1st, 1916 from Emerson, Manitoba, where Jake had operated his own tailor shop.

He had purchased the local Barber Shop and pool room from Mr. Hepburn. Before arriving in Oak Lake he had taken a barbering course in Winnipeg and became the only local barber, tailor and pool hall proprietor in Oak Lake.

They were members of the United Church. Jake was also a member of the Oddfellows and Masonic Lodge and Elizabeth belonged to the Rebekahs.

During the 1918-19 flu epidemic, Elizabeth took an active part in caring for many of the flu victims in and around Oak Lake. From then until they left Oak Lake in 1949, she practiced mid-wifery in the community.

Jake and Elizabeth Furtney had two children.

**Iva** — who completed her high school at Oakwood School and then attended Brandon Business College. After graduation in 1919 she accepted a position with Mr. R. H. Hockin who was the local notary public. She also worked at Oakburn and Kenton and returned to her former position with Mr. Hockin until 1933. In 1934 she left Oak Lake for Ontario where she married Wentworth Furtney.

**Cecil** — attended Oakwood School where he took an active part in the local hockey and baseball teams and was also a member of the Oak Lake Band.

After leaving high school in 1939, he worked for a brief period in the Red Lake, Ontario mining area. Early in 1940 he joined the R.C.A.F. in Toronto and went overseas in 1942 where he served as a fighter pilot with the R.A.F. He returned to Oak Lake on V.E. Day and on December 20th, 1940 married Marguerite Williams, daughter of Ed and Hazel Williams.

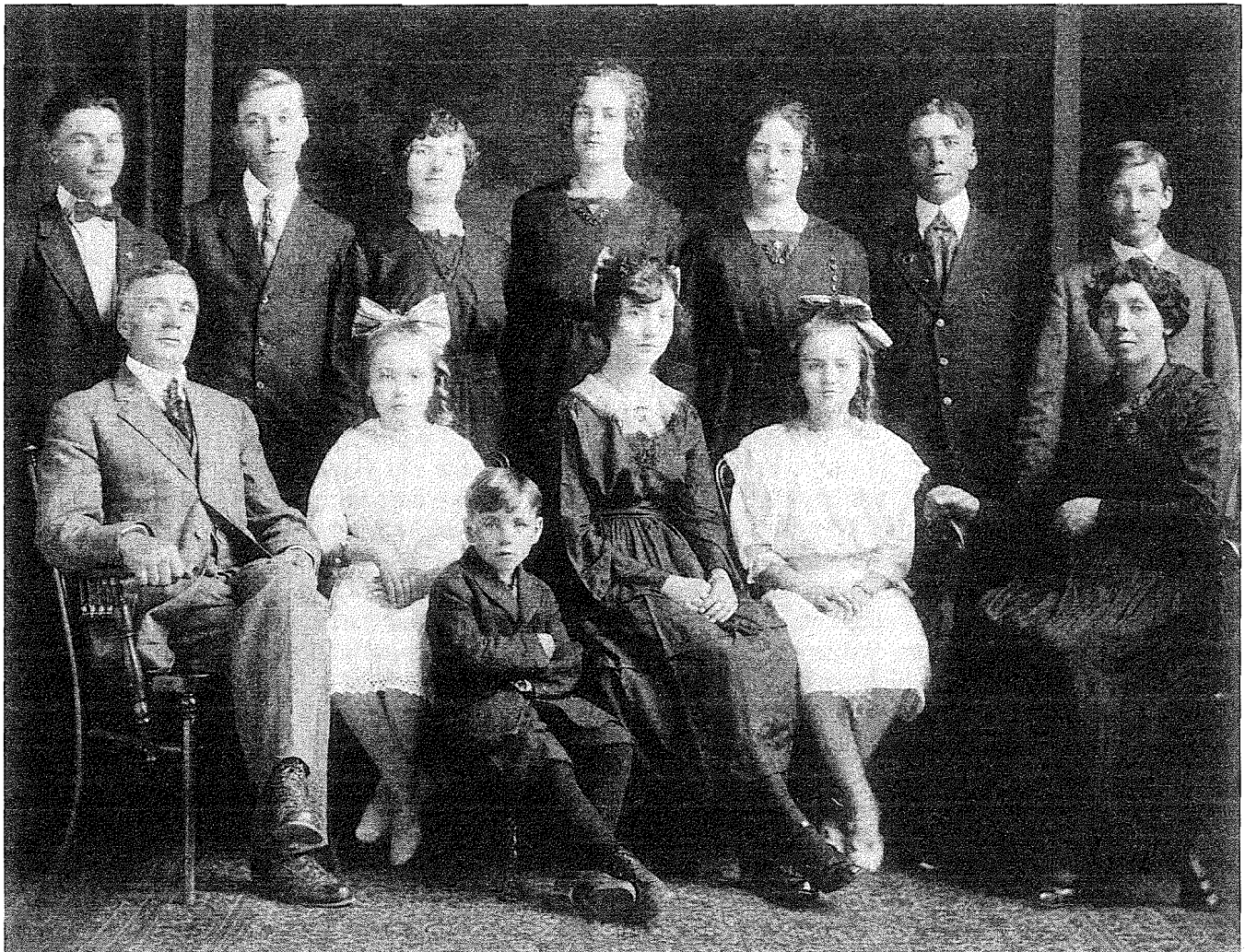
They have one daughter, Wendy, born July 26, 1954 and all reside in Toronto.

## **Gustave Gabrielle**

Gustave Gabrielle homesteaded in the Municipality of Sifton north of Findlay, Manitoba.

Gustave married Octavia Gilliard who came from Charleroi, Belgium, the same place as Gustave. A year later they were married in the village of Oak Lake, Man. in 1890. They were of the Roman Catholic faith. They later moved to Oakview area, built their farm home on N.W. quarter of 8-9-25.

They had a family of thirteen, seven girls and six boys as follows: **Emily** — married Leopold Fosty, farmer, of Scarth; **Palmyre** — married Frank Riendeau, who farmed in the Scarth area then later moved to Lewister, U.S.A. October 14th, 1941; **Denise** — married Fernand Henuset who farmed in Belleview and Scarth area; **Gaston** — married Josephine Normand who farmed in Scarth and later Benito areas, then operating the John Deere business; **Rene** — married Renee Laloyaux who farmed in the Scarth and Virden areas; **Joseph** — married Simone Chacun who farmed on the home place for awhile then later in



Gabrielle Family.

the Virden area; **Yvonne** — married Regis Leogiuier who farmed in Saskatchewan; **Octive Gabrielle** — married Margaret Harbottle and farmed in the Scarth and later Virden area; **Alice** — married Henry Marcotte who worked for the Gabrielles then moved to Sask.; **Lucille** — married Gabriel Boulanger and **Roland** — married Berthina Rousson, both farmed in the Scarth and Virden area; **Alex** — married Leonie Loiselle who was in the army and later worked for Manitoba Telephone at Virden, also at Morris, Manitoba, then moved to Beausejour, Man.

Gustave Gabrielle was mostly a grain farmer, but raised cattle early in the 1900's; he also delivered hay to Virden with one ox and one horse in 1923. There was a bridge built across the Pipestone Creek, later known as the "Gabrielle" bridge, which some of the Gabrielle boys helped to build. Being a large family, Gustave used to help Octavia peel potatoes. The house, which was well constructed, still stands today but vacant.

### **Galawan Family**

John Galawan migrated from the district of Tarnopol in Western Ukraine in May of 1928. He left behind his wife, Maria, and his son, Michael, who was only nine months old. He had friends in Brandon who had come to this country a few years earlier, so he decided that Brandon should be the place to begin his livelihood in this new land.

For the next four years he worked on railroad extra gangs in the summer; threshing gangs in the fall; and bush camps in Ontario during the winter months. When the Great Depression hit in the fall of 1929, jobs were so hard to get, that many men, single or those that were married with families in Europe, turned to soup kitchens for their mere existence. But, no matter how bad things got, Mr. Galawan never required a hand out.

In the winter of 1931-1932, while working on a dairy farm north of Winnipeg for Mr. Slupski, Mr. Galawan met another immigrant from the Ukraine, Mr. Nick Kowbel. These two men pooled their savings of fifteen hundred dollars and rented the South half of Section 29-10-24 from William Jackson in Hagyard School District, which was eight miles North West of Oak Lake. The agreement was on a third share basis, which included horses, cattle, and farm implements.

In the Spring of 1932, the two share croppers planted their first crop, both men working on the land while Mrs. Anna Kowbel tended the chickens and turkeys, besides helping with the milking of cows, as well as caring for her two year old daughter, Julia, and her one year old son, Michael.

Prices for farm products were poor during those

depression years; eggs were five cents a dozen; two year old steers sold for eighteen dollars per head; farm butter was eight cents per pound. In 1935 wheat rust was so bad that whole wheat fields had to be burnt.

Even with all these hardships, Mr. Galawan saved enough money by the fall of 1935 to pay for his wife and son's passage from the Ukraine to Canada. They arrived in Oak Lake in September.

The two families lived the winter together, and in the Spring of 1936, John rented the West half of 28-10-24 from Alex Forrest. Mr. Galawan and Mr. Kowbel split their assets in half and John moved on to his newly rented land.

Two more children were born in the following years; a son, Peter, in 1936 and a daughter, Polly Ann, in 1938. All three Galawan children went to Hagyard School, then to Oak Lake High School.

In the Spring of 1938, Mr. Galawan bought the land he had been renting for the previous years from the Municipality of Woodworth. The previous owner had lost the land due to tax arrears of one thousand dollars. Today, the same half section would sell for one hundred times that amount, but even the one thousand dollars took years to pay off because of the poor prices farmers received for grain and cattle, etc., during those lean years.

Michael Galawan left home at the age of eighteen, and went to Winnipeg in 1945. In 1947 he was hired by C.P. Rail, worked in various positions, and since 1969 he has been with the Winnipeg Yard Office. He is married, with two children, **Gary** born in 1955, and **Debbie** born in 1957. He also has two grandchildren.

Polly Ann married Dave De Laronde of Winnipeg in 1965. They moved to the Hagyard District in 1969 where they farmed on the North West section of 32-10-24, the old Haney place. They have a son, Ernest, who was born in 1969 and a daughter, Michelle, who was born in 1971.

In the spring of 1981, they sold the farm and moved back to Winnipeg.

Peter Galawan farms the home place. Mr. and Mrs. Galawan, now in their eighties, still live on the farm, although retired.

The Kowbels moved to Forrest, Manitoba in 1943. They had six children in all, four daughters and two sons. Mr. Kowbel passed on in 1975, and Mrs. Kowbel still lives in the Forrest District, where her two sons, Michael and Danny, farm.

### **The Gallant Family**

In the year 1902 Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Joseph Gallant arrived in Manitoba and took up residence at Oak Lake.



Mr. and Mrs. Gallant.

Phillip Gallant and his wife, formerly Emma Arsenault, were born in Egmond Bay, Prince Edward Island in 1872 and 1877 respectively. They were married on Nov. 9, 1899 and decided to move west to make a home and raise a family.

The Gallant family increased to ten children, four of whom died in childhood. The others included a daughter, **Ida**, who died while giving birth to a son, Albert Chasse, who was raised by his grandparents, Phillip and Emma. Albert grew up in Oak Lake and later married Mona Daniel also of Oak Lake. They have two sons, Brian and Greg, and now live in Indian Head, Sask. where Albert is a plumber.

A son, **Alyre**, was born in 1904 and lived his entire lifetime in the Oak Lake area. He was a school custodian for many years. He never married and passed away in 1980.

A daughter, **Clarice**, was born in 1907. She married Edward LeBlanc and they resided in Brandon. They had three children — Bella, married Ron Maxwell and lives in Victoria, B.C.; Ron — married and lives in Edmonton, Alberta; Roxy — married Don Baker and lives in Victoria, B.C. Clarice passed away in 1963.

A son, **Alphonse**, was born in 1910. He never married and made his home in the Oak Lake and Brandon areas. He worked for the Brandon Hotel and passed away in 1979.

A son, **Arthur**, was born in 1915. He served in the Air Force during World War II and was stationed in Nova Scotia. From a first marriage, a daughter, Louann, was born. She is now married and living in California. Art married Jean while living in Brandon where he was employed by the Scott Fruit Co. Then they moved to Regina, Sask. where Art was employed by the Hudson's Bay Co. They retired and reside in Ladysmith, B.C.

A son, **Albert Phillip**, was born in 1917. He

joined the 8th Army Field Regiment in 1939 and served overseas until 1945. He married Olive Deverson from Griswold in 1939. They have two children — Marian, married to Lynn Switzer, with three daughters and living in Portage la Prairie; Ernest, married and living in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Albert Phillip's wife passed away in 1973. He is a car salesman and resides in Portage la Prairie.

The Gallant family were members of Church Athanasius, Roman Catholic, of Oak Lake.

The children received their education at Runnymede School and at Oakwood in Oak Lake. Well remembered teachers included Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Waite and Mr. Curly Heapy.

It is interesting to note that from the ten children of Phillip and Emma there is only one grandson to carry on the family name.

## George

Frederick Arthur George was born in Morden, Manitoba, March 10, 1886. He was the eldest of eight children, six daughters and two sons, born to George and Rebecca George. He received his education at Morden and attended the Morden Methodist Church with his parents.

On December 27, 1905 he married Sarah Ann Polson. She was born in Iceland on August 30th, 1884 and came to Canada with her sister and husband in 1901. Mrs. George could tell some interesting stories of the customs in Iceland.

Fred and Sarah had three children, namely Arthur, Clifford and Mabel. All three were born in the Morden district. Mr. George farmed in the Morden district and also operated a dray business for a number of years at Morden.

In 1930 Mabel married James Morrison of Deloraine. In 1936 Clifford married Blanche Le Barron of Deloraine. In 1937 Arthur married Kathleen Johnson of Waskada. Kathleen was a graduate of Brandon General Hospital School of Nursing. She was very devoted to her profession, always ready to go to the sick and needy.

Art and Kathleen had one son, William (Bill), born at Deloraine.

In 1943 Art and Kathleen and Art's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred George, moved to Oak Lake, via Medora and Deloraine, to S ½ of 25-9-24, also known as the Charlie Chapman farm. From here they carried on a dairy operation.

Art served on the Oak Lake school board as a trustee for a number of years. He also served on the Oak Lake Agricultural Fair Board.

Arthur's wife, Kathleen, died October 22, 1964. His mother, Sarah George, died March 2, 1965 and





Fred and Sarah George's 50th Anniversary, Left to Right — Art George, Chris and Rosena Bothe, Kathleen and Bill George.

his father, Frederick George, died September 11, 1966.

Art then sold the dairy business and rented the farm to Chris Bothe. He worked part-time for the Municipality of Sifton.

Art married Ethel Hatel of Deloraine on April 6, 1966 and they resided on the farm. Art worked for the Department of Highways from 1967 to 1973 when he retired. They sold the farm to Paul Plett in 1973 and moved to 438-27th Street, Brandon, where they still reside.

Bill received his education at Oak Lake, and after he finished school, he joined the City of Brandon Police Department in 1959. On August 12, 1960 he married Norma Jorgensen, of Ebor, Manitoba. Bill and Norma have one son, Perry William, born April 10, 1962. Bill served eleven years with the Brandon Police Force. He then took a position with the Manitoba Motor Vehicle Branch where he still works. Norma teaches at George Fitton School in Brandon. They reside at 336 — Laurence Crescent, Brandon.

### **Thomas Gerrier** by **Bertha (Gerrier) Dickson**

My Grandparents, Thierry and Julia Delarue emigrated to Canada in 1904 from Belgium, and settled in Oakview District on a farm near the Pipestone Creek about one mile south of the Oakview School District. My mother, Alice, was the eldest of a family of seven, six daughters and one son. In 1909, she

married Thomas Gerrier who came out west from Prince Edward Island.

My father was employed by Canadian National Railways for a number of years in various parts of Saskatchewan and Manitoba before starting to farm in the Oakview district in 1919.

Our "hardships" we almost didn't recognize at the time. We battled potato bugs, grasshoppers, herded cows in bare feet and tried to keep the cows from doing battle with new haystacks — they nearly always beat us to it. I could never figure out why they would suddenly make a beeline for those haystacks, we almost never won that race. I remember after a hail storm, going out and gathering the hail stones and making ice cream in the old fashioned hand ice-cream freezer. One thing — hail storms were on the rare side but this one was an especially severe one. It was a treat however, for us to have home made ice cream in summer, we usually had it in winter when ice was certainly plentiful.



"Sawing Bee" Tom Gerrier, August Vanderschaeghe, Punch Gerrier and Wm. Brownlie.

Our recreation was centred around the various schools, Oakview, Routledge and Sandhurst, dances, concerts and plays.

I left home to train as a nurse in 1929 at the Providence Hospital in Moose Jaw. I graduated in 1932, and worked on hospital staffs in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Salaries in those days ranged from \$20 per month to my maximum of \$30 per month. In the depth of the depression we were "lucky" to be working. In one hospital in Saskatchewan we went months on end not getting paid! Thank goodness we were fed. For ever more I've hated charge accounts! We never seemed to catch up, but we were expected to show up for work in proper uniform, so the town merchants carried us.

In 1935 I married John Dickison of Virden, Manitoba. A teacher, he taught at Oakview and Routledge schools. He retired from Winnipeg school district #1 in 1971. We have one daughter, Barbara, who is also a nurse and two grandsons.

My Mother and Father retired from the Oakview district in 1945, and moved to Virden, Manitoba. My brother, Albert "Punch" Gerrier, continued to manage the farm until he retired to Virden in the 1950's. My father, Thomas Gerrier was killed in a train accident in 1967 and my mother, Alice Gerrier, passed away in 1969.

My husband and I are presently making our home in Lethbridge, Alta., where at one time, I worked on the hospital staff of St. Michael's Hospital.

### The Gillespie Family History

James Gillespie and Agnes Rattray were born in adjoining parishes in The Carse of the Gowrie, Scotland. They were married at Ross Farm Glencarse on Dec. 20, 1867. They had five children, Andrew, William, Euphemia, James, and Henry.

James was employed by the Highland Railway as a Conductor, and later as an Assistant Superintendent. Their last home before coming to Canada was Inverness, Scotland.

The family arrived at Oak Lake, then known as Flat Creek on July 12, 1882. It was the end of steel on C.P.R. construction. James was the first station agent at Oak Lake. When the Gillespies arrived the only

buildings were the Station, Section House, and Tankman's Shanty. There were between 2000 and 3000 C.P.R. workmen living in tents.

In 1884 James left C.P.R. and took up a homestead at NW 36-8-24 now operated by Dick Winters and family. The family lived in a large tent until a log house could be built. They grew four acres of wheat the first year. The wheat was cut with a scythe and threshed with a flail. Enough seed was obtained to sow 25 acres the next year. They called their farm home, "Forrest Hall", after home in Scotland.

James took an active part in the affairs in the community. He was a member of the congregational committee which was formed to build the first Presbyterian Church in Oak Lake. After he retired from farming he was, for many years, crop correspondent for the Winnipeg Free Press.

**Euphemia** married George Gordon. They farmed at 26-8-24. **William** went to Vancouver. He married Lillis Lawson. They had one daughter, Charlotte. **James Jr.** spent most of his life in Winnipeg. He was a noted curler. He married May Skelley. They had no children.

**Andrew** worked at Leitch Bros. flour mill. On a visit to Scotland he saw Leitch Bros. Anchor Brand



Gillespie Family: Front Row (Left to Right) — Andrew, James, Agnes. Back Row (Left to Right) — William, Henry, Euphemia and Jim.

flour on the dock at Liverpool. He worked on different farms then bought Sec. 31-9-24 from Dan McLaren. Andrew married Anne Scott, daughter of James and Margaret Scott of the Sandhurst District on Dec. 20, 1899. They operated a mixed farm, grain and cattle.

Andrew was an Elder of the Presbyterian and later the United Church for many years. He was a trustee, and Sec. Treas. of Pleasant Plains School, Councillor of ward 3, Sifton Municipality, Member of local Pool Elevator Association, a charter member of Oak Lake Canadian Order of Forresters, and a member of the local Odd Fellows Lodge. Anne was active in the W.M.S. of the Presbyterian and United Church. She was a member of the local Rebekah lodge. She did a lot of practical nursing during her lifetime. One of the times was during the 1918 flu epidemic.

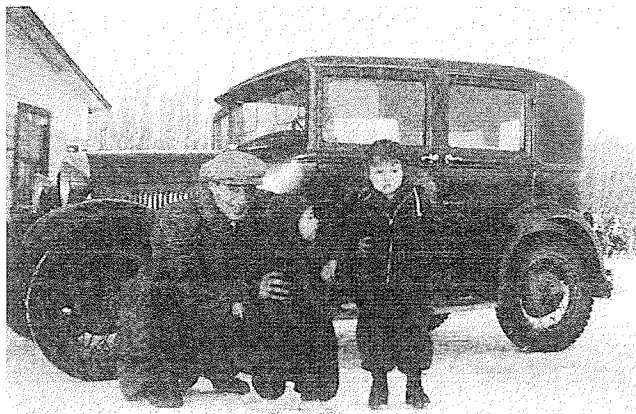
When James and Agnes retired from farming they lived in their own house on Andrew's farm for a few years, then in 1917 they moved to Oak Lake. They both died in 1927.

Andrew and Anne had four children, Margaret, Scott, Gavin, and Grace. Grace died at two months of age. The Gillespie children got their schooling at Oakwood School in Oak Lake due to Pleasant Plains School being closed for lack of pupils. They went to school by horse and buggy in summer and moved to town for the winter. Scott's first teacher was his aunt, Agnes Scott, now Mrs. McQuarrie of Oak Lake.

Andrew and Anne retired from farming the fall of 1941 and moved to their house in Oak Lake where they lived till 1951 at which time they moved to Kirkland Lake, Ontario. Andrew died in 1953 and Anne died in 1962.

**Margaret** married Clarence Telfer of Ilderton, Ont. in 1930. They had two sons, Adam and Robert.

**Scott** married Dorothy Featherstone of Virden, Man. in 1940 and they live in Kirkland Lake, Ont. They had two daughters, Marianne and Barbara.



Gavin Gillespie and Jamie, and Irene Crump.

**Gavin** married Muriel Armstrong of Rosburn, Manitoba. They live in Oak Lake and they had two children, James and Judith. James married Luella Allen of Lyleton, Manitoba, and they live in Regina and have two children, Jolene and Allen. Judith married Donald Podobni of Woodnorth, Manitoba. They live on a farm near Woodnorth and have two sons, Logan and Morgan.

During World War Two, Scott served with the Army and Gavin with the R.C.A.F.

### The Girling Family

The Girling family arrived in Oak Lake from Glenella on December 27, 1966, moving into the Bell house which was built in the late 1800's. (There is a date inscribed in one of the upstairs window.)

Armer Girling, the new Postmaster, served the community in that capacity until Nov. 1972 when he was transferred to Shoal Lake. He enjoyed golfing, coached senior ball, was a Scout leader and a member of the Masonic Lodge. He was active in the Legion and attended The United Church.

Mrs. Girling (Mary) assisted in the Post Office for several months, enjoyed golfing and curling, was active in the U.C.W. and Legion Auxiliary, and attends the United Church.

They had three children:

**Carol** — attended Oakwood High School and graduated from Virden Collegiate. She was active in school sports, skating and church activities. Carol is now married and with her husband, Barry Little, and three children, David, Paul and Mary live at Leaf Rapids, a relatively new community in Northern Manitoba.

**Darlene** — attended Oakwood High School and graduated from Virden Collegiate. She was active in school sports, skating and church activities. She is presently employed at Christie School Supply in Brandon.

**Bill** — attended Oakwood Elementary School and continued his education at Shoal Lake Elementary and High School. He is presently employed at Curb a new store which opened in Shoal Lake August 1981.

Armer, Mary, Carol and Darlene are all members of the Order of the Eastern Star Oakwood #46.

### The Ginn Family

by D. L. Ginn as told by L. McDonald

Robert Daniel Ginn, gardener, came to Oak Lake, Manitoba, in the summer of 1911 at the age of thirty-five to work for Mr. McCrone, leaving wife Florence Page-Knight and three small sons behind to follow at a later date. (He married Florence at the age of twenty-nine; son Jack was born a year and a half





Robt. Ginn, Town Constable 1941.

later, followed by Frank in two years, and another two years later by Leslie.)

When Florence came to Canada in 1913 she was able to bring with her only the two younger sons, Jack being left behind in England to be treated for an eye condition.

Jack started for New York in 1914, but the boat he was on was chased by a German U-boat, and detoured to Australia. He died in Australia at the age of twenty-seven in a motorcycle accident which also claimed the life of his fiancée.

Leslie moved to British Columbia from Oak Lake

at the age of seventeen; passing away in 1965, leaving three sons: Jack, Arthur, and Lorne, who are still residents of that province.

Frank attended Harvey Public School and Oak Lake High. He spent one and a half years in the Yukon Territories as a missionary-teacher at Carcross Indian Residential School, returning to Oak Lake in 1932. Frank worked in and around Oak Lake, then married Luella Baillie, also of Oak Lake, in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1937.

Frank was sent overseas in December of 1939, returning home to Oak Lake in 1945 after being wounded in action, and receiving various awards. Luella, had in the meantime returned to Oak Lake in 1940, bringing with her their young son, Bob (born in Vancouver in 1938). Son Frank was born in Hamiota Hospital later that year.

On Frank's return, the family moved to a farm ten miles north of Oak Lake, daughter Paige was born in 1947, and was followed by Catherine in 1951. The family left the farm in 1951 and moved to Terrace Bay, Ontario.

Frank Ginn passed away in April of 1972 at Terrace Bay. Family remaining in the area are wife Luella, in Schreiber; son Bob and family in Schreiber, daughter Paige and family in Schreiber; son Frank and family live in Cadillac City, Michigan, and the youngest daughter, Catherine, and family live at Jack Fish Lake, Ontario; (a total of four grandsons and two granddaughters).



William Gompf Family: Back Row (Left to Right) — Mr. Wm. Gompf, Charlie and Mrs. Gompf. Front Row (Left to Right) — Lena Gompf (Taylor), Lindsay, George, Ann Gompf (McKinnon), Bill, Bessie Gompf (Montgomery).



## William Gompf Family

William Gompf came from Listowel, Ont. in 1889 and worked on the farm of W. C. Smith for several years. He was hardworking and thrifty and soon was able to buy NE ¼ of 8-10-23. Here he built a sod shanty and batched for seven years. William married Agnes Lindsay of Fergus, Ont. in 1899. Their family consisted of three girls, Annie, Lena and Bessie, and four boys, Lindsay, William, George and Charles. A large up-to-date home with plumbing and Delco lights replaced the first home.

In 1919 Mrs. Gompf and an infant child died. Mr. Gompf with characteristic strength, proceeded to bring up his family alone. He learned to bake bread and taught his daughters to take on the work their beloved mother would have done.

The William Gompf family were members of the Presbyterian Church at St. David's. They travelled 6 miles by democrat to attend Sunday School and services. Lena Taylor remembers when all the families occupied their own pew consequently with nine in a family it was a tight squeeze!

William Gompf died March 8, 1951.

**Lindsay Gompf** was the son of William Gompf. Lindsay remembers his school days at Harvey when he had to drive two miles to school every day with an oat sheaf in the back of the buggy or cutter and a 20 lb. Beehive syrup pail as a lunch kit — with lunch for four.

Those were the days when help was scarce. After getting his grade VIII he stayed home to help with the chores and land work. He remembers helping Strachan McKay clear brush on 17-10-23 with four horses and a chain. Lindsay was very proud of his driving horses and took prizes at the local Fairs. He married Christina Goodwin of St. David's in 1925. Their first home was in Harvey district known as the Pommer farm (8-10-23). They have five children, are now retired and live in Oak Lake.

Tena Goodwin Gompf was born May 30th, 1901. She was active in St. David's church and was noted for her delicious baking. She sang in the choir at St. David's and Oak Lake United Churches for many years and was known for her lovely contralto voice and solos.

They lived in the Harvey District on SE ¼ 8-10-23, moving in 1939 to the Goodwin homestead where they farmed until they retired to Oak Lake in 1962. They had five children: Ron, Lorne, Bob, Dorothy and Anne.

Ron served in the Army in World War II from 1943-46 and later married Katherine Maziary from south of Oak Lake. They had three children, May-Anne, Ronnie and Valerie. They farmed in the Kenton area for a number of years. Kay passed away in 1962. Ron now is employed in Nobleford, Alberta.

Lorne was born on August 26, 1927, in R.M. Woodworth. His wife, Jean Kitzler, was born in Moose Jaw, Sask. They were married at Rivers, Man., on July 4th, 1958. They run a mixed farm in R.M. Woodworth (16-12-24, NE quarter). Before Lorne was married, he worked at a Copper and Gold Mine at Flin Flon, Man. In 1960 he moved to the farm at Kenton. He is active in 4-H and community affairs. They had two children, Carolyn — Mrs. Kevin Leif now resides at Snow Lake, Man. and Shannon — born January 10th, 1970 and is living at home.

Robert was born at Oak Lake on November 4th, 1928. He married Phyllis Lyall of Kenton on July 7th, 1962. They are farming the Goodwin homestead north of St. David's Church. They are engaged in a mixed cattle, hog and grain operation. They have two children. Barry, born June 9th, 1963 and Sherry born April 11, 1965. They both attended Oak Lake Junior High and then Virden Collegiate.

Dorothy was born November 27, 1931 at Oak Lake. She married Telfer Scott. Telfer is a passenger agent for Air Canada at Saskatoon, Sask. They have two adopted children, Darren born July 29, 1963 and Dawn born Nov. 11, 1965.

Anne married Gordon Bothe of Oak Lake.

**Annie Louise** (eldest daughter of Wm. Gompf of the Harvey District), married Alex McKinnon, of the St. David's area.

**William John Gompf** — born July 14, 1906 at home north of Oak Lake. He attended school at Harvey. He belonged to St. David's Church, Oak Lake and later St. Paul's United Church, Souris. He married Grace Eleanor Wright on October 22, 1932 at the Souris Manse. He farmed at Souris from 1932 to 1968 and then retired to Souris. They had one child — Wilfred Earl Gompf — born August 18, 1935 and died July 23, 1950. Grace Wright taught school at Harvey from 1926-30.

**Lena Gompf** married David A. Taylor on October 20, 1934. They have one daughter — Corrine Armbruster and two sons — David Kelvin (Kelly) and Edward Wray (Ted).

**Bessie** — married Bob Montgomery of the Ryerston District. They have four children, Judy, Roberta, Cathy and Keith.

**George** — married Evelyn Walton of the St. David's District. They have four children, Marlene, Garnet, Karl, and Larry.

**Charlie Allan Gompf** was born in 1915 at home in the Harvey district. He served time with the Marines at Vancouver, and many years as a Chef in Chicago, Lynn Lake and Brandon University. He has one daughter, Carolyn, from a previous marriage, and married Laura Irwin of Hamiota in 1977 where they are enjoying retirement.

## Harry Gompf and Sons, Elmer and Max

Harry Gompf was born in Listowel, Ontario in 1882 and came to Oak Lake around 1900 with his brother, Will Gompf. Four sisters also came to live in the Oak Lake area: Kate (Pommer), Minnie (Daum), Liz (Kennedy) and Millie (Cairns). Harry worked in the area for several years and met his wife, Lena Taylor of Poplar Point, Manitoba, while she worked for his sister, Liz Kennedy.

Harry and Lena were married in 1910 and homesteaded in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan for 26 years where nine children were born. One died at birth.

In 1937 Harry and Lena were dried out so they moved their family and cattle to Oak Lake. They rented a farm at Lenore for two years and then sold their farm in Saskatchewan. They purchased the Joe Carpentier farm, N.W. 4-10-23, in the Harvey district, which is presently owned by son, Max. Charlie and Clara finished their education in Harvey and Oak Lake schools. Elmer purchased land near Oak Lake and Max farmed with his father.

A tragedy occurred in the thirties when Mr. and Mrs. Gompf and Louise were caught in a blizzard and lost their way in 30° below zero temperature. Louise suffered severe frost bite from toes to hips. It was six months before she tried to walk but recovery was complete.

In 1949 Harry and Lena retired and purchased the Ducharme house in Oak Lake. They also bought a small cottage next door where Harry lived after his wife, Lena, passed away, living there until he died in 1970.

**Max** — married Annie Lincoln of Parry, Saskatchewan, who was pastor of the Pentecostal Church in town, for two years with helper, Rachel Rasmussen of Pangman, Saskatchewan.

Max and Annie had three children born to them and were foster parents to three of the Jack Campbell children of Kenton, Lynne, Tim and Kevin.

Max was a mixed farmer, specializing in pigs and poultry, for many years.

Annie taught 4-H sewing and used her ministerial talents at various services.

In 1971 the Gompfs became members of the Manitoba Farm Vacations Association and named their farm "Max Anne Rolling Acres". Here visitors from many places come each summer, enjoying the life and rocks and Indian artifacts. They spend their winters in San Juan, Texas.

They had three children, Gary, Gail and Colleen.

**Gary** — attended Harvey and Oak Lake schools, was a draftsman for a Winnipeg firm. He married Shirley Kipling of Brandon. They have two children, Daren and Christie. They live in Calgary where Gary

is manager of downtown Dairy Queen and wife Shirl is secretary for Logas Christian School in Calgary.

**Gail** — was born with a hip out of joint and spent over a year in a cast. She attended Harvey and Oak Lake schools, went to work in Banff, Alberta. She married a rancher from Wardlow, Bill McKillop, and they have three sons, Jonathon, Maxwell, and Michael.

**Colleen** — works in Banff, Alberta, running a ski rental and novelty shop in the Voyageur Inn and a coffee shop at the train station.

**Elmer** — married Edith Hart of Oak Lake.

**Florence** — married Oliver Mills of Niagara Falls, Ontario.

**Louise** — married Gilbert Askin of Brandon.

**Stanley** — married Eileen Eastwood of Winnipeg, Manitoba. He is a Baptist Church minister. They have one daughter.

**Clarence** — died at birth.

**Charlie** — married Evelyn Taylor of Willan, Manitoba. He is a Pentecostal minister and bee farmer. They have one daughter.

**Eileen** — died at age 30 in Oak Lake.

**Clara** — married Lewis White, of Pangman, Saskatchewan. They have four daughters and one son.

## Elmer and Edith Gompf

Elmer, son of Lena and Harry Gompf, was born in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan, and moved with his parents to a farm north of Oak Lake in 1937.

Edith, daughter of Alf and Nellie Hart, was born on the Johnston farm, north of Oak Lake.

Elmer received his education at Aberdeen, Saskatchewan and Edith at Oakwood School, Oak Lake.

They were married in 1943 and lived east of Oak Lake. They operated a mixed farm, retiring in 1979. They have been foster parents to many children for 33 years. They have four children.

**Beverley** — married to Ray Murray, resides at St. Rose du Lac. They are both teacheres and Bev also teaches organ. They have three children, Rhonda, Malcolm and Gerhard.

**Donald** — married Linda Waytkan and they live at Oak Lake. Donald works for the C.P.R. They have three children, Bradley, Kimberley and Randy.

**Marjorie** — a cook, married Dan Christianson and lives in Brandon. They have two girls, Jennifer and Tracey.

**Benny** — their adopted son, is a hairdresser and lives in Brandon.

It was a novel sight to see Elmer and several foster children, as well as his own, delivering the daily paper, the "Brandon Sun". The bundles were piled on a wagon, pulled by Elmer, followed by his

faithful dog, "Chief". The children walked along side and one usually had a hand tucked in Elmer's free one. They would deposit the papers on their customer's steps or between the doors and often were given a cookie. Later, Elmer drove a tractor-drawn vehicle which carried the children, as well as the papers, Chief still accompanying them.

### George Gompf Family

George Gompf, son of Wm. Gompf, married Evelyn Walton of St. David's district in 1939 and they have four children; Marlene, Garnet, Karl and Larry. They lived on the S.E. quarter of Sec. 8-10-23 owned by a cousin, Dr. Albert Pommer, until 1942 when they moved to the William Gompf farm, N.E. ¼ Sec. 8-10-23, home of George's father. In 1944 they took over the farm and in 1946 George bought the Pommer quarter section, which he still owns.

**Marlene** married Otto Penner formerly of Oak Lake in 1962 who is the Agriculture Representative at Russell, Man. They have 3 teenagers, Kevin, Janet and Brad. Marlene teaches Business Education at the Rossburn Collegiate. The Penners farm a ½ sec. south east of Russell and have a lovely farm home.

**Garnet** married Nora Helten of Oak Lake in 1966 and they have two boys and one girl, Tim, Tammy and Trevor, all in school. Garnet worked for Metropolitan Insurance in Winnipeg for a time and Nora for the Bank of Montreal. They returned to the home farm at Oak Lake in 1968. They keep busy with church and community affairs. Garnet's parents moved to Brandon in 1971.

**Karl** married Monica Hollamby of Virden in 1968. Both are graduates from the University of North Dakota. Karl taught school for several years and is presently director of two Residential Treatment Homes for children. His wife, Monica, is a speech pathologist. They have two boys, Tyler and Kirby, both in school. They live at Headingly, Man.

**Larry** has a B.Sc. in Agriculture from the University of Manitoba. He married Lily Parsonage of Baldur in 1973, who has her B.Sc. in nursing. They own a farm at Birtle, Man. They have three little girls, Laura, Sarah and Michelle. Lily does some home care nursing in the area and Larry teaches farm courses during the winter months.

### Alec Goodwin

submitted by Ella Graham

Alec and John Goodwin were the two oldest sons of David and Annie Goodwin of Arnprior, Ont. They came to Man. in 1875 and worked at several jobs — freighting for the H.B. Co. from Ft. Gary to Ft. Ellis over the old trails. They also worked on the railroad that was pushing into the West. In 1877 they were on



Alex Goodwin and Amelia Skuse. Married 1880.

the survey crew working through the Woodworth area.

Alec then went back to Ont. and in 1880 married Amelia Skuce and farmed near Proten, Ont. It was a poor farm so in 1882 he moved his wife and two small sons, Dave and Harvey, out to Man.

They came to the tent town of Brandon, bought supplies and oxen and eventually arrived at the homestead of brother John Goodwin on the N.E. ¼ of 34-10-24. Alec and Millie homesteaded on N.W. ¼ of 34-10-24. Later they acquired the N ½ of 33-10-24 where they built a larger house. They also bought John's property when John moved to Sask.

Alec and Millie raised seven children. Their son, **Dave** remained at home. He never married. **Harvey** homesteaded in Sask., married and had two children. **Millie** married Alex Phillips and raised two children. **John** became a teacher, married and adopted a son. **Annie** married Geo. Scott and had a son and daughter. **Jim** married Norma Forrest and adopted two children. There was one child who died as an infant.

Alec Goodwin loved to hunt and fish, go on picnics and visit people. He had a big laugh and there was always a lot of talking, laughing and singing in the house. Musical ability was noticeable in the family. Alec died in 1916 after a short illness. He was 65 years old.

Millie was noted for her beautiful sewing and her Irish humour. Her gift for drawing and painting was



Dave, Harvey, Millie, John, Mary, Annie, Jim Goodwin.

passed onto her children and grandchildren. She died in 1938 at the age of 84 years.

This couple were active in St. David's Church and Hagyard School work and are buried in Johnston Cemetery where many of the early pioneers are at rest.

### Jim and Norma Goodwin

Jim youngest son of Alec and Amelia was born in 1897 on the farm. He received his education at Hagyard School. He helped on the farm, then joined the army in World War I.

He returned to the farm, and at the age of 24 he married Norma Margaret Forrest. They were married at her parents' farm sec. 33-10-24. Norma was the daughter of John and Christina Forrest, she attended Hagyard School.

Jim and Norma were married on Nov. 16th, 1921 by the Union Church Minister, J. S. Miller of Oak Lake.

They spent many "Hard Years" trying to make ends meet. Jim hauled grain 9 miles to town with a team and wagon for 25¢ a bushel, while Norma delivered homemade butter to her customers for 20¢ a pound. They worked long days together.

Threshing at the Jim Goodwin farm, was one of many stops as the Goodwin men joined with the rest of the community and travelled from farm to farm. They also helped to build roads.

People still found time to enjoy life, family gatherings and picnics were held often, with plenty of homemade ice-cream.

Jim and Norma adopted two children, Shirley and Ross. They farmed until the fall of 1938, then Jim went with Sid Gregson to Brandon to work on the construction of an Armory. Jim rejoined the army.

Jim was sent to Shilo, Man., where he was a Corporal and later back to Brandon. Norma and their two children (Shirley and Ross) lived with Morris

and Mary Forrest for the first winter, later moving to Brandon, where they lived in the Dan Slimmon's house until the war was over.

They sold the farm to Mervin Walton, when the war was over, and moved to Basswood where for 4 years they managed the Co-op store. Then they moved back to Oak Lake and bought property at the west end. Here they raised chickens and sold eggs for 25¢ a dozen for grade "A". They got out of the chicken business as Jim was allergic to feathers.

They moved to the house on Main Street, where Jim was an Electrolux dealer until his passing, Jan. 17th, 1962. Norma worked for several years at Anderson's grocery store. She had several teachers board with her. Norma sold the house and moved into Princess Park in Brandon in 1974. She resided there until her passing Feb. 6th, 1981.

Both Jim and Norma were active members in the several clubs and were well known in the community. Jim received an honorary life membership in the Community Centre. He ran for mayor and was elected but passed away before taking office. He was very musical, he loved playing the fiddle and acted as judge at many contests.



Shirley Goodwin and Lockhart Makepeace 1948.

They were survived by two children, Shirley and Ross. Shirley married Lockhart Makepeace of Basswood, Manitoba at Oak Lake in 1948. They moved to the North West Territories and eventually settled in Hay River. They had five children, Tom, Bob, John, Karen and Brian. Lockhart was killed in a train-car accident in 1968. Shirley is now residing in Fort McMurray.

Their son, Ross, worked throughout Manitoba, later moving to Alberta and working in the oilfields. While working on an oil rig in Nova Scotia, he met



Beverly Benjamin. In 1964, they were married and moved back to Alberta. They moved to the Leslieville area, and in 1965, Ross went into business for himself with his own backhoe. They still live in the Leslieville area (Alhambra) on the farm (NE 39-5-5) and have four children, Bob, Jim, Carla and Donna.

## James Goodwin

written by May B. Goodwin

James Goodwin was born at Arnprior, Ontario in 1855. He married Christina Young, daughter of John Young of Arnprior, in March, 1888 and they came to Oak Lake to live on a half section of 35-10-24, purchased from the C.P.R.

David H. Goodwin, Dad's brother, and his wife and small son, Mason, came to Oak Lake too, as well as their father, David Goodwin Sr. and his wife and two unmarried children, Elizabeth (who later married T. J. Smith) and Robert, who was studying to be a doctor.

David Goodwin and his son, David H., bought farms near James Goodwin. St. David's Church was built on David Goodwin Sr.'s farm.

Crops were good and the red barn was built in 1897, a granary in 1899 and the house in 1903. Later another half section was purchased. Jack and Freda lived here for many years. Our home farm was sold to Roland Tolton in 1967.

Dad could express himself well and he was an avid reader of good books and magazines. Each year he subscribed for the Daily Free Press as he especially liked the Editorials written by John Daffoe, a young man who came from Arnprior, and who did not forget his Oak Lake friends.

Our parents were thrifty and worked hard and taught their family the value of worthwhile things in life. As their parents were Scottish, we had family prayers each night and Grace was said before meals. Dad was a beefring butcher for over forty years and kept accurate account of each member's share. If a member gave more, then he received payments at the end of the season.

Dad and his wife and family loved music. He was one of the first choir leaders in St. David's Church. He was followed by Marion Goodwin, later Mrs. Uptigrove and Mrs. George Taylor. Dad was a splendid reader of music. Della and Roy took vocal training and they too were fine readers of music. Dad sang bass, Roy tenor and Della alto. Della and Dad played the piano.

Our parents were well respected by their family and neighbours and had helpful concern for newcomers who came to live in St. David's in those pioneer days of long ago. They helped in Church and

Community and always were ready to help in times of sickness or trouble.

Dad had a busy life and had hired help for himself and his wife. Dad enjoyed games of all kinds and liked to go fishing. For years he and his four brothers went to hunt big game north of Clear Lake. Uncle



A Party of Oak Lake Hunters "Their usual Luck".

Jack McDonald and Will Head, a neighbour, accompanied the Goodwin brothers. Will Head played the violin and they would sing and read and review the world news of the year. These men were extra good marksmen with their 303 rifles. Each hunter was allowed one deer.

My mother was a lady with a beautiful face. She looked well after her household ways, we were indeed proud of this gentle mother. After we grew up we always liked to come home to our parents and our home.

When Dad was eighty he made a fine speech. He said, "Thank you all, for coming to celebrate my eightieth birthday. I couldn't have lived in a better community, nor could I have had better neighbours than the ones I've had here. I've had only two homes, my old Ontario home and this home where I brought Tennie, my bride." My parents loved and were proud of their own family, but followed with interest their neighbours' children who became doctors, nurses, teachers, and lawyers and who left to work in larger fields of opportunity.

My parents had seven children: Roy, Della, May, Jack, Clifford, Andrew and Ann.

**Roy** — was in the Army one year and returned home to the farm until 1942 when he went to Fin Flon to work for Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting until he retired. He died of asthma in Flin Flon and was buried in Johnston cemetery at Oak Lake. He left a host of friends who remember his kindness and love.

**Della** — kept our home after mother died in 1914. She was a clever sister. She made quilts and was a good knitter and learned many different patterns of knitted things. She loved good books and poetry and

was a lovely cook and helped in church and community.

She married Alex Young in 1927 and they worked in Winnipeg and north of Winnipeg. They had one son, Bob, who was killed in a plane crash in 1978 while on a mission from Mesa, Arizona to New Mexico. Della died in 1979 in the Conquest Nursing Home and was buried in Winnipeg. Alex Young died in Winnipeg in 1960.

**May** — was a teacher and taught one year at Sovereign, Saskatchewan, the rest of her teaching was in Manitoba. She went as a substitute teacher in 1943 to Flin Flon and came to Brandon to live in 1975.

**Jack** — and Freda were married in 1923. Freda came from Holland, Manitoba, where her grandfather was an early pioneer and was honoured to have the town of "Holland" named after him. Jack and Freda were great in the Community. Jack was a councillor of Woodworth Municipality and had a trucking business. He bought two Model "T" Ford trucks and with men built ten miles of gravel road. Jack and his cousin, Jim, had the first rubber tired tractors in the district. They also had the first combines in St. David's district. In 1973 they came to live in Oak Lake.



Freda and Jack Goodwin.

They spent several winters at Victoria, British Columbia, and several more at Sarasota, Florida. They were always involved in Church and Community and are continuing in this work wherever they go.

Jack and Freda had two children: **Marguerite**, a graduate nurse who married Roland Du Burger of Calgary. They have three children, Jeff, Lesley and Brock. **Gary** married Jeanie Hughes in 1954. They had five children, John, Patricia, Bob, Darren and Andrea. Gary married Donna Omalley in 1974. They have one son, Christopher. They live at Drumheller.

**Clifford** — following his schooling at Oakwood, trained in the Canadian Bank of Commerce at Oak Lake and later Griswold. In 1936 he married De Ella Giem at Northgate, North Dakota. In 1938 he went into lumber business with Al Hammal of Frobisher and moved to Oxbow in 1965 where he was the administrator of the hospital until he retired. De Ella was a talented music teacher in Frobisher and at Oxbow. De Ella died in April 1980 while Cliff died in May 1981. We were proud of Cliff and his wife and family.

They had two children: Arleen and Garth.

**Andrew** — graduated from high school and farmed for a time and then in 1936 he went to God's Lake and later to Flin Flon where he worked for 25 years. Andrew was married twice, first in 1945 at Winnipeg, to Edna Mills-Allan, a teacher and a great friend of all our family. She died in 1948 and was buried in Winnipeg. Andrew later married Marion Pegg of Oxbow where they have a lovely home. Marion is a wonderful knitter and is an excellent cook. Their son, David, died at White Rock in 1976.

**Ann** — married Wood Fisher of Nesbitt in 1942. Ann was a graduate nurse and was the Matron of the hospital at La Porte. Wood had many good positions at Sarasota where they lived over twenty years. They too have good friends everywhere they have lived. They now reside in Brandon.

### **David and Annie Goodwin**

David and Annie Goodwin came from Arnprior, Ontario in the early 1880's where they were married in 1883. They took out a homestead on N.E. 27-10-24 north of St. David's Church and built a sod shack where they lived until 1903 when the present brick house was built. They had seven children, Mason, Margaret, Belle, Olive, Murray, Christena (Tena) and Mabel.

Every year for fifteen years from the early 1900's the men took a holiday in November and went hunting at Lake Ode in Riding Mountain Park. This group included David Goodwin and son, Mason; Jim Goodwin and son, Roy; Alex Goodwin and son, Dave; plus Jack McDonald. They took 3 sleighs and would be away for 10 days. In the 15th year David and

Mason were wounded by a rifle shot fired by Dr. Cameron who came to their aid and carried David 5 miles to camp for medical help. Mason was able to return home the 90 miles by sleigh which took 3 days despite having a bullet in his arm and bleeding badly. David had been taken by train to Winnipeg. The only thing that saved both from death was a branch of a cherry tree that split the bullet. This branch is presently in the home of Tena Gompf.

In 1914 the Goodwin family, with the exception of Mason and Margaret moved into Oak Lake to the old Cormey house where Olive taught school and Mabel and Tena attended school. In 1916 David built the brick house where Lorne Story now lives on Vyner Street. (Annie died of cancer, Sept. 6, 1924 and then David returned to the farm. David died in 1940 at Winnipeg.)

**Mason** was born at Arnprior in 1887. He farmed the Goodwin homestead from 1914 until his death of a ruptured appendix in 1935.

**Margaret** was born April 16, 1890. She became a nurse and worked at Nelson House for 5 years and then at Ilford, Manitoba for a number of years. She would walk for miles tending the Indian people, pulling teeth, delivering babies and attempting to cure all ills. She met Charles Lee, a trapper, and married him at Ilford, Manitoba. They had no children. In the later years they moved to Hamiota where Margaret developed diabetes and later gangrene made it necessary for the amputation of both of her legs. She lived for 8 years in a wheel chair. She was noted for her beautiful singing voice.

**Olive** was born July 8th, 1892. She became a teacher and taught at Verity School, Oakwood School, and later at Champlain School, Winnipeg, for a number of years. She married Jack Cowan, a lawyer, and later he was Deputy Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. They had 2 children, Marjorie, married to Bob McBeath, now living in Texas, and Grant, an actor, now living in Toronto.

**Murray** was born March 14, 1895. He graduated as a Medical Doctor. He practised for 3 years at McAuley, Manitoba and then went to Teulon where he practised for 34 years. He retired from Teulon and then became the ship's Doctor aboard "The Ice-breaker Labrador" to the Arctic until his death in 1968. He married Anna Roberts (deceased in 1952). They had 3 children, Jean, Bill, and Pat.

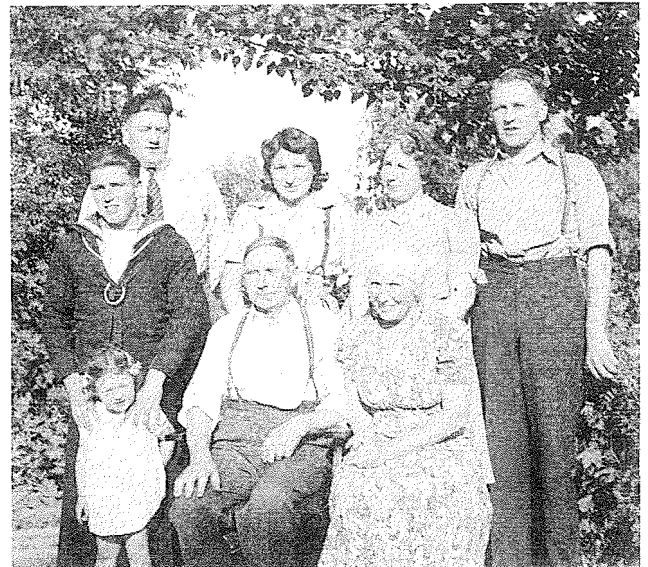
**Belle** married Cliff Gordon, farmed south of Oak Lake. They had 3 children, Warren, Doug, and Phem. She died May 14th, 1971.

**Mabel** was born in 1902. She worked as a stenographer for Eaton's, Winnipeg, for a number of years. She married Harry Del Bigio who was an electrical engineer, and owned and operated Del's

Electric in Winnipeg. They had three children, Berenice, Roland and Marilyn. She is presently living in Winnipeg.

### Charles L. Goodwin

Charles L. Goodwin, his wife, Ida, and their four children — Irene, Franklin, Olive and James arrived in Oak Lake by train in 1923, C. L. Goodwin having been sent to take over the position of C.P.R. Pumpman. Since the dwelling down at the river by the pumphouse had been burned or demolished, they lived in the town until a new dwelling was built beside the pumphouse on the banks of the Assiniboine River. Mr. Goodwin did considerable landscaping such as making a sunken garden and a lily pool in the old house foundation. Deer used to come out of the hills and drink out of the lily pool. He also built a diving board on the river bank and a picnic table on the lower level, both of which were enjoyed by groups from town. One year the C.P.R. awarded him a special prize for his work in landscaping. At that time the pipeline was a shortcut when walking to town.



Pete Anderson, Olive Goodwin, Irene (Goodwin) Anderson, Franklin Goodwin, F. R. Jim, Charles and Ida Goodwin, Heather Anderson, standing.

When the age of steam came to an end locomotives were fuelled by oil, the pumping station was closed down and the dwelling was rented to A. D. Scott. The Goodwins had retired and moved into town. However, this house also burned down. Later, when this piece of C.P.R. land was put up for sale Olive Goodwin bought it, later turning it over to her nephew, John Anderson. John, now living in Winnipeg, came out with his friends on holidays and

weekends and built a Geodesic Dome on the old house foundation. However, since the boys could only come out on weekends, both the dome and pumphouse were badly vandalized. The boys eventually had to abandon it. In spite of signs being put up, bricks were stolen from the pumphouse.

**Irene** — attended high school in Oak Lake and Wheat City Business College in Brandon. Worked in law offices in Souris, Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Windsor, Ontario and Oak Lake for Ed. Alder, also in Municipal Office, Oak Lake. Married Peter Anderson in 1937.

**Franklin "Pork" Goodwin** — born in 1911 and came to Oak Lake with his parents in 1923. Here he attended school, was active in sports and a member of the Oak Lake Band. He attended Virden Collegiate to take his Grade XII. He taught school for some years and in 1937 entered Brandon College, graduating in 1940 with a B.A. in Geology.

In the next years he served as a meteorologist, in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, where he met Wilma Green, who became his wife. Frank received his "Wings" and in World War II activities served as a pilot. He was stationed at Nassau, and in the British Isles. Following the war, he attended Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario and graduated in 1948 with B.Sc. in mining engineering.

He was employed at Kimberley, B.C. until his retirement in 1976 where he, his wife and family continue to make their home. They raised a family of three boys: Ross, Kye, and Kent.

**Jimmy** — was born in Hyde, Saskatchewan in 1919. He received all his education at Oakwood High School. He joined the navy in 1939 and after the war continued on at sea as a merchant seaman.

Later he sailed for three seasons with the Northern Transportation Co. Ltd. on the Athabaska McKenzie Waterway. During the winter he hunted buffalo in Wood Buffalo Park for the government. He was appointed the District Marine Agent for the Department of Transport with headquarters in Fort Smith, North West Territories.

He married Alma McIver of Victoria, B.C. in 1955. They have four children. He is now retired on the west coast of British Columbia.

**Olive** — attended Oak Lake public and high school, Brandon College, Faculty of Education, Winnipeg University. Taught at Virden Collegiate 1936-1941. Overseas with the Canadian Children's Services 1942-1945. Teaching with Burnaby School Board 1945-1977. 1949 married Col. H. L. Pease. 1968-1970 and 1977-1979 teaching in Japan. Now retired and living in Burnaby, British Columbia.

### George Gordon History

George Gordon was born in Montrose, Scotland,



George Gordon.

son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Gordon of Upper Mills Kinnebar Farm on December 26, 1865.

As a young man in Scotland he worked as a brakeman on the railroad.

Around 1886, he sailed for America arriving in Minnesota, and spent some time with his elder brother, Robert, and also worked on the farm of Andrew Gillespie's uncle in Stevenson, Minnesota.

In 1887, he came to Manitoba, working with Archie Malcom the first while, then in the fall, went to Deleau to work on the threshing crew of "Duncan and Walker". They threshed all through the winter as considerable grain was left unthreshed the previous fall. The next spring, he homesteaded a quarter section where the Gordon buildings still stand six miles south of Oak Lake in the Lansdowne district, Section 26-8-24. Later he built a one room shanty on this piece of land which cost him the grand total of \$14.00. This building has served as kitchen for many years and later ended up as the "Hen house". For two years, the crop was sown by hand and in harvest he stacked the grain, this way it yielded a better grade and better price.

He bought the south east quarter of 26-8-24 and then the north east quarter, next he acquired the north west quarter which had previously belonged to Henry Gillespie.

In his homesteading days, he owned a pair of oxen "Buck and Barney". This erratic pair worked only when they felt like it. On one trip back from Deleau they got as far as Albert Vachon's and refused to go any further. After trying in vain to drive these two home, he took a piece of his clothing and tied their horns together and was able to drive them home this way.



He has told many stories of the hardships endured those first years, the extreme cold of the winters and heat of the summers.

During his long residence in Lansdowne district, he served as trustee of the school for 40 years and later served as trustee of Oakwood School.

He was Councillor for Sifton Municipality for 18 years and Reeve for one term.

He was actively involved with the United Grain Growers and served as secretary for years. This organization imported apples, coal, twine, etc. by the carload to help the farm community get a better deal.

He assisted in the organization of the Sheep Breeders Assoc. and was director of the Wool Growers Assoc. for 30 years. As a breeder of Short-horn cattle he was known far and wide as he made many sales from his purebred stock. He served as Agricultural Representative for the C.P.R. and also sent in crop and livestock reports to Miss Cora Hind of the Winnipeg Free Press.

As a member of the United Church (formerly the Presbyterian church) he served on the board since the church was built.

In 1888, he married Mary Mitchell who passed away suddenly in 1889 leaving an infant, Mary Wilhelmena (Gordon) Minorgan.

In 1894, he married Euphemia Gillespie and together they built a successful farming enterprise, as well as raising 8 children: Agnes (MacKenzie), Clifford — deceased, Allan, Lillian (Campbell), Henry — deceased, Wilfred, Doris (McMillan), and Murray.

Mrs. Euphemia Gordon was born in Inverness, Scotland in 1875. They came to Canada in 1882, first settling at Flat Creek where her father, James Gillespie, was station master. They moved to a farm south of Oak Lake in two years time and farmed there for many years.

She passed away in June, 1930 after a lengthy bout with diabetes.

George Gordon retired from farming in 1937 and spent his remaining years in the town of Oak Lake. He passed away July 24, 1951 at the age of 86.

### **Clifford Gordon**

Clifford Gordon, the eldest son, was born in 1897. Following his education at Lansdowne School and the Manitoba Agricultural College, Cliff joined the Canadian Army and served overseas in England, France and Germany from 1916 to 1919.

Following the war, he returned to his home district and purchased the E½ 27-8-24. Cliff and Belle Goodwin of the St. David's District were married in 1924.

Cliff managed a mixed farming operation with



Cliff and Belle Gordon, first granddaughter Donna Andrews 1959.

both sheep and cattle. He was especially interested in the former and was a director of the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers for many years, also was on the Manitoba Sheep Breeder's board, the Oak Lake Agricultural Society, the Lansdowne School board and the United Church session — also the Town and Country Newspaper.

Belle died in 1971 and Cliff took up residence at Oakwood Place.

In 1975 he took a trip overseas. Travelling by bus Cliff would stop to enjoy anything that interested him. One day in Scotland he spotted a large flock of sheep and insisted on getting off — not a town nor person in sight. A bewildered driver watched Cliff — little suitcase in hand — plodding toward the sheep. He needn't have worried. The Shepherd emerged from his grassy pallet, and after a lengthy chat, took him home and later Cliff caught another bus.

Cliff travelled widely across Canada in his duties with the Wool Growers to Conventions and Toronto Royal. On these trips he talked to all he met — always finding someone from Oak Lake or related to someone in Oak Lake. Next to his family this little town was his pride and joy. He was the town's self appointed Good Will Ambassador — and a good one.

In the Lansdowne district neighbors would say Cliff and Belle were the definition of what is called "Good neighbors".

He passed away in August 1981.

Their family consisted of three children. **Warren** — married Janet Wardman (Virden) and they have one son Noble. **Doug** — married Jessie McLean (Kenton) and their family consists of Gerry, Greg and Gae. **Pheme** — married Gordon Andrew (Souris) and their daughters are Donna and Diana.

### Allan Gordon

Allan Gordon, second son of George and Euphemia Gordon, was born in 1899. He operated a Hardware business for 50 years, 1921-1971. He was in partnership with Alex Strong for 29 years from 1921 to 1950, then it was known as Gordon's Hardware Ltd. until 1971, when it was destroyed by fire. In 1935, he married Elva Cole, daughter of John and Ethel Cole. They had three children.

**Glenda** married Glenn Walton, son of Mervin and Mary Walton. They had two children, Geoffrey and Gayle, but Glenn died at the age of 29. Glenda remarried later to Paul Bourque, son of Tom and Heddy Bourque and they had one child, Bonnie.

**Gary** is a teacher at Russell, Manitoba, and is married. He has two children, Jocelyn and Trent.

**Donald** operates his own business in Winnipeg, "Gordon's Crafted Cabinets". He is married and has three boys, Kelly, Ward, and Graham.

Elva has her A.T.C.M. in music and was organist in the United Church for many years. She also assisted in the Hardware.

Since retirement, Allan has kept busy with repairing lawn chairs, especially in the summer months, while camping at their cottage at Oak Lake Resort.

The cottage which they bought in 1948 was made of bricks that were baked at the kiln at Oak Lake before the turn of the century.

### Henry and Ella Gordon

Henry and Ella Ronberg were married in 1932.

Henry was the son of George and Euphemia Gordon and Ella the daughter of Rudolph and Annie Ronberg. They started farming south of Oak Lake on the Bob Lang farm, now operated by Betty Plaisier. This was the depression years and money was scarce with the main livelihood baling hay in the marsh and shipping it to Saskatchewan.

Their three children were, Bob, born November 13, 1932, Wayne, October 29, 1938 and Cheryl, May 8, 1944.

About 1938 Henry acquired his own Shorthorn herd foundation from Ed McBeth and Clarence Kennedy. He and the family carried on with their pure-breds and over the years showed them across Western Canada. They first showed at the Royal in 1950.

Henry was secretary of Sandhurst School District

for many years. They were all involved in concert work with the teacher to raise money for the Red Cross.

Gladys Williams and Ella Gordon were quilting a quilt for the Red Cross in February 1941 when, during a raging blizzard a low flying aircraft was heard. That evening we learned a plane was missing from Rivers. Charlie had heard a thud on the lake and Earle had gone out but couldn't see anything. A search party was formed from the Gordon farm and at 8 a.m. they found the plane with four boys who were all killed in the crash. Headquarters were established in the Gordon home for that week. The wrecked plane was guarded day and night. The Court of Inquiry was held in the Gordon home where all the officials gathered to determine the cause. A memorial service was held in Oak Lake United Church.

In 1946 the family moved to the Lansdowne District to the George Gordon farm.

Wayne and Cheryl attended Lansdowne School and Bob attended high school in Oak Lake, driving in with a horse and cart accompanied by Doug Gordon.



Henry and Ella Gordon, Wayne, Cheryl and Bob.

Their entrance to town was an alarm clock for the town children. **Wayne** attended high school and stayed with his Grandmother Annie Hatch when his parents moved to Souris, in October, 1955. **Bob** married Joyce Honeyman in 1959. They have five children, Lois, Shirley, Sheila, Lynn and Bruce. They farmed as Henry Gordon and Sons until 1961 when Wayne married Eleanor McBurney, they have 3 sons, Barry, Bryan and Brent.

Henry and Ella moved to Souris with Bob and Wayne taking over the farm, now known as Kinnaber Cattle Company.

**Cheryl** married Don Brown of Souris in 1962. They have 2 daughters Kim and Kerry.

Henry passed away August 20, 1973 and Ella resides in her home in Souris.

### **Wilfred Gordon Family**

Wilfred B. Gordon, born May 1, 1908, in the Municipality of Sifton at Oak Lake, Man. is the sixth child of George and Euphemia Gordon, pioneers of the Lansdowne district. He attended Lansdowne and Oakwood Schools. With the exception of a short time spent working in Regina, Sask., and Marwayne, Alberta, and the period from Nov. 1936 to August 1938 spent living in Griswold, Man., he lived in Oak Lake until Aug. 1962.



Nelson Banister delivering grain to Wilfred Gordon at new Ogilvie Elevator.

In Nov., 1936 he and Velma Donogh, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Weir Donogh of Griswold, were married. They lived in Griswold until they moved to Oak Lake in Aug., 1938 with their eleven month old son, Ronald. Wilf had been transferred from Ogilvies Elevator #111 at Ashbury, near Griswold, to be manager of Ogilvies Elevator in Oak Lake. On July 23, 1940 their daughter, Carole, was born. In the same year the elevator exploded requiring Ogilvies to build a new one. Mr. Nelson Banister hauled the first load of grain to the new elevator which was erected in three months. He also drew the first load of grain into the original Ogilvie Elevator in Oak Lake.

**Ronald** and **Carole** attended Oakwood School, Grade One through Grade Twelve. **Ron** continued his education at University of Man. and received a degree in Civil Engineering. He is now an engineer with the Dept. of Highways in Winnipeg. He married Pat McLeod of Rapid City in 1963. They have two children — Keith and Donna.

**Carole** attended Man. Teachers' College and

taught school in St. James and at the former Air Force Base at Rivers. She married Niel Reeves of Oak Lake in 1963 and they reside in Rivers, Man.

Wilf was active in community work holding the position of Secretary of the Men's Curling Club, Treasurer of the United Church, Trustee of Oakwood School Board. He contributed his time and work when the Community Centre was built. He was always interested in sports and umped a few ball games. Velma was active in Church work, enjoyed playing the piano and giving music theory lessons. She attended Provincial Normal School and taught in Winnipeg and Shilo, Man.

In 1962, Wilf and Velma moved to Cracknell, Man. and in 1963, moved to Glenora, Man. where he retired in 1973.

### **John Gow**

John and Elsie Gow with their three children, Jack, Marjorie and Alex, came to Canada from Perth County, Scotland in 1908, and settled on a farm four miles south of Oak Lake.

**Jack** had always wanted to be a C.P.R. engineer but lost the use of his left hand in a hay rake accident when he was thirteen years of age so stayed with farming. He married Emily Paterson in 1943 and they farmed four miles south west of Oak Lake. Jack and Emily ran a cattle operation. He was extremely efficient with his one hand and wielded an axe in the bush, "better", it was claimed, than most men with two.

He died in 1954 and Emily sold the farm and moved to town. She has resided in Oakwood Place since it opened, and is known to all for being ready to give a helping hand where needed.

**Marjorie** took her schooling in Oak Lake and a business course in Brandon. She worked for the Department of Municipal Affairs in Regina. She died in 1978.

**Alex** worked with the "Sask Tel", telephone company, also of Regina. He died in 1968. Neither Alex or Marjorie married.

### **John R. K. Graham**

John R. K. Graham and two children, Marion and Wilfred, moved to Oak Lake in 1906 when he purchased the drugstore there. Mr. Graham was a widower and the first few months his wife's sister, Mary Richardson, cared for the family until his brother, Tom Graham, his wife, Nell, and two girls, Muriel and Helen, came from Alberta to be with him. Tom worked in the drugstore with Mr. Graham.

In 1910 Mr. Graham married Sara Kerr and in 1913 moved to Calgary.

Marion (Graham) McCormick of Edmonton is the only surviving member of the family.

The family were very interested in the Presbyterian church. Mr. Graham sang in the choir and played in the Oak Lake band. He was always interested in Community projects and took part in many.

Through the years he kept in touch with old friends from Oak Lake. When Marshall Smith was in Edmonton and Ft. McMurray, we saw him frequently.

Mary Black was Nursing Instructor at the University Hospital in Edmonton and contacted us. In Oak Lake, she taught Marion in Sunday School and when she graduated in Nursing, Mary Black, was one of her examiners for R.N. examinations.

I, Marion, through the years have kept in touch with Eva Higginbotham (Arthur) and we still correspond.

My first piano teacher was Tessa Parson whom I idolized. After my marriage, I lived in Ft. McMurray, Alta. until we moved to Edmonton in 1970. My husband passed away in 1974. I have a son and a daughter.

### **Graham Family**

Joseph Frederick Graham was born at Sydenham, Ontario on Decembr 17, 1888. The family came to Brandon in 1902 and later to the Roseland district where they farmed.

Fred Graham joined the Manitoba Telephone System in 1911. He served overseas in the First World War with the 10th Battalion. Following the war, Fred resumed his duties with MTS and in 1920 married Amy Thorley of Brandon. Amy was born in Birmingham, England. They lived in Winnipeg and then moved to Oak Lake in 1921.

Fred and Amy had two children, Marjorie and George. They both attended Oakwood School and under the guiding hand of "Curly" Heapy graduated from high school. In 1945, Marjorie married Bob Flock of Douglas, Man. They farm in the Douglas district and have three daughters, Lynn, Sandra and Donalee. George was killed in 1944 while serving overseas with the R.C.A.F.

Fred retired in 1954 after 43 years of service with MTS. Fred and Amy moved to Brandon in 1960. Fred passed away in December 1975 and Amy lives in Brandon in Grand Valley Place.

### **Claris Gray**

Claris Gray, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Austin Gray of Harding, was one of the students who came to Oakwood School from Education Point. She stayed with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Black, but returned home to take Grade XI at Hard-



Claris Gray and Jean McQuarrie — "Buddies".

ing when Mrs. Black died. Claris returned to Oak Lake for Grade XII. After taking second year Pre-Med., Claris's plans were changed when her father's crop was wiped out by a hailstorm, and she went teaching on a permit at Lansdowne. She returned to Winnipeg to take her Normal School training and later taught Grades VI, VII, and VIII at Oakwood School.

Claris played ball for Oak Lake for a number of years — starting as catcher for a Senior Women's team at the age of eleven. There were many interesting tournament trips all over Manitoba and North Dakota.

Now living on a farm at Shoal Lake, Claris is married to Arthur Nicholson, and their children, Bill and Sandra, live nearby.

### **James Edward and Mary Ellen Gray**

James Edward Gray, born in Paisley, Ontario in 1897, came to Kenton district with his parents and brothers in the late 1890's. Ed. Gray was a skilled carpenter and in this way contributed to the development of the communities of Harding and Bradwardine. The Agricultural Hall at Harding, the Education Point School and several farm buildings are existing examples of his work.

In 1908 Ed Gray married Mary Ellen Etsell of Lenore. They lived to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. Early recollections of their wedding day mentioned that they tried to hire a car to drive them to the station but there was a heavy snow on the ground





Henry and Geo. Gray 1940's.

so the owner refused to take it out. In 1908 there were few cars in Manitoba. So they called Kelly Stables who owned a motor outfit, which incidently converted to a hearse by removing the seat. The car was hired with a driver wearing a frock coat, white gloves and top hat.

The Grays lived at Bradwardine, moved south of Harding and finally purchased the McGhie farm (west ½ of 21-10-23) in the early thirties.

Early farm life for pioneers was never easy. They spoke of prairie fires, flu, overseas wars and plenty of hard times. They had three sons, Alden, George and Henry; two daughters, Eileen (Mrs. William Montgomery), and Evelyn (Mrs. Art Osborne). There are three grandchildren, Karen (Montgomery) DiUbaldo, Ellen (Osborne) Smook, and Edward Osborne, and as yet two great-grandchildren, Adrienne and Patrick Smook.

Ed's three sons have successfully farmed the home place spending their lives there, except for the time Alden was overseas in World War II. Farm men and women contributed greatly to the growth of Manitoba through long hours of hard work — from the early days to the prosperous 1980's.

### **Thomas Edward Griffith submitted by Katherine Griffith**

Thomas was the youngest of four children born to Lewis Griffith and Catherine (Wren) Griffith in Wales. Later the family moved to Liverpool, England.

When he finished school he worked as a "Draper" until 22 years old, then decided to try Canada. He worked one winter at Brockville, Ontario before coming west to Brandon.

The first winter he teamed from Brandon to Shoal Lake. The following year he came on west to Oak Lake and worked in a store for three years in the winter — the first year the store was in a tent.

He homesteaded south of Oak Lake, N.E. 26-8-24, in the Lansdowne district, and married one

of the teachers, Mary Jane Smith Morton Laurie in 1893. Miss Laurie was born near Seaforth, Ontario in 1866. She came to Manitoba and took Normal School training in Winnipeg in 1888. She taught at Deloraine, Bradwardine and Griswold as well as Lansdowne.

Thomas was on Lansdowne school board when Miss Laurie was hired to teach in the old log school at a salary of \$40.00 per month. He was active in helping to get the new school built. Times were tough and records show Miss Laurie was Mrs. Griffith for nearly a year before the board was finally able to complete paying her salary "with interest of \$6.90".

Thomas was a member of St. Alban's Anglican Church while his wife was a staunch Presbyterian and later belonged to the United Church. When Lansdowne celebrated their 60th she was able to be there.

Thomas and Mary Jane had five daughters; **Nattie** — born May 10, 1895, married Thomas Jackson of Oak Lake. They had one daughter, Jeannette Gamble (Belle) Jackson. Later she married Harry Nickol of Portage la Prairie and they had five children, Helen, Harvey, Percy, Margaret and Olive.

**Ada** — born September 18, 1897, married Leonard Hepburn of Virden in 1921. They had no family. Ada passed away in 1969.

**Katherine** — born May 28, 1899, lives in Winnipeg.

**Emily** — a twin born March 31, 1901, married Herb Tait of Boissevain. Herb is deceased, and Emily still lives at Boissevain.

**Mary** — born March 31, 1901, married Walter Tapp of Virden. They had two sons, Alvin and Roy. Mary died in 1968.

Mrs. Griffith moved to Virden in 1916, after her husband's death. She passed away June 1958.

### **Roy Griffith**

Roy is the third son of Percy Griffith of Deloraine. He was born there in 1927. Roy attended school at Deloraine and then helped on his father's farm.

In 1947 Roy's father purchased a farm 4 miles south of Griswold and the family moved there.

In 1950 Roy married Marjorie Skinner of Griswold. They bought the Robinson farm section 35-9-24, one mile north of Oak Lake. Roy farmed and worked in Helten's Service Station for a few years. Later he purchased the Cliff Harrison farm, parts of 35-9-24 and 2-10-24. In 1963 he rented part of the Arthur Harvey farm and in 1974 he bought five quarters of this farm 12-10-24 and S.E. ¼ 13-10-24.

Roy and Marj have two children, Dennis and Diane. **Dennis** was born in 1956. He took his school-

ing in Oak Lake and Virden Collegiate and then helped Roy on the farm. In October 1976 Dennis married Denise Weins, daughter of Mrs. May Weins of Oak Lake.

Dennis and Denise now live on the home farm one mile north of Oak Lake while Roy and Marj built a new home in Oak Lake in 1976 where they now live.

Dennis is a member of the executive of the Manitoba Pool Elevators. He is very interested in curling and is a member of the Oak Lake Curling Club.

**Diane** was born in 1958. She took her schooling in Oak Lake and Virden Collegiate. She was active in the 4-H club and the figure skating club and took a keen interest in curling.

After finishing school she attended Assiniboine Community College in Brandon. She worked in Brandon for a year and then obtained employment in Calgary, Alberta. In May 1981 she married Peter Grindle of Flon Flon, Manitoba. They now make their home in N.E. Calgary.

## The Hagyard Story by Reba Hagyard Roy (as I know it)

Grandfather and Grandmother Hagyard came from Yorkshire County in England, when my Father John Weddall was a small child. They settled in Ontario, where Grandfather who was a veterinarian set up his practice. It had been traditional in the Hagyard family that the eldest son in each generation become a veterinarian. My Dad was the eldest son. Four girls and one boy were born in Ontario to my Grandparents.

When Grandad was yet not much past the prime of life, he passed away very suddenly.

Dad worked at different jobs, to help support the family. He apprenticed with a cabinet-maker, and eventually set up his own business in Teeswater, Ont.

On Feb. 22, 1876 John Weddall Hagyard married Sarah Pearson, the eldest of seven daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Pearson of Brussels, Ont. Samuel was a skilled craftsman of boots and shoes and had his own small factory.



Back Row semi circle Left to Right: Mrs. J. W. Hagyard, Lily, Addison, Albert, Earl, Mr. J. W. Hagyard. Front Row: Left to Right: Viola, Clifton, Charles and Reba.

The Pearson family, as well as Grandmother Hagyard's family were brought up quite strictly in the Christian faith. In the Pearson family they were not allowed to wash dishes on Sunday. One daughter was organist in the church, and the others except for the youngest were in the choir. After marriage, Sarah of course lived in Teeswater, Ont. where two sons were born to them, Charles Humberson and Addison George.

In 1882 John Weddall Hagyard heard the call of the West, and decided to go and take up a homestead.

Arriving in Brandon, he walked from there to the country north of Oak Lake, where he chose his homestead. My father, John Weddall Hagyard settled in the district, later known as the Hagyard School District. As soon as he could get a building erected, he sent for our Mother.

Mother arrived on a settlers train, along with some settlers effects, a small child (Addison) in her arms, and a larger boy (Charles) holding on to her dress, and a huge dog (Sam) for protection in the Wild West. They had travelled to the end of steel, and got off the train, on or beside a pile of lumber, which was Flat Creek. Dad had someone there to meet her with a vehicle drawn by a team of mules. Thus began my parents pioneer days on the prairie as farmer and farm wife. Two horrifying tales (to me) of my Dad's experience were when he carried a hundred of flour on his shoulders from Brandon to the homestead. Of course anyone that knew my father (J. W. Hagyard) will recall that he was a tall, very well built man, who weighed around 200 lbs., nevertheless what a burden that must have been! The other incident was the time that he and his friends were returning from Brandon with groceries. They had to cross the Assiniboine river in a boat, probably a canoe. Midstream the canoe tipped over, the groceries went to the bottom of the river, but luckily both the men could swim.

Mother had many hardships too, and many lonely hours. I've heard her say that sometimes an Indian woman would call in, and Mother would be glad to see her just because she was another woman. The cold and snow-storms were bad as in those days there were few trees, and the wind got a real sweep. In summer there was the dread of prairie fires, until they learned to plough a fireguard around the buildings.

One of my Mother's many stories of the rough times, was of washing clothes on the washboard for the family of four, and later more, the washtub sitting on a bench near the door; leaving the wash to get a meal or to attend to something else, and upon returning to finish the wash, finding the clothes on the board stiffened from the cold. I can hear the liberated

ladies of the '80's saying "Well I wouldn't have stayed there very long".

The J. W. Hagyard's had eight children. Charles and Addison (Add) who were born at Teeswater, Ontario. Albert Lorne who was the first one born on the homestead, then Clifton Weddall, followed by Lily Irene who tipped the scales at 3 lbs. when three weeks old. Being the first girl in the family, she was a very precious, tiny piece of humanity. Nevertheless she grew into a strong individual, and lived into her 80th year, passing away August 15, 1973.

Earl Pearson was the next one born into the family, followed by Viola Esther, and finally by myself, Reba Myrtle.

Dad bought a frame house and large stone barn on the south side of the Assiniboine River, very close to the river bank. It was while living there that Viola and I were born. Due to the flooding of the Assiniboine river, our Dad bought a very nice, large house in the hamlet of Routledge. Though he gave up active farming himself, he retained the farm in the valley and we moved to Routledge when I was a year old.

**Charles** farmed part of the valley land. He never married, was a good clean bachelor and a good cook. Dad had the house across the valley moved to higher land. Charles passed away Oct. 2, 1956 in his 80th year; he had been unfortunate in having his house burn down, a few months previous to his death, believed due to loose electrical wiring; he luckily making his escape from his bed, just seconds before a portion of the burning ceiling dropped onto the bed.

**Addison** (Add) went to Saskatchewan and took up a homestead in what became Anglia S.D. He married Jean Campbell there in 1911. They had six children, namely Margaret, Hilton, Jessie, Grace, Beverly, and Aldyth. Beverly died quite young, and Jean, Add's wife, passed away in 1936 after a long illness. Add retired from farming and he and the remainder of his family moved to B.C., where he enjoyed his retirement. He passed away April 22, 1956.

**Albert** learned the hardware business. Years later he moved to Ogema, where he married Minnie Martindale. They had one child, a daughter, Dorothy. Albert died in 1944.

**Clifton** farmed in the Assiniboine valley, then went overseas in World War I, returning to farm at Routledge. He married Irene McTaggart in 1936; they had one child, a daughter, Joy, who is now married to Ralph Gouldie of Coronach, Sask. Joy and Ralph have one daughter, Grace, eight years of age. Clifton passed away in Virden Hospital Dec. 13, 1978, in his 88th year.

The older members of the family, attended Hagyard School. After the family moved to Rout-

ledge, Lily and Earl attended Routledge School as well as Viola and myself.

**Lily** married James Read, formerly of Lowestoft, England, on Dec. 8, 1914. James farmed in the valley. Two boys were born to them, Roy and Lorne. James passed away in 1951, in his 62nd year, and Lily on August 15, 1973, in her 80th year. Roy now retired, farmed for years north of the river; Lorne farmed for some time in the valley, later moving into Virden where he now resides.

**Earl** worked many years in Saskatchewan. He returned to Routledge to live, suffering ill health. He passed away May 10, 1964 at 66 years of age.

**Viola** was born January 1, 1900. She was a healthy, robust very active girl, but was stricken very suddenly Aug. 12, 1912 with infantile paralysis. She was paralyzed from the waist down, and was completely helpless for a year or more. But with sheer pluck and determination, she went from leg irons to crutches, and finally became able to walk again without support. She suffered effects from the disease throughout the rest of her life, but rarely complained, was a hard worker, and cared for our aged parents in their declining years. After they passed away she kept house for Charles for some years until she married Thomas Pearn on Sept. 18, 1947 then going to Virden to live. Thomas passed away on October 26, 1968. Viola passed away on Dec. 30, 1979.

Dad served in the capacity of Routledge school trustee for many years. He was frequently asked to serve as an Arbitrator. Also was called and served on the Jury on different occasions. Anywhere a home was needed for public use, it seemed the Hagyard home was always available. Voting for elections were held in it; also the time of the Spanish Influenza in 1918, the people of the community gathered in our home, and Dr. Blanchard from Oak Lake came up and inoculated each one. Mother was never too busy to allow her family's friends to gather in the home. This was especially so on dance nights that were held in the schoolhouse. Young people would gather in our home, both before and after the dance. Mother and Dad would sit up until midnight to make the coffee in a large wash boiler. Shortly before midnight two of the young men would carry it over to the school house. This continued throughout the years until our parents got too old to carry on, and then someone else took over.

Our parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Hagyard passed away in their own home in Routledge, in the months of April and March respectively 1936.

I, **Reba**, am now the only surviving one of the family. I married John Roy of Innisfree, Alta. on June 11, 1925, going to Alberta to live. Two daughters, Betty and Honor, were born to us.

My husband, John Roy, passed away Dec. 8, 1973, after having a severe stroke in May 1970. I live alone in my own home, and have reasonably good health for my age.

### **Robert Murray Hagyard**

Murray was born and raised in Snowflake, Manitoba, moving to Oak Lake in 1972 from Lauder, Man. He is employed by Manitoba Pool Elevators and has recently received a service award for 15 years of service with them.

At present time he serves on the Town council and is Secretary of the Oak Lake United Church. Murray is involved with community activities and the Church choir.

Shirley Agnes (Morden) Hagyard was born and raised in Hartney, Manitoba. Murray and Shirley were married in 1970. Shirley is active in many community groups and leader of the Brownie Pack. Shirley enjoys painting and ceramics. Both enjoy Square Dancing very much.

They have two children:

Glenda Dawn — Born Oct. 19, 1972, and Trevor Robert — Born Aug. 21, 1976.

### **Hallett Family**

Edward William Hallett and his wife, May (nee Gale), were both born in beautiful Dorset, England. Mr. Hallett and his future brother-in-law, Herbert Gale, first came to Canada in 1913. When war was declared in 1914 they returned to England to enlist in the British army — Mr. Hallett in the Royal Garrison Artillery as an anti-aircraft gunner, and Mr. Gale as a dispatch rider, both of them serving almost four years in France. Mr. and Mrs. Hallett were married in 1915 when Mr. Hallett was home on leave.

After the war, both Mr. Hallett and Mr. Gale returned to Canada. Mrs. Gale came shortly after, and Mrs. Hallett arrived in 1920. For some time they resided near Lenore, both families on farms. Then both men began employment with the Canadian Pacific Railway, where they remained employed until their retirements.

Being with railway meant "moving". Mr. and Mrs. Hallett came to Oak Lake in 1927. They resided in Oak Lake until 1934. A few years later they moved to Virden, then to Routledge, and then again to Virden, where they remained until, and after, Mr. Hallett's retirement from the railway.

Mr. and Mrs. Hallett were members of the Anglican Church and were regular attendants. Mrs. Hallett and their two daughters attended Matins, the two girls attended Sunday School in the afternoon, and the family of four attended evening service every Sunday. For many years, Mr. Hallett served on the



vestry, and Mrs. Hallett was a member, in good standing, of the W.A.

Mr. Hallett was an ardent curler (an activity which Mrs. Hallett shared for some years), gardener and wildlife conservationist. In later years, Mr. Hallett was instrumental in securing the wildlife sanctuary near Oak Lake and was awarded the Conservationist Certificate. Both Mr. and Mrs. Hallett were keenly interested in fishing and both won many trophies. While at Routledge, Mr. Hallett was awarded first prize for the loveliest flower garden in the Brandon Division.

During their residence at Routledge, Mr. and Mrs. Hallett did all their shopping for many years in Oak Lake. In those days, train service was excellent and their groceries were sent via C.P.R. from Oak Lake to Routledge. Most of their recreation and visiting during those years also took place in Oak Lake.

Their elder daughter (Margaret) had begun school in Minnedosa and continued on in Grade I in Oak Lake, having the good fortune to be taught first by Mrs. Phillips, then Myrtle Smeltz and Mrs. Waite. Their younger daughter (Elaine) began her schooling in Oak Lake, also under the fine teaching of Mrs. Phillips.

Mr. and Mrs. Hallett's two daughters, Mrs. Ronald D. Brownlie (Margaret) and Mrs. George E. Rinn (Elaine), presently reside in Winnipeg. Elaine has one daughter, Heather, and one grandson, Joey William Mohos, residing in Toronto and twin sons, Brad and Brian residing in Winnipeg.

### The Harrison Family

William Harrison, born in 1858, at Sturton le Steeple, Nottinghamshire, England, was the eldest



Mr. and Mrs. William Harrison. (Lily Harrison).

of a family of eleven. He came to Canada in 1880, spending three years with a farmer in Quebec and returning to England each winter as a steerage passenger, to see his Mother who was ill.

He came to Manitoba in 1882, and took up a Homestead and Pre-emption on section 36-9-24, West 1 on the Assiniboine Valley, two miles north of Oak Lake, Manitoba.

He built a shack on the side hill, and had a team of horses and a dog. Above him on the hill many Metis and Sioux Indians had settled. William ploughed a strip of land and sowed it to grain. After helping a neighbour one day, he returned home to find his grain trampled. A large sterling silver watch and chain and some gold coins, which were keepsakes from his parents were missing from his shack. The watch with key attached had a long chain which men wore around the neck, through the armhole and into the pocket of the vest because Highway Robbers were so numerous in those days. Later, the watch was found near a slough, and all he could conclude was that this was done to discourage settlement.

(In order to receive the Deed to his land he had to reside in Canada for a period of three years, be British by birth, or a naturalized citizen, and reside on the land for six months in each of the three subsequent years, and the ability to understand and speak the English language.

The fee was \$10.00 for the Homestead and \$10.00 for the Pre-emption. He received his deed on June 1st, 1885, at Souris Dominion Lands Office.)

He married Lily Melvina Williams in 1892 at Alexander, Man. She was born in Linwood, Ont., in 1875, and came west with her family in 1888. She was the youngest of a family of eleven; her parents, the William Whaley Williams' came from Ireland and were of Welsh descent, having gone to Ireland at the time of Cromwell, 1599-1658.

There was an abundance of game in those days, and one day William took his muzzle loading gun down to a slough to shoot some prairie chickens. He shot into the flock and picked up twenty-two birds.

As his family grew, he built a larger home near the creek that ran between the house and the barn. The home was renovated in 1910.

1915 was a banner year for the farmers, and it was the first time that William was able to ship a car load of wheat.

It was very difficult to hire men to stook, and when the crop by the river was cut, there was no one to stook it. Word was left in town that he needed men. That afternoon his wife saw two men working in the field, so prepared a hearty meal, but no one ever turned up. When her husband returned he said he never sent anyone — yet the whole field was

stooked! They never knew who sent these men or who they were.

One Fall, when Winter came early, and it was hard to get the crop threshed, Tom Chaske brought his Steam outfit and gang from Sioux Valley, and threshed their crop. The Harrisons never forgot the kindness of their Indian neighbours. Mrs. Harrison learned to speak their language quite well. Whenever the Natives came by on their trip to Town, they stopped at their home, where they were given lunch. Following are the names of some of the ones they knew well: Maggie Hapa, who lost a son in the First World War, Lizzie Blue Cloud, Maggie Abo, Bessie McKay, and Taschina, a fine Indian.

The Harrisons acquired over eleven hundred acres of land, on which they resided all their lives. Many a skating party was held on the sloughs, complete with a bonfire and tobogganing on the hills. Meals were supplied for Scouts on their camping trips. They called their farm "Beaver Glen".

They had 4 sons and 5 daughters: Clifford, Arlie, Rubie, John, Gladys, Willoughby (Bill), Enid, Margaret and Eric.

They were faithful members of St. Alban's Anglican Church. William passed away in 1939 and Lily in 1960. Both are buried in Oak Lake Cemetery.

**Arlie** — the eldest daughter, married Russell Hogg of Oak Lake. **Rubie Agnes** — married Harry Riches, a World War I veteran. They lived in Oak Lake for a number of years, then moved to Victoria, B.C. Their family — John H. and Gladys Ware and 7 grandchildren. They have both passed away. Rubie was an Artist, and painted for a number of years.

**Gladys** — a teacher and Home Economist, married O. D. MacLeod, of Plenty, Sask., where they farmed. Their family: Donna Lankenau, California, 3 grandchildren. They retired to Burnaby, B.C. Gladys passed away in 1979.

**Enid** — married Roy Hamilton, a Conductor on the C.P.R. They lived in Brandon till Roy retired, when they moved to Calgary. Their family: Gale and Ronald and 7 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Enid was artistic and painted in her early life.

**Gordon Willoughby** (Bill) — married Margaret Kent, they live in Brandon. He was a Conductor on the C.P.R. and owns a farm at Wapella, Sask. His hobby is growing flowers and gardening. Their family: Lyle and James and there are 4 grandchildren.

**Margaret** — married Fred Willows, who operated a store at Bella Coola, retiring to Vancouver, B.C. Their family, George, Marion (Mrs. Sugden), and Peter, and 6 grandchildren. Margaret was artistic and painted in her teens.

**Clifford George** — born 1894, attended Harvey School for a term, then Oakwood, in Oak Lake. He

went overseas in 1917 in the First World War, returning in 1919. He married Elizabeth Schmidt. They had 4 children: Margaret (Mrs. Edwards), William, Robert and Elizabeth (Mrs. Bartlett), 15 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren. Cliff operated the home farm for several years, then farmed on part sec. 32-10-24 and part sec. 35-9-24 until his death in 1969. He grew registered seed for many years. In later years he rejuvenated and operated a one cylinder Rumley oil-pull gas tractor, that is now in the Museum in Saskatoon. His widow lives in Winnipeg.

**John** — attended Oakwood School and he took Normal training at Brandon. He then taught at Elphinstone and Menzie. After working on the home farm for 5 years, took an Indian School at Split Lake, North of Thompson. In 1926 many Mennonite families came to Oak Lake, Jake and John Friesen, Driedgers, Dirks and 2 families of Rempels and asked Jack to help them with the "new" language. Classes were held at the farm home all winter. He was Superintendent of the United Church Sunday School, and sang in the Choir, and served on the Church Board for many years.

In the 40's he worked as gardener at the University of Manitoba, and while there won "The Victory Garden" Contest. This meant winning first in Fort Garry in this all vegetable contest and then going on to take the "Sweepstakes" — First for greater Winnipeg. After serving the U. of Man. from 1939-42 he was greenhouseman for the Dominion Rust Research 42-46.

He married Marion Carphin in 1939. Their family are Lloyd, Anne (Shepherd), Jane (Taylor) and Jim and 9 grandchildren. From early 50's to 70's Jack was caretaker of the old and new Curling Rink, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Oak Lake Agriculture Society for 3 years. He and Marion live in Oakwood Place, Oak Lake.

### **Eric Harrison**

Lyman Eric Linwood was born March 9, 1914. He attended Oakwood School, and was a life-long member of St. Alban's Anglican Church. He worked in Saskatchewan and on the farm before enlisting in the army with Ft. Garry Horse in Sept. 1939, and received discharge in November 1940 to return home to farm.

He was married to Alice May Brown of Swan River, Man. on October 7, 1941.

Eric farmed, and raised sheep and cattle, and had a Rural Route mail contract for 27 years. He was a member of the C.O.F. for 25 years, and Secretary and member of the Royal Canadian Legion for many years.

Eric was very interested in sports, and was a

crack shot. He was a great naturalist, and fed the birds in winter, and loved the wild flowers. He also loved to travel, touring U.S.A., Canada, Europe and Britain. Antique collecting was a hobby.

He was truly a good samaritan, hauling cars out of the mud and snow at all hours of the day or night, on our often treacherous roads.

The Assiniboine valley often flooded, so Eric took the district school children across in his boat. Eric passed away October 27, 1978.

Alice continues to live on the family farm. She keeps busy with her family and also helping with many Community activities.

Eric and Alice had five children.

**George Thomas Eric** — a teacher, now farms, married Audrey Milne of Griswold. They have three daughters, Andrea, Ashley, and Lindsay. They live at Griswold, Manitoba.

**Carole June** — a secretary, married Melvin Elliott of Lenore, Man. They have three sons, Dennis, Christopher, and Jonathan. They live in Winnipeg, Man.

**Lynne Enid Mary** — a bank teller, married Douglas Lund of Elkhorn, Man. They have two children, James and Jennifer, and live in Brandon, Man.

**David Roy Alexander** — a Cpl. in the R.C.M.P., married Mary Abettkoff, of Kamsack, Sask. They have two children, Melissa and Ian Eric, and live in Carlyle, Sask.

**Gloria Maureen** — took 2nd year University, married James McBain of Virden, Man. They have two children, Tracy and James. They live in Calgary, Alberta.

### The Alfred Hart Family

Alfred Hart was born in England in 1884. He came to Canada at 18 years of age. He worked in Nova Scotia and then came west and worked for 14 years for Herb Walton in the St. David's district. He also worked for Wm. Johnston.

He married Nellie Darlow of Bedford, England October 8, 1909. They returned to England a year later. In the following spring Alf came back to work for Herb Walton and Nellie stayed until their son, Melville, was born at Bedford, England. A daughter, Phyllis, was born in Brandon.

Both Melville and Phyllis attended Johnston school. In 1919 they moved into Oak Lake where Alf was employed by C.P.R. In 1926 he purchased a dray business from Bob Monroe. He was also caretaker of the United Church for over 40 years. Alf Hart died at age 64, in 1949. Nellie Hart was 85 when she died in 1969.

Their family: **Melville** — married Minnie Pater-

son and they had five children, Margaret, Gweneth, Larry, Kenny, and Terry.

**Phyllis** — graduated as an R.N., winning the Gov. General's medal for proficiency. Married Larry Condon of Wanatah, Indiana and they had two children, David and Marylee.

**Edith** — married Elmer Gompf and they had four children, Beverley, Donald, Marjorie and Benny.

**Evelyn** — a victim of polio, died in 1950.

### Hart, Mel

**Melville** is the only son of Alfred Hart, born in Bedford, England. He came to Canada at the age of six months, lived with his parents on the Ed Johnston farm. He received his education at Johnston and Oakwood Schools. Mel operated a trucking business, hauling cattle, grain and gravel.

He married Minnie Paterson of the Ryerson district north of Oak Lake, at her parents home in 1935. They lived in the Bill Hanson house in town which Mel bought before he married, now occupied by



Mel and Minnie Hart, Larry, Gwenneth Ann, Margaret, Kenneth, Terry.

Albert and Louise Lenning. They have five children: Margaret, born 1936 at their home; Gwenneth Ann, in 1941 at their home; Larry, 1942, at the Furtney residence over the barber shop and pool hall; in 1946, a son, Kenneth, born in Virden Hospital; and in 1949, a son, Terry, born in Virden Hospital.

Melville joined the Air Force, and went overseas in 1943. September, 1945 was a very happy day at the C.P.R. station when some of our local boys returned home. Margaret, not remembering her Dad, remarked to her mother, "Is that man going to stay at our place all night?" In 1946 we moved over the tracks to the Bill Hollier house.

Mel went into partnership with Mr. C. Motheral

in a lumber and coal business for 14 years, later selling insurance until retiring.

**Margaret** graduated from teachers college and taught at Mather, Man., and Crystal City, and still substitutes. She married Jack Vincent of Mather in 1960 and they have two children, John and Julie (twins) who are now thirteen years of age.

**Gwenneth Ann** graduated from teachers college and taught at Ebor, Man., and Palmer, Sask. She married Norman Bernard of Weyburn, Sask. and they now operate a Mini-golf and Drive Inn in Boissevain. They have three children, Barry 19, Brian 17, and Patti 13.

**Larry** graduated from Oakwood School. He was interested in sports, played ball with the Virden Oil-domes, hockey with Brandon Wheat Kings and St. Boniface Saints, Winnipeg. He married Joan Lundy of Oak Lake in 1966 and they reside in Winnipeg where he is employed with Moore's Business Forms. They have three children, Larone 14, Richelle 12, and Lindsey 10.

**Kenneth** attended Oakwood School, went to Grand Forks to Physical Education, played fastball, and curled. He married Kathy Johnson of Virden in 1966. Ken worked with the Oak Lake Co-op and is still employed with Federated Co-op in Saskatoon, Sask. They have two girls, Shelly 14 and Wendy 12.

**Terry** attended Oakwood School. His desire was to play hockey. He enjoyed fastball and curling, was on a rink which counted an eight ender in a local bonspiel, played Junior hockey with Brandon Wheat Kings and Selkirk Steelers. He married Theresa Marie Folk, Regina, Sask. in 1970. They have two boys, Cory 11 and Brett 7. Terry works with a General Motors Company and resides in Brooks, Alberta.

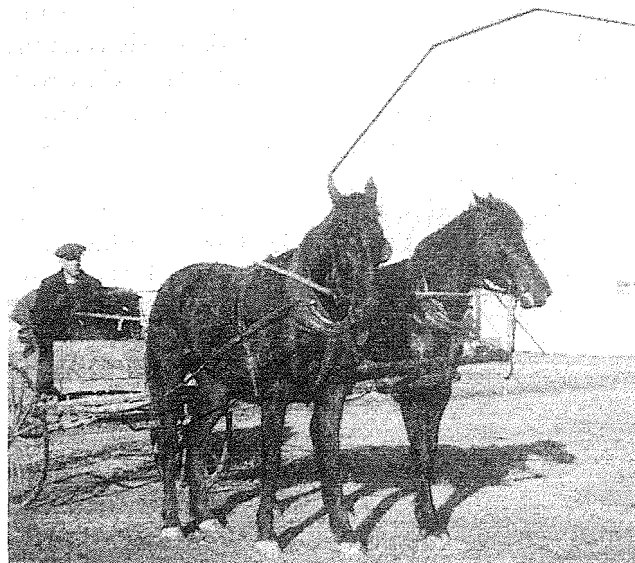
### **Harvatt Family** submitted by Vera Harvatt

Harold Harvatt was born in Huttoft, England in 1893. At the age of seven he came to Canada by boat with his mother, Minnie Harvatt, and sister, May.

Settling in Ryerson District SE 36-10-24 where his Mother became housekeeper for Mr. John Paterson whom later she married. Harold attended Ryerson School and Sunday School at Ryerson Methodist United Church.

Harold played football with Verity boys of Kenton District. At threshing time he worked with a gang on a steam engine outfit owned by his uncle, Donald Paterson. These engines were fired by hand with straw.

At the age of 21, in 1914, Harold joined the Army going overseas to England, France, and Germany. He also fought at Vimy Ridge.



Harold Harvatt and Ponies.

When the war was over, he married Amy Gordon of Beverly, England on Dec. 9th, 1918.

In the year 1919, he returned to Canada via boat with his wife as a war bride and son, Thomas, of 6 months.

For one year, they farmed in Bradwardine District; then settled on the farm in Ryerson district in 1922. He was a great admirer of horses and worked all his land with them. He raised his own colts and trained them. The grain was hauled to town by team and wagon.

In the dirty thirties, it was very hard to make a living. The children would be lucky to receive 5¢ for a chocolate bar.

They had another son, Lorne, and daughter, Vera, who attended Ryerson School. Some days they would walk 3 miles to school in winter and summer. Later a pony took them to school in a cart made by their Dad.

The children picked up the mail at Maskawata Post Office which was close to the school.

They farmed in Blair district from 1939-1947.

In the year 1947, they moved to Oak Lake where Harold had a job with the Massey Harris Company which was located where the present Co-op store is.

Harold was caretaker for the town hall of Oak Lake as well as the Bank of Montreal located in the same building.

Harold and Amy celebrated their 50th anniversary on December 9, 1968, receiving good well-wishes from all their friends and relatives.

In her younger years, Amy was a Sunday School teacher and sang in the choir in England. She is a life member of the Ladies Auxiliary, also of the United Church in Oak Lake.



The oldest son, **Thomas**, served in the Second World War in England, Italy and Sicily. He is retired and lives with his wife, Mary, in Virden. They have two children, Gary working in Brandon, and married to Ronna Stewart of Oak Lake. They have a son, Darren.

Daughter, Fern, is married to Larry Thornhill. They live at Oak Lake by the Lake and have four children, Chad and Troy who attend Oak Lake school, and Toby and Tracy at home.

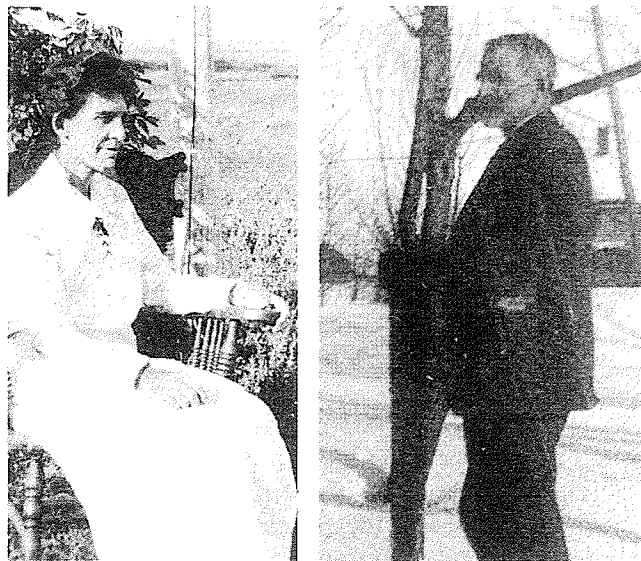
Harold and Amy's second son, **Lorne**, works for Specialized Soil of Oak Lake. Their daughter, **Vera**, works at Valleyview Co-op in Virden.

Their oldest grandson, Frank, lives in Virden and runs his own gravel outfit known as Harvatt's Hauling.

Harold was a life member of the Legion No. 79, Oak Lake. He retired in 1968 and passed away May 21, 1971.

### Harvey Family

The Harveys, consisting of Dr. Harvey and his wife, a son Albert and his wife, and John, Thomas and Celia, came from Peterborough, Ontario, to the district which later bore their name, in the early eighties.



Celia and Tom Harvey.

Thomas Harvey built a house on N.W. ¼ of 7-10-23, where his sister Celia kept house for him. She was Mrs. Horace Stevenson's bridesmaid, and the two ladies were lifetime friends.

Jack farmed S.W. ¼ of 18-10-23 until his death, resulting from exposure in a blizzard.

The Harveys prospered in their Manitoba home, growing grain and raising purebred Hereford cattle.

Arthur, son of Albert and the last of the Harveys in our area, continued to farm till 1963. Then he and his widowed sister, Helen Unger, who lived with him, retired to Oak Lake. Both are deceased.

### Henry Hatch

Henry Hatch came from Devonshire, England, and settled in Quebec. He was a building contractor and many famous structures in both Ottawa and Quebec City bearing his name, may still be seen.

In 1882, he and some of his sons came west to Flat Creek and began to look for land, where he could make a home for his Canadian born Irish wife and family. He spent the first night in Manitoba with the Archie Malcolm family. The big room was divided



Henry Hatch and Son William L. May 1898.

by sheets and the new settlers slept on the floor. He homesteaded N.W. ¼ 24-8-24. The family arrived the next fall. Rebecca, Thomas, John and William were the surviving children from his first wife, who died when William was two. Later he married his wife's sister and they had four more sons: Lorne, Herbert, Cyril and Percy. She too died at an early age. While little is known of these women, their

memory remains in a large photo of each kept by the grandchildren.

Henry was an Anglican and his name appears, in 1888 in the records of the five districts which inaugurated the building of St. Alban's Anglican Church. Sons John, George, Lorne, and William were also on the Vestry in the early 1900's. At first Anglican services were held in the old Lansdowne school, of which Henry was a trustee.

In early years his home was always open to new settlers. On return journeys to Quebec he brought out other families, to settle in the area.

Henry was known for his good farming methods. He was a breeder of fine horses, which he especially liked, but also grew grain and raised livestock. His last years were spent with his son, William, and his wife and family, in the original house in which he first slept (S.E. 27-8-24) on coming to Manitoba. He died in 1906 in his 70th year.

**Rebecca** — only daughter of Henry Hatch, was a trained nurse. She married Jack Casson of the Findlay district. She died in 1944.

**Hugh Thomas** — eldest son, was twenty when he came to Manitoba with his father and actually the first Hatch to take a homestead (N.E. 24-8-24). Some years later he went to the States, dying in Chicago.

**John George** homesteaded S.W. 25-8-24 in 1898. On August 21, 1901 he married Margaret Henderson of the Lansdowne district, in Brandon, Rev. Dean Harding officiating. They farmed in the area for several years later moving to Birtle.

**Cyril and Percival** moved to Perdue, Saskatchewan.

**Lorne** — married Lidie Harley of Pipestone. She died in 1906 and Lorne joined his brothers in Saskatchewan, where he later married Kittie Redfern.

**William L.** and **Herbert John** stayed in the Lansdowne area.

### **John (Herb) Hatch Family submitted by Myrtle (Hatch) Arthur**

John (Herb) Hatch was born June 2, 1880, married Honor Irene Redfern in 1911, from the Sandhurst district, who was born November 3, 1890. They lived in the Lansdowne district until the fall of 1918 when they moved to the Homestead NE¼ Sec. 34-8-24.

Dad was very active in community affairs, church work, and political affairs. In the winter he loved to trap. Spent many long hours trapping, which he had to snowshoe to do, then come home to the fireside, where he enjoyed a game of cards with his family. He passed away while still on the homestead December 21, 1946.

Mother also was very active in community af-



Mr. and Mrs. Herb Hatch.

fairs, church work, and Lodge. She spent many long hours cooking over a wood stove for her family as well as cooking and sending out meals to the threshing gang.

After Dad's death she sold the farm which had been the Homestead for all those years and moved to Oak Lake, Manitoba and later moved to Brandon, Manitoba where she passed away on June 16, 1960.

Her enjoyment was her family.

Their family consisted of 8 boys and 2 girls:

**Elmer** — married Marie Gillis, their family consisted of 3 boys and 1 girl.

**Caroline** — died an untimely death in December, 1954.

**Crawford** — married Jean Larmour, their family includes 3 girls, now living in Surrey, B.C.

**Douglas** — died in his first year of life.

**Ross** — married Grace Kelly — now living in Victoria, B.C. — their family — 2 boys.

**Myrtle** — married Wally Arthur — living in Brandon, Manitoba — their family — 2 boys and 2 girls.

**Maxwell** — married Phyllis Tolton — living in Winnipeg, Manitoba — their family — 2 girls.

**Melville** — married Doreen Lewis — living in Brandon, Manitoba — their family — 2 boys.

**Ivan** — married Peggy Munro — living in Edmonton, Alberta — their family — 1 girl.

**Stanley** — married Lynda Hawking — living in Nakusp, B.C. — their family — 2 boys.

### **William Livingston Hatch**

William Livingston, son of Henry Hatch, was born February 23, 1873. He was a child of nine when he came to the Lansdowne district. He went to the original old log school, however most of his education was obtained in Quebec City, where he returned in 1888. In young manhood William travelled a good deal, returning to the east four or five times, then to the west coast, going to California, then north to the Klondike.

In 1897 he settled on the W½ of Section 27-8-24, and on December 11, 1901 was married to Miss Mary (Minnie) Montgomery, a prairie school teacher, of the Montgomery district, north of Virden. She had come from Petrolia, Ontario, as a child in 1882, with her parents. The district was named after the Montgomery family. When close to home she rode horseback or drove a buggy, taking her youngest brothers with her to attend the school she taught. She was organist for the two churches near her home.

William, because of his Quebec schooling, spoke French fluently, and acted as an interpreter for both French and English people who met to discuss a deal — or needed letters written. He raised Shorthorn cattle, as well as grain, and was noted as an expert woodsman. Each winter he cut the trees, needed for next year's fuel supply on the "bush quarter".

In 1908 Mr. Alex Cameron imported registered Shetland ponies, from the Shetland Isles. William bought a four year old mare called "Kate", (fourth and fifth generations still on the farm), and the growing family all learned to ride. Lillian remembers riding her pony to the clay pit area, filling her apron with mushrooms, then home again for a tasty meal, made from her offering.

Their home became the place to gather, and the family recall an evening's fun, was Mother at the piano, with friends gathered around singing songs and hymns, then enjoying a tasty lunch. A Sunday evening ritual, was when William read from the big family Bible, and all would kneel at their chairs for prayer.

In this warm and happy home seven children, went to Lansdowne and then Oakwood school, growing to adulthood.

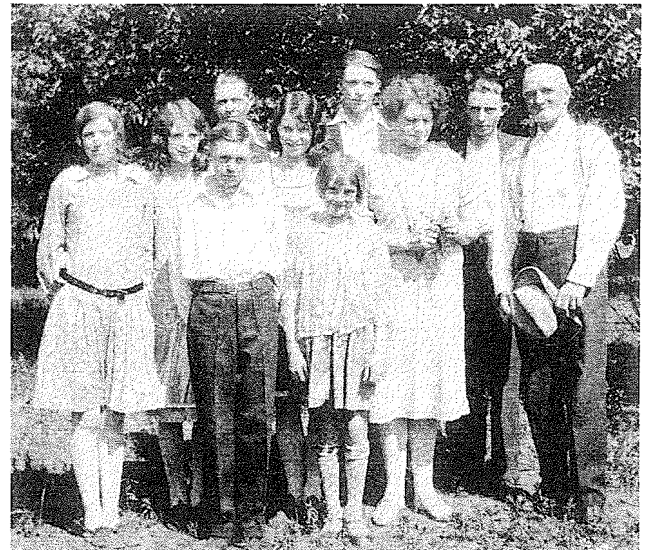
Grandpa Montgomery and his wife, Elizabeth, used to visit the family in the summer. They drove, in a day, from north of Virden, via Routledge and lake

roads with a team of ponies and a democrat. Early settlers recall watching them pass their farms with "Trixie" and "Buster" eagerly trotting on.

Christmas festivities began early. At least five weeks before the actual concert, neighbours gathered at the Hatch home to practise their drama and music — they had a piano — the school had not. Concert day began as the youth of the district transferred the piano to the sleigh box for the ride to the school. Friends and neighbours arrived in the evening to enjoy the program, a visit from Santa, and the women's hearty lunch. Toes began to twitch as the fiddles were taken from the cases. Strings and bows quivered, the piano picked up the rhythm, and everyone danced until the wee small hours. The next day, regardless of weather, the piano was brought home, and today is still treasured in a family home.

William helped to promote the growth of town and community, and was a trustee of Lansdowne for 33 consecutive years.

The whole family attended St. Alban's Anglican Church, and in earlier years Minnie had been a busy member of the W.A. This talented lady also had a gift for writing poetry, and many an event — or feeling — found expression through her pen.



Wm. Hatch Family, and a cousin Harold, between Mum and Dad.

Minnie passed away in 1941 and William in 1951. Their children were: Harry, Wilfred, Charlotte, Irene, Lillian, Lloyd and Violet.

**Harry** and **Lloyd** were farmers, **Wilfred** a Mountie. The four daughters followed in their Mother's footsteps and became teachers, taking their training at the old "Brandon Normal School".

**Charlotte** — after ten years of teaching, married

a farmer, Fred Moody of the Routledge district in 1938.

**Irene** — taught for thirteen years in local schools. In 1942 she married Clarence Motheral and continued teaching while he was overseas. They settled in Oak Lake when he returned.

**Lillian** — married E. William Brownlie in 1945. They have two children, Faye, a teacher in Winnipeg, and Brian, working with the Parks Board in Brandon. Lillian taught in local schools and others, retiring from Goulter School in Virden having taught more than twenty-eight years. The Bill Brownlie family now resides in Virden.

**Violet** — married Roy McFarlane in 1956. They have two sons, Leigh of Brandon, and Murray of Carberry. Violet retired from teaching in Carberry in 1980, having taught a total of thirty-eight years. Violet and Roy reside on an original family farm north of Carberry.

**Wilfred George** — second son of William and Minnie, farmed until 1931 when he enrolled in the R.C.M.P. at Regina, Saskatchewan. Except for five years with the Yorkton Police, he served in the R.C.M.P. force until his retirement to Victoria, British Columbia in November 1959.

Wilfred married Nellie May Sparrow of Yorkton, Saskatchewan in 1933.

From 1960-1972 he was posted to H.M.C. Dockyard detachment of the Canadian Corps of Commissioners.

Wilfred and Nell had four sons, Lawrence (died as an infant), William, Robert and Ronald, all married and living in the west. They enjoy the company of eleven grandchildren and one great grandson.

## Harry Hatch Family

Henry Wm. Royce (Harry) Hatch was the eldest son of Wm. and Mary Elizabeth (Montgomery) Hatch. Born at 27-8-24 (the Hatch farm home) he



Harry and Wynne Hatch and Daughters.

received his education at Lansdowne Country School and Oakwood High School. At the age of seventeen he found employment with the Bank of Montreal holding positions in banks at Gainsborough, Oak Lake and Saskatoon. As a member of the Border Horse, he trained at Camp Shilo for several years.

As a young man Harry (as he was commonly called) became interested in Construction Work and spent some time in the employ of Mr. Dave Taylor and Mr. E. P. Steen, building roads in the province. Later he worked in the various capacities of time keeper, foreman and general superintendent for Kane Construction, Bird Const., Tomlinson Const. and finally McGinnis and O'Connell. During his years as superintendent he was in charge of building airports at Vulcan, Alberta, Chater, Manitoba, and Kingston, Ontario as well as highways in Manitoba and Northern Ontario.

From early childhood Harry was afflicted with bronchial asthma and although the farm with its animals and grains was not conducive to his good health it held a peculiar fascination for him. Often his career in construction work was interrupted by his return to the farm bordering on the marshland south of Oak Lake. Finally in 1947 he left construction and settled down to farming. For several years he operated the horse-drawn grader in the R.M. of Sifton. He served the same community for several years as councillor and as reeve. As a conservationist he worked constantly along with Ducks Unlimited and the Manitoba Game and Fish Association for water control and conservation of water and wildlife.

In 1937 Harry was married to Winnifred Steen who had been pursuing a teaching career. After the births of their children she resumed teaching holding positions at Hesselwood, Lansdowne, Johnston, Oakwood, Assiniboine and finally Princess Elizabeth, Shilo. Always interested in young people Harry and Winnie Hatch were strong supporters of the 4-H Beef and Sewing Clubs of Oak Lake.

Harry was forced, by ill health, to leave his beloved farm in 1965. Living first in Oak Lake and later in Brandon, he died in 1975.

A staunch Anglican, he held the belief that, "God and family" were the most important things in life.

At present Winnifred Hatch, retired from teaching, lives in Brandon.

**Sharon (Hatch) Zilkey** — teaches Kindergarten and music at Grandview. She has two children, Jennifer and Jonathan.

**Heather Lee (Hatch) Penner** — lives in Brandon. She and her husband, Eric, have three children, Kelsey Jo, Trever, and Ryan.

**Linda Belle Hatch** — is a teacher at Grandview.

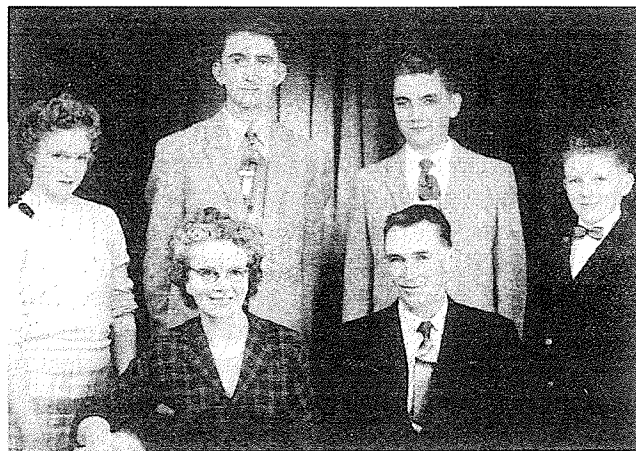


**Betty Ann Merrick** — a foster daughter, is a secretary with the Dakota Ojibway Development in Winnipeg.

### Lloyd Hatch Family

Lloyd Montgomery Hatch, youngest son of William and Mary, was born in 1914 on the farm. He attended Lansdowne school, where one of his teachers was sister Charlotte. As a youngster he rode a lot, and got into the sheep industry early, through a gift of an old ewe from Mr. Cliff Gordon. He was a member of the calf club and later took short courses. He learned the art of trimming and dressing and presenting his sheep under the watchful eye of Mr. Wm. Holland.

In December 1939, he married an Alberta born school teacher, Wilma Elizabeth Tully, whose ancestors came to the Strathclair area in 1878. They bought the home farm in 1940 and the Stewart E½ 28-8-24 in 1946, adding to the enterprise as time went on to form, what was to be known as, "Pleasant Dawn Farms". Revenue from sheep bought Lloyd's bride the first gas powered washing machine, in the area, early 1940 — Again they were dealt to procure a new Singer sewing machine in 1941. They financed, in 1942, the purchase of four foundation females to start their purebred Polled Shorthorn herd.



Hatches of Pleasant Dawn Farms.

In the late fifties and into the early seventies the flock was widely shown. In 1956 Lloyd won Champion flock over all breeds at the Toronto Royal, as well, Champion shearer, making him known thereafter as "Manitoba's Ace Sheepman". He judged at numerous shows, including four times at the Royal, and had a ready sale for his purebreds — coast to coast and in the U.S.

Meanwhile he continued to perfect his Polled Shorthorns. They were shown, chiefly to sell, and mostly buyers came to the farm. The Diploma stu-

dents from the University of Manitoba visited the farm several times to see how viable an operation, was the mixture of purebred cattle and sheep. The Shorthorns also sold across Canada, the United States and to Scotland. Visitors were a "way of life" at Pleasant Dawn, as interesting people, many from other countries, looked at the stock, chatted, admired Lloyd's working dog, a border collie — and ended up at the kitchen table for the inevitable cup of tea.

Lloyd's recreation has always found expression in his livestock business, or trips connected to it. However anything for the good of the Community finds him participating and contributing. He was 4-H leader for several years, trustee of Lansdowne school, director of the Fair Board, and both president and secretary of Shorthorn and Sheep Associations, and many other organizations. His services as an amateur Veterinarian have been frequently appreciated.

In 1973 he was named North America, "Builder of the Breed" — a Shorthorn award. The commentary said in part, "He is known for his rigid code of honour, and is a respected and trusted cattleman". Judging the Palermo Shorthorn World Show, in the Argentine in 1978 and the World Shorthorn Congress in Calgary, Alberta in 1980 were two highlights.

Wilma and their family of four, David, Tully, Mary and Fred, have always been a vital and enthusiastic part of life at Pleasant Dawn. Wilma has used her executive talents in many of the farm oriented organizations, as well as in the community, and in St. Alban's Anglican Church, where Lloyd serves on the Vestry and Wilma as Secretary. The latter is a member of the A.C.W. and in earlier years taught Sunday School. Wilma, once the children were grown, was able to accompany Lloyd on his judging trips.

The children all went to school at Lansdowne and Oakwood. They helped with all the various farm activities and were 4-H members.

**David Ronald Montgomery** — made a name for himself in his teens, in wildlife circles, for his knowledge of bird life and his able guidance to well known biologists, wishing to tour the Oak Lake marsh. He took piano along with his school studies, and is still widely involved with the Arts. He received his B.Sc. from Brandon University. David writes the "Chickadee Notes" for the Winnipeg Free Press, as well as other wildlife publications. He now has his own consulting firm and lives in Winnipeg.

**Tully James** — second son of Lloyd and Wilma, became a farmer. He worked with his Dad, but as well did a lot of custom shearing in his early twenties. He had been Manitoba Junior Champion Sheep Shearer at sixteen.

In 1969 he married Arlene Atchison of the Find-

lay district, and started farming on his own. He bought his Uncle Harry's farm, E½ of 22-8-24, and in 1970 Cliff Gordon's, E½ of 27-8-24. He runs a mixed operation, including both purebred and commercial cattle. He also had sheep for a time.

Tully has served on both cattle and sheep association boards, and is a past president of the local fair. The family attend St. Alban's Anglican Church, where Tully acts as Minister's Warden.

Tully and Arlene have three children, Debora, Kevin and Trent. They enjoy family sports, riding, swimming and soccer. The children are the fifth generation of Hatches on Pleasant Dawn.

**Mary Elizabeth** — took music along with her schooling, obtaining her Grade IX piano. She also completed several years of 4-H sewing, but her No. 1 hobby was always her Shetland ponies and later her riding horse "Midnight". She graduated from St. Boniface School of Nursing in 1967 with her R.N., and the following year married Jack Reynolds of Miniota. They live in Ponoka, Alberta, where Jack is Royal Bank Manager, have two children, Jacquelyne and Jamie.

**Frederick Lloyd** — known as Fred, was always very interested in sports. Following high school he took a year at the University of Manitoba, then joined the R.C.M.P., graduating from Penhold, Alberta in November of '67. He married Joan Harrison of Winnipeg, a nurse from Mary's class. They have three children, Laura, Lincoln and Tyler, and make their home in Surrey, British Columbia.

### **Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Heapy**

Clarence (Curly) and Clara (nee Henry) Heapy were born at Oak River, Man. Both are descendants of pioneer families who settled in that area. Curly's maternal great grandfather was one of the first settlers in western Ontario (Kincardine area), coming there in 1833, Curly's grandmother (nee Margaret Dickson born 1827) and other members of the family came from Scotland by sailing vessel in 1834. Grandma married Robert Chisholm in 1853. Their eldest son, Archibald, crossed the Assiniboine River in 1879 and took a homestead on a level quarter section 13 miles north of Griswold registering his claim at Odanah, south of Minnedosa. In 1881 the Chisholms came west, wintering at High Bluff and thence to the Ancrum district in 1882. Archibald D. Chisholm (Curly's uncle farmed 1882-89 and then came to Griswold where he operated many business enterprises. He was reeve of the Sifton Municipality from 1895-1904. Curly's father, E. J. Heapy (Dick) came to Griswold from London, England on April 1, 1891 with \$2.50 capital assets. He was lured here by his elder brother who was a member of the R.N.M.P. He

acquired Hudson Bay land in 1899 and was married to Margaret Chisholm in 1900.

Clara's mother (Annie Stewart) came from Scotland with her parents and 4 other members of the family to Winnipeg, and from there to Oak River by Oxcart in 1880. Clara's father, Edward Henry (eldest son of the widow Mary Henry), came with 10 other members of the family from Mitchell, Ontario and travelled from Winnipeg to Brandon on the 1st passenger train west Sept. 26th, 1881. They settled at Oak River. A Clan reunion was held in 1981 to celebrate the event. Clara's parents were married in 1897.

Curly received his education at Maplewood S.D., Oak River, Brandon and the U. of Manitoba. He attended 1st Class Normal in 1924-25 and began teaching at Happy Lake S.D. 7 miles north of Boggy Creek, Man., 32 miles from a town where no roads or phones existed. His first position ended in 7 weeks due to a serious bout with typhoid fever. In August 1926 he became principal of Rutherglen School at McAuley. He was also principal of Sinclair School before coming to be principal of Oakwood School in Oak Lake in 1933. He retired from teaching in 1966. He enjoyed the goodwill and co-operation from the majority of parents, pupils, and teachers. The school board introduced Grade 12 into Oakwood S.D. in 1939-40 and it met with considerable success.

In 1959 the school became overcrowded with 8 classrooms operating where there had been formerly 5. In 1961 the new collegiate opened.

During his service, Curly received several gifts and awards — namely: an engraved watch from the North Country in 1951, a coronation medal in 1953, a beautiful plaque and an expense-paid trip for two to Europe for two months given at a school reunion in 1962, the Golden Boy award in 1963, a life membership pin from M.E.A. in 1967.

Clara and Curly were married in 1927. Their 3 children were born at McAuley. Lois graduated with her R.N. from the Winnipeg General Hospital, and worked in B.C. and Manitoba ere her marriage to Clarence Vincent in 1955. Their 3 children Faye, David and Lee are graduates of the U. of M. Lois continues with her nursing profession. They have one granddaughter, Regan Harden.

**Margaret** became a school teacher and married Stuart Taylor in 1951.

**Gerald** worked in the Pool Elevator at Dauphin until he joined the R.C.M.P. in 1951. He served at Cloverdale, Yellowknife, and 5½ years in the Northern Arctic returning to Saskatchewan. He retired in 1976 after 25 years of service with the rank of a sergeant. He now farms some of the land that his grandfather Henry acquired in the 1880's. He was

married to Charlotte Thompson in 1964 and they have four sons, Perry, Thomas, James and Ernest.

Clara and Curly have resided in Oak Lake since 1933 except 3 years when Curly operated an insurance business in Oak River for his niece's husband, Dr. F. T. Gould. They have taken an active part in sports, community events, and the United Church. Curly was the first manager for the Oakwood Place.

Clara and Curly celebrated their Golden wedding anniversary in 1977. They are happily blessed with 3 children, 13 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

### **Isabelle (Allan) Heeney**

#### **Isabelle (Allan) Heeney**

**(From a letter to the Sec.)**

In 1921, when we arrived in Oak Lake to start school, the new addition (2 high school rooms, and teacher's room, plus auditorium in basement) was not ready, so we were sent home. We had 2 or 3 weeks extra holiday — on salary!

My home was on a farm north of Brandon, my parents — Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Allan. In 1931 I married Fred Heeney, also a farmer in north Brandon, and we have two children — Dennis, on the home farm, is married to Betty Henderson, and they have three children, Barbara, Bob, and Maureen — and Margaret, married to James Robertson, Edmonton. They have two children, Brian and Diane.

Oak Lake was a busy, friendly place to live, and there was always lots to do. Mr. English had a good school band, and Russell Stevens a good orchestra which played at dances — Elliott Orr, Ralph Lund, Fred Higginbotham were some of the musicians. Mrs. Leitch directed plays, and Mr. Steen was a good choir director. Mrs. Cameron taught our "Alpha Class" in Sunday School, and her niece, Mamie Adams, had a beautiful singing voice.

Harold Smith had a really good Drug Store, and Eve Carpentier always kept a nice stock of china, gifts, etc.

I boarded with Mrs. Todd, a very kindly lady. Mr. Todd was older, and was only living during my first year. He told stories of coming from Winnipeg on a boat up the Assiniboine, and it took a whole day from Brandon to Oak Lake. He farmed previously to retiring, in the Ryerson District, I think.

These are only a few of my memories of my three years in Oak Lake, where I taught grades VI, VII, and VIII.

### **The Helten Family**

In the spring of 1948 Clarence Helten came to the village of Oak Lake to help in the construction of an implement garage for Mr. George McCulloch. Mr. McCulloch was the Massey Ferguson agent in Oak



Til and Clarence Helten, Doreen and Nora on her confirmation Day. Inset Margie Helten.

Lake at the time. While Clarence worked at the construction of the garage, his wife, Til, and daughters, Nora and Doreen, lived in Brandon. As the summer progressed, Clarence and Til became fond of the small community and in October of the same year, they moved to the village. Their first home was the present home of Mr. Reubon Denbow.

In the autumn of the same year, Clarence became manager of the Massey Ferguson dealership. He remained as manager for a period of six years. As time went on Clarence and Til were blessed with a third child, a daughter, Margaret, in October of 1952.

The little town was growing slightly and in 1954 Clarence and Til decided to build a garage of their own. The service station and cafe was opened on August 13, 1954. Clarence looked after the garage while Til managed the restaurant. Faith Reeves helped Til as alternate cook and the staff consisted of local school girls and married ladies from the community. In 1958 the cafe portion of the garage was leased to E. Bothe and subsequently to Gordon Bell and then to Elmer Edey.

In 1956 Clarence and Til purchased some property next to the service station and sold their old home to Mr. Bill Spence and had a custom built home moved in from Carman.

Clarence continued to run his service station business until 1962 when he sold it to the B. A. Oil Company. Having sold his business C.J. went to work for Kohut Brothers of Souris. Later he worked with Royal Paving Company until 1968. Unitary School Divisions and Division buses were coming into existence and in 1968 C.J. obtained a job driving a school bus for the Fort La Bosse School Division. Clarence decided to build an auto body repair shop in 1969 on the same property as his house was on.

Clarence and Til's family were growing up rapidly. All three girls attended school in Oak Lake. Margie completed her high school in Virden. The girls were active in 4-H, curling, school sports, figure skating, church functions and many other community activities. After completing their education each of the girls struck out on her own to explore new horizons.

**Nora**, the eldest daughter, worked at the Bank of Montreal in Brandon, Winnipeg and Nanaimo, B.C. In 1966 she married Garnet Gompf of Oak Lake. They have three children — Tim, Tammy and Trevor. At present, they are living on the Gompf family farm seven miles north of Oak Lake.

**Doreen** worked as a hairdresser in Winnipeg, Pinawa, Kenton, London, Ont. and Brandon. In 1980 she married Ken Schmidt of Griswold and they are now living on a farm near Griswold.

**Margie** worked as a secretary for Pelly Trail School Division in Rossburn. Later she moved to Minnedosa and worked in a law office. In 1973 she moved to Russell and worked at the Collegiate there. In 1974 she married Len Derkach of Russell. They have one son, Jay, and live on a farm near Russell.

Clarence and Til always took an active part in community life. Both Clarence and Til have taken executive responsibilities in various community organizations. Having lived in this community for more than thirty years, Clarence and Til are very proud of their community. They are as much a part of the community, as the community of Oak Lake is a part of them.

### **The Island — Hendersons**

William Henderson was born on October 31, 1856 at Harpsdale, Caithness, Scotland, the son of Hugh and Janet Henderson. He worked on his Dad's farm for sometime, then did his apprenticeship in Stone Masonry. He then went to Edinburgh and joined the Police Force where he remained until he had saved enough money to emigrate to Canada.



Jack Sparks and Uncle Bill Henderson.

William and his brother, Hugh, came to Canada in 1883. They worked in the lumber mills in Quebec for a year, then went to the States, from there to British Columbia, finally Isabella, Manitoba where they worked on a farm. In 1891 William and Hugh went to the Valleyview district, Tantalton, Sask. where Hugh took up a homestead.

William came to Oak Lake, Manitoba in 1892 and settled on a portion of land just east of the Lake purchased from Mab Marion, commonly known as "The Island". His nephew, Alex, son of Hugh, came to live with him in 1919. Alex married Mabel Fuller of Oak Lake in 1927. Besides farming, they trapped muskrats in the spring. Live muskrats were trapped for Knotts Muskrat Ranch in 1928 or 1929. These muskrats were later shipped to Germany.

During this time, Albert and Ernie Fuller ran a concession booth and open air dance floor on "The Island". The Oak Lake Nighthawks kept the large crowds dancing two nights a week until nearly 2 a.m. Ice was cut from the Lake in the winter time and stored in sawdust and straw in the Ice House, for cooling of drinks and freezing of ice cream during the summer. Farm products such as milk at 10 cents a quart, butter and eggs were sold to the cottagers.

Uncle Bill injured his leg while loading cattle. This injury later turned gangrenous and the leg was amputated in Winnipeg in 1929. A common sight at the



Island was Uncle Bill driving his black horse and buggy to survey the crops and on regular trips to town for groceries. He had a sweet tooth evidenced by his love of home made candy. He always had time to chat with everyone. Uncle Bill died of a stroke in June, 1930 at the age of 74 years.

Jim Hewitt worked for the Hendersons for six years. The Stewart boys were also periodic workers at the Island Farm.



Margaret, Jessie, Dorothy, Alice, baby Phyllis Henderson, showing Dad's bag of Geese and Ducks.

Alex and Mabel had seven children. The children attended Lansdowne and Sandhurst schools and later some attended Oakwood High School. The five girls who were older than the boys were very competent workers on the farm — from haying, and the cutting and threshing of grain in the summer and fall to muskrat trapping in the spring. The family operated the concession booth at the resort.

**Margaret**, the eldest, worked on the farm and married Jim Orr, a farmer of Elkhorn in 1960. They had one son, John. Jim died of a heart condition in 1970. John and Margaret and Uncle Tom Orr continue to operate the farm, north of Elkhorn.

**Jessie** worked as a typist with the Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Office in Brandon. She married Charles Stewart, a farmer, of Pipestone in 1959. Jessie and Charlie have three sons: Bill, has taken a Recreational Vehicles course at Assiniboine College in Brandon and Tom and Brian work with their Dad on the farm.

**Dorothy** worked with her sister, Jessie, at the Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Office and later married George Watt of Rounthwaite in 1953. Separated in 1956, later they were divorced. Dorothy worked as a church Secretary and later for the Dept. of Agriculture, raising her family of four by herself. Children are Donna, twins, George and Grant, and James.

Dorothy married John Bussey in 1973 and separated in 1977. She has been very active in Club 77 Singles Club in Brandon.

**Alice** taught on permit at Woodbend School, Laurier. Attended Winnipeg Normal School and taught for two years at Bloomsbury School north of Brandon before marrying John Olive, a farmer of Oak Lake in 1955.

**Phyllis** continued in her two older sisters footsteps working for a period with Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Office in Brandon before it closed and later working for Donovan and Stone, C.A.'s in Brandon. She married Murray Kennedy, a Mental Health Worker, of Brandon in 1963. They have two children, Cindy and James, both in elementary school. Phyllis assists the Children's Aid of Western Manitoba as a driver and helper in her spare time.

**Bill**, who hasn't yet made any marital commitments, operates The Trailer Park, Marina and Concession Store and Laundromat (added in 1981) at the Island with his mother. They have seen the resort grow from just a few cottages along the Lake front to approximately 280 along four streets in the south end and two in the north. The Trailer Park has 280 campsites, most serviced with water and electricity. More cottage lots are presently being opened in a new subdivision.

**John** operates the farm along with his very ambitious wife, Elaine, formerly Elaine Penner of Oak Lake. John and Elaine were married in 1974. They have three children, Lori (in Grade 1 September 1981) and Cathy and Hugh at home.

Alex died of kidney failure in Brandon Hospital in 1960 in his 61st year.

### David and Elspet Christie Henderson

Alexander Henderson and his wife, Elspet Robertson, lived in The Parish of Udney Aberdeenshire, Scotland, where Alexander was Head Master in a School for boys.

Their third son, David, married Elspet Christie in 1862 of Aberdeenshire. They lived at Blair Athole where David was a station master.

The Henderson Family emigrated to Canada to Oak Lake, Manitoba — William and David, in April 1885, and the parents and other seven children, July 1886.

William and David, the two elder sons, homesteaded one half section of land in the Lansdowne District, about four miles south of the Town of Oak Lake, and named it "Athole Farm". As soon as lumber and building supplies were available, they began building a home suitable for the family, later to arrive from Scotland. They also built a stable, a blacksmith and utility shed, with a great deal of help

from new friends and neighbours. An enormous amount was accomplished in 1885 and early 1886. They purchased a plow, harrows, stoneboat, scythe and farm tools. Land was cleared, cultivated and some grain planted. Three horses, two cows, several pigs and chickens were also on the shopping list; and during the winter, wood had to be chopped, split and piled. The men were fortunate in finding a good supply of water — a well was dug, and cribbed, quite close to the farm buildings.

The departure of the Henderson family from Scotland was delayed until their eldest daughter, Elspet, completed her education at the University of Edinburgh.

Meanwhile, the journey to Canada was being planned and arranged. The interest and enthusiasm of the family was greatly stimulated when an old friend, by the name of Andrew Gillespie, returned to Scotland after having lived in Canada for several years. He had built a home and farm buildings, harvested some grain, and knew the opportunities of a good life in this new country. His reason for returning to Scotland, was to move his own family to Canada. The Gillespie homestead was quite close to Athole Farm, and Andrew had helped William and David with building and farming ventures. He was able to make valuable suggestions as to comforts and necessities, which would be useful in setting up a comfortable home for this large family.

The Hendersons, in Blair Athole, began proceedings to have settlers effects transported across the Atlantic by Ocean Steamer. Among their treasures was a beautiful old Melodeon, which, for sentimental reasons, they could not leave behind. They had it wrapped in a special packing, covered with burlap, and then crated for shipping. The instrument made the journey in fine condition and was the source of family entertainment for many years.

The Henderson family arrived at Athole Farm in July, 1886. They soon made friends, and became active in the Community. The Church of their faith was the Presbyterian Church, which they all attended regularly. The children started their schooling when the Fall classes began in the District school. Life seemed to offer many comforting promises, when a great tragedy occurred.

The father, David, had hitched the team of horses to a light wagon, and had gone hunting prairie chickens. He located a covey, and, in his excitement, stood up in the wagon to take aim. When the shot was fired, the team bolted, throwing David violently against the tailboard of the wagon. He suffered a broken back and died November 3rd, 1887.

Following the death of her son, David, Mrs. Henderson sold the land and moved to Birtle to live

beside daughter Margaret Hatch, later moving to Grande Prairie, Alberta to be near daughters, Jeannie (Mrs. Robert Mitchell) and "Bella" (Mrs. Tom Waterman). She died in May, 1932.

**Elspet** — eldest daughter, married James B. Lang of Oak Lake, Manitoba November 12, 1888.

**Elizabeth** — married Robert Wm. Mitchell of Oak Lake, Manitoba January 1, 1891.

**William** — married Jessie MacFarlane November 18, 1891 at Oak Lake, Manitoba.

**Georgina** — married Robert Ethelbert Beattie at Nelson, British Columbia May 21, 1900.

**Margaret** — married to John George Hatch, August 21, 1901.

**Jane** — married Robert W. Mitchell (second marriage) February 3, 1903.

**Isabella** — married Thomas Waterman.

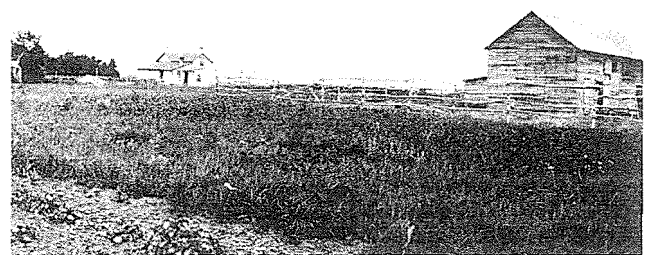
**Thomas** — not known whom he married.

**David** — (not married), second son of Elspet Christie and David Henderson, kept the family home together and cared for his Mother, Elspet (Christie) Henderson, after the death of his father (David), until his own death on June 6th, 1915.

### The Higginbotham Family submitted by Gladys C. Brown

John William Higginbotham was born Aug. 19, 1865 at Brantford, Ontario. He came to Manitoba with his family when he was seven years old. They travelled by train and brought oxen with them in a box car. The family settled on a homestead north of Oak Lake in what was to become known as Ryerson district. They uprooted tree stumps, and planted some of the first crops in that area.

Grandfather John William Higginbotham, of Irish descent, was a leader, and religious principles governed his life. One of his sons, Joseph, was instrumental in giving the name to Shiloh Church and was one of the board members.



Higginbotham Home in Ryerson District.

John William Higginbotham farmed in the Ryerson district for several years. He courted Alice Maude Bailey of High Bluff, Man., driving there with a buggy and a team of horses. They were married Dec. 28, at High Bluff, Man. Alice Maude

Bailey was born March 3, 1879 at Windsor, Ontario. She told us that when she was three years old, she came to Winnipeg, Man. by train, and from there by paddlewheel boat up the Assiniboine River to Portage la Prairie, Man. Her parents settled at High Bluff, Man. One of the Bailey grandsons still lives in her original home.

After their marriage, the Higginbothams attended Ryerson Church, and their eldest child, Eva, was the first baby to be baptized there. When Eva was seven years old, the family moved in to Oak Lake Town, where they lived in the same house for many years. The children attended Oakwood School.

Children born to Alice Maude and John Higginbotham were:

**Eva** — now Mrs. Cecil Arthur — in her 82nd year — She and her husband live in their own home in Winnipeg, Man. They had one son, Walter, and a daughter, Muriel.

**Lillian** — Registered Nurse — Died in April, 1948.

**Frederick** — Businessman — Married — A son, Gerald and a daughter, Faye — Died Feb. 1951.

**Wilfred** — Served in the American Navy during World War II. Died May, 1948.

**Wesley** — Died of pneumonia at 3 years of age.

**Marion** — now Mrs. Ernest Stevens — Both retired — Living in Stuttgart, Arkansas, U.S.A., in the winter, and at Wasagaming, Man. in summer. They had one daughter, Marilyn, and a son, Gordon.

**Margaret** — Retired — Living in Winnipeg.

**Gladys** — now Mrs. William Brown — Living in Winnipeg, Man. They had two daughters, Heather and Patricia.

John Higginbotham and his wife were both interested and active in community affairs. Mr. Higginbotham was an elder in the Oak Lake United Church for many years, and was also Superintendent of the Sunday School in same church. Mrs. Higginbotham was organist of the United Church for 35 years. This included not only playing for church services, but also weddings, funerals, etc., and for many concerts in the Town Hall, as well as concerts in the church. She taught piano lessons in her own home, and played for numerous events in the surrounding areas in the country. Their home was a "Drop-in" centre for school teachers, young people or anyone who was lonely and wanted a cup of tea or just a chat.

John Higginbotham died in Sept. 1941. Alice Maude died March 1951.

In closing, may I say that it was a privilege to grow up in this community with so many cultured and talented people, whom I feel influenced our lives in so many ways.

## Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Hockin

Robert Hichens Hockin came to Canada from England in 1882. He worked in Toronto, then came west to Winnipeg where he worked on the "Manitoba" Free Press paper. He and Mr. D'artig were given the contract to carry the mail from Winnipeg to Edmonton. They had a two wheeled cart and two ponies. They drove one and led one and changed each day. They followed a trail from trading post to trading post and camped at a post each night.

Mr. Hockin did not return to Winnipeg and after a few days in Edmonton, went to Calgary to try cattle ranching. But later he drifted back to Manitoba and went into business with Mr. W. J. de Manbey at Rapid City. When the main line of the railway did not go through Rapid City, they decided to move to the main line and drove from Rapid City to Oak Lake.

Rosa Carolina Breach came from England in 1888 to be with her sister, Mrs. de Manbey. She moved with them to Oak Lake in 1890 but returned to England for her trousseau, coming back to Canada in October.

R. H. Hockin and Rosa C. Breach were married in St. Matthew's Church in Brandon, Oct. 8, 1890. The church was later destroyed with all the records. The next day they went by freight train to Oak Lake. It is reported that they rode in the caboose.

At first Mr. de Manbey lived in half of the Chinese laundry and the law office was in the other half. Later they built the office that still stands. Mr. de Manbey was a lawyer and R. H. Hockin was a Notary Public.

Mr. Hockin had built a three roomed bungalow in 1890 while his bride-to-be was in England. Later he added a kitchen and a bedroom on the west side and extended the cottage roof for two bedrooms on the north, leaving a room with no windows in the middle. He added glass panels above the north and south doors to give light. Later he raised the house two and one half feet and put in a foundation to prevent the basement flooding.

Mr. Hockin, a notary public, was secretary-treasurer of the Municipality of Sifton and later the town of Oak Lake, as well. He spoke French fluently and could converse with the French settlement residents and the Belgian people who lived around the lake and they became his regular clients.

Mr. and Mrs. Hockin were active members of St. Alban's (Anglican) Church, which opened in 1890.

They had one son, Francis Treverne (who died as a youth) and three daughters: Mary D., Carrie Joan and Edith Prudence, who all attended Oakwood School. **Mary** worked as boys' matron in several Indian Schools (The Pas, Man. and Carcross in the Yukon), also she worked for a time in the telephone

exchange. She was very active in the work of the Anglican Church. **Joan** took a business course at Brandon College and worked in her father's office until she married H. H. Gardner in 1919. They lived in the Breadalbane district south of Lenore. They had a son, Treverne Hugh (Verne) and two daughters, Edith K. (now Mrs. A. Lefort) and Helen J. (Mrs. G. W. Reynolds). **Edith Prudence** took a business course in Brandon and worked for her father too, but decided she would be a nurse and went on to train in Children's Hospital, Winnipeg. She worked many years with the Eskimo and Indians of the far north (matron of the hospital at Pangnirtung, Baffin Island, Moosonee, Ont., and Aklavik, N.W.T.). For her work in this field and service to the people of the north, she received the Order of Canada in October of 1980.

Joan died in 1949 and Mary and Prudence have retired to Winnipeg, Man.

When the C.N.R. was built to Churchill, Mr. Hockin was asked if he would allow his name to be used for a station. He agreed, so "Hockin" will remain in Manitoba as long as the C.N.R. to Churchill continues.

### The Hogg Family

Thomas Rutherford was born Feb. 23, 1861 in the Township of Carrick, in Bruce County, Ont., son of John and Marion Hogg of Ontario, and formerly of Edinburgh, Scotland. He came to Manitoba in 1890. Being a teacher by profession and having taught in Ontario, he became one of the first teachers of Oakwood School, and was the first Principal when the School was enlarged. In 1894 he gave up teaching and operated a Barber Shop until 1910. He bought the "Oak Lake News", and edited it until 1919 when he sold it to his son Russell. For a few years he taught at the Industrial School in Regina, Sask.

He was a member of the Oak Lake Citizen's Band, President of the Oak Lake Symphony Orchestra, and belonged to the Rifle Association. Following is the write up about his Awards, as printed in the Oak Lake News Aug. 1st, 1907:

"T. R. Hogg wins Laurels at Winnipeg."

At the Manitoba Rifle Association in Winnipeg last week T. R. Hogg won the Poite Diamond Medal and \$100.00 in cash for highest score in the Militia Match, the Governor General's Bronze Medal for second in the Grand Aggregate and the Winnipeg Rifle Association Silver Medal for the highest civilian scores in the Grand Aggregate."

On his return to Town on No. 5 Saturday afternoon, Mr. Hogg was tendered a reception at the station by a number of friends, under the leadership of Mayor Hood. The Band rendered a very appropri-

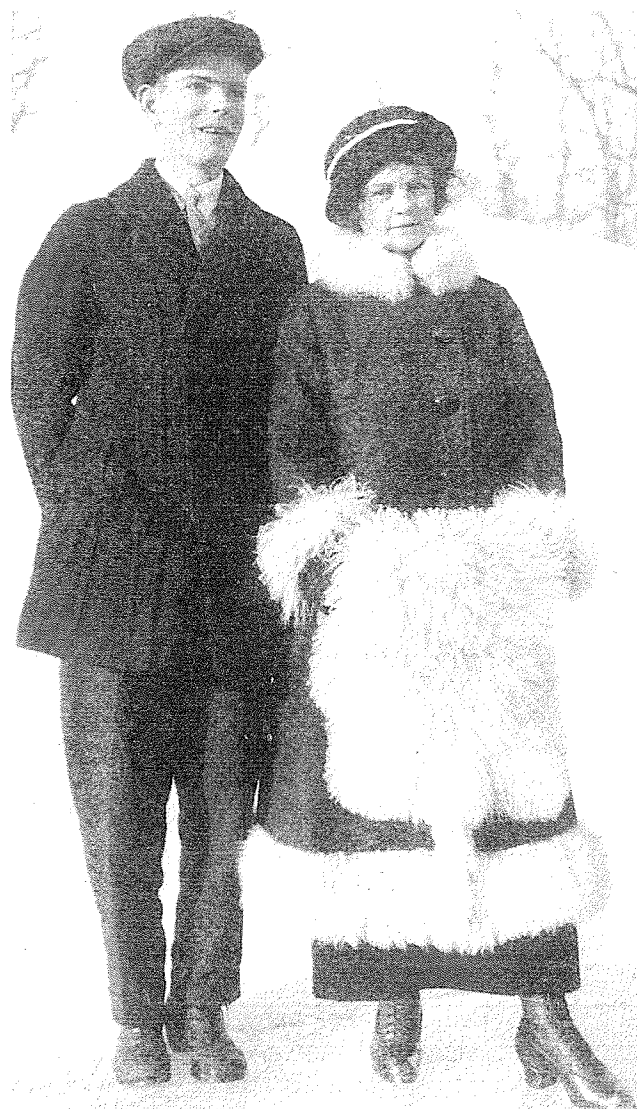
ate selection, while a number of the devotees of the Rifle Range were present with rifles, and fired a volley or two. The younger generation made the atmosphere noisy with fire crackers etc. Mr. Hogg went on to win a place on the Bisley Team which was to go to England, but the team was unable to go.

His wife, the former Charlotte Lewis, was born in Ontario in 1859 and came west with him in 1890. They had eight children, only three of whom survived: Russell, John, and Nellie. Mrs. Hogg was known for her kindly disposition and neighbourly deeds.

"T.R." died in 1939, and Charlotte in 1923, and they are buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery.

She had been a member of the Methodist Church, and he a Presbyterian.

**John Rutherford Hogg** became a Dentist and practised most of his life in Regina, Sask. He married Violet Jackson. They had 3 daughters: Marilyn, Pa-



Russell and Arlie Hogg 1916.



tricia and Sunny. He, too, was an expert marksman and an ardent hunter.

**Nellie Marion**, a teacher, married Albert Mills of Chaplin, Sask. They had six children: Arlie, Maxine, Laurie, Bud (Albert), Don and Darlene. Albert was a World War Veteran and a member of the Famous "Dumbbells" who entertained the Troops in France and England during the War.

**Russell Hogg** took over the Publishing of the Oak Lake News in 1919, and edited the paper for forty years. He married Arlie Harrison.

Russell was a keen hunter and his photograph was on the cover of "Hints for Hunters", a Government brochure published in 1923. He, along with his father and brother, joined the Oak Lake Citizen's Band when he was 9 years old, when Mr. A. M. Tipp was conductor. Later, Russell was Band Master for twenty-five years, and taught many young musicians to play a variety of instruments.

He was interested in Photography and was known as the "Local Photographer", taking pictures of weddings, anniversaries, scholarship winners, Fair animals, etc., and won prizes in competitions. He also took pictures for the Brandon Sun and Winnipeg Free Press.

He passed away in 1961 and is buried at Oak Lake.

Arlie helped her husband for 40 years in publishing the Oak Lake News. She was Reporter for the Winnipeg Free Press and the Brandon Sun for ten years. She was always keenly interested in Art, first receiving instruction from Artist, Author and Naturalist, Hamilton M. Laing. She painted briefly in 1930, and later at the age of 70 joined the Virden Art Club in 1965. She accepted invitations to exhibit her work in one-man shows — in The Brandon Allied Arts Centre, Portage la Prairie Arts Council, and at Bôissevain in the "Seniors in Arts" Display. In November 1980, she had a joint Exhibition with her daughters at the Brandon Allied Art Centre (Mrs. Eileen Doherty, Mrs. Lila Higginbotham, and Mrs. Rubie Ready).

The Town of Oak Lake sponsored an "Appreciation Day", and Tea for Arlie in 1977. She was presented with a Statuette of a Buffalo and plaque suitably inscribed.

One of her paintings is on the cover of "Bachelor by Choice or by Chance" by Author Clarence A. Boon, and one hangs in Lorne Green's Studio in Los Angeles, California. She is a member of St. Alban's Anglican Church. She belonged to the Junior and Senior W. A. and Guild, also assisted in the Sunday School. Mrs. Hogg was a director of the Oak Lake Fair Board. She now resides in the Senior Citizens Home, Oakwood Place.

Russell and Arlie had three daughters.

**Eileen** — graduated as a teacher. She married Ken Doherty. They had five children: Ken, Dale (Mrs. W. Van Loo), Gerald, Brent, and Brenda (Mrs. Eldon Boon). Eileen later returned to teaching and has continued making use of her artistic talents.

**Lila** — a school teacher, married John Higginbotham of Virden. Lila is a well known artist. They have two sons, John and Brock.

**Ruby** — married John Ready. They lived in Oak Lake for some time, before moving to Brandon. Ruby too is an artist. They have five children: Connie (Mrs. Bill Grant) of Virden, Man., Lynne (Mrs. G. Hiller) Calgary, Jackie (Mrs. Larry Clarke) Calgary, Marla of Calgary, and son, John, of Calgary.

### **Harry Holland**

Harry Holland, youngest son of Joseph and Annie Holland, was born at Holland, Man. While he was a small boy his family moved to Transcona where Harry spent most of his life before coming to Oak Lake to reside.

He married Florence Gibson of Transcona. They have three children, Joanne, Marilyn and Jack and there are ten grandchildren.

Harry retired as lab technician at Transcona Malt- ing Plant in 1970. He and his wife came to make their home in Oak Lake in 1975.

### **Holland**

In 1879 William John Holland came from Ontario to Manitoba and in 1890 married Elizabeth McDermott whose family had come from Blyth, Ontario in 1874. He carried on the family farm at Holland, Manitoba and raised purebred Shorthorn cattle.

Mr. W. J. Holland was one of the first Directors of the Pool Elevator. He also took a great interest in the Agriculture Society and was one of the Directors. On his way to one of the meetings, on a cold December day in 1929, Mr. Holland was killed by a train when crossing the track by the elevators.

Mrs. Holland died in 1936 after a short illness. This was the year of the record heat. The thermometer registered 103°F that day.

There were three sons and three daughters in the family. **Elsie**, the eldest girl, left home in 1917 and went to Transcona where she started her career in a bank. She married Frank Burleigh who died in January of 1969. Elsie still lives in Winnipeg.

**Arthur**, a veteran of WWI, was wounded at Arras and returned home in December, 1918. In 1919 the family moved to Oak Lake to acquire more land and located six miles south of the town as the land was suitable for grazing.

In 1920 **Arthur** married Margaret Henderson of Glasgow, Scotland, where she had studied at the

School of Fine Arts. They moved to Transcona where Arthur worked in the stores of the C.N.R. They have five children: Ray, Margaret, Joyce, Dorothy and Wilma. Ray and Joyce claim the distinction of being Oak Lakers as they were born on the farm. Arthur and Peggy now live in Kenton, Man.

In 1923 Winnifred Ferris (**Freda**) married Jack Goodwin of the St. David's district. They had two children, Marguerite du Berger of Calgary and Gary of Drumheller, Alberta. They retired to Oak Lake in 1973.

**Marguerite** (Reta) took her teacher's training in Brandon. She taught for a few years and then went to Montreal where she resided for 14 years. She returned to Winnipeg and spent the next 16 years on the staff of Success Commercial College. She retired and now lives in Oak Lake.

**Frank** and Bill moved to the St. David's district in 1937. The heavier soil was better for crops during the drought. Frank married Mabel Leys from the Harvey district in 1943. He was a Director of the Pool Elevator and a Trustee for Verity School. They had four children: Ted, Marguerite, Elizabeth and Duane. Ted was to be married on October 23, 1971 but a tragic accident occurred taking the lives of Frank, Ted, Elizabeth and two of Ted's friends. Ten year old Duane was the sole survivor of the accident. He was taken to Children's Hospital in Winnipeg where he hovered between life and death for days. The following February he was taken to Toronto by his mother and Aunt Reta Holland where he successfully underwent open heart surgery performed by Dr. William Mustard of Toronto. Marguerite married Warren Wolfe of Bradwardine. They have two children, Troy and Jodi. Warren has his Ph.D. in Mathematics and teaches at Royal Roads Military College in Victoria, B.C. Duane and his mother live in Oak Lake.

**Bill** married Lorraine Johnston of St. David's district in 1942. They farmed south of Kenton on the farm formerly owned by Mr. John Abel. Bill, always interested in animals, took many championships with his purebred sheep. Assisted by Jim Wallace he trained several of his standard bred horses for the sulky races, some later showing up well in Montreal and other eastern points. Due to his health he retired in 1971 and he and Lorraine have made their home in Oak Lake.

## **The Hollier Family**

### **by William (Bill) Henry Hollier**

My father, Vincent Oswald Hollier, was born and married in Leicester, England. He married Sarah Ann Fowell also from Leicester, came to Canada and Oak Lake in March of 1907, and immediately went to work for Nelson Banister as a farm labourer, one and

a half miles north of Oak Lake. He was nicknamed Billy by the Banisters, a name he was known by to most people for the rest of his life. My mother, Sarah Ann Hollier, came to Oak Lake, in July of the same year, 1907, bringing with her my two sisters, Margaret Helen, nine years old, and Ivy May, three years old, and my brother, Vincent Leslie, a baby. Her brother, my Uncle Herbert Fowell also came to Oak Lake with my mother, a boy of fifteen years. Father worked for Nelson Banister for three years and it was during that time in September, 1908, that I, William Henry, was born. In 1910, Father went to work for E. Williams also as a farm labourer.

We lived in a house along the valley, west of the William's home farm, and in January, 1911, while living there, my brother, Albert Edward, was born. In 1910, my Mother's parents came to Oak Lake and lived with us until we moved into the town of Oak Lake in 1912. My Grandparents then rented a home of their own. After moving into town, Father was employed by the Leitch Brothers Flour Mills as a mill hand. In those days it seemed customary to rent a home rather than buy and many houses were built in town for the sole purpose of renting to others, and it was not until many years later, when most of the family had moved away from Oak Lake that my father bought a house. It was known as the Lang House, situated across the street and a little west of the Pool Elevators. He later traded this house with Mel and Min Hart for a cottage in the North West part of town.

In July, 1913, my brother, Herbert Arthur, was born.

My father, a farmer's son, always had farming at heart. In 1915, the Government was offering land for homesteading in the Interlake country near Eriksdale, so the Holliers along with my two Uncles and Grandparents went homesteading. This was a sad mistake. The land was good cattle country, but far too many stones to grain farm. We returned to Oak Lake in the early part of 1918, and in September, 1919, my youngest brother, James Oswald, was born in Oak Lake. At this time my father was working for Mr. George Connor who was operating the Leitch Brothers' elevator for the Northern Milling Co. The Leitch Brothers' Mill had ceased operation at this time. After leaving Mr. Connor he hired with the Ogilvie Co. until the new Pool elevator was in operation, he was then hired by the Pool Elevators as their first buyer in Oak Lake and stayed with them until his retirement in 1946. After retirement Mother and Father moved to Winnipeg to live with my sister and her husband, Tom and Nellie Chapman. And it was while he was visiting my sister, Mrs. Harold Moody, at Routledge, that he died of a heart attack on March

29, 1948, in his 71st year. After Father's death Mother returned to Winnipeg for a short time, returning to the Moodys at Routledge where she lived until her death in the Brandon Hospital on the 17th day of July, 1964, in her 86th year.

My oldest sister, **Margaret Helen** (Nellie), was born on January 30, 1898, in Leicester, England. She married Thomas Chapman of the Eriksdale District in Winnipeg on October 17th, 1917. They had no family of their own, but adopted two girls, Olive and Phoebe.

The Chapman family lived mostly in Oak Lake until the outbreak of the Second World War. They moved to Winnipeg where Tom was employed in a munitions plant in Winnipeg. They later moved to Calgary where Thomas died on March 2, 1946. Nellie then returned to Oak Lake where she continues to live.

**Ivy May** also was born in Leicester, England, September 6th, 1904. She left Oak Lake in 1942 to work in Toronto, but returned to Oak Lake in 1945 and the following year on the 29th of July, 1946, she married Harold Moody, a farmer in the Routledge District. They have no family. Harold and Ivy have retired from active farming, but still live in the farm home two miles south of Routledge.

**Vincent Leslie** (Les) was born on the 19th of September, 1906 in Leicester, England and on July 20th, 1929, he married Dorothy Randel of Winnipeg, formerly of Broad Valley at Brandon, Man. Les and Dorothy had five of a family, three boys and two girls, Robert, Beatrice, Richard, Bernice, and Raymond. They left Oak Lake and moved to Kenton where Les was employed as a butcher. Then they moved to Lenore and Quill Lake, Saskatchewan and finally to Saskatoon, Sask., where Les was employed as a mechanic by the Cockshutt Co. until his retirement. Dorothy died very suddenly on the 10th of September, 1975. Leslie still lives in Saskatoon.

**I, William Henry**, the first of the Holliers to be born in Canada, was born on September 10, 1908, one and a half miles north of Oak Lake, and married Aileen Reid of Oak Lake, formerly of Griswold, on the 25th of June, 1933, in Brandon, Man. We had four of a family, two girls and two boys, Iona, Avonna, Wayne, and Garry. We left Oak Lake in 1933 to go to Maple Siding, four miles south of Virden where I was employed by the Manitoba Pool Elevator. We returned to Oak Lake in 1938 and left again in 1942 to work for the Man. Pool at Ipswich Siding, and in 1956 to Grandview, Man., where I still have my home. Aileen died on the 19th of April, 1979, after a lengthy illness.

**Albert Edward** (Ab) was born three miles north of Oak Lake, on January 14, 1911. He married Doro-

thy Webb of Oak Lake in 1933. They had one daughter, Patricia, who died suddenly of diphtheria in the King George Hospital in Winnipeg. Albert and Dorothy were divorced, and at the outbreak of World War II, Ab left Oak Lake to work in a munitions plant in Toronto. While there he met and married Ann Benavick in Toronto on the 19th of June 1948. They had no family of their own, but adopted a daughter, Aneta. Albert and Ann made Toronto their home until 1981 when they moved back to Oak Lake to live.

**Herbert Arthur** (Herb) was born in Oak Lake on July 15, 1913. In September of 1939, he enlisted in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlander Regiment. While stationed in Winnipeg he married Edna Boyce of Oak Lake on February 14, 1940. Herb went to England with the Queen's Own Camerons in 1940, but after spending 16 months there, was returned to Canada as a guard to bring over German prisoners. He was then transferred to a Winnipeg Regiment and spent some time in the South Pacific Islands, and then returned to Europe where he was stationed until the end of the war. After his return to Canada he was employed by the Government as a meat inspector in the city of Winnipeg until his retirement. Herb and Edna had one daughter, Mary Lynn, who is married and living in Winnipeg, and they themselves still make their home on Ferry Road, St. James.

**James Oswald** (Jim), the youngest of the Hollier family, was born in Oak Lake on September 30, 1919. In September of 1939 he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Engineers Regiment. He was sent overseas with his regiment in 1940. While in England he met and married Nellie Wiltshire of Greenwich on March 27, 1943, in Greenwich. Jim was never wounded, which was very fortunate, as I understand the Royal Canadian Engineers was one of the Regiments chosen to head the allied drive into Sicily. From that time on he spent most of his time in the active war area. Upon returning to Canada he was employed by Anthy Iron Works in Winnipeg until his retirement at the age of 60 years. Jim and Nellie had a family of four children, two girls and two boys, Dawne, Johnny, Patricia, and Terry. After Jim's retirement they continued to live on King Edwards Street, St. James.

Vincent and Sarah Ann Hollier's family all received their education at the Oak Lake Oakwood School and as children we attended the Methodist Sunday School, my mother being a Methodist, although Father and Mother and some of the older members of the family attended the evening services at the Anglican Church. After the Methodist Church became part of the United Church we were sent to the Anglican Sunday School, my father being an Anglican. The Hollier boys took part in most of the sports of that time, that is baseball, football, hunting,

and fishing in the summer months; hockey, skating, tobogganing, and skiing in the winter. There were no highlights in the Hollier family that could be considered out of the ordinary, but I think that I can speak for the rest of our family as well as myself, when I say that we all have many fond memories of our family life and growing up years in the town of Oak Lake.

### **John G. Hollis**

**submitted by Ms. Holli Patton**

John G. Hollis was born in Ontario in 1858. His parents came from England. He married Margaret Boyes from Hawksville, Ont., a sister of Mrs. J. B. Costley. They had one son, Arthur. They were Methodists by faith and lived in River Bank, Ont., where they had a store and post office. In 1899 they came to live in Oak Lake and owned property in the St. David's district. He carried the mail in Oak Lake until he died in 1918. Mrs. Hollis died in 1926 at the age of sixty-six.

Their son, **Arthur**, was employed at an early age as night operator in the Oak Lake telephone office and later with the Telephone System in Brandon, Man. Fraternally he was a member of the Canadian Order of Foresters.

He married the former Grace Lee of Brandon, Man. They had one daughter, Margaret. He was a veteran of the First World War, after which he continued to work for the Manitoba Telephone System as district man in Oak Lake, then to Souris, Man. and from there to Swan River, Man., where he remained until retiring to live in Oak Lake. He died in 1944 and Mrs. Hollis in 1951.

Their daughter, Margaret (Mrs. Max Garland) lives in Perkinsfield, Ont. There are two grandchildren, Holli Patton, Oakville, Ont., and Wayne Garland, Regina, Sask., and two great grandchildren, Christine Angela Patton and Sandi Lynn Garland.

### **Mr. and Mrs. George Hood and Family**

Mr. and Mrs. George and Marion Hood, originally from Peebles, Scotland, came to Guelph, Ontario where they raised their family; then to Alton, Missouri. In 1887 they came to Oak Lake to make their home.

Of a family of eleven, four adult sons and one daughter-in-law accompanied them: John Rutherford and wife, Sarah, Albert Edward, Robin Lewis, and James L.

The new town was a most interesting place, everyone making a new venture, full of high hopes.

Mr. Hood, independent and industrious, with three of his sons started in business, and his wife and crippled son, James, comfortably settled with Robin

in his new house, decided he would like to do something for himself. He filed on a homestead at Dauphin, built himself a warm one-roomed dwelling. He located not far from the town, so when the weather was fine he could walk in for supplies.

In July 1900 his neighbour, checking on Mr. Hood, found he had passed away from natural causes at the age of 73.

Mr. George Hood and his two unmarried sons, James and Robin, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Hood, and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hood, all rest in the Oak Lake cemetery.

The Hood men were good family men, loyal friends, staunch Presbyterians, and staunch Conservatives.

Marion Hood was known to the Oak Lake people — old and young — as Grandma Hood.

She was very helpful in the new town and organizations starting up. She belonged to the Ladies' Aid, taught the primary class in Sunday School, and held office in many of the ladies' groups.

After her husband went to homestead in Dauphin, and after his death, she was very lonely, but kept herself busy helping others. Needlework helped to fill her spare time. Her soft voice and charming Scotch accent gave council and comfort to many a lonely worried soul.

As she grew older and her rheumatic condition worsened, she decided to move to Cleveland, Ohio to live with her eldest daughter, Kate Congalton and family. There she spent her remaining years, passing away at the age of 92.

### **John R. Hood 1853-1921 and wife, Sarah McDonald (Smith) Hood 1862-1920**

Jack Hood bought the white cottage at the end of Main Street, with stable and carriage shed on north end of lot, from Mr. Smith.

The church in the new town was the centre of activities. All the Hoods were good singers and sang in the choir. Mrs. Sarah Hood was a beautiful soloist and sang at all the functions in Oak Lake and round about.

Many years later (1914) a big concert was planned in Oak Lake to raise Red Cross funds. An old timer offered \$25.00 if Mrs. Jack Hood would sing "Auld Lang Syne". She had a bad heart condition and had not sung in public for years but consented. She came through with flying colours and received a standing ovation from a crowded hall.

Jack Hood, being interested in machinery, was the first Massey Harris agent. In 1917 the Massey Harris transferred him to the Swift Current block and they moved to Gull Lake where daughter, Vye, lived. On July 12, 1920 Mrs. Jack Hood took a heart attack





Vye Hood's Wedding. Left to Right — Mary Lind, Mabel Motram, Tessa Parsons, Elsie Parsons, Erta Hood, Mrs. H. M. Anderson, Mary Hockin, Dr. Scott, Chas Saunders (groom), Vye Hood (bride), Mrs. Dr. Scott, Mrs. Annie Campbell, May (Leitch) Weeks, J.R. and Mrs. Hood, Agnes Burns, Mrs. H. D. (Hood) Crowe, Virden girl, Jessie Lind, Maggie Ellis, Alex Jack. Back Row — girls unknown — Harry Crowe center.

and died suddenly. On February 18, 1921 Jack Hood passed away from pneumonia.

Jack Hood organized and played on the first baseball team, was on the first council, first trustee board, active in getting curling and skating rinks started. Also among first campers at the lake; horse and buggy and tent days.

Their two daughters, Maye and Vye, were trained singers with beautiful voices which gave pleasure at many functions, as they were in great demand. In the Brandon Sun, April 20, 1980 in "Berts Beat" by Bert McKay, he wrote about the Japanese plays put on in Virden, especially one, "The Geisha". Vye Hood's beautiful solos were mentioned. Oak Lake friends chartered a freight engine and a bunk car with bunks replaced by seats and chairs, and over forty friends and relatives, old and young, travelled to Virden to the play. The novel mode of travel and the thrills it gave added to our enjoyment of a wonderful evening.

In 1912, **Vye Hood** married Charles D. Sanders, bank manager at Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. They retired in Vancouver and are buried there. They had two daughters, Patricia and Edith.

**Maye** married H. D. Crowe of Virden and they have a daughter, Loraine.

#### **Albert E. Hood 1857-1936 and wife, Jane McKay (McBeth Slimmon) Hood 1857-1929**

The first seven months after arriving in Oak Lake, Albert's rheumatic condition was very hard on him. He was unable to feed himself and lived with Jack and Sarah Hood during this time. As soon as he improved a bit and was able to work, he bought the meat market. He later bought a farm with a log house, sod stable and chicken house, from Casimir Dauphinuis. They were housed quite comfortably and used oxen, "Buck and Bright", to break extra land. Albert said they were slow but strong for breaking. Then he sold the meat market and went into cattle.

There was a Catholic cemetery on the northeast corner of the farm when Albert bought it. It was moved to the present location several years later.

Early one spring morning the father came in and said, "There must have been snow last night, that whole quarter section is white." The boys went out and the quarter was covered with snow geese.

As Albert's health improved he sang in the choir and played baseball on the first team for the home games only. His livestock came before pleasure and were always fed on time. He believed in mixed farming, always some money coming in regularly for

current expenses. In 1889 his mother and brother, James, moved to town in Robin's new house.

September 12, 1893 Albert E. Hood and Jane McKay (McBeth) Slimmon were married by Reverend Hedges in the bride's "little brown house". They and Jane's two boys, Gladstone and Edwin, all moved to the farm. Glad helped the new Dad and Ed helped his mother with garden, errands, etc.

July 2nd, 1897, a 6½ lb. daughter was born to the Hoods. Named Alberta Marion Sutherland after her Dad and both grandmothers, her Dad promptly called her Erta.

In 1898 the Hoods built a good sized frame house, the carpenter was Mr. Jim Bell. It still stands on the farm and was recently sold by Ernie Ronberg.

When I was four years old the boys, Glad 19 years and Ed 18 years, went farming on their own. In the years of their batching Mother and I drove out to spend a few days each spring with each chap. One year the flood was on, we crossed at the Williams bridge in a boat and the horses swam behind.

More land was needed, so Ab bought a river flats farm — south of George Harrison's. The pasture part was on the south side of the river.

Over the years Dad had built up a nice herd of

purebred Shorthorn cattle. He usually showed at Oak Lake Fair with good results.

The trips to and from the river flats were hard on both man and beast. The land was sold to George Harrison, and Dad bought Uncle Jack Hood's land with only the road between them. For a number of years farming was easier. Then the rheumatism worsened and the farm was sold in 1913 to Rudolph Ronberg, and their house in town (presently owned by Mrs. Fred Story) taken on the deal. Dad took on the garden. That garden of Dad's was a "Godsend" to us when ours was either dried out or eaten by grasshoppers. After his retirement Dad took up curling and thoroughly enjoyed it.

For ten years or more he kept bees. He handled eleven hives alone during his last summer.

After 16 years in town, Mother passed away from a heart attack August 13, 1929.

At 72 Dad faced life alone in our home, as Henry A. Lawson and I had been married September 12, 1928. Dad died in 1936.

#### **Alberta Marion Sutherland (Hood Lawson) Palmer — the last of the Hoods in Manitoba.**

Henry Lawson had come from Prince Edward Island in 1914. He worked in the lumber and oil business in Oak Lake until 1926, when he moved to Waskada. Following our marriage we made our home there, and raised two sons, Albert Henry Curtis and Henry Edward. My husband passed away in 1957, and I continued living in the house we'd built when he retired, for the next seven years.

In 1964 I married Robert Palmer, a widower and we had eight happy years. He died in 1972. My sunset years are cheered by the love of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, as well as many kind friends.

#### **James L. Hood 1851-1892**

James was badly crippled from rheumatism and was unable to take part in sports or even work steady. He was willing and helped his brothers when and where he could in their new adventures in business. The ravages of pain had taken a heavy toll on his heart, and he passed away at the age of 41.

#### **Robin Lewis Hood 1867-1912**

Robin was the youngest son of George and Marion. He built a small general store, with the post office in the store, on Main Street and small house on the lot next to the Jack Hoods. There was a stable and carriage house at back of the lot. Business in the store was brisk so he hired Mrs. Annie Campbell to handle the post office as well. Later the government built a small post office west of Thompson's restaurant, with Mrs. Campbell as Post Mistress.

Robin built a large general store, the second story of the same size contained a large millinery shop, two



Mrs. A. E. Hood and Erta.

dress making shops at the front and suites at the back. A man by the name of Jacques clerked for Uncle Robin for many years, and he and his wife lived in one of these suites above.

In those days a general store meant you carried everything, from finest wool broadcloth for dresses and suits to coal oil. There were cookies by the large tin boxes or by the pound, and the legendary cracker barrel open. The shelves were packed with bolts of material of all kinds. I remember a doctor's wife, who, when she bought a dress, bought the whole bolt of material, so no duplicate dresses.

Robin played on the first baseball team, sang in the choir, curled, skated and played tennis. He had a fine rig and a team of nice drivers, and drove to the tennis courts. "Young Will Campbell" exercised the horses while Robin played.

Oak Lake was incorporated in 1904 and Robin was voted in as mayor. He served two terms as mayor. 1904, July 1st, was a big celebration, a big parade, grand and colourful floats. The mayor and Council rode in a grand carriage, (rented for the occasion) all wearing their "Christie Stiff" hats. A big crowd came from towns all around, there was plenty of sports; baseball, football, and races. In those days July 1st was Oak Lake's day.

Two years later Robin visioned what would happen to a small town with three general stores and horseless carriages coming in to use. He went west and decided to locate in Lanigan, Saskatchewan. He built a store like the one in Oak Lake, sold the home store and shipped the stock to Lanigan.

Five years later, on August 11, 1912 he was drowned in Lake Watrous. While saving a life, lost his own.

Compiled from memory in loving respect for those who have gone before by: Alberta Marion Sutherland (Hood Lawson) Palmer, 84 years of age, assisted by Mrs. Norman Reid, my special friend.

## **John Horsman**

John Horsman of Guelph, Ontario, and his wife, Elizabeth, and their daughters, Fannie, May, and Laura, came to Oak Lake by C.P.R. and opened a hardware business. Their eldest, Edward, had already established himself with the Bell Telephone Company in Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

The family were members of St. Alban's Anglican Church, where May played for the services and for those of the Presbyterian Church for some years. **May** married Edward Dickson, theirs being the first wedding in St. Alban's. Edward Dickson was a member for Lansdowne constituency in the Greenway Government. Edward Dickson invented a

smokeless powder, manufactured in Winnipeg and in Swanton, Vermont, by the Robin Hood Powder Co.

**Fannie**, after teaching for several years, married Thomas Sharman, who came to Oak Lake via Emerson, after service with the Northwest Field Force.

**Laura** married David McLeish, eldest son of Daniel McLeish of Oak Lake, Man.

## **Hutchinson Family**

### **by Donna Hutchinson**

On June 30, 1953 Donna Mathison of Bounty, Saskatchewan and Alan Hutchinson of Wapella, Saskatchewan were united in marriage. We settled in Brandon, Manitoba where Alan was a Dispatcher with the C.P.R.

November 25, 1954, our first son, Leigh, was born in Brandon General Hospital. While in Brandon we attended First Church United.

It was the Spring of 1956 when tragedy struck and completely changed the course of our lives. A very dear friend, and Best Man at our wedding, Don Conquergood, was killed in a car accident at Virden, Manitoba. Don, had been the C.P.R. Station Agent in Oak Lake. At that time we still lived in Brandon where Alan or "Hutch" as he is known, worked the "Graveyard Shift" 4 p.m. til midnight. We decided to bid on Oak Lake Station where we could perhaps enjoy more of a "family" life. With so many "senior" men ahead of us we did not ever dream that we would get this Station — but to our delight we did. Unfortunately that lovely huge brick Station building had never had the dwelling completed so it meant hunting for a house for three who would soon be four. We finally decided on Jack Ready's house now occupied by Earl, Eileen and Curtis Calcut, where we lived for 4 years.

It was April 26, 1956 when "Hutch" took over as Station Agent with Donna and Leigh soon to follow.

July 31, 1956 a trip to Virden Hospital in the middle of the night brought the arrival of our second son, Chris.

Childhood days are happy days and these two little boys delighted in going, all by themselves, over to Mrs. Maiziary's where she would serve them "real" tea! Or to "Sans Sans" (Gordon Anderson's). We were always concerned about all the bush around there in case the boys wandered off. One day they did wander away and frantic moments, which seemed like hours, were spent searching for them. Desperately Pennington's house was approached, as they had an outside pool 2 to 4 feet deep! (which the boys had been warned not to go near.) As we neared we could hear splashing and the sounds of glee. There they were playing in the Pool! Fortunately there was very little water in it that day.

In the Fall of 1959 the opportunity arose to purchase the "Pool Elevator" house, where Duncan Stewarts now reside. We decided to try life on the other side of the tracks. One cold night, January 27, 1960, another trip to Virden Hospital and the arrival of our third son, Geoff. Life on this side of the tracks saw our yard full of kids and animals. Being lovers of animals we had our share of dogs, cats, rabbits, lizards, white rats (brought home from school experiments) etc. Then there was the telephone installed in the tree. (Serviced by the Telephone man no less). It caused some wonderment when folks would hear it ringing as they walked down the sidewalk past our place.

Our three sons received their education in the schools here at Oak Lake, in Virden and Brandon. They attended Sunday School in the United Church. They were all involved in Scouts and Cubs, played some Hockey and Ball and Geoff earned a Ribbon of Excellence in his last year of 4-H.

The Fall of 1965 we purchased Vic Dixon's farm 20-9-23 east of Oak Lake and the summer of 1966 saw us moving to the farm; where the pigs ran away and a couple of fires nearly escaped us.

**Leigh** — married Roberta Fryer, formerly of Virden, Manitoba on September 18, 1976 and they now reside on Kreutzer's farm just south of us where their son, Murray Michael, was born August 9, 1980. Leigh is now a Building Mover working with War-kentine's Movers at Virden.

**Chris** — married Leslie Drisdale, of Okotoks, Alberta on February 14, 1977. They live in Cochrane, Alberta where he works as a Heavy Duty Machine Operator.

**Geoff** — also lives in Cochrane, Alberta and works in the oil industry.

Before the closing of the C.P.R. Station here, "Hutch" purchased the Insurance Agencies in town and we operate the General Insurance Business and Autopac outlet.

We have been active in Community affairs. "Hutch" served on the Town Council, Oakwood School Board, Secretary of Golf Club and held many other Executive positions. Both of us have been on the United Church Board, as well as serving on Royal Canadian Legion Branch #79 and Auxiliary Boards. Leigh and Geoff are Associate members of the Legion.

We have enjoyed our years in Oak Lake and although we are not Pioneers we feel enough a part of Oak Lake to be part of this History.

### **Alex Ireland Family submitted by Elsie Ireland**

Alex Ireland was born October 26th, 1909. He

was the youngest son of Alex and Harriett Ireland, who came from Ontario in 1864, and settled on the North-east quarter of 7-8-23. Then moved to the South-east quarter of 7-8-23. Here "Little Alex" (as they called him) was born. He lived here for 65 years.

His mother and father died early in life, in their fifties. George then carried on.

Alex married Elsie Jones of Souris in April 1933. They had four of a family. **Rodney** who lives in Souris. **Betty** married Ferg Devins. They have two children, Donna and Kent. They also live in Souris. **Eleanor** married Don Blanchard. They have two children, Judy and Bill. Judy is married and has two children, Curtis and Mark. They all live in Red Deer, Alberta. **Marie** married Dennis Booth. They have three children, Jack, Del and Doug and all live in Saskatoon.

We all had some real good times on our farm with our friends and neighbours. They came for ball games, cards and dances. Sunday was usually like a big picnic. These we miss now.

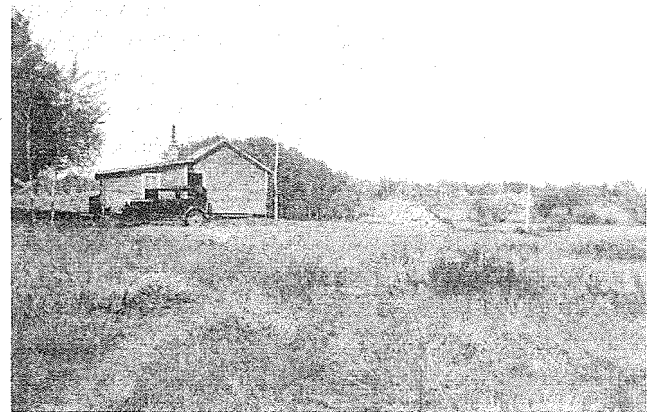
Our family attended Hesselwood and Deleau schools.

George passed away in March 1968. Alex and Rodney continued farming with Rodney doing a lot of carpenter work in Oak Lake and then in Souris.

We sold our farm to Peter Masson in 1974 and retired to Souris. Still enjoy visitors from Oak Lake and Deleau.

### **Lloyd Iverson**

Lloyd and Olive Iverson moved from Shell Lake, Saskatchewan in 1943. Lloyd worked as a carpenter together with his father-in-law, Carl Schwindt. In 1944 they built a barn for Wilfred Smith and later one for Jack Goodwin, in the St. David's area north of Oak Lake. In the Spring of 1945, Lloyd and Olive bought a half section of land from Charlie Scott in the Lansdowne district. In 1948 they bought an adjoining half section which was the old Carberry farm. They



Our First Home on the Farm.



lived there until 1963 at which time they sold the farm to Mr. and Mrs. Everett Batho.

Lloyd and Olive gave up farming and moved to Cranbrook, B.C., where they went into the construction business.

Their three children, Eldon, Gary, and Esther Marie were all born in the Virden Hospital. They attended Lansdowne School and later Oak Lake Collegiate. **Eldon** married an Oak Lake girl, Janice Bothe, in 1966. He is a lawyer and lives in Port Hardy, B.C. They have five daughters, twins Dana and Janelle, Krista, Jill and Robin.

**Gary** is a contractor and now resides in Port Hardy, B.C., with his wife, Shannon. He has a son, Eddie.

**Esther Marie** works for the Canada Manpower Centre in Cranbrook, B.C. She married Larry Bradshaw, and they have two daughters, Tara and Marni.

### Malvin and Gladys Iverson

In May, 1945, Malvin and Gladys (Schwindt) Iverson, Inez — 3 yr. and Gordon — 2 yr., moved from Shell Lake, Saskatchewan to Dave Goodwin's farm, north of Hagyard School. Four daughters were born in Hamiota Hospital: Violet in '47, Linda in '49, Sammi in '51, and Alma in '52. All attended Hagyard School, Oakwood High, and St. David's Church.

**Inez** — sang in the school and church choirs, taught Sunday school, took part in the 4-H calf and sewing clubs, played in the high school orchestra, and following teacher training at Brandon College, taught one year at Ryerson School. In 1964, she married Jim Parrott. She has two sons: Crawford born in Dec./68 and Marshall born in May/70. She is a correspondence instructor for the Department of Education, and bookkeeper for a firm of broadcasting engineers in Winnipeg.

**Gordon** — was active in the 4-H Beef Calf Club, and farmed for some time. In 1962, he married Sharon Seens of Harding. In 1965, he took a welding course in Winnipeg and worked for Malco Machine Co. and Dominion Bridge, before moving west. He is now a high pressure welder in Sarnia, Ontario. He had three daughters: Angela born in 1963, Shelley born in 1967, and Kelly born in Nov./78.

**Terri** (Mrs. Larry Whitecotton, of Alix, Alberta) — attended Brandon College for teacher training, and taught her first year at Bardal, south of Virden. A son, Jay, was born in Oct./69 in Winnipeg, and a daughter, Crystal, was born in Dec./77 in Alix. Terri teaches in Alix.

**Linda** (Mrs. Don Ironside, of Alix, Alberta) — spent some time in Winnipeg, before moving to B.C.

She has a daughter, Lyalla, born in Jan./79 in Cranbrook, B.C. She works part time at Knight's Guest Ranch in Alix.

**Sammi** Eileen (Mrs. Grant Taylor, of Alix, Alberta) — has a son, Calvin, born April/77 in Cranbrook, B.C. She works at the Bank of Montreal in Lacombe, Alberta.

**Alma** (Mrs. Rick Schier, of Nelson, B.C.) — has a daughter, Suzette, born in May/69 in Hamiota Hospital, and a son, Dougie, born in April/75 in Cranbrook, B.C. She works for Employment Opportunity Program with the Ministry of Labour, B.C. in Nelson.

Malvin and Gladys farmed the Goodwin farm and then the George Taylor farm in Manitoba for 26 years. Malvin and brother Lloyd also ran the "Iverson Service Station", in Oak Lake for a short time. In 1971, Malvin and Gladys moved from Manitoba. They lived on a farm near Cranbrook, B.C. for five years, and now live on 40 acres at Alix, Alberta.

While at Oak Lake they were active in St. David's Church, and other community affairs. Malvin served as school trustee, and on farmers union committees. He curled and golfed.

### Andrew Jackson

There were three Jackson brothers who were ear-



Andrew Jackson, early St. David's Pioneer.

ly settlers in the St. David's district — Andrew, William, and Gam. They were of Irish descent. Being a musical family, they provided music for dancing and entertainment in the early years.

Andrew used to ride to Kenton to drill under A. W. Kent during the 1885 Rebellion. He farmed on S.E. 22-10-24. He never married and in his declining years lived with his sister, Agnes (Mrs. J. Sawyer) and her son, John.

### **William Jackson**

William Jackson came from Walkerton, Ontario and homesteaded in Heward, Sask. from 1900-1902. In 1902 he bought a farm, 29-10-24, north of Oak Lake. In 1918 he married Mary Ann Johnston. They left the farm in the early "thirties" and made their home in Virden and later Glenboro before moving to Winnipeg, where William died in 1953.

They had three children who attended Hagyard School.

**Muriel**, the eldest, served three and one half years in the air force. In 1945 she married George Laudrum of Oberon, Man. They reside in Winnipeg.

**Kenneth** of Winnipeg, married Jean Boille of St. Claude, Man. in 1953. Her death occurred in March of 1979. They had two children, a daughter, Lucille born in 1955, married Don Hutchinson of Winnipeg. They have one son, Bradley. Their son, Donald works in Winnipeg and lives with his father.

**Lorna** married Ellis Forbes of Hartney, Man. in Sept. of 1952. They have lived in United States since 1966 and presently reside in Naperville, Ill. near Chicago. They have twin sons, Kevin and Cameron, born in 1958.

### **Leo Jaeb**

Leo and Anne Jaeb came with their children to Oak Lake in July 1956, from a farm at Fulda, Saskatchewan. In June of that year they bought the Oak Lake Meat Market from Mr. Charles Scott, which they operated for twenty-three years. They sold the business in Oct. 1979, retired and continue to reside in Oak Lake.

They had a family of two — Marjorie and Allan, who both attended Oak Lake Schools.

**Marjorie** — worked in the office for the Department of Highways. In June 1968 she married Tom Bryant of Elkhorn. They reside in Calgary and have two children, Leanne and Michael.

**Allan** — worked on the farm for a few years for Fred and Bud Taylor. Later found employment with Manitoba Hydro. He married Rosemary Maffenbeir of Tilston, Manitoba. They now live at Altona, Manitoba. They have two children, David and Clarissa.

### **David and Sara Janzen**

by Sara Mitchell

I, Mrs. Donald Mitchell, nee Sara Janzen, am the eldest of seven children born to David and Sara Janzen, nee Sawatsky, third eldest child of Henry and Sarah Sawatsky who formerly immigrated into Canada during the Russian Revolution in 1925.

David and Sara Janzen were married in McAuley Jan. 27, 1927 and moved to Oak Lake, in the Sandhurst School district in 1936 into a farm home owned by Mr. Nick Mowez. My parents were very grateful to Mr. Mowez as he only charged them \$1.00 per month for rent and the spacious house had 17 rooms including pantries and we children had a hey day in this once beautiful mansion!

As my sister, Mary, and I attended Sandhurst School we well remember going over to Grandparents home, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sawatsky's home, now owned by their son, Rev. Jacob Sawatsky.

I was born April 20, 1928 and my sister, Mrs. Mary Warkentin, was born April 17, 1929 and how well we remember how excited we were, when we along with many scholars were able to see King George VI on the Royal train passing through Oak Lake that special day in 1937 when the King and Queen were touring Canada! My sister, Mary, and I attended Sandhurst School for a short time as my Dad worked for Mr. E. DeGalley, later moving to a small house of Mr. DeGalley's where we attended Oakview School along with Henry who was born March 24, 1931. Our parents again moved to a small house near a creek, owned by Mr. Joe Dupaul where Dad was employed as a hired hand in 1937. Abe, who was born June 25, 1934 and John, born July 10, 1937 and Helen, born April 3, 1942 all attended Sandhurst School. Dad and Mom moved to near Scarth in July 17, 1942. Tired of working for other people Dad purchased this farm through a wonderful man named Mr. Zig Van Loo of Belleview.

The youngest child, Arthur, was born Jan. 23, 1945.

**Mary** was married to Henry Warkentin of Winnipeg on July 15, 1950, who has worked for over 25 years for Canada Wire in Wpg. They have an only child, Audrey, who was born September 10, 1954.

I, **Sara**, graduated as a Licensed Practical Nurse in June 1952 and married a farmer, Donald Mitchell of Virden. We have three children; Donald who married Maurice Vanderscheaghe of Oak Lake on March 29, 1975. They have two children. Maurie Kay and August David. The Vanderscheaghes moved to Regina in January 1979.

Our only son, David took a college education and is employed as a mechanic in Virden. He married

Ruth Mailland of Hamiota Sept. 1, 1979. Ruth is employed in Virden as a secretary.

Our youngest daughter, Regina Rose, was married to David Wright of Brandon on April 18, 1981. They are both graduates of Assiniboine Community College of Brandon and both have professional jobs in Virden.

My brother, **Henry** Janzen, has worked at Beaver Lumber Co. in Virden for over 25 years. He is married to Eileen Smith of Lenore. They have two daughters, Brenda and Barbara.

**Abe** has a Diesel Mechanics course and he works in Winnipeg. He married Valentine Rempel of Winnipeg on Sept. 12, 1959. They have six children, Keith, Diana, Johnathon, Albert, Weiner, and Gail.

**John**, a farmer, married Diana Sangster of Kenton, a public health nurse, October 8, 1967. They have two daughters, Laura aged 11 and Karen aged 9.

**Helen** married Arnold Thiessen and were divorced. They had two children, Ward and Sonia. Helen married Kenneth Wardle of Virden on July 29, 1972.

**Arthur** married Phyllis Kilford of Virden on Feb. 18, 1968. They live in Thompson where Arthur has been employed with Inco. and Phyllis is a secretary at City Hall. They have two sons, Kurt age 10 and Bradley aged 7.

Mom and Dad Janzen are happily retired in Tara Place, Virden since leaving their farm on May 17, 1976. Dad was born on September 29, 1904 in Russia and Mom was born on July 12, 1907 also in Russia.

### Jiggins Family History

**Samuel Walter Jiggins** — was born at Great Waltham, Essex, England on January 5, 1874. He married the former Edith Fitch who was born on Jan. 24, 1872. They were married on Jan. 17, 1898 at Pebmarsh, Essex. While in England he worked as a farm manager and butler for Mr. Bradhurst, an invalid and multimillionaire. They came to Canada in 1907, where Walter was employed with the Oak Lake Shooting Lodge, located on the southern shore of Oak Lake.

Mrs. Jiggins was well known for her Red Cross work. A quilt made by Mrs. Jiggins and donated to the Brandon Red Cross realized \$132.00. This remarkable hand workmanship by a handicapped person (her hands were terribly deformed with arthritis) was admired by Princess Alice, on her visit to Canada. A second quilt containing 2335 pieces was donated to the Oak Lake Red Cross.

Walter remained as manager of the hunting lodge for 40 years (1907-1947). Mrs. Walter Jiggins died on April 16, 1945. Walter then lived with his son, James, until 1957. The latter years were spent at the



Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jiggins.

Souris Riverbend Home until his death on Jan. 10, 1960.

They had one son, James Walter, born Dec. 3, 1898 at Pebmarsh, Essex. Jim attended school at Oakview and Lily Hill (near Wawanesa). He helped with the managing of the shooting lodge until 1925, when he moved to Brandon and was employed with the Brandon Sun, as pressman and stereotypist. Jim married the former Emily Hollick of Brandon in Aug. 1928.

Emily was born in Korolowka, Poland in 1902 and came to Canada in 1910 with her parents. Jim worked with the Brandon Sun until 1936, when he and family moved to the Deleau district south of Oak Lake, where he was engaged in farming and ranching.

The hay business was a large part of the farming operation. During the drought in the thirties in Saskatchewan car-loads of hay were shipped out of Deleau and Findlay. In 1937 Jim loaded out 250 car-loads of baled hay.

They had two children Edward and Edith who still remain on the family farm.

Jim's many interests included hunting, fishing and building radios. He built the first crystal radio set in the area, which created alot of interest at that time.

Jim passed away on December 12, 1976 and Emily on March 9, 1974.

**Edward** and **Edith** farmed for many years, mostly hay and cattle operations. Two years ago they

sold most of their land to the Nature Conservancy Association. Ed. is a member of the Oak Lake Water Table Preservation Association and spends a lot of time trying to preserve the Oak and Plum Lake marsh complex. He is also an avid amateur radio operator (VE4-EJ).

Edith is a busy person, who helps not only with the farm operation but has a large garden and finds time to play in a small old time orchestra, along with Jim Smith of Oak Lake and Bob Johnson of Harding.

### **The Johnas Family**

Dan and Lina Johnas left Germany and came to Canada with their two sons Uwe and Volker in 1952. Their first stop was Oak Lake, where relatives already resided. After being here for some months, they moved to Griswold. During this time, their daughter Doris was born. Dan worked on the C.P.R. and with the drilling crews in Virden.

Early in 1955 they moved to Kelowna, British Columbia, where Dan built houses for eight years. Another two sons, Danny and Carl and another daughter, Irene were added to the growing family.

But the oldest sons, having had a taste of Oak Lake, wanted to go back there to farm, so in 1963 the Johnas' settled on a farm in the north country of Oak Lake, where Volker and his wife Lois with their two children Andrea, born 1976 and Mark, born 1979, still reside. They also farm what was once the Walter Smith place. Uwe and his wife Gail and their daughter Melissa, born 1978, farm on what used to be the Ralph Smith place.

Doris and her husband Victor Doerksen with their twin boys and one daughter, live in Brandon; Carl and his wife Tayona near Virden; and Danny and Irene work and study in Brandon.

Dan and Lina Johnas now reside in the town of Oak Lake.

### **Andrew Johnston submitted by Myrtle Johnston**

In 1880 Joe Johnston and his wife, Lizzie, of Glenallen, Ontario came to the Breadalbane district and took up a homestead. In 1881 his youngest brother, twenty-year old Andrew, came out followed by four other brothers. William, George and Jack settled in the Breadalbane-Hagyard area but Tom went to Carman, Man. Tom's son, Jack was a druggist in Oak Lake in the early years.

Andrew filed a homestead on N.W. ¼ of 3-11-24. When he saw that it was very stony, he gave it up and homesteaded N.E. 21-10-24. He bought S.E. 21-10-24 from Hollis and also bought N.W. 21-10-24. He built a frame house and a big bank barn with stone foundation patterned after the one on his father's Ontario farm. The house, covered with insul

brick some twenty-five years ago is still standing. The barn has been taken down.

In 1891 Andrew Johnston went east and married his Ontario sweetheart, Annie McKinnon. They had three children, Ethel, Haddon and Henry. He lost his wife in 1909 when Henry was three years old. In 1916 he married Agnes Hughes. They had one daughter, Vimy.

In 1919 he bought 1-11-24 from Ernest Tolton where he resided until his death in 1930. His son, Henry, farmed there with the help of Robert M. Anderson of Oak Lake until 1972 when he sold the farm to Claude Tolton and retired to Virden.

Ethel married George McVicar and after his death married Maurice Anderson. She died in Victoria. Haddon and his wife, Gladys Smith of Winnipeg, lived in Victoria. He died in 1977. Henry and his wife, Myrtle Smeltz of Cromer, had one son, Wayne who teaches in Carman. Wayne and his wife, Margaret Moody, have four children, Scott, Craig, Maureen and Lynne. Vimy married Alex Bell. Their daughter, Sandra, and husband Herb Brown, presently stationed at Portage, have three daughters, Debbie, Janice, and Alayne.

In 1896 Andrew Johnston donated land for a cemetery, the plots to be free. The first members of the community who passed away were laid to rest in Breadalbane cemetery, but after Johnston Cemetery was established the remains were brought from Breadalbane and re-interred in Johnston Cemetery. The present gates were a gift from Jack Sawyer in memory of his pioneer parents.

Andrew Johnston served as a councillor in Woodworth Municipality.

When the community decided to build a church, Thomas Bailey, James Goodwin and Andrew Johnston were named as a building committee.

Andrew Johnston and his brother-in-law, Duncan McKinnon, had a steam threshing outfit and threshed for eight or ten farmers. They would thresh stooks in the early fall and the last crops to be threshed would be stacked. They could thresh stacks late in the fall even after the snow came.

In the spring of 1911 Andrew Johnston and John McDonald went to Winnipeg and each purchased a Reo car. After a short lesson on how to drive it, they started home. They were two days making the trip, stopping overnight at Carberry. On several occasions they were obliged to get horses from farmers to pull them through mud holes. Unless it was raining, they always drove with the top down. Five year old Henry, who went everywhere with his father, was sitting in the back seat. When they gunned her to go through one of these mud holes, Henry went up in the air and



landed in the mud hole behind the car. These were the first cars in the St. David's district.

Mr. William Forrest bought a car some time later. The Johnstons went over to see how he was getting along. He was slowly driving round and round the telephone pole in the yard — he had forgotten how to stop it and "whoa!" had no effect.

One day Henry was with his father and some men fixing a fence. A mare galloped up through the pasture, stopped in front of them, whinnied loudly then turned and started to gallop away. She wheeled around, came back and whinnied again. Three times she went through this performance and then Andrew said, "Her colt isn't with her. We'll follow her." The mare would gallop a short distance, stop, then gallop on again. She led them to an old dry well overgrown with grass. Her colt had fallen in backwards. They got the colt out and it went off with its happy mother. Can horses think?

When Wayne was about twenty two months old, he and his dog wandered out to the road near the house. Harvey Anderson came along in his car and wondered why the dog was standing crossways in the middle of the road, his head turned facing the approaching car, not moving an inch. He slowed up, then saw the baby sitting on the road on the other side of the dog, playing with stones. He brought the child into the house. Can dogs think?

For many years, many of the farms in St. David's were operated by members of pioneer families. It may be of interest that in 1949, Myrtle Johnston's Sunday School Class of seventeen children were all grandchildren or great-grandchildren of pioneers.

Henry and Myrtle Johnston were interested in the work of the school, the church and the community and ever grateful that they were privileged to raise their son among people who placed home, church and community high on their list of priorities. "You can't go it alone."

## George Johnston

George Johnston came west in the early 1880's and settled north of Oak Lake. He married Elizabeth McKinnon and they had one daughter, Isabel (Belle) who taught school for a time but had to give up her work because she suffered from asthma. Her parents moved to various locations, including Vancouver, hoping to find a climate that would benefit her health. The family returned to Oak Lake where George continued to reside following his wife's and daughter's deaths. He died in 1939 at the age of 86. A step-daughter, Flora, kept house for him for a number of years.

## William Johnston

submitted by Lorraine (Johnston) Holland

William Johnston was born in Glenallan, Ontario in 1849, the eldest in a family of seven children. He travelled to the Brandon area in the early 1880's with several of his brothers. After returning to Ontario, he married Mary Anne Spring and in 1886 the family moved to Manitoba. They travelled by train bringing household goods and even some farm animals. At this time their family included three children; Lena, John and Ed. Before coming to homestead on the east ½ of 15-10-24 the family resided for a short time in the Breadalbane district where William's wife died giving birth to twin girls, one of whom survived; Anne.

Later William married Mary Anne Keith and their two daughters, Mary and Sarah, were born in Manitoba. The family first built a sod stable and a small frame house on the homestead. These were later replaced by a large frame barn on a stone foundation and a large brick house which was built in 1909.



Home built by Wm. Johnston in 1908.

Mr. Johnston always took a great interest in community affairs, his church and school. He died in 1917 at the age of 68 and his wife died in 1924.

Of his children, the eldest, Lena, never married. As a young woman she helped with the care of her younger brothers and sisters. Later in her life she managed the house for her younger brother, Edward, until her death in 1945. William's second son, John, married Eileen Hall and farmed locally. Mary became a teacher and taught for a number of years in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In 1945 she left her school in Lemberg, Saskatchewan to return home to nurse her sister, Lena who was suffering ill health. She remained on the family farm until retirement. She and her brother, Edward moved to Oak Lake in 1948. Ed died in 1958 and Mary resided in Oak Lake until moving to Fairview Home, Brandon in 1970.

Anne, the youngest of William's first family, married William Jackson of Haggard district and had three children. Sarah, the youngest of the family, taught school for a number of years and then married Robert Acton of Lemberg, Saskatchewan. She had five children, Vera, Lillian, Audrey, Stanley and Shirley.

### John Johnston

John Johnston, second child of William Johnston and Mary Anne Spring, was born in 1884 in Glenallan, Ontario. He grew up on the family homestead — the east ½ of 15-10-24. He attended Johnston School but farm duties took precedence over school attendance. The heavy work involved in homesteading included digging oak tree stumps and hauling the stones for the barn foundations.

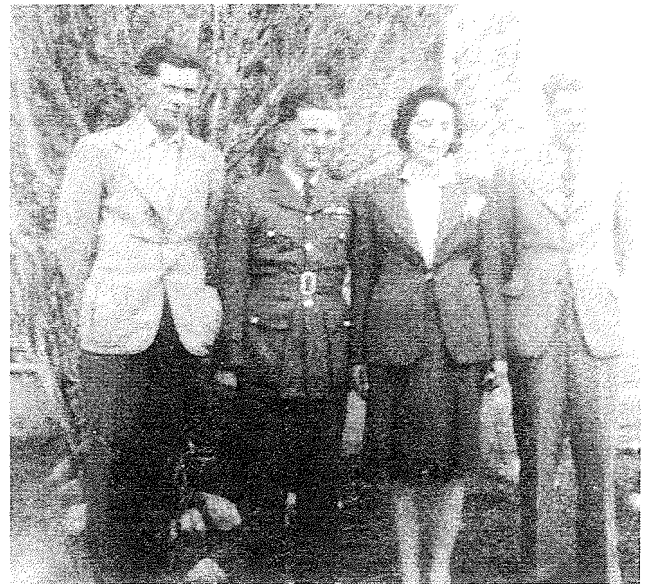


Jack and Eileen Johnston, December 4, 1912.

John married Eileen Hall who was born in Ireland and who, after her parents' death, made her home with her aunt and uncle in England where she was educated. John and Eileen began their married life on 36-10-24, a farm purchased from Mr. John Higginbotham. They later moved to the Johnston School District taking up residence in a frame house on the west ½ of 15-10-24. This move was made so that their children would have close access to their school.

John Johnston was a strong believer in Co-operatives. He helped organize the Oak Lake Pool Elevator and was one of its first directors. He also aided in establishing a Co-op in Kenton and became one of the first directors of the Kenton Consumers Co-operative. Mrs. Johnston made use of her early training in drama and elocution in her life in the St. David's community.

They had four children. **Lorraine**, the eldest, married William Holland of Oak Lake in 1942 and they farmed locally. **Norris** married Berenice Scott from Oak Lake in 1943 and farmed in the Oak Lake district. **Ross** served as a pilot during World War II and completed a tour of operations overseas. He



Barry, Ross, Lorraine and Norris Johnston.

returned to Canada as a flying instructor at the west coast, marrying Audrey Curry from Kenton in 1944. After the war Ross farmed with his brothers in the St. David's district. He left the farm in 1959 and moved to Minnedosa where he was employed with the department of Veteran's Affairs until his death in 1975. Ross and Audrey had a family of six children: Gaye (Mrs. Richard McMillan), Shari Lynne (Mrs. Bernie Beaudry), Kim, Cindy (Clark), April and Lisa. **Barry**, John and Eileen's youngest son, married Georgina Bray from Kenton in 1947 and took up farming on the east ½ of 15-10-24, his grandfather's homestead.

### Norris Johnston

Norris Johnston, eldest son of John L. Johnston, born January 1917 at 36-10-24. He attended Johnston School. He served with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles armed forces from 1940-1945.

He married Berenice Scott, graduate of Brandon Normal School in 1943. They farmed at 16-10-24 until 1967 when they moved to Oak Lake. Berenice has taught in the Fort la Bosse Division for the past twenty years.

Norris served on the Fort la Bosse Division Board as trustee and chairman.

He was president of Manitoba Pool Elevators local, and one of the instrumentals in the foundation of the Oak Lake Co-op Store. Keenly interested in agriculture, Norris became a leading salesman for liquid fertilizer throughout the western provinces. In 1974 he and a partner formed Specialized Soils Products in Oak Lake.

Norris's death occurred in July, 1977.

There were four children:

**Darlene** — graduated as teacher from Brandon University; taught for several years in British Columbia and is presently teaching in Assiniboine School in Oak Lake. Married Lynn Wilkinson in 1967 who is in management at Specialized Soils. Their two children are Jeremy and Krista.

**Dennis** — graduate of University of Winnipeg. He was employed in Woolco stores until his return as General Manager of Specialized Soils in 1977. He married Dawn Marie Curry in 1969, a graduate nurse. Moved to Brandon in August, 1981.

They have two children — Scott and Cristin.

**Dawn** — graduated in Business Education from Virden Collegiate. Married Keith Kreutzer in 1971, who was employed with Valleyview Co-op in Oak Lake and Virden. Keith died in April, 1979. Dawn was transferred from Virden Bank of Nova Scotia to Brandon, where she and family of Michelle, Keith, Tara Dawn now reside.

**Dale** — graduated from Virden Collegiate and was employed in Woolco stores at Brandon, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Victoria, B.C. He joined Specialized Soils in 1981.

### **Barry Johnston**

Barry Johnston, youngest son of John and Eileen Johnston attended Johnston and Oakwood Schools. On July 25th, 1947, he married Georgina Bray of Kenton, and at that time he took over the operation of the original Johnston farm on 15-10-24. Georgina taught school for a few years before her marriage.

Barry and Georgie were involved in many of the organizations of their community. Barry acted as secretary of the Oak Lake Agricultural Society for a few years. They were both keenly interested in sports. Ardent curlers, they enjoyed many winters, curling as members of the local Club and in neighbouring bonspiels.

Georgina's death occurred in Feb. of 1971, while still a young woman.

Barry sold the farm in 1979. He now resides in Elstow, Saskatchewan where he manages the Saskatchewan Branch of Specialized Soils.

There were five children in their family:

**Judy** — a Dental Assistant prior to her marriage to Wallace McLean of Kenton. They reside in Calgary and have three children, Jodi, Krista, and Robert.

**Joan** — worked in the Credit Union. She married Brent Doherty. They live in Oak Lake and have two daughters, Teresa and Tracy.

**Janice** — a L.P. nurse, is married to Gordon Huminuk of Winnipeg where they reside. They have one child, Jeryln.

**John** — married Barbara Routledge of Lenore.

They live in Oak Lake, where John is employed with Specialized Soils.

**Jerry** — of Virden, is also with Specialized Soils.

### **Marcus Jordan**

Marcus Jordan, better known as Mark, was born in England. He came to Canada in 1905 and to the Oak Lake District, where he worked as a farm hand. He was employed by Mr. Jack Cairns for a number of years. It was here he met Elizabeth (Lizzie) Peden. She came from Scotland in 1909, to work for the Cairns family. Mark rented a ¼ section and started farming for himself. In 1927 he left the Ryerson District and bought land in the Johnston School District.



Mr. and Mrs. Jordan and Grandson Blair.

Four of their eleven children served in the armed forces in World War II.

The children are:

**Rosalind** — who married Charles Greig of Camrose, Alberta, is now deceased. Their children — Roseann, Lillian, Margaret, Linda and Florence.

**Arthur** — of Camrose, Alberta, is deceased.

**Samuel** — married Ruby Gordon. They farmed for a number of years on the family farm, later moving to Oak Lake where Ruby died several years ago. They had two children — Blair who lives at Esterhazy, Saskatchewan where Sam now resides, and Valerie who married Clare Marcq of Hartney, Manitoba.

**Florence** — married Bill Burvill of Camrose. She is deceased. Their five children — Marion, Janice, Mark, Dick and Joey.

**Phillip** — moved to North Vancouver, where he married and has two children, Connie and Danny.

**Mary** — married Tom Harvatt of Oak Lake. Their children — Gary and Fern.

**Lloyd** — married Bernice Burrou of Vancouver and they have three children — Wayne, Dennis and Dolores.

**Ben** — married, living in Vancouver.

**Fred** — moved to Regina, Saskatchewan where he married Jenny Jorginson. They have five children — Lorraine, Sharon, Leona, Betty Ann and Lloyd.

**Jean** — married Glen Thrush of Virden. They live in Fort St. John, British Columbia. Their five children are — Garth, Barbara, Valerie, Lloyd and Glen.

**Mable** (Jean's twin) — married Bev. Nelson of Virden. They have seven children — Jane, Larry, Linda, Timothy, Debbie, Darrel and Garry.

### **Peter Jordan**

Peter and Emma Jordan, with two young children came west from Guelph, Ontario the spring of 1889 and settled north west of Oak Lake in the Valley, S.W. 18-10-24. They lived in a small log house until 1904. By that time their family had increased to six.

Finances being better, and a new baby on the way, Peter, a stonemason by trade, directed the building of a stone house, doing much of the work himself. Lime was available a few miles from the location and came in useful. Peter's son, Bill, recalls a young Negro chap who looked after the burning of the lime at night. The house was a three storey stone structure built into the hillside.

Thirteen children were raised here, one girl died at the age of two and one half years. The schools attended were: Blair, Oakwood, Johnston and Virden.

For a time in the early years Emma's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Grannville, lived with the Jordans.

Their family are as follows:

**Bridgett Anne** — Mrs. Ed Hayward who now resides in West-Man, Virden.

**Thomas** — lived at Bowsman, Manitoba, now deceased.

**Mary** — Mrs. Tall, resides in Swan River.

**Peter** — answered the call of duty for his country, returned to live at Sunset Prairie, British Columbia.

**Margaret Ellen** — Mrs. Tom Hayward lived in the Blair District. Later, she moved to Virden where her death occurred.

**William** — resides with his wife, Cora, on the home place, 18-10-24.

**Kathleen** — Mrs. Adkins, lived in Tacoma, Washington — is now deceased.

**Emma Jane** — Mrs. Wise, now lives with her husband in Hoquiam, Washington.

**Albert Lawrence** — raised on the farm, and later moved with his Mother and Edna Jordan (a niece they raised) to Swan River. His death occurred there at an early age.

**Nellie Irene** — Mrs. Romsa and her husband live in Cutbank, Montana.

**Edith May** — Mrs. Horn, and husband Gordon, resided at Woodnorth for a number of years. They now live in Virden.

**Christine Edna** — Mrs. Hagan, and husband Ed, lives on a farm at Woodnorth.

### **William Jordan**

William Jordan, third son of Peter and Emma Jordan was born September 19th, 1899 on SW 18-10-24 which is now owned by Mrs. John Cairns.

In June, 1920 he married Cora Elizabeth Leech of Woodnorth, Manitoba. They farmed N ½ 15-9-27 (north of Woodnorth). On June 1st, 1927 they moved to the Jordan home farm. It was a flood year, Bill sowed late grain in order to have feed for the livestock over the winter. Cora, with two small daughters and a niece, Ethel Jordan joined her husband in October of that year. It took three days (round trip) to move their belongings by horse and wagon. Moving the livestock proved quite an undertaking.

Early one spring morning the children, with two cousins, decided to walk to their former home at Woodnorth (without anyone else knowing). They became lost in a ravine. They arrived home in the evening tired and hungry. Needless to say they never tried this again.

In 1928 their first son was born. In 1930 a nephew, seven months old was taken to be cared for by the Jordans and in 1937 with four sisters, joined their father Peter in the Peace River Country.

The Jordan family were:

**Gladys** — who married John Cairns of the Ryonson District.

**Muriel** — who married Cecil Blackstock. They were both members of the armed services throughout World War II. Cecil died several years ago. They had a son and daughter. Later Muriel was remarried to Leonard Blackstock and there were two daughters born to them. Muriel died a few years ago.

**Aubrey** — married Loretta Souter of Kenton, Manitoba, his death occurred in 1970.

**Ralph** — married Evonne Laymae, Huntsville, Ontario.

**Faye** — married Gary Wilcox of Brandon, Manitoba.

**Garry** — married Karen Osmond of Flin Flon, Manitoba. They farm on the original Jordan homestead. His parents, William and Cora live in the old home near by. They are both quite active.



William still takes his turn driving the tractor and helping with chores.

### **Joynt**

Mr. and Mrs. David P. Joynt were married in Oak Lake, October 1903 by Rev. W. A. McLean. They farmed for a number of years in the Harding district before moving in 1929 to make their home in Oak Lake. Dave was born in Woodlands, Man. in 1881. Jane Widdifield was born at Sandford, Ont. in 1880 and came to Oak Lake with her family in 1900.

Dave spent most of his life doing carpenter work, taking great pride in moving and restoring older buildings.

They had two sons and two daughters: Lorne of Oak Lake, Earl of Winnipeg — deceased in 1979, Lillian — Mrs. Gordon Kennedy, Brandon, and Marguerite — Mrs. John Wallace, Saskatoon.

Jane Joynt died in April 1964.

Dave Joynt died in Nov. 1972.

**Lorne Joynt** and Hannah Turner were married in Swift Current, Sask. on July 1930 and came to Oak Lake to make their home. Lorne was interested in carpenter and electrical trades and for a number of years worked for the Indian Affairs Dept. They had five children, one daughter, Eleanor — deceased in 1965, and four sons, Fred — a photographer, married Donna Ferguson, they have five children, Kenneth, Yvonne, Brian, Patricia, Boyd, and live in Brandon, Man.; Clifford — plant manager at Inventronics Ltd., married Wilma Pollock, have three children, Linda, Brian, and Glenn live in Brandon, Man.; Gerald — Principal of the school in Wawota, Sask. who married Connie Dunbar, and have two children, Shauna and Kerry; Donald — is employed by O. J. Pipelines, Regina, Sask.

### **Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Katchen**

William Katchen was born in 1885 in East Linton (near Edinburgh), Scotland. Mr. Katchen came to Canada in 1906. He worked for a farmer by the name of Mr. Chennels in the Scarth District, later buying a farm from Paddy Noon, S.W. ½ of 4-9-25. This was 5½ miles east and 1 mile south of Scarth. It was the Oakview School district. The school was ½ mile south.

Mr. Katchen's older brother, James, came out to Canada and joined him on the farm. Sister Margaret came out later to keep house for them. Mary Lamb Smith also born in East Linton, Scotland, came to Canada to marry Will Katchen. They were married on Mary's arrival in Virden on July 12th, 1912, in a little stone house which still stands in Virden. They continued to farm in the Oakview district, mixed farming.

Mrs. Katchen didn't know anything about life on a Canadian farm, but with the help of a very good friend and neighbour (Mrs. Ledgerwood), she soon learned to bake bread, make butter, cook for a hungry threshing gang of 20 or more men. Mr. Katchen often talked about the long hard days in the fields, then the long walk, looking for cows when there were no fences. How easy it was to get lost in a blizzard in winter with no roads or fences. They always put in a large stock of groceries for winter, things that couldn't be grown or made on the farm.

On April 9th, 1914, a son, James (Jim) was born. A daughter, Marion (Mayme) Ronaldson was born October 28th, 1915. A son, John (Jack) Smith was born July 9th, 1917. A daughter, Elizabeth (Betty) Cumming was born Dec. 29th, 1918. They all attended Oakview School. They all enjoyed the many activities of the district, ball games, schoolhouse dances and socials, skating and hockey by flooding the garden in winter to make ice, card parties and other games at home and at friends' houses. All helped with farm work and chores while going to school.

Mr. and Mrs. Katchen took an active part in all district activities, helping whenever they could. Mrs. Katchen being a good seamstress, spent many hours sewing, making most of her family's clothes, also sewing costumes for Christmas concerts and field days for many of the School children. Mr. Katchen enjoyed all sports. He played football in his younger days, was an enthusiastic lawn bowler, winning many trophies for his bowling in Scotland and later in Manitoba. He took part in curling in later years. He, also was Sec. Treasurer of Oakview School for a number of years.

The family farmed in the Oakview district until 1933. They rented the farm to Mr. and Mrs. Willie Leach, later selling to Mr. Voden.

In 1933 the Katchen family all moved 2½ miles south east of Cromer to the Elm Valley district. Mr. and Mrs. Katchen continued to farm there until retirement in 1947, when they bought a house in Virden, leaving Jim and Isabel on the farm. Mr. Katchen died in 1957. Mrs. Katchen continued to live in her home in Virden until her death in 1965.

**James** (Jim) quit school at age 13 to help on the farm. He remained at home. Jim liked to read, was good at making things and inventions. One of the things he made in the late twenties was a windmill to pump water for the large herd of cattle, it saved a lot of hard hot work in the summer. He used old car frames and other old angle iron for the tower, even making most of his own bolts, about the only thing bought was the wood for the vanes of the fan, which he curved and carved into shape. It had an automatic

shut off and on, system. In 1947 he married Isabel Henderson of Filmore, Sask. They had three children — a son, Jack, and two daughters, Mary and Margaret. Jim died in 1958, after a lengthy illness with sugar diabetes. Isabel sold the farm and moved to B.C. with the children.

**Marion** (Mayme) also remained at home. Her great love for animals and outdoor life kept her on the farm, where she took an active part in all that went on. In 1943 she married Harold Lyons of Elm Valley district. They farmed for a few years near Woodnorth, where their son, Jim, and daughter, Rhonda, were born, later selling the farm. They moved to Armstrong, B.C. where Harold worked in the logging industry. Son, Doug, was born while in B.C. Later they moved back to Virden, where Harold was a self employed carpenter. Presently they are retired and live in Virden.

**John** (Jack) after his education, was looking for greener pastures. The first year at Cromer, the grasshoppers ate all the crop, so Jack went north, where crops were better, then to B.C. Jack was in the Armed Forces during World War II. He married Wilma Fenton of Salmon Arm, B.C. in 1940. After the war, Jack bought a dairy farm at Salmon Arm, which he sold after Wilma's death in 1959. They had one daughter, Denniece, and an adopted son, Bill. Jack remarried and lives at Quesnel, B.C.

**Elizabeth** (Betty) finished her education at Cromer and took a hairdressing course in Winnipeg. In 1940 she went to Two Creeks, and married Henry Reeves in 1942. They farmed at Two Creeks, where their three children were born, Wilfred, Christina (who died as an infant) and Bruce. They are presently retired living on a farm in the Harmsworth district 8 miles north west of Virden.

### James Reuben Kennedy Family

J. Reuben Kennedy came from Carp, Carleton County, Ontario. His father died when he was 5 years old and his mother remarried. Reuben came to the Harvey District in 1890 and homesteaded SW 8-10-23 (Hudson's Bay Company land).

Not caring for batching, it wasn't long before Reuben married Elizabeth Gompf who was keeping house for her bachelor brother, William. William always declared that "a smooth tongued Irishman won her away". Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy lived on the homestead where eight children were born to them.

Clarence — (deceased); Louise — (Sheen) deceased; Edith — deceased in infancy; Eva — (Bastard) living at Kenton; Gordon — living in Brandon; Lorne — deceased; Mildred — (Story) living in Oak Lake; Blanche — (Smith) living in Brandon.



J. R. Kennedy Family. Left Down — Gordon, Louise, Blanche, J.R. Right Down — Clarence, Eva, Mildred, Elizabeth.

Their local district was known as Harvey, named after the well known pioneer, Dr. Harvey.

Reuben Kennedy's sister, Elizabeth, married W. C. Smith. Her first home was a sod shack.

### Clarence Kennedy and Family

Clarence R. Kennedy son of J. R. and Elizabeth (Gompf). Kennedy married Cleo Garner, (a cousin of Ruby Smith), who died very young. Clarence later remarried, choosing Ethel Smith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Smith, as his wife. They farmed the E½ 9-10-23. This land was originally purchased from the C.P.R. by Headly Vicar Young, who in 1916, moved to Selkirk. Their home was located on SE 9-10-23. Mixed farming included a small honey operation.

Clarence and Ethel raised a family of three daughters — Elizabeth Blanche (Betty) born 1931,

Donalda (Donna) 1933, Maisie 1938, and one son Murray 1935.

Clarence and Ethel were good neighbours and took an active part in church and community affairs. Ethel had a beautiful singing voice which she used generously for the enjoyment of others. Their children all attended Harvey School and Oakwood High.

In 1963 Clarence and Ethel sold their land to Wes Tolton and moved to Brandon. Clarence died May 1975, Ethel March 1976.

**Betty** — a nurse who trained in Gray Nuns' Hospital in Regina, married Gordon Baker. They have five sons — Bruce, Danny, Mark, Dean and Barry. The Bakers live in Regina.

**Donna** — trained as a nurse and married Robert Helgeson. Their home is in Winnipeg. Their family consists of a son, Brent and a daughter, Barbara.

**Murray** — worked with the Manitoba Telephone System. He married Beth Pattison. They live in Vernon, British Columbia and have three daughters — Brenda, Roxy and Sherry.

**Maisie** — a receptionist in a dentist office, lives in Regina with her husband Ed Larson. They have two sons, Brett and Stuart.

### **Gordon Kennedy and Family**

Gordon W. Kennedy — son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Reuben Kennedy was raised on the home farm SW 8-10-23 in Woodworth Municipality. Gordon took over the Frank Todd farm E½ 24-10-24 in 1926. This land had been homesteaded by A. J. Todd, one of the earliest Ryerson pioneers.

Gordon married Lyllian, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dave Joynt. They raised two sons and a daughter.

Gordon and Lyllian moved to Birtle, Manitoba in the early 1940's. There, Gordon served as farm instructor at the Birtle Indian Residential School for a number of years, then he and his family returned home to Ryerson, where they built a new house on their farm.

Gordon and Lyllian took part in community affairs. Gordon served on the Ryerson School Board. Lyllian was a keen competitor at Western Manitoba summer fairs. She often attended and hosted Ryerson W.M.S. meetings and helped with Red Cross work. She has long been known for her beautiful handwork, fine cooking, and green thumb.

The Kennedys belonged to Oak Lake and Virden Pentecostal Churches.

Their family — Carl, Marguerite and David were raised mainly in the Ryerson District.

Gordon and Lyllian retired to Brandon in 1971, where Gordon worked in real estate for a number of years.

**Carl** — was born February 16, 1930 in the old log house on SE 24-10-24. He took his schooling at Ryerson and Birtle. He worked on the farm until age 19, when he became employed as an asphalt foreman for a road construction company.

August 25, 1951 Carl married Effie Lewis (a bookkeeper) of Roland, Manitoba. He continued road work and farmed for a while at Roland on Effie's home farm.

In 1962 the family moved to Oak Lake where Carl farmed with his dad and practiced carpentry. He built a home in Oak Lake which is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. John Letkeman.

In the community Carl was involved in curling, teaching carpentry to 4-H members and as rink caretaker. Effie became a Manitoba Telephone System operator in the Oak Lake Office serving a total of 13 years at Roland and Oak Lake. She also thoroughly enjoyed curling and was a 4-H leader.

Carl and Effie were members of the Pentecostal Church at Virden and each taught Sunday School and served on the church board — Effie as secretary-treasurer. In 1977 Carl and Effie moved to Brandon where they are self-employed.

Their family consists of three sons — Darryl (1951), Richard (1954) and Keith (1958). Daryl and Richard came to Oak Lake with their parents in 1962. Both boys attended school at Ryerson School and Oak Lake, were members of the Virden band, and played at Expo 67, members of the 4-H beef club. Daryl refereed minor hockey. On May 6, 1972 Daryl married Yvonne McIntosh, daughter of Albert and Vena McIntosh, then of Oak Lake. They live in Brandon where Daryl has been a fire fighter for the past ten years. Daryl and Yvonne have three daughters — Michelle Leigh Anne, Jo-Anne Lynne and Angela. Richard married Iris Iwanyshyn May 7, 1977. They have two sons, Derek Richard and Carl Michael. Richard is now employed with Mutual Life Insurance and lives in Flin Flon, Manitoba. Keith started his education at Ryerson, went on to Oak Lake Elementary and Junior High then to Virden Collegiate. Played goalie with the Oak Lake minor hockey teams and then after he completed grade 12 played hockey with Melville Millionaires. He is now employed with CP rail as brakeman and lives in Brandon, Manitoba.

**Ruby Marguerite** — only daughter, was born in 1940 in Oak Lake at the home of her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Dave Joynt. Marguerite was educated at Ryerson School and Oakwood High. She attended Oak Lake and Virden Pentecostal Churches and now Charleswood Temple. In 1964 Marguerite married James Logan of Teulon, Manitoba. Jim and Marguerite have a daughter, Shelley (1969) and a son

Corrie (1972). Jim now teaches in St. James-Assiniboia School Division and Marguerite is happy to be a housewife. They live in Winnipeg.

**David** — youngest son of Gordon and Lyllian Kennedy, received his education at Ryerson School. He and his wife Doreen Anderson have been married 18 years. They have one son, Tim. David and Doreen live in Brandon, Manitoba.

### **The Kinnears**

**submitted by Katie Kinnear**

William Martin Kinnear was born on Dec. 24, 1910 at 126-10th St., East in Brandon. Most of his education was received at the King George School. When he was 17 years old Martin decided to take up the "trade of Tin Smith". He apprenticed for 5 years, and became qualified by the age of 22.

Martin's father, John Grant Kinnear, a miller by trade, was born in Freuchie, Fife Shire, Scotland, and came to Canada in 1905. He was a "car Inspector" for the C.P.R., for over 50 years. Martin's mother was Elizabeth Martin, born in Dundee, Scotland, she came to Canada in 1906 and married Jock Kinnear in Nov. the same year. The Kinnear family were: four boys and two girls, Ruby, James, Martin, Grant, Ann, and George.

Martin decided to have his own business as soon as he qualified and at 22 years of age, he started his own shop at #328 Frederick St. in Brandon. Times were hard in the 1930's and Martin tells of how he worked for 35¢ an hour when he was learning his trade. He had an old "Overland car". He cut the back off and made a truck for himself.

In 1935 he met a girl from Griswold at a whist drive and dance at the Orange Hall in Brandon. Her name was Katherine Jane Meadows, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James H. Meadows of Griswold.

They lived on a farm section 34-8-23 in the Municipality of Sifton, seven miles from Griswold and 9 miles from Oak Lake. This was a three generation farm belonging to Grandfather Henry Meadows, then father James Meadows and passed to Katherine Jane in 1937. James Meadows was born in Omeme, Ontario and came west with his parents in 1881, settled on the same farm in 1882. He married Sarah Ann Young of Harwood, Ontario in 1903. They were married in the old Methodist Manse in Oak Lake.

W. Martin Kinnear and Katherine J. Meadows were married on Sept. 22, 1937 at the home farm south of Griswold. They resided in Brandon for 3 months, and Kay's father, Jim Meadows passed away in Dec. 1937. Martin and Kay went back to the farm, and Martin decided to become a farmer. Martin and Kay had one son, born May 17, 1940 and passed away May 18, 1940 in Oak Lake. Martin served as a trustee for Hillsdale School District in 1942-43.

They lived on section 34-8-23 for 9 years and in April 1946 they had a sale and moved to Oak Lake in October. Martin took up his old trade again. They lived for 1 year in what is known now as the Co-op house. Then moved to the Charlie Williams house and lived there for 8 years, Martin had his shop in the basement there. Kay's mother, Sarah Meadows, made her home with the Kinnears.

In the 1960's Martin served as a town councillor for 2 years. Martin joined the Lansdowne Masonic Lodge in 1945 at Griswold and also became a member of the Order of the Eastern Star in 1949. Kay has been an active member of the Order of the Eastern Star from 1945 and is still going strong. They are both members of the United Church. Martin and Katie also play Golf and at one time attended all the Golf tournaments and Curling Bonspiels.

In 1952 Martin decided to build a new shop on the corner of 1st Ave. and Assiniboine St. under the name of "Oak Lake Sheet Metal", Heating and Plumbing, and in 1954 they built a new house beside the shop and moved in on Jan. 8th, 1955. For the past 35 years Martin has been giving his assistance to Oak Lake, Griswold and districts, and those "districts" went very far a field touching Alexander, Lenore, and Kenton, even Pipestone and Virden.

### **The Peter B. Klippenstine Family**

**submitted by E. Klippenstine**

Peter B. Klippenstine was born in Arkadac, U.S.S.R. in 1912. In 1925 his parents and their family of eight children left Russia. First they went to Germany, then by ship to England, finally by ship again to Halifax. They landed there September 13, 1925. They then boarded a train for Herbert, Saskatchewan. They stayed with relatives and worked around there until 1928 when they bought a farm at Truax, Saskatchewan. They lost the farm during the Depression, and moved to Dummer, Saskatchewan to rent a farm which they later bought.

In 1937 work was not to be had in Saskatchewan, so Peter bought a bicycle and rode to Oak Lake, Manitoba, arriving there on July 1. He worked at various farms around Oak Lake.

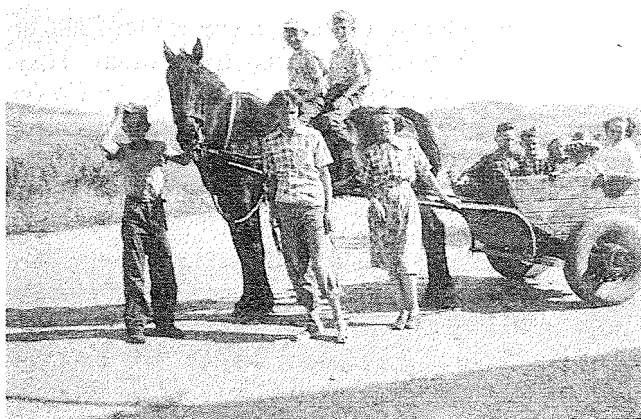
Here he met Katherine Penner and they were married October 24, 1939. She and her family had come from Steinau, South Russia.

He worked for Dave Taylor for quite a few years, and his sons Albert, Peter and Ernie were born.

On March 28, 1944, they rented a farm in Alexander, for the next four years. During this time his daughter, Irene, was born.

In 1948, they bought the Bob Haney farm, north of Oak Lake, in the Hagyard District. The children went to Hagyard School, first walking the three miles, then by horse and cart.





Albert Klippenstine holding "Madame", with Peter and Ernie on Horse. Jean and Elizabeth Etsell standing, Gordon Iverson, Jerry Smith, Irene Crump, Irene Klippenstine with hat and Inez Iverson in cart.

The family went to Church at Pleasant Plains School until the new Church was built at Oak Lake. During the construction, there was an accident. Peter Niebhur was killed and Peter Klippenstine sprained his ankle.

In 1955 they bought the George Smith farm, north of Oak Lake in the Harvey District. They farmed this section as well as the Haney half section until Ernie left for Calgary in 1969. Peter then sold the Haney farm as the two were too far apart.

He carried on farming the section until he retired to Brandon in 1974. Mother suffered a stroke June 6, 1975. Her left side remains paralyzed and she is in Hillcrest Nursing Home in Brandon.

Albert is married and lives in Brandon. His wife is Eleanor and they have two sons, Cory and Kent.

Peter is married and also lives in Brandon. His wife is Brenda and they have two sons, Ryan and Jeffrey.

Ernie is married and lives in Calgary. His wife is LeEllen and they have two sons, Jody and Richard.

Irene is married and lives in Winnipeg. Her husband is Ben Landry.

### **Jack and Mabel Knight**

**(July, 1914 - July, 1939)**

**by Mabel Knight**

My husband and I lived in Oak Lake for twenty-five years. We arrived in 1914 and purchased a meat market from Jack Aitkens. It was situated on Front Street, next to McCubbin's Hardware. Later we bought Dr. Wright's property at the far end of the business section of Front Street and built a modern store and residence.

At the far west end of Front Street was, I believe, the Methodist Church, in the charge of the Reverend Mr. Osterhout. The Presbyterian Minister was the

Reverend Mr. Sarkissian, an Armenian, and a very fine minister. I believe the Anglican Church was in the charge of the Reverend Mr. Shirley and the Reverend Mr. Littler, and the Catholic Church, of Father Arsenault and Father Derome.

Our choir master was Mr. E. Steen and our organists were Miss Jessie Lind — Mrs. Higginbotham — Mrs. Blanche Phillips and of course, in later years, Elva Gordon. Our community was blessed with such talented singers as Tessa and Elsie Parsons, Mrs. Cameron, Mr. E. P. Steen, Mr. Chapman and many, many more. Our town was rich in talent, art, etc.

Also at the west end of the town was Mr. Piroth's Bakery, with daily delivery — later taken over by Mr. Anderson's Grocery Store, with sons Bill and Peter. Next there was an implement shop, and Jack Lamond's Meat Market with brother, Peter. Our tiny Post Office followed, Mrs. Campbell and son, Bill, handling every item so well. On the corner was Parson's Hardware, which later burned down and was replaced with Strong & Gordon's Hardware. Cameron's General Store and the concert and dance hall above were always busy. Does anyone remember the "Night Hawks" Orchestra? For this fine music, thanks to R. Stevens & Sons, and also to Jack and Russell Hogg who played band music for parades and skating. Our first skating rink, 1914-15, was south of town and the C.P.R. Moving along, we have just passed our tiny Fire Hall and Jail. Next we come to Mr. Sandell's Saddlery Shop. Around the corner was our affable Alex Jack, cabinet maker. Then we had a blacksmith shop and the old Telephone Office, now I understand a tearoom. Then comes Russell Hogg's "Oak Lake News" with the weekly edition.

The Masonic Hall was the scene of many lodge meetings, church bake sales and socials. We also had another blacksmith, Mr. E. Emond and his son, Ed. Back to the livery barn where Ralph Helliwell was a friend to many farmers. Then, Dr. Val McLeish, our own veterinarian, and around the corner, Ed. Orr and Family, Jewellery (later, Davidson). We once had a band stand in the C.P.R. grounds or close by, where bandsmen gave us Sunday afternoon concerts — remember?

Mr. Andrews had an office next to McCubbin's and in later years Jack Dean had a small cafe. Then Glen Walkey, the druggist, and also Mr. Lyons. Mrs. Thomson and son, Bill, operated a restaurant with a picture show upstairs and a player piano. Anybody remember "Birth of a Nation"? Next was Tommy Butterworth's Tailoring Shop and Mr. Hawkin's Municipal Office. Mr. Jake Furtney's Pool Room and Barber Shop was around there somewhere. Then came an implement shop, later Mr. A. Stewart's Implement and Ford Agency. Thompson's Dry Goods

followed, and the Oakland Hotel, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Simpson. Leitch Bros. Mill was in full swing in these early years (Anchor Brand Flour). Also, Mr. Lawson's Lumber Yard and office was south of the C.P.R.

Our C.P.R. section men were Mr. H. King, Mr. Fiori and Adolph, following in his father's footsteps. Our station master was R. F. Stevens and Bill and Fred were also C.P.R. station agents. Mr. Baynham, I believe, was before Mr. Stevens.

These were all busy years. We worked hard sending parcels overseas, knitting and baking to raise money for war efforts. In 1918 came the 'flu. It was either make soup or masks. Fortunately we lost only one patient. For their good services, thanks to Mrs. Leitch and Mrs. Borthwick, and to Drs. Blanchard and Hicks, plus many helpers. We also had several Polio cases who, with the loving care of their parents, made remarkable recoveries.

On Armistice night a friend phoned us from Winnipeg at 3:00 A.M. Immediately my husband dashed down to the fire bell and in no time most of the town had heard the good news. Mr. Henry Stevens, in making a speech the next night, made the witty remark that he thought that the man who rang the bell should be Knighted!

During the late twenties we were fortunate to get a very fine new Post Office with Mr. William Cochrane and staff in charge. Front Street looked quite prosperous with Mr. Jordan's beautiful C.P.R. flower gardens. Story's Garage was the last business at the east end of town.

In 1929 and 1930 came the financial crash which affected almost every business and family. The freight trains brought us many "free" customers who dashed across town to get handouts. For nine years we had drought and dust storms but fortunately the later years have been reasonably good. Oak Lake has come a long way — from coal-oil lamps and gasoline irons (of which I was petrified) to hydro with electric stoves and washers, and running water and sewers. It took several years to get the "Yes" vote but it was really worth the effort.

No doubt I have missed out many important details but I will always take a special interest in Oak Lake and, if possible, I hope to come to Oak Lake in '82 for your Big Celebration.

One question I would like to ask. Are any grandchildren of Lizzie or Maggie the Squaws, around the Reserve? Their grandmothers were wonderful women. Maggie was one of the first people to call on me on Christmas 1914, the year I came to Oak Lake, and in 1939 she was the last person to come and say a sad "Good-bye Forever".

## The Family of Theodore and Sarah Koester

Our Mother, Sarah Anne McDonald was born in Bruce County near Riversdale on the 31st of October (1880-1972). Her parents were Neil McDonald and Hannah Parker. Their family was three sons and six daughters. The log cabin in which they lived is still standing. After her father died, Sarah came west to Ryerson District to visit her sister Elizabeth and her husband, Anson Dixon and small sons, Truman, Norman and Alex. Through the years the two families had kept in close touch — this continues through the second and third generations.

It was while staying with the Dixons, that our mother met our father, Theodore Koester (1877-1958). He had come with his family in 1881 from what was then Berlin, Ontario (now Kitchener) to live in Brandon. There were six sons and two daughters in the family.

Our parents were married early in 1903 and eventually owned three quarters of 4-11-23; the farm which is now owned by the H. H. Stevenson family.

Eight of the children were born on our farm. Dr. Henry A. Wright and Mrs. Leserf were in attendance.

The eldest daughter was still born, December 5th, 1903 and is buried in Shiloh Cemetery along with an infant brother, Henry Herbert (1917-1918) who was named for Dr. Wright and Bert Whaley, a longtime family friend who lived across the street from the cottage in which we lived during the time the family spent in Oak Lake. Our cottage was beside the residence of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Hood and their daughter, Alberta. It is situated on what is now the Trans-Canada Highway.

**Fred**, the eldest son (1905- ) is living in Edmonton, with his wife, the former Joan Gibson of Virden. Their daughters, Louise and Lillian, live in Montreal, Quebec and St. Albert, Alberta. There are ten grandchildren. Fred received an excellent training by working first for the Bank of Commerce, the British American and North Star Oil Companies, and before retirement for the Treasury Branches in Alberta.

**Nell** (1907- ) along with Fred attended Ryerson and Education Point schools. She took teacher training and when she taught at her first school, Ryerson (1928-1932) she boarded with Tom and Jeannie Sloan, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Slimmon and Mr. and Mrs. John M. Smith. She later took her nurse's training at the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, B.C. and joined the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps. She and her four brothers, Charlie, Ken, Norman and Jim spent over 24 years in the forces. In 1949, she married Don Slimmon, who had three

daughters. Their daughter, Lillian, was born in 1950. Nell is living in Wawanesa, Manitoba, when she's home.

**Kathleen** (1909-1923) went to school at Education Point, Oak Lake and Brandon. She died at 14 years as a result of peritonitis and spinal meningitis. She and our father are buried in Brandon Cemetery.

**Annie** (1911-1948) married Larry Byrd of Virden. They had two daughters and one son. When she was small and we lived in Oak Lake, Annie spent so much time with the Hoods, that some people teased her by calling her "Annie Hood" because she went everywhere with "Uncle Ab". She died as a result of Multiple Sclerosis. She and our Mother are buried in Virden Cemetery.

**Charlie** (1913- ) and his wife, Alice Hopkins of Brandon, are retired and living in London, Ontario. Charlie left teaching to enter the R.C.A.F. He trained in Radar Telecommunication and graduated with his commission. He served in Canada, West Africa and England and continued teaching after the war.

**Ken** (1915- ) married Kathleen Moore of Kenora and lives in Richmond, B.C. They had a son and daughter. Their son was accidently killed when he was 21. Their daughter and her husband have two sons and live in Richmond also. Ken was an aero-mechanic in the R.C.A.F. for over six years. He was stationed in various places in Canada, including the east and west coasts.

**Norman** (1919- ) was born in Oak Lake. His wife is Evelyn Strang of Dauphin. He taught near Killarney for two years before he entered the R.C.A.F. He graduated as a pilot with his commission and was stationed in Canada, England and West Africa. After the war he entered Medical School at the University of Manitoba and graduated in 1951. His first practise was in Wawanesa where the family stayed for 15 years. He has since been in North Dakota but retired this year. He and Evelyn have three sons, three daughters and nine grandchildren.

**Jim** (1921-1945) was born in Brandon but received his education in Virden. He joined the Regina Rifle Regiment along with several classmates. While he was stationed in England, he married Georgina Kenward of Southwick, Sussex. Just one month before the end of the war, he was killed in action and is buried in Nijmegen, Holland.

**Zen** (1924- ) married Andy Judson of Brandon shortly after they graduated from Brandon College. They have three sons and live in Lennoxville, Quebec.

There are so many pleasant things about being part of a large family and growing up on a farm. We made our own fun! Did you ever fasten the shafts

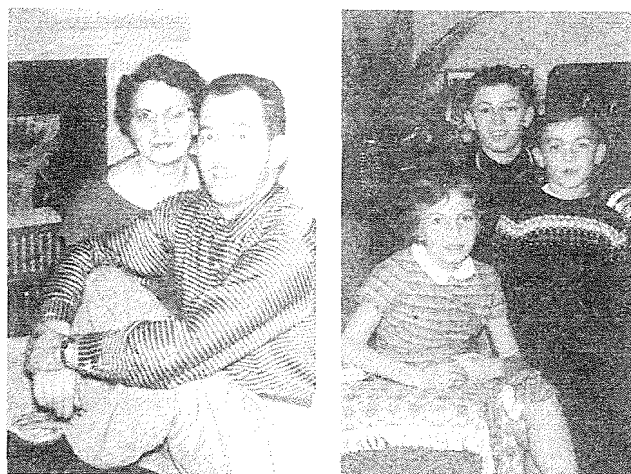
behind the buggy and have the horse push instead of pull you? Did you smoke steeped tea leaves or try fresh tea? The latter was nasty to the feel and taste. We used to enjoy harvest and threshing time but it really was a strenuous time for our parents.

### Leonard Kreutzer

Leonard E. Kreutzer, his wife Pearl, and son Keith, arrived in Oak Lake on October 22, 1950 from Lipton, Saskatchewan.

They brought with them one carload of cattle, and one carload of household effects and small farm equipment. They settled on the Percy Wallace farm, the north half of 18-9-23, which they purchased after renting it for three years.

During this time Darlene was born in 1951, and Reg in 1954, completing their family of two sons and one daughter.



Mr. and Mrs. Kreutzer and Family.

Leonard took a part-time dealership with the J. R. Watkins Company, and later was employed as their field representative. He was transferred to Saskatoon, where the family resided for two years. Upon returning to Manitoba they settled on the same farm where an Angus herd of cattle was once again built up, and Len retired from the Watkins Company.

After the family was grown up and had completed their education at Runnymede, Oakwood and Virden Collegiate, Len and Pearl sold their livestock and farm in 1972. Len accepted a job with the Manitoba Department of Highways as a Highways Traffic Inspector, and took up residence in Griswold.

Keith, deceased, left behind his wife Dawn, children Michelle, Keith Jr. and Tara who presently reside in Brandon. Darlene, during her school years at Oak Lake, helped out at concerts with her tap dancing and piano playing. She was in the Glee Club and United Church choir and graduated from Bran-

don University with a Bachelor of Teaching degree. Darlene, and her husband Claude Oldcorn, farm north of Brandon, near Forrest, and have two children, Claudia and Dallas. Reg and his wife Doreen, operate a landscaping business in Regina. They have a daughter Melanie, and a baby son, Benjamin Reg.

### The Laidler Family

The Laidlers, cousins of the Cairns, were a large family of 5 sons and 4 daughters, the children of John and Eleanor Laidler of Northumberland County, England. In 1905 John Jr. was the first of the family to leave home and settle in the Ryerson District north of Oak Lake. He was soon followed by his brother, Tom. One of them returned to England for a visit and brought their sister, Eleanor (Neen) to this land of promise in 1913. She was followed by brothers Andrew, James, and Matthew, her father (John Sr.) and sisters Mary, Ethel and Ettie. The family was also accompanied by John D. Bell, a school teacher from Morpeth, Northumberland, who taught school for years at Melfort, Saskatchewan.

**Matthew** Laidler soon returned to England to stay. **Ethel** married John Bell. After he resigned his position at Melfort, Mr. and Mrs. Bell returned to Oak Lake where he taught in the high school for a number of years. They lived in the James McFarlane house. Jack died in 1961 and Ethel in 1977.

**Ettie** became Mrs. Duncan McDiarmid of Silverton, British Columbia.

**Jack, Andrew, Tom, James, Neen** and **Mary** farmed for years in the Ryerson District first on W½ 28-10-23 then on the E½ of 33-10-23 also 4-11-23. Andrew died while on the farm. The other 5 retired to Oak Lake in the 1950's to live in the old Methodist parsonage on North Railway Street, later to be known as the Conway house. All the Laidlers, except Ethel, were buried in the family plot in Johnston Cemetery. Ethel and John (Jack) Bell were buried in Oak Lake Cemetery.

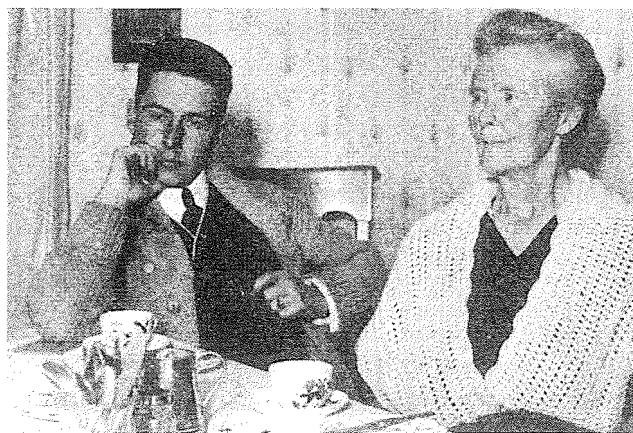
### The Lamond Family in Oak Lake

Annie Gow was born in Kirkmichael, Perthshire, daughter of John Gow and Marjorie McDonald. In 1877 she married James Lamond, son of Robert Lamond and Jane Camerson of Glen Shee. They settled at Auchtenny, their farm in Perthshire, and raised ten children.

**Alec Lamond** — at age sixteen, was the first of the family to arrive in Oak Lake in the late 1890's. His mother's sister, Mrs. Donald McFarlane, was already settled there. At first Alec worked in a store in Oak Lake, later moving to Edmonton, and eventually to Los Angeles. During the First World War he served with the supply branch of the U.S. Forces.



Jack Lamond.



Mrs. Annie Lamond and Son Willie.

**Jack Lamond** — was next to arrive and established a butcher shop on Front Street. Later, Jack became auctioneer. In 1908 he brought out from Scotland his widowed mother, Mrs. Annie Lamond, brothers, Bert, Peter and Willie, and sister, Annie. They were later joined by sisters, Tot and Mima, and during the early years of the war, by Bella, who travelled across the Pacific from Tasmania in a ship blacked-out for fear of enemy action. Jack Lamond



was a very good fiddler and often played for dances with brother, Peter, accompanying on the piano.

Mother, Mrs. Annie Lamond, was a beloved resident of the town, known for her kindly ways and hospitable nature. There was always a pot of tea on the stove and a scone ready for anyone dropping by. Mrs. Lamond lived in Oak Lake until shortly before her death in 1929, in her 75th year.

**Peter Lamond** — worked with Jack in the butcher shop. He had a keen interest in sports, on one occasion coming in second in the mile race at a local meet. The winner was Kenny Eastman who later became chief at the Indian Reserve. Peter often partnered Mrs. Mabel Knight at dances, Jack Knight not being fond of the pastime. On one occasion they won first prize at a masquerade ball wearing the royal prince and princess costumes made by Mrs. Knight. Peter served with the Canadian forces in the First World War.

**Bert Lamond** — also served overseas with the Canadian army. Later he joined the federal excise department in Winnipeg. Bert was well known for his keen sense of humour.

**Annie Lamond** — worked in the drug store in Oak Lake, eventually marrying Frank Parsons of Parsons Hardware. Frank was the son of Thomas Parsons who came to Oak Lake in 1890 and opened a hardware store in 1894. Two sons, Bert and Glen, were born in Oak Lake before the family moved to Winnipeg.

**Willie Lamond** — attended Oakwood School in Oak Lake, along with Myrtle Lang, who was later to become his wife. Both became school-teachers — Bill taught for a time in Harvey School District and Myrtle in the Ryerson District and in Oak Lake. Willie also worked in the real estate and insurance business before moving to Winnipeg and his association with the business school there. Their eldest son, Conrad, was born in Oak Lake.

**Mima Lamond** — a graduate of St. Andrews University in Scotland, married Fred Leslie who was with the Union Bank in Edmonton, later the Royal. They later moved to Winnipeg where Mima taught at Havergale College for a time.

**Tot Lamond** — settled in Winnipeg, marrying Fred Scrimshaw of that city.

Another sister, **Jean Lamond** (Mrs. Jim Folwy) remained in Britain, eventually, with her husband and children, reuniting with the Lamond family in Winnipeg in 1921.

**Bella Lamond** — married Dr. Val McLeish, veterinarian in Oak Lake, in 1920. Bella was a sister of the Rebekahs, Hearts of Oak Lodge. Their elder daughter, Sheila Anna, was born in Oak Lake.

## **Robert Lang II 1834-1900**

### **Elizabeth (Wells) Lang**

**written by Elsie (Lang) Endicott**

James Lang and his wife, Grisel Brown, were born during the 1750's in Fulford, Scotland. They had seven children, the youngest son, Robert Lang I, emigrated to Canada with his wife, Marion Watson, and three children in 1833 to Osborn Township. Less than a year later Robert died and Robert Lang II was born six weeks later. Years passed and the family in spite of hardships prospered in the new land.

In 1860 Robert Lang II, described as a well proportioned young giant with a strong Scottish burr, married Mary Lamb who died in 1872 leaving six children. Robert was married the second time to Elizabeth Wells and feeling the Ontario farm too small to support the large family it was thought advisable to move to the prairies.

In the Fall of 1881, the two eldest sons of Robert Lang II, Robert L. Lang III and James B. Lang, travelled West as far as the railroad was laid at that time; to a point known as "Flat Creek". Here, they left the train and, carrying their backpacks, walked in a southwesterly direction, towards a large body of water which had been under discussion on the trip from Ontario. They found an area of unclaimed land; were able to register a claim, and returned to Ontario to inform their parents of their success. Robert Lang II sold his Ontario farm; and in the Spring of 1882, filled three freight cars with machinery, livestock, lumber and farm equipment, and set off for Manitoba. When they arrived at "Flat Creek", all prospective settlers and effects had to be unloaded, as this was the end of the line. They all had to rent or build whatever tent or roof cover they needed to protect possessions until Claims were legally registered and boundary lines established. When the Lang family contract was cleared with Land Agents, they loaded wagons with lumber, nails, and the needed material to begin building a large house.

When the Lang family arrived in the district they found some friendly Scottish Settlers from Ontario, and a few French families from Quebec, already in their little homes. There were several sod and log houses near the shore, which were occupied, in season, by nomad fur trappers, who moved from place to place in search of muskrats, wolves, lynx or other fur bearing animals. Many of the trappers arrived in the area by red-river cart, or by the Assiniboine river boat. Trappers and hunters also crossed the American border in search of deer and buffalo, but they were seldom permanent settlers. Those of Catholic faith were cared for in a log cabin known as "The Priest's House", which stood within sight of the Lang farm; weathered and ancient even as early as 1882.

As Spring and Summer advanced, building plans had been studied and followed, a strong and very large cottage type house was erected. It was claimed, in family chronicles, to be the largest house, for the largest family, west of Winnipeg. As time went on and news of district activities became known, the native Indians of the Pipestone Reservation came to see "Sappa Teepee", the large house. The visiting Indians were friendly and honest, and became interested and helpful in the work going on. They became valued friends of the Lang family, and enjoyed sharing lunches of hot tea, bread and jam, with their new white neighbours.

An old ceremonial peacepipe of the traditional variety — red stone bowl and carved wooden stem, — was presented to Robert Lang, whom the Indians had named "The White Chief", as a gift of friendship, by Chief of Council, Chasky Waucapaw. This gift, and the honour bestowed, has been treasured for many years, and is still a valued possession of one of the grandchildren of Robert Lang II.

The site of the new home was on a small hill, facing the beautiful expanse of the blue waters of "Oak Lake". The original homestead of Robert II and Elizabeth Lang was to be known, forever after, by the charming name of "Oakland Heights".

It has been recorded in "The Virden Story 1882-1954" — "Through the untiring efforts of the late Robert Lang, the Town's name was changed from Flat Creek to "Oak Lake".

When Robert Lang II, and his wife, Elizabeth (Wells) Lang, arrived at Oakland Heights in the Spring of 1882, they were the parents of thirteen children. Their eldest son, Robert L. Lang III, was 20 years of age, and all of the children had been born in Ontario. Then three more daughters were born to the family. Isabel Lang was born in 1889, Oriole Edith Lang born in 1892, and Lilian, who died in infancy. The last three daughters were all born at Oakland Heights.

The family all lived and worked the farm together, buying more land as it became available. In 1885 **Robert Lang III** married Margaret MacFarlane, daughter of neighbouring pioneers, William MacFarlane and his wife, Janet (Hood) MacFarlane. The young couple established a home on property about a quarter of a mile from the family home. They had three quarters of a section of choice land along the northern shore of Oak Lake, and they named the farm "Spruce Bank Farm". Robert III and Margaret became parents of nine children, six girls and three boys, all born at Spruce Bank Farm.

**James B. Lang**, second son of Robert II and Mary (Lamb) Lang, married Elspet R. Henderson, eldest daughter of David Henderson and Elspet



Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Lang.

(Christie) Henderson of "Athole Farm", in the neighbouring district of Lansdowne. Several years later, Robert Lang II built a new home for his family on "the Island", and transferred rights to Oakland Heights to his second son, James, and his wife, Elspet Henderson. All seven children were born at "The Heights".

As time went by, Robert Lang II built a new home for himself and his family at "The Island", on a very attractive location under the towering oak trees, and on the eastern shore of Oak Lake. The family continued to live at Oakland Heights while the building progressed. Robert, who was skilled at carpentry, also devised a method of making bricks and clay blocks. He discovered a mound of clay suitable for brick work quite close to the site of the new home. He set up a brick kiln at the clay bank, and eventually molded by hand, and fired enough bricks to surface the entire house. The family were all put to work molding, firing, transporting and piling the fired bricks. When the building, made of oak beams and hand lumber, was completed, Robert made a mortar of lime, sand, and water, and with a plaster trowel, set the bricks in place, on all four walls of the house.

The District in which these families lived had been named "Sandhurst", and when a School was being planned for the numerous children in the community, the Lang family donated in perpetuity, a parcel of land; to be fenced and set aside for the new building.

Robert Lang II, born in Goderich, Ontario, in 1834, died after a long illness, at his Island home at Oak Lake, Manitoba, at the age of 66 years, in the

year 1900. The burial, largely attended by a host of friends from Sandhurst and surrounding districts; as well as by the many Indian friends who had named him "The White Chief", took place in the rural Sandhurst Cemetery on November 14th, 1900.

## Larway

On September 4, 1951 Raymond Bruce Larway of Melita and Margaret McDonald Williamson of Dauphin were married in the Anglican Church in Dauphin. For the first three years they lived in Stonewall, Manitoba where Ray was employed with the Manitoba Telephone System. While in Stonewall a son, Raymond Bruce, called Bruce, was born on July 8, 1952. On February 12, 1954 a second son, John Donald, called Don, arrived.

In September 1954 Ray became Telephone Districtman in Oak Lake, replacing retiring Mr. Fred Graham.

Ray, Marg, Bruce and Don moved into Oak Lake and purchased the Aitken house on #1 Highway. While living here, Ray planted the Manitoba Spruce, which stand tall and proud, he also planted the ones behind the telephone office, now known as The Homestead.

On June 3, 1958 a third son, (Wayne) Scott was born, then on August 15, 1959 another son, (Cole) Kevin. On March 28, 1961 along came the first daughter, Janice Lynn.

With a young family this size, Ray and Marg decided it was time to get off the busy highway where they had lost a few pets. So in May 1961 we purchased a house and 50 acres of land from Alex Gabrielle (by the old slaughter house) formerly owned by Archie Taylor and further back, William and Donald McFarlane. Also 160 acres at SW 28-9-24 from Mr. Graham of Foxwarren and formerly Medenzkie's. All this property was stocked with sheep and still continues to be a sheep operation.

The house on the home place was added on to, also a new barn and tool shed, trees planted and landscaped.

On July 24, 1962 another son, (Dallas) Brett, was born. Then lastly another daughter, Catherine Heather, was born on October 20, 1963. Thus a family of five boys and two girls.

Mrs. E. B. Williamson, Margaret's mother, lived with them from 1954 till 1962 when she moved to Brandon. In 1968 she passed away and is buried in the Legion plot at the Oak Lake Cemetery.

Ray's mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Jack and Verla Larway retired from M.T.S. in 1961 at Melita and came to visit the first summer, in a trailer, and have lived here exactly 20 years.

Ray has coached hockey for 25 years in the Oak Lake Area, is a past President of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #79, served on the Oakwood School board and on the first committee of the Oak Lake and district new arena board. He is a member of the Golf Club, Curling Club, and played on the Oak Lake Baseball, Hardball and Hockey Team back in 1954 and 1955.

Margaret has held offices in the Oak Lake Figure Skating Club, the Ladies Curling Club, the Golf Club, Secretary Treasurer for the United Church Sunday School and has typed for the Oak Lake Town and Country News since its beginning.

The family attend the United Church and Margaret, Janice, and Catherine have taught Sunday School for many years.

All seven children played organized hockey and both girls figure skated. Bruce, Don, Scott and Kevin all played Junior Hockey. **Don** played four years of professional hockey with the Houston Aeros of the World Hockey Association, and American Hockey league and presently is going to Europe to play. Don still lives in Houston and is in business there. **Bruce** is married to H el ene (Bernarden) from St. Eustache, they have two sons, Neil and Marc, and are living in Calgary. Bruce works for Southern Messenger. **Scott** has been employed with The Manitoba Telephone System since 1978. **Kevin** has been working in Calgary for a year. **Brett** has been working with the Canadian National Railway, but plans to take a Heavy Duty Mechanics course. **Janice** graduated as a Laboratory Technologist in June 1981 and is now employed at The Holy Cross Hospital in Calgary. **Catherine** graduated from grade 12 in June 1981 and will take a Commercial Art course.

Ray retired from the M.T.S. on March 22, 1981 after 35 years. We continue to live on our small farm.

## Lawson Family

### by Blanche Elliott (Lawson)

In 1769 there arrived at a small bay on the north shore of Queen's county, Prince Edward Island (then called Isle St. John) a sailing vessel bearing a number of settlers from Ayrshire, Scotland. Among them was a member of the Lawson family, the first of that name to arrive in Canada.

Years later a descendant, Alfred Curtis Lawson, was born on March 12, 1875 at Stanhope, Prince Edward Island. He graduated from Prince of Wales College, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and began his career in education at Covehead, Stanhope, and Cavendish (where L. M. Montgomery attended). In 1900 he responded to the call for volunteers to go west to teach the children of the spreading settlers in the expanding Canada. He

taught at Woodville and Kola schools in Manitoba and at McNaught, Saskatchewan.

In November 1907, he married one of the young women of the district, named Cassie Simpson. Two children Lorne, born in 1908, and Blanche, born in 1910, were added to the family before they left for Oak Lake, Manitoba, in 1912.

Their first home was in one part of a duplex situated in the north end of town. This was owned by Mr. Ed. Lund, a brother-in-law of Alfred's, who was at that time building a new home for them next door.

Alfred Lawson went into the lumber and coal business. He had an office and yard on the south side of the C.P.R. tracks. Later he was engaged as Imperial Oil dealer in which capacity he served for 25 years or more. These were the days of hoisting heavy drums to be delivered over all sorts of roads and by-ways.

Being a public spirited person he took an active part in community affairs. He served as councillor for the town of Oak Lake, was a member of the school board, was secretary of Oak Lake Sports Association, and secretary of the Oak Lake curling club (being charter drawmaster for forty years). He was also on call as a member of the Fire Department.

He took a keen and active part in curling and other sports, and was an excellent marksman, winning many prizes locally and at Winnipeg and Ot-

tawa. In 1909 he won the Dominion Silver Shield trophy for rifle shooting.

He had a talent for mathematics and was available when anyone needed help with problems in balancing accounts etc. He liked working on difficult and intricate problems and puzzles, and one time won a thousand dollar prize for his acumen.

In 1914 another daughter named Lorraine was born and in 1918 a son, Henry, completed the family circle.

A brother, Henry, and sister, Margaret came from Prince Edward Island to live in Oak Lake. Henry assisted in the lumber business until he left to become manager of a lumber company in Waskeda, Manitoba.

Cassie Lawson's forebearers were also early settlers coming to the east coast (New Brunswick) in 1775 and then out to the west at the turn of the century. Her father belonged to the reserve army and had many tales to tell of troubles with Indians and settlers. She was born on April 24, 1887 at Port Elgin, New Brunswick.

Cassie was a devoted homemaker, kind and generous to all who came to her door. During the "thirties" there were many transients travelling through on the highways who were grateful for a snack or meal. She was an excellent cook and received many compliments from those who tasted her delicious huge loaves of bread and cinnamon buns.

Cassie took pride in canning plenty of fruits and vegetables. There was always a large vegetable garden at the back of the property as well as the land belonging to Mr. Lund on the south side of the duplex.

A pet Magpie kept in a cage outside was a point of interest because Cassie had taken time to teach it to talk. A wild goose with an injured wing was also kept until it was able to fly and years previously a pet crow had been given shelter until it became a nuisance to the neighbours.

**Lorne**, the elder son, joined the forces in 1943. Prior to enlisting, he was employed by the Oak Lake News and went overseas in August of that year. He was married to Miss Jean Stewart of Lavinia, Manitoba in 1942. Lorne was killed in action on December 28, 1944 and was buried in the Canadian cemetery of Groesbeek, Holland.

**Blanche** went to Normal School in Brandon, Manitoba after completing her education at Oakwood school. She taught at Sandhurst for seven years. It wasn't the \$75.00 a month salary that kept her there but the splendid boarding home she had for six years with George and Annie Scott and children, Keith and Gwen. The last year was spent with Mr. and Mrs. Adam Scott and family.



Alfred Lawson receiving \$1000.00 for Number Puzzle, 1935.



The backing and support she received from the interested parents of the children under her supervision also kept her there. The yearly Christmas concerts were the highlight affair to be long remembered. She taught at Blair school for part of a year and then was married June 29, 1938 to Reverend Robert Elliott in Oak Lake United Church and now lives in Lethbridge, Alberta. They have two children, Daryl Curtis (Assistant Supervisor with the Water Department) Prince Rupert, British Columbia and Carol Lynn (Social Worker) Lethbridge, Alberta.

**Lorraine** attended Oakwood school and later worked for the telephone company in Oak Lake. She was married in 1942 to Mr. Lloyd Brown of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. She died July 18, 1951. There are two children, Marlene, married and living in Stettler, Alberta and Dwight living in Red Deer, Alberta. Marlene has six children.

**Henry**, the youngest child, received his education at Oakwood school. He was interested in sports especially in curling and hockey and also in music, playing in the town band for a number of years. He enlisted in 1940 with the Winnipeg Grenadier Band. He was sent with the troops to Jamaica then to Hong Kong where the Japanese took the garrison into internment camps. He spent 3½ years as prisoner of war at Osaka returning home in 1945. He helped his father until his retirement and took care of him until he died. He now resides in Stettler, Alberta.

## **W. L. Leach Family**

### **by L. M. Leach**

W. L. Leach thought he would make a fresh start, having served overseas with the Royal Garrison Artillery from 1915 to 1919. He came to Canada in 1923. He was born at East Ord, a village on the borders of England and Scotland. He worked for Mr. W. Katchen in the Oakview area. I followed in 1925 with two small children, Lewens, almost 4 years old and Nancy, 1½ years. We left Glasgow, Scotland, by boat, on May 9th arriving at Quebec on May 19th. I was hanging on to these two small children and the inevitable travelling rug. The voyage was uneventful except for a bout of sea-sickness when passing the coast of Ireland where the sea was very rough. On the train, travelling west, I heard a male voice with a Scottish accent talking about Oak Lake. I approached him. It was Mr. Anderson, father of Bill and Pete. He had been on a trip back to Scotland. He was very helpful and as he was stopping over in Winnipeg to visit his daughter he phoned the Katchen farm where my husband was working and told them we were on the train. I was met at Oak Lake by Mr. Miller, the United Church minister who greeted me with the

words "I come from Berwick-on-Tweed". I couldn't believe it, my home town. I didn't feel such as alien.

He drove us out to the Katchen farm in the Oakview district. My first impressions — Awful roads — the vast distance one could see with the naked eye — screen doors (I hadn't met any mosquitoes yet) — the fascination to see, in the early morning and looking towards the lake, a mirage! (The haystacks on the marsh seemed to stand up over the water.) — and to hear the drumming of the prairie chickens.

As some of my assets had come by cargo boat I had to get the signature of a J.P. before I could claim them. I was taken to Mr. Dan Edy, an elderly crippled bachelor, living alone in the district. The Snelson boys checked on him regularly, watching for the smoke rising from his chimney every morning.

On November 1st, we moved to the Sandhurst district where Sheila was born in 1931 in a log house. We returned to the Oakview district in 1934 during the depression. These are the years I would like to forget. By this time we had acquired a small herd of cattle and eked out a living by milking cows and shipping cream.

The Second World War broke out, Lewens enlisted in the Army in 1941 and went overseas. Nancy went to High School in Oak Lake, then to the Wheat City Business College in Brandon and to the Wawanesa Mutual in Wawanesa, her first job. We left the district in 1944. After finishing school, Sheila worked in the phone office in Oak Lake. Lewens returned home in 1946, a married man. He married a Dutch girl while in Holland, they settled at Oak Lake for some years. Both girls married, Nancy went west, Sheila to Winnipeg.

William L. Leach passed away on July 8th, 1962, in Virden District Hospital. He was buried in Virden Cemetery. I have resided in Virden since that time.

## **Robert John Ledgerwood Family as told by Lila Ledgerwood**

Isabella MacLachlan married Mr. Robert John Ledgerwood, February 24, 1892 at White Lake, Ontario. They came by rail to Oak Lake. The trains in those days were not padded with plush seats. At that time you just sat on hard board seats.

They cooked their meals or boiled the kettle for a cup of tea on a stove in the back of the car.

When they arrived at Oak Lake, Jim Ledgerwood, Robert's brother, took them out to their home with their small amount of goods and chattels.

The main part of the house was built. One room downstairs, two rooms upstairs, and a few years later they built on a kitchen, bedroom, pantry, and a small shed onto the kitchen and end of the bedroom, where

the winters coal was kept. The first few years, wood was used.

There was what they called the sandhills and poplar trees, which grew there about a mile from home. We cut loads of wood and brought them in, in the winter and cut them into stove-length pieces. Some blocks were big enough to split and dry out.

It was very light sandy land, but lots of good hay land. We would cut a lot of hay and put it up in stacks seven to eight tons and then sell it in the winter.

They started with one or two horses and an old ox to break up some of the land. Some years there were fair crops, depending on the moisture, and other years, wind would just blow it out.

They started out with one cow, but gradually ended up with a herd of cattle. Used to milk 15 to 16 cows and shipped the cream. They always had good vegetable and flower gardens. Chickens, ducks, and turkeys were all raised and had to be killed and plucked by hand, and were then taken usually to Virden, which was built after the railroad went through to the coast.

They usually had enough cream cheques and egg money to keep the groceries on the table.

Pigs were raised and butchered in the fall and sold to customers in town. One year two were fed with a nipple and bottle until they got big enough to eat out of a trough.

They had a family of three children; Douglas, Donald and Lila. Each had their own chores to do after coming from school, a walk, of two miles to Oak View School.

Mother very often boarded the teachers, and they would also walk. We had one teacher who said he was going to ride horse-back, but he could not stay on the horse's back, so he gave up and walked.

Oak View School was very often closed for the winter months, so we children would be sent either to an Uncle's home or Grandpa MacLachlan's, who lived in Reston.

We usually spent our Christmas at Grandpa's home. It was a 20 mile drive, but we would have hot bricks or stones at our feet and lots of buffalo robes and blankets to keep us warm. Dad would be up in front standing and driving the team, sometimes swinging his arms and stamping his feet to keep warm. We would start off before sunrise to get there in time.

In 1915, when the First World War was on, Douglas joined the battalion in Virden, one of the first to leave Canada, and was shortly sent to the trenches. He was wounded but still carried another man out on his good shoulder, who could not walk. He returned to action, losing his life July 30th, 1917 and was buried in France.

Mother had many letters of sympathy.

Don went to Regina and joined the 249th battalion, and was sent east, spending most of the winter at Balcartier, before being sent overseas. He too was wounded, and had a silver plate put in his right jaw. Later he was hospitalized with pneumonia but got home in 1919. After his discharge, he took a telegraphers course and was stationed at Hornpayne, Ontario.

Then Dad had an accident, so that left all the chores for Mother and me. We had a good many head of cattle and horses at this time, so Don came home and never went back to his telegraph work.

Mother and I worked outside in haying and harvest time while the boys were away. Many stacks of hay were built besides doing all the milking and other chores. I often would harness up the old chore team and go for loads of hay and then pitch it up in the loft and Mother would put it as far back as possible so we would have enough for a stormy day. The neighbours were good and would come once in a while and fill up the loft.

We used to have some severe snow storms. One night a sleigh load of Indians drove into the yard. They used to drive from Oak Lake Reserve to Pipestone Reserve. They wanted to go home, but Dad told them to unhitch their ponies and stay all night. So after our supper we always went into the front room. Dad told them there was lots of wood to keep a fire going. They had a little baby, and they had lost the nipple off the bottle. There was a new one I had, when I had little pigs, and Mother gave it to them. You would have thought they had a pot of gold. They bathed the baby and fed it, and tucked it in for the night.

The storm had gone down through the night, and when we got up, they were gone and everything was left clean and tidy. The next spring, the old Indian brought Dad a nice load of Oak posts to build a fence around the pasture.

We lived about ¼ a mile from the Pipestone Creek. Just across the creek, an old bachelor, Mr. Daniel Edy lived (N.W. 32-8-25). The creek often flooded in the spring, and would come out over our pasture near the back of the buildings. Mr. Edy had a flat bottom boat, and would row over to our place. He had a good many meals with us. He also had a violin, and he and Mother would play a few hymns. Mother would play the organ. She never had any lessons, but just picked it up by herself.

In the summer, we used to have students come out and have church services. Perhaps, three in a Sunday, in different school houses. Mother would play the organ at each one. They would then go back to College in the fall.

In 1923, I, Lila, went in training and finished in

1926, and from there I went to Winnipeg, and got my R.N.I did a bit of specializing around Virden and different places, and then got on the staff at Shaunavon, Saskatchewan and was there for five years. We did not get the wages that they get today. If we got \$5 for 24 hours and did the housework etc., we thought we were pretty lucky.

Then I got a call to go to Dauphin as night supervisor. I worked from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., for \$75.00 per month, and thought I was doing well. It was about 100 bed hospital and I had 2 floors, 5 wards and the nursery. There were three girls in training to help me, and we had very little time to sit down.

I did that for 10½ years, and then received a call to go to Penticton as assistant matron, and was there two years, when I came home to look after Mother, and did a bit of specialing at night. Don would be home to stay with Mother. He worked in the Land Titles Office until he retired. He started in Virden, and was later transferred to Brandon. Don came back from the office after retiring, and stayed in Virden. I got arthritis so bad that I could not keep up with the work.

We both came into the Sherwood Home in 1973. We were both very comfortable and all were good to us.

Don died October 11, 1979, at age 72.

Mother died June 28, 1959, at age 92.

Dad died May 24, 1933, at age 72.

### **Leitch Brothers 1887-1928**

The Leitch Brothers were born in the Ottawa Valley of Canada East (now Quebec) in the mid eighties of Scottish immigrant parents. Their schooling was brief and wage earning began at an early age in the logging industry on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River. Beside the father and mother, the family consisted of Marion (Mrs. Moore), Archibald, Alexander, Ann (Mrs. Mundie), Angus and Malcolm. The sons purchased the grist mill in Oak Lake in 1887.

Soon after buying it, the first mill burned and was replaced by a mill with an output of 250 barrels a day, later increased to 500 barrels. It was powered by a large steam engine through what seemed like an almost endless array of belts, pulleys and shafts. The steam from the power plant was condensed in a pipe or flume that led to a depression not far west of where the ninth hole of the golf course is presently located. For many years this millpond with its nice warm water provided a popular swimming hole for the local kids. About 1915 or 1916 a large condenser (a tall square lattice like wooden structure) was built to condense the steam so that the resulting water could

be saved and reused in the mill. The mill pond became a thing of the past.

Oak Lake like many of the new prairie towns had street problems. The streets became a mass of mud and ruts in wet weather. To combat this problem the cinders from the mill were systematically spread on the streets and in time when settled and packed the town had lovely flat dry mudless streets as the cinders didn't turn to mud and the rain or melting snow drained right through. Leitch Brothers had a problem of disposing of wagon loads of cinders from their boilers which they had to cart to some place. Fortunately for the town, cinders provided excellent paving.

In those days communications were handled by mail or telegraph and cable came later. Telegraph and cable charges were based on the number of words and in order to keep these costs low companies using these facilities had address codes. For this type of address Leitch Brothers conducted a search and found that there was only one Oak Lake. At the time they could not find another place anywhere with a postal address of Oak Lake. Hence they adopted and registered as their code the words LEITCH OAK LAKE. The same words arranged in a circle around an anchor was trade marked and appeared on all stationery and advertising. It also formed the central portion of many trade marks for different brands of products marketed in Canada, the United States, Britain, South Africa, Japan, China and other countries. In the Orient, in order to introduce and arouse interest in Canadian flours, a chain of bakeries were maintained in Kobe, Yokohama, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Leitch Brothers were members of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange from its beginning in 1889 to 1921 when the flour milling business in Oak Lake terminated.

The four brothers participated in the milling business with the Malcolm Leitch family residents of Oak Lake for over forty years. Their four family homes are still in use.

**Archibald Leitch** had three sons and five daughters. Their home called "Hazledean" is now the Wallace home. In 1898 the family moved to Cranbrook, British Columbia, where Archibald began the East Kootenay Lumber Company. Many grandchildren and great grandchildren survive.

**Alexander Leitch** married Rosemary Findlay of Findlay, Manitoba and they had four sons and three daughters. Their home is now owned by Dr. Scherz. In 1902 this young family moved to Frank, Alberta, a busy coal-mining town, where Alexander began a general store business. The following year the parents and four sons were killed in the Frank slide

disaster. The three young surviving daughters were adopted by uncles. Rosemary (May) returned to Oak Lake to the Malcolm Leitch home. One grandchild, Sheilagh McPhail Yorke, lives in Victoria, British Columbia.

**Angus Leitch** homesteaded at Griswold prior to coming to Oak Lake, where he married Jessie McCoskrie. This union was childless and both Angus and his wife died at an early age.

Following the death of Angus in 1906, a widowed sister, **Marion Moore** of Ottawa, came with her son, Alex, and three daughters, Ethel, Louise and Edith, to occupy his home. This home is now the C. O. Motheral residence. The Moore family returned to Ottawa about 1920.

**Malcolm Leitch** married Edith Shaw in Cameron's Hall, March 22nd, 1899 with the Rev. W. A. McLean officiating. Edith Shaw was the daughter of William Mellis Shaw and Elizabeth Anne Waterson



Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Leitch.

of Walkerton, Ontario. The Shaw family homesteaded in the Woodworth district in 1882 when Edith was two years of age. Mr. Shaw had been a carpenter for the C.P.R. He became the first Reeve of Woodworth Municipality. Later the Shaw family moved to Oak Lake where William Shaw became employed by the Leitch Brothers Milling Company.

The Malcolm Leitch home was called "Inglewood" (presently the Anderson-Whitcomb home). There were six children in this Leitch family: William died in infancy, Maurice, Malcolm, Agnes, Marjory and Kathleen attended school in Oak Lake under principals from Mr. Boyd to Mr. Stokes. For a time at the turn of the century, Malcolm also carried on a coal mining business at Passburg, Alberta (as well as the Flour Milling Business in Oak Lake).

In October, 1928, following the death of Malcolm Leitch, his family moved to Vancouver. Edith Leitch

died in 1967, Maurice at Salmon Arm in 1973 and Agnes at Vancouver in 1979. Surviving are Malcolm of Vancouver, Marjory (Doig) of Brandon and Kathleen (Roberts) of Salt Lake City. Seven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren also survive.

The Leitch Brothers were adventuresome pioneers. It is significant that the Alex Leitch General Store in Frank, Alberta, the Archibald Leitch lumber business in the East Kootenays and the Malcolm Leitch Collieries at Passburg, Alberta were the first business ventures of their kind in each area — a very necessary type of pioneering.

### Joseph Lemaire

Joseph Lemaire was born in Somme, France, and in 1887 he married Marie Belanger, of D'Uguy-L'Eqipee, France. They came to Canada in 1892. They lived first at Whitewood, then Broadview, Saskatchewan. Later they moved to Griswold and then to Oak Lake, where Joseph worked on the railroad until his retirement at age 65.



Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lemaire's 60th Wedding Anniversary.

The Lemaire's had seven children, **Emile, Celine, Victor, Charles, Polixene, Josephine** and **Henri**. They all attended St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church. Their home was a warm friendly one, and there was a special closeness between husband and wife. They had a huge garden, and during the depression Marie fed many, and many a transient. Some returned later to thank her. She was always there when someone needed a helping hand or a friendly word.

Joseph died December 6, 1953 in his 91st year, and Marie predeceased him December 1, 1948, in her 82nd year. Both are buried in the Oak Lake cemetery.



## **Albert Lenning**

### **Louise Lenning**

Albert Lenning was born July 30th, 1909 in St. Claude, Manitoba. Louise was born June 11, 1920 in Rosenort, Manitoba. She moved to Sperling with her family where she went to school.

On September 21st, 1940 we were married. Albert was working for the Massey Harris Co. in Winnipeg. I lived with my parents for a year. On February 17th, 1941 our daughter, Mable, was born at Carman, Manitoba. My family and myself all moved to Oak Lake in April of 1942. Albert was still working in Winnipeg. In 1944 he quit the company and started to work for the C.P.R. in Oak Lake on the track.

Our son, Arthur, was born June 11, 1945. The same day Jock Stewart was killed at the railway crossing and Albert helped to clean it up after the accident.

We moved into town that year and rented the house owned by Guy and Tom Williams. The house has been taken down a few years ago by John Kobialko.

In 1948 Albert drove a caterpillar for the C.P.R. and went to work as far as Fort William and Port Arthur to Rosemary, Alberta. That same year we bought our present home from J. Nicholson. Previous owners were R. Hanson, M. Hart and V. Hollier.

In 1961 Albert went to work in the Weston Shops in Winnipeg repairing the caterpillars. He retired in 1977 and keeps busy fixing someone's troubled lawn mower or engine, and gives a helping hand building, and going to coffee with the boys.

Louise was an active worker in the United Church Young Women's Club, the Figure Skating Club, the Rebekah Lodge, the Ladies Curling Club and the 4-H Club, except for the years she was with Albert in Winnipeg.

Now she keeps busy working on the local paper, on the board of the Senior Citizens Club and on the Housing Authority board.

Our children both attended Oakwood School. Mable was active in C.G.I.T. and the Brownies and Girl Guides. Her sport was skating and she was active in the Figure Skating Club.

Arthur was in the Boy Scouts and played a little hockey. He also loved skating.

Mable was married to Gordon Marshall from Edmonton and has two girls, Lynda and Valdine, and one son, Duane. Arthur was married to Heather Young of Calgary and has one son, Arron, and a daughter, Anne.

They all live in Alberta.

We have five grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

## **R. T. Leonard**

Richard (Dick) Leonard was born at Brantford, Ontario in 1862. He came west with a survey party, connected with the superintendent's department of the C.P.R. in 1881. He homesteaded in the Gainsborough, Saskatchewan area.



Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Leonard.

In 1891 he married Isabelle Battersby of Londonderry, Nova Scotia and they came to Oak Lake in 1893. Mr. Leonard was employed as a grain buyer for the Winnipeg Elevator Co. and Leitch Bros. Flour Mill.

Later he purchased a farm from Johnny Homes, 22-8-24 in the Lansdowne district and ran a mixed farming operation.

The Leonards were members of St. Alban's Anglican Church, and Dick served on the Vestry.

In 1936 they left the farm and retired to Oak Lake. Mr. Leonard died in December 1942 and Mrs. Leonard in 1943.

## **Lepine Family**

Ambroise Dydime Lepine was born in St. Vital on March 18th, 1840. His living descendants know little or nothing about his early days or his parentage, except he had French, Scottish and Indian blood. We understand that he studied for a time for the priesthood.

He first came to public notice when he joined Louis Riel in 1869 and became his adjutant-general in the Provincial government, and as such, was head

of the militia. It was in this capacity that he was judge at the trial of Thomas Scott and was one of the few who knew where Scott was buried. It has been said that he moved to Batoche, Saskatchewan as did his two brothers, after the Red River fracas was settled, but to his family's knowledge, this is not so. He moved to the Oak Lake area in the late 1880's or early 1890's and homesteaded there on N $\frac{3}{4}$  of N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$  of 29-8-24 and lived there until the early 1900's when he moved with his family to Forget, Saskatchewan. His wife died in Forget in 1908. Ambroise lived with various members of his family thereafter and died in Winnipeg in 1923 at the age of 83. He is buried in the St. Boniface cathedral cemetery.

Ambroise was a big man — six feet, three inches tall, well proportioned, and exceptionally strong. Historians say that he had a quick decisive mind, devoted to his homeland, and stood always for peaceful constitutional procedure. His grandson remembers him as a strict, but kind, person who spent much of his later years writing and reading.

### **Mr. and Mrs. John Letkeman**

John and Betty Letkeman were both born and raised in the Haskett-Rhineland area of Manitoba. They spent most of their married life (35 years) in Ste. Anne, Manitoba, where John managed a Co-op bulk oil station. On retirement in 1977 they moved to the former Carl Kennedy home in Oak Lake. They have four children: Evelyn (Friesen) of Steinbach, Beverly (Penner) of Kola, Chester of Winnipeg, and Libby (Wohlgemuth) of Oak Lake.

### **Maisie (Williams) Lewis**

During the scholastic year 1945-46, I taught in the Sandhurst S.D. at a salary of \$1100.00. The school board at that time consisted of August Valley, chairman, Henry Gordon, Secretary Treasurer, and John Sawatsky.

Board and room were arranged for me at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Scott. Unfortunately, the Scotts did not enjoy the best of health, and were



Maisie (Williams) Lewis.

often under the doctor's care. However, they were a wonderful couple with a good sense of humour and treated me like one of the family. The school was practically opposite the Scott's, so I was able to hike home for a hot lunch all year: the only school during my teaching career where I was able to do this. It was great!

I believe there were about twelve students attending Sandhurst School in the fall of 1945. Unfortunately, we lost two of these students later in the fall when the Enns family moved to Griswold to farm. I believe Billy and also Johnny Henderson started school after Easter to help out the school enrollment.

I recall a hailstorm hitting the district in early fall, breaking one of the school windows. Later that fall, a swarm of bees came to make their home in the school attic. Inspector Moore called at this time and was amazed at how calmly we all carried on with our studies, completely ignoring our buzzing visitors. It seems to me D.D.T. had not been a deterrent, so the trustees had a more drastic measure — that of gassing them out.

I recall taking the class on a hike to the sandhills one Friday afternoon. That was quite an experience! Getting a car stuck in the sand was also a different experience. However, the cooperation of kindly neighbours, so commonly found in rural areas, gave the necessary assistance required in such a predicament.

The Christmas Concert was one of the highlights of the year. Telfer Scott had a keen ear for music, could harmonize in a group, and could also play the violin, so was a real asset to the school.

In the spring, I received my first lessons, from the Henderson girls, on trapping muskrats. They had become quite skilled at helping their father trap, skin, and stretch the hides. The spring of 1946 must have been a good muskrat season, for I believe they reported having caught well over a thousand.

The annual picnic brought the school year to a close with its usual races and ball games etc.

I have many happy memories of my year at Sandhurst School, of my associations with the people of the community, their warmth and their friendliness. I often wonder what the future had in store for my students, namely: Jessie, Dorothy, Alice, Phyllis, Billy and Johnny Henderson, Margaret and Murray Williams — niece and nephew of Bonnor Williams; a former Elkhorn teacher of mine, Katrina Mowez, Bob and Wayne Gordon, Egon, Bruno and Ronnie Enns and Telfer Scott. I sincerely hope their lives have been richly blessed over the years.

### **Leys**

June 1926 Mr. and Mrs. John Adam Ironside Leys, under the Soldier Settlement Board Plan, ar-

rived from Aberdeen, Scotland, with their family of four, James, Mabel, Bill and Margaret, settling on S.E. ¼ of 18-10-23.

Winter that year set in early (September) and was severe. Our roads were only prairie trails, and we children walked to school. We could walk on the hard snowbanks and hold onto the wire on the telephone lines. No plumbing in the country schools either, we had to "find" the wee building, almost covered with snow.

Mr. John Leys died in 1941 at 56 years and Mrs. Leys who made her home part time with Mabel or Margaret, passed away in 1967 in her 87th year.

**Jim** — married, and lived in Winnipeg, he worked for Canada Packers. He died in 1974 at 63 years of age.

**Mabel** — the eldest daughter, stayed home with her parents, her ambition was to be a nurse, but since her father was in poor health, she had to help. Life for the family then was very simply lived, money was so scarce, we made our own entertainment, our music was a little gramophone with a large tin horn, that my father had brought from Scotland, which was only allowed to be played on Sunday afternoons.

In 1943, Mabel became the bride of Francis James Holland (Frank), they lived a happy life, raising four children, Ted (deceased) (see note F. J. Holland), Marguerite, now living with her family in Victoria, British Columbia, Elizabeth, (deceased) and Duane who lives with his mother in Oak Lake.

**Bill** — joined the Navy, but due to his father's death, returned home to take over the duties of farming. He married Lila Scott of Forrest in 1950. They continued living at Oak Lake until 1960, when they moved to Oakner, farming there until 1965. Moving to Langruth, they carried on farming until Bill died suddenly November 25, 1977, the first day of deer hunting season, near where he had spent his young life.

There were six children, **Carol** — Mrs. Wayne Irwin of Portage, who has two children, **Kenneth** — married to Kathy Hyde of Shoal Lake; they have one daughter, **Candice** — Mrs. Gerald Arksey of Winnipeg; they have two children, **Donald** — employed by the C.P.R. and **Garth** and **Dana** at home.

Mrs. Lila Leys resides now in Brandon and works part-time in Chez Cloth.

**Margaret** — the youngest, wrote her grade VIII departmental examinations at Harvey School, when she was eleven and a half and won the Charles Piault scholarship. She trained at the Hospital for Mental Diseases in Brandon. She was married during the war to Pilot Officer Arthur Coligan of Morrisburg, Ontario. They have five children, all are living in On-

tario, except the oldest son who lives in Anchorage, Alaska.

Margaret died in 1975 and is buried at Morrisburg, Ontario.

### **Chris and Louisa Lifeso**

The Lifeso family came to the Oak Lake area in the 1890's, rented land and built up their cattle and horse herds. Chris and his son Jack worked out to support the family. While at Oak Lake Jack learned to operate an elevating grader used to build highway and railway grades. Eight horses pulled it and eight pushed!

**Fred** (1899) and **Norman** (1903), born at Oak Lake, were christened by the Presbyterian Minister, the Reverend Guthrie in 1905. Little **Louisa** died before 1903. **Mary** married William Snaith who worked for years at a Hotel in Virden. Their three oldest children, Elsie, Tom and Wm. were all born in Virden.

Chris and Louisa Lifeso and family moved from Oak Lake to the Moose Jaw area in 1907, where they ran a "stopping house" for many years.

Louisa died at Nipawin, Saskatchewan in 1950. Chris passed away at 93, at Melfort, Saskatchewan.

Jack, the only surviving member of the Chris Lifeso family, is now a resident in the St. Joseph's Home in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

Norman married Edna, daughter of Earl C. Maxwell. She has written an interesting story of the Lifeso Stopping House, which appeared in the Western People Magazine in 1980. Edna lives at Paradise Hill, Saskatchewan.

### **Lind**

#### **by Mary (Mustard) James**

David Lind went from Hespeler, Ontario to Oak Lake with Mr. Elder. He set up a dray business, found a house and sent for his family. The time would be about 1891.

Our daughter, Helen, was directed to the house by Mrs. Percy Wallace. She recalls it as being "across the tracks and turn right at the first street . . . it was white, in poor repair and had an overgrown yard." She thinks an elderly man lived in it.

Mary (Dryden) Lind came from Galt, Ontario. She went west by train with her three eldest children — James, Mary and Jessie (my mother — born in Galt, April 13, 1890). My mother was two years of age when the family went to Oak Lake — 1892.

The children born in Oak Lake were:

**Nell** (Mrs. A. N. Smith) — died in Vancouver in the 1970's.

**Bessie** (unmarried) — died in Vancouver in the 1970's.

**Isabel** (Mrs. E. V. Fogarty) — died in Detroit, Michigan in the 1970's.

There was also a son born in Oak lake who died at age two.

The older members of the family:

**James** — died in Vancouver many years ago.

**Mary** (unmarried) — died in Vancouver in the 1950's.

**Jessie** (Mrs. James C. Mustard) — died in Belleville, Ontario in 1968.

My mother (Jessie) was employed in the store of Alex Cameron (of Scotland), and his brother-in-law, Mr. Steen (of Streetsville, Ontario). Her brother, James, also worked for Mr. Cameron. She was active in the Presbyterian church where she played the organ. Her piano teacher was Ella Parker — one of two sisters. Jessie Parker was employed for many years by the Regina school board. Ella became the second wife of Hector Anderson. Mr. Anderson was bank manager for the Royal Bank in Oak Lake. My father, born in Golden Stream, Manitoba (near Gladstone) worked for Mr. Anderson and Mr. Naylor in this bank, before moving to Winnipeg. They were married at my mother's home on September 25th, 1920 and lived in Winnipeg until my father's death in 1952. Later my mother joined our family in Montreal and Belleville, where she died.

The names of good friends were Nova (Campbell) McQueen; Elsie Parsons and Tessa (Mrs. Percy Wallace); Edna Burns, Mary and Pru Hockin; the Cameron family, the Leitch family; Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Smith, of Sparta, Ontario — Dr. Hartley Smith lives in Winnipeg. He attended school with my youngest aunt, Isabel, and still refers to her winning the Governor-General's medal.

I'm sorry I have no outstanding dramatic tales to relate. The agonies of life and death were not dwelt on — occasionally as medical science improved there would be reference to families ravaged by tuberculosis. Belle Johnston (sister was Flora) was one T.B. victim that always brought sadness to my mother. She was to be married about the same time as my parents and she was stricken by T.B.

My mother and her sisters were women of exceptionally even temperament who always enjoyed their friends and laughter. I realize her working day in the store was 12 hours and her maximum pay was \$75 a month.

Dr. W. A. MacLean and Dr. John Cormie were both ministers whom I remember meeting. They had served in Oak Lake.

### **Charles And Elise Logeot** submitted by Theresa King (Logeot)

Charles and Elise Logeot came from Saskatchewan to Hartney, Manitoba in 1929. They moved to



Charles and Elsie Logeot.

Oak Lake in the early thirties, to the homestead, as I call it, bringing with them three sons and four daughters. Then they were blessed with another little girl, giving them a family of eight.

The boys were out working on their own, so they did not attend any of the schools there. The girls attended Hesselwood school. One of the teachers that I remember was Irene Hatch.

We moved from our homestead at Oak Lake in the early forties to farm in the Deleau district. There they built a house and barn, just the two of them. They worked from early morning until late at night, building their home. The boys would come and give them a hand whenever they could. Hard work soon caught up with Dad, and so they had to give up farming which they loved so well. They retired to Souris, Manitoba in 1952. Now to tell you where their eight children are.

**Victor** — married Eleanora Sokol, they have a family of four and live at Deleau, Manitoba.

**Charlie** — married Edith Cantlo, they have a family of four and live at Napinka, Manitoba.

**Rene** — married Gertrude Morris, they have a family of two and live at Deleau, Manitoba.

**Flora** — married Nick Paquette, they have one son and live at St. Malo, Manitoba.

**Bertha** — married Donald Davis, they have a family of two and live at Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**Louise** — married Russell Harbottle and they live at Virden, Manitoba.

**Theresa** — married Lawrence King, they have a family of two and live at Melville, Saskatchewan.

**Irene** — married Fred Grieve, they have a family of two and live at Souris, Manitoba.

I have often heard my Dad and Mother talking about the hard times and the thirties, but as I think back to the family picnics, the Sundays at Oak Lake beach, in a way to me, they were the "Golden Years" when we were all together.

### **Noble E. Loyns**

In December 1913 the drugstore in Oak Lake was purchased by Mr. Noble E. Loyns, then employed in Portage la Prairie. In January 1914 Mr. Loyns moved to Oak Lake to begin the operation of his own business. He boarded for some time at a Mrs. Shaw's.

In the summer of 1915 he was married to May Robinson of Portage la Prairie and they bought a home. A daughter was born to them in August 1917. On November 4, 1918 he died of influenza and is buried at Oak Lake.

During the few years he lived in Oak Lake he took an active interest in the church and community life. He was president of the Oak Lake Young People's Union, superintendent of the Sunday School, and at the time of his death was a member of the Board of the Methodist church. He was also a member of the local lodge of Oddfellows and enjoyed such sports as skating, curling and baseball.

After his death, Mrs. Loyns sold the business to Mr. Glen Walkey, and she moved back to Portage la Prairie.

In 1972 she donated business papers and records pertaining to the operation of the Oak Lake drugstore to the Manitoba Archives in Winnipeg.

### **E. R. Lund**

**submitted by Rubie (Lund) McDonald**

Mr. Edgar R. Lund, born Cookville, New Brunswick, 1876, deceased 1917.  
married

Miss Helen M. Simpson, born Shemogue, New Brunswick, 1877, deceased 1966.

The turn of the twentieth century, and the opening up of the prairies by the Canadian Pacific Railroad, brought boom times to the community of Oak Lake, and especially to Mr. Malcolm Leitch, whose interest was in the flour mill business. This meant expansion and the need for a contractor and architect.

Mr. Leitch learned the name of Mr. E. R. Lund of Elkhorn and district. To persuade him to come and make his home in Oak Lake, he offered him Block "B" on Birch Street, adjoining his own property, Block "A", with the stipulation that he was to build himself a home, besides planning and building the Leitch home, and various buildings to be added at the millsite.

The offer was accepted, and Mr. Lund constructed a small dwelling for himself and his family,

consisting of a living-dining room, a kitchen and an attic; and a workshop, stable and sheds. Later, by the year 1906, the second part of the house was built, containing a parlor (as it was called), a hallway, and three bedrooms upstairs and one down, plus a full sized basement. Around 1930, a sun porch and sleeping balcony were added, which were the last changes until the house passed into the hands of its present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis.

The location of the home was ideal for the raising of a family, and for entertaining many nephews, nieces and grandchildren, who came to visit, as did friends and neighbours. There were seemingly vast expanses of sandhills for the children to roam in, both summer and winter (with a trip to the lake itself as a special treat); wild flowers and berries to pick; peaceful, sunny days (and rainy ones when the attic became an intriguing haven); and plenty of space outside for games, with even a "curling rink" in the back yard. The house itself, with its shady, old trees and window boxes of bright red geraniums, was frequently admired by passersby.

The Lund family were members of the Presbyterian Church and the children attended Oakwood School. **Grace** — became chief telephone operator in Oak Lake, later married, and now lives in British Columbia. **Hazel** — married, and taught school in Manitoba, was a member of the Canadian Women's Army Corps, and later moved to British Columbia, where she lived with her daughter, Maxine, until her death in 1979. Her elder daughter, Doreen, was also a teacher in Manitoba, married, and had two sons, Ian and Michael; all now live in Winnipeg. **Ralph** — was employed by a lumber company in Saskatchewan, where he married and raised a family of three, Elaine, Verlee and Perry. **Rubie** — became a teacher, married the late Alex McDonald, formerly of Oak Lake, and now lives in Winnipeg. **Cyril** — after serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force, became a butcher in Ontario, married, and had a son, Edgar (named for his grandfather) and a daughter, Noreen. Two grandsons thus carry on the name of Lund, as do two great grandsons.

Sad to relate, "Ed" Lund, as he was known, did not live to see his family grow up, but Mrs. Lund continued to reside in the house. She passed away in July in 1966, at the age of 89, having lived to enjoy her home for over sixty years.

### **Postscript**

Around 1914, Mr. Lund built himself a double house on the road north of the Presbyterian (now United) Church. Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Lawson (brother-in-law and sister of Mrs. Lund) lived in it until their own home was built on the adjoining lot, and the double house was later sold.



## Lundy

Marion Lundy was the second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Withers of the Ryerson district. She lived there until her marriage to Willard Lundy in 1940. This was the second year of World War II and Willard, who had enlisted with the Lake Superior Regiment was stationed at Camp Borden in Ontario. For awhile they lived in Barrie, Ontario and later in Winnipeg moving to Oak Lake in the forties.

They had two children, Joan and Jack.

Their first place of residence in Oak Lake was a cottage on the east side of the Masonic Hall. In 1954 they bought Mrs. John Hatch's house, north of the highway.

Marion's sister, Barbara, made her home with the Lundys when she worked in Anderson's store, until her marriage to August Valley in 1960.

Marion and Barbara were very close companions, probably because they had no relatives in Canada.

In their childhood they greatly longed to see their grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins but they were far away in England and Wales.

In 1946 Marion was employed by the Manitoba Telephone System as night operator, at the local telephone office. She later became manager of Operator Services and retired in December 1976 after 30 years of service. Upon her retirement she was presented with an engraved watch, and "Life membership" was conferred upon her by the Telephone Pioneers of America.

The Lundys had quite a menagerie as Joan and Jack were always bringing home stray animals. Some people took advantage and dropped off kittens near the house every fall. It cost a fortune to feed them.

The largest stray to be brought home was a big dog who was named Bowser — the smallest was a pigeon, not yet feathered! He was named "Pete", until an egg was laid; then the name was changed to "Petunia".

Joan and Jack received their Elementary and High School education at Oakwood School. **Joan** became a Dental Assistant and worked in Winnipeg. After two journeys to the British Isles and Europe (on one her Mother accompanied her), Joan decided to settle down and in 1966 married Larry Hart. They live in Winnipeg. At present Joan is a part time employee of The Bay store in Unicity. Larry is employed by Moore Business Forms and is involved in hockey, as a coach.

They have three daughters, Larone, Richelle, and Lindsey.

**Jack** has been employed for a number of years at Deer Lodge Hospital, first in the mail department

and now in the Department of Transport. He also is involved in hockey as a manager.

In 1967 he married Diane Reed and they settled in Winnipeg. Diane is employed by National Drug Ltd.

They have three children, Dean, Dara Lee and Drina.

Marion now lives in Oakwood Place Residence.

## Lutz Family

The SW¼ 23-9-24 was owned by Audrey Irish Lutz from 1944 to 1952. Joint title was arranged in 1945 with husband, John M. Lutz, when he returned from war service, overseas.

The land was sold in 1952 to Percy and Winnie Reed, and later to the Will Wallace family of Oak Lake.

The Lutz family built a home on the property in 1946 and lived there until July 1952, when they moved to Enderby, British Columbia.

The three eldest sons, John, Orval and Lyle, were born in Oak Lake. The fourth son, Lenard, was born in Enderby, where John, Audrey and family reside at the present time.

## Archie Malcolm

Archie Malcolm was one of the very early settlers in the Lansdowne district. The first log school built in 1882 was on his land and he was chairman of the board for several years, also a strong backer in getting the new school built. His was a warm and friendly home where new settlers always found a welcome.

Mrs. Malcolm died in 1890 and Ellen at age 13 went to live with an aunt in the Ogilvie district.

Our information on the family is very sketchy. They apparently left the Lansdowne district in the early 1900's. There were four children: **John** and **Janet**, both of Alberta, **Peter** of Prince Rupert, British Columbia and **Ellen** who married Donald Mac-



Jeanette and Ellen Malcolm.

Lennan of the Gladstone area. The latter returned to visit her old home at the time of Lansdowne School 60th celebrations.

### **Masson Family 1882-1900**

On September 13, 1882 Joseph M. Masson came to homestead the NE¼ 14-8-24. He was the third oldest child of Marie Louise Wolfe and Magloire Masson Sr. from the parish of St. Ambroise de Kildare, just north east of Montreal in the Province of Quebec.

Magloire Masson Sr. then 55 years old next came westward to homestead the SW¼ 12-8-24 on April 4, 1885. He lived with his son Joseph on the NE 14-8-24 while building his house on his new homestead and moved into his new 18' x 20' log home on October 8, 1886. Among the six coming to live in the west were his wife, father-in-law, Charles Wolfe, and his youngest son ten year old Magloire Masson Jr.

By 1889, 44 acres on the ¼ section were in crop, 45 acres had been fenced and a stable and granary had been built. The number of cattle had increased to 10 and two horses were handling the farm chores.

Another son of Magloire Masson Sr., Louis Ulderic, came on May 1, 1888 to homestead the S½ 14-8-24.

In September of 1895 Magloire Masson Jr. bought the homestead from his father. His older brothers, Joseph, Ulderic and Charles sought better opportunities and so moved westward into Saskatchewan after selling out to their youngest brother.

### **The Magloire Masson Family**

Magloire Masson was born in St. Ambroise, Quebec on August 13, 1874, the youngest of a family of six boys and five girls.

In 1886 he moved west with his family and settled eight miles south of the town of Oak Lake in what later became known as the Hesselwood School District.

In January of 1900 he married Emma Donais who had also come west from Quebec with her family and had settled in the same area. Born of this union were Hormidas, Adelard, twins Emerie and Amedie, Edward, Marie Anne, Joseph, and Wilfred.

**Hormidas** — became interested in breeding Jersey cattle on the family farm. He died of encephalitis in 1936, at the age of 36.

**Adelard** — married Anna Dumont and farmed in the Hesselwood District till 1966 when he moved to St. Rose du Lac where he still resides.

**Emerie** — married Ida Parkes of Oak Lake and settled a mile west of the town on the Parkes farm. He died in February of 1976. He was predeceased by Ida who died in 1965.

**Amedie** — and Raymonde Laloyaux were married in 1934 and farmed in the Hesselwood District till they retired to Souris.

**Edward** — remained single. He worked in an aircraft factory in Toronto during the war years. Upon his return west he worked on the family farm till he took over the job of postmaster at Deleau from whence he was forced to retire, due to failing health. He died in 1969.

**Marie Anne** — remained at home on the farm with her parents. She cared for her ailing mother who died in June of 1939. In 1949 she married Rudolph Marciel of St. John, North Dakota, U.S.A. and farmed there till 1969 when she became a widow. Four years later she returned to Canada and now resides in Oak Lake.

**Joseph** — and Emma Bisson of Dunrea were married in 1942 and farmed in the home district till his retirement to Oak Lake in 1980.

**Wilfred** — the youngest of the family, remained on the home farm. He continued in the Jersey cattle business with his father.

On January 7, 1954 Mr. Masson passed away on the farm at the age of 79. Wilfred remained farming till 1972 when he retired to Oak Lake, later marrying Mabel Spiller of Burnaby, British Columbia.

### **Adelard Masson**

Adelard J. Masson, known as Dil, was born December 8, 1901. He was married to Marie Anna Dumont November 12, 1935 and took up mixed farming on 23-8-24. Dil and Anna were known for their good neighbourliness and never too busy to lend a helping hand. As part of his farming, Dil put up hay and baled countless tons, first with horse power and later using a tractor.

He was a kindly nature and even the most trying breaks or situations evoked no more than, "Gee whizz".

They had six children who all went to school at Hesselwood.

**Donald M.** — born July 27, 1936, married Carole Deleau June 3, 1961 and became an auctioneer in St. Rose du Lac. They have three children — Bradley Donald, Myles Jeffrey, and Treena Jo-Anne.

**Ronald Adelard** — born July 27, 1936 and was married to Arlene Swanson April 22, 1961. They had the Post Office in Deleau for many years before Ron went to construction work. Their children are Kevin and Darrell.

**Marguerite M.** — born September 28, 1939. She was married to Raymond Fournier November 25, 1960. He joined the Canadian Air Force for a time. They now live in Hull, Quebec. Their children

are: Jo-Anne Lucille, Andre Robert, Lisa Marie, and Marc Alexandre.

**Paul Albert** — born January 25, 1944 and married Sharlene Valcourt November 8, 1969. They farm in the St. Rose du Lac area of Manitoba. They have two children, Aaron Paul and Tyler James.

**Henri Andre** — born April 16, 1948, married Fern Rath on October 23, 1976. Their children are Dustin Henri and Sacha Sue.

**Ernest Jean** — born April 4, 1950 and married Valerie Delorme April 30, 1971. Their children are Wendy Lynn, Melanie Dawn and Kelly Ernest.

### **Joseph Arthur Masson**

written by Linda Moggach (Masson)

On March 31st, 1913, a son, Joseph Arthur, was born to Emma Donais and Magloire Masson Jr. on their farm eight and a half miles south of Oak Lake. He was the second youngest son of a family of six brothers, and one sister.

For a total of ten years he attended Grande Clairiere's Convent and Hesselwood school, the lack of pupils forced the school to close and the students to go to Lansdowne School.

In 1929 Joseph joined his brothers and sister in carrying out the daily chores on the farm. He liked reading, baseball, hockey, and picture shows. His main interest was farming, raising Jerseys and beef cattle, putting up hay, trapping muskrats in the spring.

In 1939 Joseph's mother passed away, leaving his sister, Marie-Anne, alone with the housework. It was too much for her to carry on with all the task. A girl, Marie-Emma Bisson, who had been raised on a farm in Dunrea, Manitoba was hired in 1941, to help out for the busy season. The following summer she was rehired.

Due to World War II Joseph was called for military training early in August, a postponement was applied for, and granted on August 20th, 1942.

On October 16, Joseph and Emma were engaged, and plans for their wedding were made. They were married in St. Felix Roman Catholic Church in Dunrea, Manitoba on November 25th by Reverend Harold Roy, former parish priest of Oak Lake.

The couple resided at his dad's farm until the war was over, at which time his brother, Wilfred, returned home to take over.

Joseph and Emma and their three children moved to their own farm S.W. 14-8-24 about half a mile from the home place.

An older house was bought from Mr. Jim Jiggins of Deleau, Manitoba in 1945, and was moved to its present site, pulled by three tractors, after the first snowfall.

A carpenter, Mr. Raymond Laloyaux, and his workers were hired in the spring, and the house was ready to move into July 19, 1946. The barn was completed and six harnessed horses, moved in their stalls. They had eight cows, including four Jerseys and twenty-four chickens.

A family of nine children were born, eight lived.

**Gerald** — born October 3, 1943, married Geraldine Verrvey of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba in June 1969, lives on a farm in Bagot, Manitoba.

**Louanne** — born September 18, 1944, married James Lyle of Dryden, Ontario in January 1965, lives in Dryden, Ontario.

**Lucie** — born September 3, 1945, married Raymond Meilleur of Fisher Branch, Manitoba in June 1970, lives in Calgary, Alberta.

**Robert** — born March 1, 1949, married Brenda McKinnon of the St. David's District Oak Lake in September 1972 and lives on a farm south of Oak Lake.

**Lorraine** — born on March 30, 1950, married James Dyer of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba in June 1972, lives in Marathon, Ontario.

**Lorette** — born October 3, 1951, married Wayne Ament of Rosburn, Manitoba in 1975 and lives in Wasa, British Columbia.

**Linda** — born July 12, 1953, married James Moggach of Hamiota, Manitoba in August 1972, lives in Calgary, Alberta.

**Daniel** — born May 6, 1957, married Elaine Ballingall of Calgary, Alberta in March 1979, lives in Calgary, Alberta.

In 1979 time to retire came, the farm was sold, a lot was chosen in the town of Oak Lake, Manitoba where a house was built by Abbott Enterprises and was ready to move into by early spring 1980.

### **Earl C. Maxwell**

Earl C. Maxwell came to the Oak Lake area in the Dirty Thirties with his cattle and horses from the dried out Radville area of Southern Saskatchewan.

One son, Chester E. Maxwell, bought a farm at Oak Lake at the same time. "He was badly burned when he tried to rescue an airforce man from a downed plane — not knowing that the pilot had baled out earlier. Chester received a medal from the government" for his gallant effort.

He sold the farm to C. Rousson and moved to California in the early 1950's.

Earl Maxwell's daughter Edna, married Norman Lifeso.

### **Sebastian and Sophia Maziary and Family by Agnes Corner**

It was the year 1912 when Sebastian Maziary obtained release from the Polish Cavalry Officer at



Sebastian and Sophia Maziary.

Gorlezina, Poland, in order to join his friends to emigrate to Canada. Right from the Halifax harbour where the Liner docked, Sebastian was recruited by the C.P.R. to help build the C.P. Station in Brandon, Manitoba.

After the building project was completed, Sebastian continued working for the C.P.R. track maintenance crew. In 1918, while he was assigned the Oak Lake area route, the town and people there appealed to him, and he felt this was where he would like to settle and call home. He bought a lot #19, south of the tracks and built a small house. He purchased a 1919 Model T Ford, one of the first in Oak Lake in order to visit with his Polish friends who still lived in Brandon.

One of his close friends had a niece, Sophia, in New York City, whom Sebastian knew and grew up with in his homeland village. Sophia left Poland at age 18 to join her sister and family friends in New York. She had returned to Poland to marry when W.W.I broke out and her newly married husband was

killed in action. Feeling very forlorn she sailed back to the States, and was employed in a large rich family home "Rubensteins" when Sebastian began corresponding with her. Sophia had been very fond of her uncle, so when she received the train ticket and spending money she decided to go to Oak Lake to see her uncle and Sebastian.

Sebastian and Sophia were married July 11, 1921 at St. Hedwigs Church in Brandon. Sophia had a difficult time getting used to a small Manitoba town, her fashionable clothes were out of place here, and she was often asked by curious ladies to show them her trunk of garments. George Smith, among others, asked "Where did you get such a fashionable lady, Seb?" Mrs. Pete Fiori and others asked if she could spare one of her stylish dresses.

Sebastian and Sophia had three daughters, all born in the house in Oak Lake and attended by nurse Goodwin. Julie born May 2nd, 1922, Katherine February 7, 1924, and Agnes January 23, 1926.

Sebastian loved music and soon became a member of the Oak Lake Citizens Band, playing a C or B-flat clarinet during the band's formative years. His neighbour Russell Hogg, one of the bandmasters, encouraged him and taught him how to read music, etc. Seb or "Soup" as he was known by the band members never would miss a band practise or performance — this was a real high-light in his life!

In 1927 Sebastian purchased a small farm south of the C.N. tracks and moved his family there. When a job came open at the C.N. railway at Algar he tried working there and farming. When he was able to rent and buy more land he gave up the railway job and farmed there until retiring in 1957. The farm was sold to Laurence Newton and Sebastian and Sophia returned to their house in town.

#### **Recollections:**

**Historical** — While living on the farm we were visited each summer by an Indian family who travelled some distance in their democrat pulled by two thin, tired horses and followed by several skinny dogs. They asked permission to go through our pasture which we rented from the government. We suspected there was an ancient Indian burial ground at one end of this pasture. It was a small hill and lacking vegetation. Even our cattle would not go anywhere near there. There were animal bones and skulls around there as well. The Indians who came were friendly but we had a difficult time understanding them. Mother would always give them some meat, bread and milk for their journey.

**Depression** — A mile north of our farm the C.N. trains would stop for water, and during the Depression days, the men who were riding the boxcars would get off and come to the farm houses in sight for

food and water. Although there would be two or three get off the trains, only one would go to a farm, in that way we would feel safe giving them food. None of them ever gave us any trouble and were always fed after washing up outside.

**World War II** — During the war years when the Oak Lake band members were getting small in numbers and the band folded up, we (Dad, Katharine and Agnes) joined with other band members, like Victor Decroliere, Jack McLeish, Jim Smith, etc., and formed our own local dance band. We attempted playing the latest war song hits, but didn't have enough time to practice the music sheets. (We all had to pitch in helping with harvesting and haying.) We travelled to other communities playing for dances. Travelling in the winter was very difficult and arriving at still unheated halls, then trying to thaw out our instruments before playing; but we hung in there for the sake of music!

We recall one Christmas when the Dufily family were entertaining several army and airforce boys at their farm over the holidays, Mr. Dufily came to get us and a couple of other band members by horses and wagon sleigh after a real heavy snowfall. We kept warm with heated bricks and animal skin blankets. Of course we could not get back to our farm chores



Kathrine, Agnes and Julia Maziary.

until afternoon the next day, but it seemed all meaningful and enjoyable in those days.

The Maziary girls, Julia, Katharine, and Agnes, all attended Oakwood School and were confirmed members of St. Athanasius Catholic Church.

**Sebastian** — passed away in his home November 2, 1964 at age 80, due to cancer.

**Sophia** — at this writing is 91, lives at Central Park Lodge in Edmonton, and spends weekends with her daughter, Julia and family. She still owns the house which Sebastian built in 1918 — her heart and best friends are still there in Oak Lake, where she wishes she were able to be today!

**Julia** — moved to Brandon from high school, and then to Winnipeg, where she worked in Fur Salons as a design finisher. She married John Olenik of Brandon August 29, 1952 (at St. Hedwigs Church, the same church where Sebastian and Sophia were married 31 years before). Julia and John moved to Edmonton, where they still reside at this writing (1981). They were blessed with two daughters, Prudy and Janice, and adopted a son, Thomas.

**Katharine** — stayed close to her parents, marrying a local boy, Ronald Gompf, May 10, 1948, after Ronald received his release from the Army. He had returned from World War II action in France and Holland. They bought a farm north of Kenton where their two daughters, MayAnn and Valerie, and son, Ronald (Butch), were born. Katharine passed February 19, 1962, at age 38, due to cancer. Ronald now resides in Southern Alberta and has since remarried.

**Agnes** — attended Business College in Winnipeg after high school, then worked in business offices as secretary/bookkeeper. She married Charles Corner of Winnipeg and they reside in North Vancouver, British Columbia. They have one son, Mark, and two daughters, Laura and Diana.

## Meadows

submitted by **Thelma (Meadows) Davis**

William Walter Meadows, born in Omeme, Ontario on May 20, 1877, came west in pioneer fashion at the age of four, and settled with his family for a short time at Brandon before moving to a farm near Griswold, Manitoba. In later years, all five brothers (John, Robert, Thomas, James and Walter) purchased homesteads in or near the vicinity where they had located as boys. Eventually, Thomas moved to Alida, Saskatchewan; and there, for many years, continued to farm.

At Hillsdale School, south of Griswold, Walter acquired his education in the difficult manner of the past; attending classes when not working on the farm.

Throughout his early years and into manhood, he



was keenly interested in sprinting participation; and, at this, he was very successful.

On November 25, 1908, at Oak Lake, he married Mary Winnifred Young, a lady from Harwood, Ontario. Having come to visit her sisters, wives of two Meadows brothers, she met and later married a third brother, Walter.

Together, they farmed southwest of Griswold until moving to Oak Lake in December, 1927.

In 1928, Walter, with his horses, helped in the construction of the town Pool Elevator.

Of the 1908 marriage, six children were born who all lived at Oak Lake for some time. However, the only present home town resident of the Walter Meadows family is **Marjorie**— Mrs. George Torrance — whose husband, a local resident and former Griswold citizen, died November 3, 1978. For many years, Marjorie was employed by the Manitoba Telephone System at Oak Lake; the last fifteen in the capacity of Chief Operator.

**Myrtle** — Mrs. Cecil McMillan, deceased February 2, 1936 at the early age of twenty-three, resided at Griswold with her husband, a Griswold-born citizen, for the short duration of her married life. Of this union, there was one child, Doreen, Mrs. Ronald Carstairs. She, with her husband and children, Kenneth and Joanne, now make their home at Winnipeg.

**Irene** — deceased June 9, 1979, was the wife of Harold Cairns from Oak Lake, deceased February 3, 1979. From November 1939 until October 1976, they farmed eight miles north of Oak Lake on N.E. 30-10-23. They had two children, Dennis and Debra, Mrs. Eugene Sturby, both of Brandon. Three grandchildren were born, one after Harold's death.

**Christina** — residing at Estevan, Saskatchewan, married William Allum from south east of Oak Lake. For many years, Bill worked from the home town, with the Canadian Pacific Railway. Their only child, James, lives at Calgary with his wife, the former Helen Andreas, from Davidson, Saskatchewan, and their family. Chris and Bill have five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**Thelma** — Mrs. Raymond Davis, after spending some time teaching at The Pas, settled at Winnipeg with her husband, originally from Manor, Saskatchewan, and their two daughters, Shauna and Glennis. Ray was at one time an employee of Jack Knight at the Oak Lake Meat Market.

An only son, **Walter Mervin**, of Brandon, lived all his boyhood and some years of his manhood at the home town, where, after leaving school, he worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway. He is presently employed as Assistant Roadmaster. His wife, the former June Elliott from Carberry, was an employee of the Manitoba Telephone System at Oak Lake. To

them was born a son, Walter Garry, and a daughter, Judy, Mrs. Fred Todoruk of Dauphin. Garry married Diane Morissette of Fannystelle, Manitoba; and, on December 9, 1980, they became parents of a daughter, Therese Colette.

For many years, the house previously owned by Mr. John McFarlane was the family home; and remained so until it was demolished in the spring of 1965. After that time, Mrs. Walter Meadows (Winnifred), now widowed, went to live with Marjorie and her husband in a new home on the adjacent lot.

Winnifred, always interested in the United Church, was, in 1975, given the honour of helping to cut the anniversary cake commemorating the seventy-fifth birthday of the church; fifty of these years functioning as United.

The passing of Walter on January 10, 1952 marked the closing chapter in the life of that Meadows generation. Twenty-five years later, March 18, 1977, his wife, Winnifred, joined him.

### **The James Milne Family submitted by W. Glen Milne**

James Milne (1863-1928) of Rathem, Scotland came to Canada as a lad of eighteen and spent several years in Ontario before moving west with CPR construction crews, reaching Calgary in the early 1890's. He returned to Oak Lake to work for George Gordon (Lansdowne) and while there helped out at a farm auction. Mr. Milne was on a rack displaying a grain bag which he said contained 25 other identical bags; when challenged and asked to show all of them, he claimed that was entirely unnecessary as he had personally examined and counted them the night before and they had his word on it. After further heckling, he finally dumped out the contents — and what a sorry mess of useless, mouse-eaten bags had never been seen before!! Mr. Milne's auctioneering efforts ended when he leapt from the rack in pursuit of a practical joker and his partner who had so effectively set him up, and were in hysterics at the edge of the crowd.

In 1895 he returned to Fergus, Ontario, and married Isabel Lindsay (1871-1908) and moved to Harvey District. They settled on the SW¼ of 9-10-23 and later purchased the N¼ from R. K. Smith. A splendid three-storey frame house was built in 1906 complete with hot and cold running water, a sewage system, carbide gas lights and a bathtub. Mr. Milne was a good manager whose talents were enlisted by the School Board and the Masonic Lodge. Tragedy struck their home in 1908 when Mrs. Milne died of peritonitis. She left three small boys — George, Allan and Henry (Harry). The whole community mourned her loss.



James and Isabel Milne 1895.

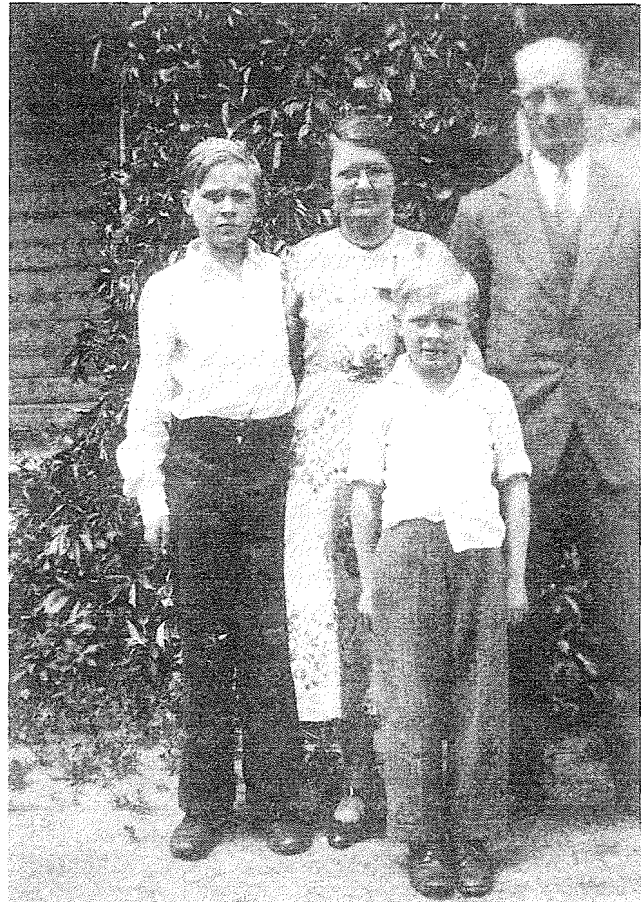
His brother, John, came from Scotland to live with them and later Eliza Jane (Jean) Agnew (1886) arrived as housekeeper. She and Mr. Milne were married in 1915 and had two children — Douglas and Dorothy. James and Isabel were buried in Oak Lake cemetery. Jean is living in Calgary but at age 95 her eyesight and famous memory have dimmed considerably.

All the Milne children attended Harvey and Oak Lake Schools.

**George** — (1895-1962) took an agricultural course and served in England during World War I. In 1920 he married Annie Smith (1896-1959) of the Alec Smith family (Runnymede). They started farming on the S½ of 9-16-23 where they built a neat cottage. Along with their two boys, Harvey and Glen, they moved to the home farm in 1930 where the original 3-storey house was reduced to cottage size. About 1959 George and Annie moved to Oak Lake where they both died within three years; burial was in Brandon cemetery.

**Allan** — (1897) graduated in Dentistry from University of Toronto and practiced in London, Ontario. He served in England during WW II, suffered a stroke in 1966 and is currently a patient at the Veterans Hospital in London.

**Henry** — (1903) graduated in Engineering from



George Milne Family.

University of Michigan and spent 41 years with the Bell System in Cincinnati, Detroit, Cleveland, Denver, NYC and Chicago. While in Cleveland, he married Ida Darling Walby (1912) who bore two children — Lorraine and James William. Henry and Ida retired in 1968 and are now living in Clearwater, Florida.

**Douglas** — (1916) served in the merchant marine for many years and then moved into construction work in Seattle. He is retired and has remained in Seattle.

**Dorothy** — (1920) graduated in Nursing and in 1943 married Robert Pollock of Hamiota. They have two girls, Sharon and Carol, are retired and now live in Westbank, British Columbia.

Harvey (1923), elder son of George Milne, while serving overseas in WW II, married an English girl, Iris Haines (1919). On his return Harvey took an agricultural course and studied insurance and land management. They have two children — Collin and Lesley Joy, and live in Vanderhoof, British Columbia.

Glen (1926) began teaching in Winnipeg and obtained his BA degree there. In 1951 he married Eunice Hunter (1927) of Brandon and moved to Cal-

gary where he became principal of a large elementary school. They have three children — Heather, Donald and Bruce, and are still quite active.

### **Mr. and Mrs. John Michie**

Mr. and Mrs. Michie came West to Oak Lake in the late 1800's or early 1900's. They settled on the east half of 14-11-24 directly north of Henry Tolton. A large red brick house was built on a rise in the land to the south. To the west in the hills was a pond of the clearest water in Manitoba.

They were staunch supporters of the St. David's Presbyterian Church, driving the three miles in a democrat with ponies. Mr. Michie spoke affectionately of "The Ponies".

They had a family of six: Ina, Etta, May, Hazel, Melville, and Goldie. Ina (Mrs. Clark) lived on the George Michie farm, while Etta died in her early twenties. All attended Verity School.

The Michie family moved West to Birch Hills in 1911, the farm was purchased by Henry Tolton. Mr. and Mrs. Michie and Etta are interred in the Johnston Cemetery.

A brother, George, lived across the corner, south on the west half of 12-11-24. Their family, Laura and Lorne, attended Verity School.

### **Mitchell, Wm.**

**submitted by Eileen M. Coulter**

I, Eileen Mary Mitchell, was born May 12, 1928. My parents were Wm. and Bertha Mitchell. I was born in the Ryerson District and when Mother died two months after, I made my home with the John Patersons, attended Ryerson School and High School at Oak Lake.

I married David John Coulter of Virden, and presently live west of Virden, where we operate "D. J. Coulter and Sons Auto Wrecking".

We have a family of eight, seven sons and one daughter: Ted of Virden, Lynn of Oak Lake, Robert, Kelly and Sandy at Red Deer, Alberta, Shelley, Les, and John at home.

### **Alex Moar**

In 1910 Alex Moar arrived at Swanson, Saskatchewan from Unist Shetland Islands, Scotland to help his brother Bill Moar on the homestead. Bill Moar had come from Scotland the previous year and started the homestead.

Violet Atkinson arrived with her parents from Little Current, Ontario and settled in the Birdview, Saskatchewan area which is the next town to Swanson. On March 14th, 1917 Alex Moar and Violet Atkinson were married in Sutherland, Saskatchewan. From then until March 1921 Violet, Alex and



Anniversary Picture.

Bill worked the homestead at Swanson. There were three sons — Alex Jr., Douglas and Gordon.

In October 1966 Alex, Violet and Bill moved to Oak Lake purchasing the Gregson house. They enjoyed retired life until Alex passed away October 11th, 1969 and was laid to rest in the Griswold Cemetery. On March 7th, 1970 Bill passed away suddenly and was laid to rest with his brother Alex. Violet remained in the home until 1972 when she decided to sell and move to Calgary closer to her family. She purchased a mobile home and remained there until she chose to move to Kelowna in June 1979. She is still enjoying good health as of her 81st birthday, July 5, 1981.

### **Modelands**

**submitted by Ella Gordon**

Thomas Edward Modeland married Elizabeth Doherty and moved from Woodstock, Ontario to Portage la Prairie about 1880.

The family moved to Oak Lake in 1884 and lived for a short period on the farm now owned by Wm. Olive. Their family — Elizabeth, born 1877, Annie born 1882 and Mable born 1884, died in infancy. They drew lumber to their homestead to build a home in the Pleasant Plain district, west of Oak Lake. Logs were also used as well as sod.

Seven children were born in this district. William 1886, Edward 1888, Norman and Mildred (twins) 1891, Seward 1894, Alvin 1896 and Isabel 1898. The children attended Pleasant Plain School and some later in Oak Lake.

Elizabeth (the mother) died in June 1904.

Some years later they bought another farm 3



Thomas and Elizabeth Modeland.

miles west and built a new house, known as Pete Penners, now Roussons.

**Elizabeth** married Dave Morfitt and moved away, **Annie** married Rudolph Ronberg in 1903 and lived in the Oak Lake District until 1964. **Edward** died at the age of 17, the result of a threshing machine accident in 1904. **Mildred** trained as a nurse and worked in Canada and U.S.A. **Seward** and **William** served in Europe for four years during World War I. Upon his return Seward trained as a barber, William farmed. **Alvin** worked at home and at Russell Baileys until 1927 when he left to work and reside in Detroit.

**Isabel** trained for a school teacher in Brandon and taught in Saskatchewan, marrying Ben Nicholas.

**Thomas** later married, Mrs. Hutton and moved to Oak Lake and built the house where Allan Gordon used to live. He passed away in 1927 and his second wife in Calgary in 1936.

**William** and **Norman** took over the home farm and later farmed the Leitch farm, also Donaldsons, until they retired to a house on the Ronberg farm. They later bought the Banister farm east of the Golf

Course. In 1964 they moved to Souris with their sister Annie. William passed away December 1964, Norman August 1975 and Annie November 1977. All the family are now deceased.

## R. A. Montgomery Family

### Eleanor Montgomery

Robert Alfred Montgomery and his wife, Esther Emma James, were born in the Ottawa Valley. Mother's ancestors emigrated in 1820 from the adjoining borders of Wicklow and Wexford counties in Ireland to Almonte, Ontario. My grandfather, Oswald Montgomery, age 19, left Cavan County with his parents in 1832. They settled near Lanark, Ontario.

Father was born November 22, 1866 and Mother on April 27, 1867. They belonged to the same church and shared similar political persuasion. Although they were both staunch in their beliefs they were tolerant and judged others as individuals regardless of colour or creed.

Mother was the second child of eleven. Her older sister, Minnie, died, age ten, from appendicitis. So Mother became a responsible helper. Her next brother, John, died at sixteen from Rheumatic Fever. As Mother grew up in the original homestead, her knowledge of family history was vast. Father was the youngest son of a family of fourteen. In those days many children died young. His father, Oswald, was married twice. Grandfather died when my father was a lad. Robbie was born in a log house on the banks of the Mississippi River (Ontario) but never learned to swim. It could be that farm chores which included picking stones had greater priority.

My parents were married in their early thirties January 26, 1898. My grandmothers married at 18 to men 28 and 32. They lived with grandmother Montgomery near Lanark, Ontario. When she died, Father took Manitoba Fever. Five of his brothers settled in Winnipeg when Main Street was an oxcart trail. Father bought an improved farm beside the Sioux Valley Reserve in Ryerson district. It was homesteaded by Duncan McCallum. My parents with Mother's cousin, Ellie Jackson, and their five children, Thomas, Mabel, William, Mary Anne (Mollie) and Baby Oswald, came west on a slow train with their settler's effects in March 1906.

Father could adapt to a new environment. Mother who was a born homemaker and appreciated her new, kind neighbours, yet yearned for her own folk. Her tales of her Grandpa James and his younger brother Ben's life in Ireland and pioneering in the bush were part of me. We had no relatives close by. My brother, Bob, and I were born out West. I shared the neighbour's kin. I had an aunt Maggie Clark on the next farm and Uncle Harry Cowing. Perhaps the grand-



parents were the old Indians who frequented our home.

The family took whooping cough when Bob was three months old (1908). He survived. My brother, Ossie, died (2 years). He was a delicate child who was exceptionally bright and bonnie. The type the old timers always said were too good to live.

Our home had the open door. Strangers and callers were always given food, shelter and encouragement. Many house parties took place over the years. Once the guests had to wait out the storm. Anglican church services, World Day of Prayer and Red Cross meetings were also part of life.

My parents had a Christian sense of values, a ready Irish wit and a keen sense of humour that set us a good example. Father was involved in the community. He was on the vestry of St. Alban's Anglican



Montgomery Family and Aunt Gladys James — standing.

Church, a trustee of Ryerson School, a councillor of Ward I, Woodworth Municipality, President of Oak Lake Fair, and the Wheat Pool and Grand Master of the Masons. Mother was supportive in his efforts.

In the early period in Manitoba, a terrified peddler came to the door. Someone had told him that the Indians would scalp him. Pow-wows were common.

One afternoon when Mabel and Bill were decorating Mother's long black locks with turkey feathers as she sat mending, a knock came to the door. Mother answered with her hair flowing and bedecked. When she returned to her sewing, she realized why the stranger had given her such a queer look.

Doing a man's work was the aim of the farm boy. Tom drove three horses on binder when he was nine. At 82 he hoes the garden.

I remember when the crop was out in stooks all winter. It was threshed in the spring. Neighbours helped put in the crop. Farmer friends were always ready to help in an emergency such as the 1918 flu or in any trouble. Mr. and Mrs. Gompf went to their neighbour's when they butchered pigs. Mr. Gompf's sausages were so delicious.

The wheat was rusted in 1916. Hail has also added to loss. Horses died of distemper. Cows bloated from eating clover.

My sister, Molly, was a jolly generous soul. She taught school for four years. In June 1929 she took seriously ill. Her years of suffering from her eyes were caused from brain tumour. She died in October at the age of 26.

I began teaching that year. It was also the beginning of the Dirty Thirties. I taught 11 years in rural schools and 28 years among Indians. I didn't experience "Cultural Shock".

Father died in September 1938. He had poor health but never complained of his lot. Mother passed away suddenly in June 1944.

Mabel remained at home. Her career was being useful.

In closing I am proud to quote of my parents, "It is not a man's purse but by his character, that he is rich or poor."

### **The William James Franklin Montgomery Family**

William Montgomery is the second oldest son of Robert A. and Emma E. Montgomery (nee James). Bill was born in a log house on December 27, 1901 near the town of Lanark, Ontario. The Montgomery family made the journey from Lanark to Oak Lake by train, the trip taking approximately one week. Bill recalls the train seats were made completely of wood and very uncomfortable. Each family on the train had to cook their own meals on a small cookstove provided in each caboose.

Bill attended Ryerson school which was approximately 2½ miles from the Montgomery farm. He and his brothers and sisters would make the journey by horse and buggy in the summer and by team and sleigh in the winter. Bill remembers taking his sister, Eleanor, to school with a pony called Maude. It seems that Maude was a good pretender. On their way to school Maude would have to pass a slough. She would become lame as soon as she neared the slough and would head straight for it. Not even a good whipping would deter her from entering that slough. She had a mind of her own — a contrary one at that! Bill would have to get out of the buggy and lead her out on the road. Then off she would go without a hint of lameness.

The family attended St. Alban's Anglican Church in Oak Lake. Bill served as People's Warden for the church for a four year term in the early 1960's. Other community involvement consisted of being one of the directors on the Oak Lake Pool Elevator board for a two year term.

When Robert A. Montgomery Sr. passed away in





Montgomery Home.

1938, Bill took over the farm. He actively farmed until 1977 and is presently renting it to his two nephews, Greg and Michael Baker.

Bill married Eileen Gray on January 15th, 1945 in Young United Church in Winnipeg. Eileen is the elder daughter of J. Edward and Mary Ellen Gray (nee Etsell). Eileen was born in Bradwardine, Manitoba and moved with her parents to the Brierwood district in 1918. She attended Education Point School for her elementary education and took her High School at Harding, Manitoba. In April of 1932 the Gray family moved to the Ryerson district on to a farm previously owned by Tom A. McGhie. Eileen's brothers, Alden, George and Henry Gray, are still actively farming in the Ryerson district.

Bill and Eileen have one daughter, **Karen**, who is working as an R.N. in Winnipeg. Karen married Fernando Diubaldo on June 25, 1977 at St. Ignatius Church in Winnipeg. They are presently residing in Winnipeg.

### **Robert S. and Bessie Montgomery submitted by Judith Montgomery Beard**

Robert S. was the fourth son of the late Robert A. and Emma Montgomery, who came from Ontario with five children in the spring of 1906 and settled NW 16-10-23 in the Ryerson District.

Robert S. and Eleanor were born on the home farm December 24, 1907, and December 29, 1909.

Robert attended Ryerson and Oakwood Schools, was a member of St. Alban's Anglican Church, served on the Vestry as Peoples' Warden. He played with the Oak Lake Citizen's Band, and with the Winnipeg Grenadiers Band, and was also an avid baseball player, back catcher his position. As a member of the Masonic Order, he held many offices, receiving his fifty year jewel in March, 1979, and is a member of Oakwood Chapter O.E.S.

Bessie was the third daughter of the late Wm. and Agnes Gompf, who resided in the Harvey District, NE ¼ 8-10-23, where they farmed and she was born,

February 18, 1911. She attended Harvey School, was a member of St. David's Church, and a member of St. Alban's Guild.

Robert and Bessie were married November 26, 1940 in Oak Lake and resided on a farm at NW 17-10-23 in the Ryerson District, until retiring to Wawanesa, Manitoba, in September, 1976.

Their family consists of three daughters, Judith, Roberta and Catherine, and one son, Keith. The children all attended Ryerson, Oak Lake and Virden schools, and were members of St. Alban's Anglican Church.

**Judith** — was born in Brandon March 24, 1942, during a terrible blizzard that stopped trains from Oak Lake to Brandon. She was married December 23, 1959 to James Beard of Trossachs, Saskatchewan and he works for the P.F.R.A. They have one daughter, Susan, and three sons, Wesley, Barry and Arron. Susan was born at Hamiota and took her Grade I at Ryerson School. She is a graduate Psychiatric Nurse. Wesley and Barry were born in Hamiota. They attended St. Alban's Church and Sunday School, and resided at SE 18-10-23, Oak Lake, and NW 16-10-23, before moving to Trossachs, Saskatchewan, in 1966. Their youngest son, Arron, was born in Weyburn. In January, 1981, their first grandchild, and Robert and Bessie's first great grandchild, Charity Dawn, was born to Barry and Wendy Beard, of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan.

**Roberta** — was born September 19, 1950 at Hamiota, and graduated from Red River College as a Licensed Practical Nurse. She married Richard Cliche of the Royal Bank, Winnipeg, March 30, 1974, where they now reside. They have one son, Jeffery, and two daughters, Adrienne and Lindsay. Roberta is employed at Winnipeg General.

**Cathy** — was born August 27, 1952 at Hamiota. After her schooling she graduated from the Selkirk Mental Hospital as a Psychiatric Nurse, where she worked, and went on to graduate as an R.N. also. She married Roy Sveinson, a Reimer Express Lines driver, of Selkirk June 28, 1975, where they now reside. They have one daughter, Kelly, and one son, Kyle. Cathy continues nursing at Selkirk General Hospital.

**Keith** — was born April 13, 1955 in Hamiota. After schooling he worked on road construction in the Oak Lake area. He married Carie Wiens of Oak Lake February 22, 1975. They have one daughter, Holly, and one son, Derek.

### **Herbert Moody Family submitted by Edith Moody**

The Moody family (Robert Moody and his three sons, Arthur aged 14, Herbert 12 and George 7) came as pioneers to the Virden area in 1882, taking up land

about three miles west of the town site. Originally from Bradford, England, they came to Virden from Hamilton, Ontario.

For the first two or three winters the three boys remained alone on the homestead to fulfill homestead regulations, while their father worked as a cabinet maker in Winnipeg to earn needed funds. The boys were lucky in having good neighbours in the nearby Jeffrey family to give them a helping hand when needed.

Later the family was joined by an aunt, Harriet Gatenby, (the boys' deceased mother's sister) and the boys' own sister, Emily. Robert Moody married Miss Gatenby and the family settled into pioneer life. After some years Robert Moody and his wife retired to live in Winnipeg till their deaths, Harriet in 1904 and Robert in 1920.

Emily Moody, in course of time, married Albert Ryan. They lived for a few years in the Virden area on the farm later owned by the Reid family. In 1904 they moved to Rosser, Manitoba, where they farmed; and they later retired to Winnipeg.

Arthur Moody became a doctor and George, a lawyer. Both practised their professions in Winnipeg.

Herbert Moody remained on the father's homestead and also homesteaded in the Routledge area. In 1893 he married Margaret Lawson.

Margaret Lawson was born in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1871. After the death of her father at an early age, her mother married John Cooper. They spent a few years in Scotland, moved to England and finally in 1883 emigrated to Canada, homesteading in the Routledge area. In this family were John and Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Cooper's daughter, Margaret Lawson, baby Joan Cooper (Annie) and John's brother, Alex.

After their marriage Herbert and Margaret Moody lived on the Robert Moody farm till 1896, Robert Moody having retired. In 1896 John Cooper died and the Herbert Moodys moved to Routledge to live with Mrs. Cooper and Annie. Here Herbert Moody operated Mrs. Cooper's and his own homestead. He also operated the Leitch Bros. grain elevator at Routledge.

In 1909 the Moody family moved to Winnipeg to have better educational opportunities. Mr. Moody became a grain buyer for Leitch Bros. on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, but continued to operate the farms at Routledge. In 1922 the family moved back to the Routledge homestead where Mr. Moody and his three oldest sons continued to farm. A house was built on the homestead site to accommodate the Moody family. Mrs. Cooper and her daughter, Annie, continued to live in their pioneer home and to operate their farm. Mrs. Cooper died in 1926. Annie continued to live in the old homestead house till it



Herbert Moody Family, Arthur, Edith, Fred, Harold, Mr. and Mrs. Moody and Alan in front.

burnt down in 1971. She had a small cottage built near the site of the old home and lived there till her death in 1976.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Moody retired to Virden in 1947 and lived there till their deaths, Herbert in 1954 and Margaret in 1959. They have three great grandsons — Scott and Craig Johnston, and Brian Moody — and five great granddaughters — Tina Moody, Maureen and Lynne Johnston, and Lori and Alanna Purvis.

In the Herbert Moody family were five children — Arthur, Edith, Fred, Harold and Alan. **Arthur** — continued to farm at Routledge until his death in 1934. He was not married. He served in the armed forces during World War I.

**Edith** — also not married, taught school for many years. She is now retired and living in Virden where she taught from 1943 to 1967, retiring in 1967.

**Fred** — married Charlotte Hatch of Oak Lake in 1938. They are now retired but continue to live on the original Moody homestead 28-9-25 which Fred and Harold continued to farm with their father after the death of Arthur. Fred and Charlotte have two daughters, Margaret and Janice, both school teachers. Margaret married Wayne Johnston of the St. David's District (Oak Lake). They have four children: Scott, Craig, Maureen, and Lynne. Janice married Edwin Purvis of Winnipeg. They have two children, Lori and Alanna. Both families reside in Carman, Manitoba.

**Harold** — married Ivy Hollier of Oak Lake in 1946. They are retired and also have their home on the old homestead. They have no family.

Since retiring, Fred and Charlotte Moody and Harold and Ivy Moody have sold some of their land and enjoy the company of their new neighbours: Mr. and Mrs. Vern McFarlane of Virden are raising and training race horses; Mr. and Mrs. Murray Cox moved from Alexander with their two sons, Patrick and Michael, to establish an apiary; Murrav's brother, David, and wife, Lynn, from Cardale, also own and operate an apiary.

**Alan** — married Edith Maskell of Winnipeg in 1937. They spent a few years in Sydney, Australia, where their only child, a son, Christian, was born. Later they made their home in Los Angeles, California where Alan was engaged in the field of computerization. Edith died in 1952. Alan remarried. His second wife, Gladys, is now in Sun City, California. Alan died in 1963. His son and family, a girl and a boy, live in Issaquah, Washington, U.S.A.

### **James Moreland Family**

James Moreland was born December 10, 1897 at Castle Douglas, Kircudbrightshire, Scotland, son of Robert Moreland and Mary Welsh. He attended school there and served in the British Army during World War I. He emigrated to Canada in 1920 arriving at the farm of James Milne in the Harvey district.

In 1927 he married the former Verna Walton, eldest daughter of Herbert and Martha Walton. They farmed for 14 years north of Oak Lake where they were members of St. David's United Church and took part in the different activities there. Verna played the organ for several years. In 1938 they moved to Brandon and Jim was employed as a custodian with the Brandon School Division for thirty-one years, retiring in 1970. They were members of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. In 1977 they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with all their family home.

Jim and Verna have seven children: Mrs. Gordon Bond (Doreen), Kenton, Manitoba; Melvin and his wife, Ruth (Talman), Brandon, Manitoba; Mrs. Frank Lushaw (Joyce), Brandon, Manitoba; Mrs. Allen Campbell (Elaine), Chater, Manitoba; Mrs. Ed McPhail (Gwen), Milton, Ontario; Garth and wife, Gloria (Gillespie), Brandon, Manitoba; and Mrs. Fred Mistal (Donna), Hazen, North Dakota.

Jim Moreland passed away the 12th of August 1978 in his 81st year. Verna still resides in the family home on Victoria Avenue in Brandon.

### **The Clarence Motheral Family**

Clarence Motheral is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Charles Motheral of Kenton. In March, 1942 he married Irene Hatch who was then teaching at Sandhurst School. Four days later he left for Overseas with the R.C.A.F.

He put in two and one half tours of operational flights as a pilot, before he returned to Canada. After his discharge in 1945, he and Irene took up residence in Oak Lake.

In 1945 Clarence and Mel Hart purchased the lumber business from Mr. Frank Watson. Ten years later Clarence purchased Mel's share and then operated as "Motheral Lumber Ltd." until March 31, 1971, when he sold the business to Mr. Sigurdson.

In 1952 Clarence and Irene built "The Sports-haven Motel", which they still operate.



Clarence and Irene Motheral holding Donnie, Lawrence and Barbara.

Clarence has served the community in many capacities. He was Mayor of the town for 20 years, on the Provincial Board of Health, the Virden Health Unit Board for 14 years, Chairman of Fort la Bosse School Division, the Executive of Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Provincial Board of the Curriculum Review Committee and was President of the Manitoba Tourist Association.

He is a Past Master of the Oak Lake Masonic Lodge and Past Patron and Irene is Past Matron of Oakwood Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star.

"Rene" and Clarence live in the stately old house formerly known as the Parsons place, built in 1900 by Angus Leitch, and close to their Motel. The home

reflects both inside and out Rene's special horticultural hobby of growing flowers.

They are members of Oak Lake United Church.

The Motherals have three children, who all went to Oakwood School.

**Barbara** — an R.N., is married to George Wakat of St. Paul, Minnesota. She continues to practice her profession there.

**Don** — married Lorraine Desrochers of Baldur, Manitoba, in April 1972. They lived at Oak Lake a short time before moving to Brandon, where Don is employed at Christie School Supply as Shipper-Receiver. They had two children, Daniel and Laurie Ann.

**Lawrence** — married June Venn of Kenora, Ontario and they had a daughter, Tracy. Lawrence, now lives in Edmonton, Alberta and operates Pivot Motors.

### **Nicholas and Anastasia Mowez and Family submitted by Michael Mowez**

Nicholas Mowez was born in the western Ukraine on November 16, 1881. This part of the Ukraine was under Polish rule, and he served two years in the Polish Army 1902-03, then married Anastasia Ruzala February 6th, 1904. In the spring of 1911, he emigrated to Canada, sailing on an ocean freighter which carried livestock to this country. He arrived in Winnipeg and was first employed by a construction contractor "Carter and Hollis", who at that time were constructing the water pipeline to Winnipeg from Shoal Lake (25 miles northwest of the city). The pipe was made of concrete and laid in a trench 6 feet deep, much of the work was done in the winter as the frost prevented cave-ins. Horses were used to haul the material and much digging was done by hand.

After the pipeline was completed, Mr. Mowez got employment with the C.N.R. and worked on a gang near Regina, during that period the tornado devastated a part of Regina. It passed the bunk cars where the men worked. Mowez said it was a frightening experience. An empty boxcar was blown off the rails, men laid in the ditches or held on to the rails for fear of being blown away.

In the Fall of 1914, Mowez arrived in Virden with several other men who worked on the gang with him, from here they went to seek employment on farms. Mowez got a job on a farm in the Oak Lake area. By the time he had enough money to pay a passage for his wife and family, the war of 1914-1918 had broken out. Being illiterate was a handicap which many immigrants faced in this country. Sometimes they were taken advantage of. Mowez claims that his wages for ten years were around \$500.00 plus room and board.

Early in 1925 N. Mowez purchased E.½ Sec. 15-9-25 from Harry Barrett, a bachelor who was the original homesteader, and in the early spring of 1926 his wife Anastasia came to this country to join her husband after being separated for 15 years, first by the war of 1914-18 then the Russian Bolshevik Revolution and political turmoil in the Ukraine. The family were not allowed to leave at this time with their Mother because the oldest son, Steve, was near military age and the oldest daughter, Julia, was now married. Two children, a boy and a girl died during the war from typhoid fever epidemic. Mrs. Mowez managed the family farm in the Ukraine therefore she was an asset to her husband in the new country and worked out in the field stooking grain, doing chores, etc.

The crops were good in 1926, 1927 and 1928. In 1927 they bought a new car, 1927 Model T Ford sedan from A. S. Stewart, who was the Ford dealer in Oak Lake, and paid cash for it — \$750.00.

In 1928 a new barn, a garage, and a granary were built, plus they bought E.½ Sec. 2-9-25 at \$2500.00. This deal was on payments to be paid in 5 years, but after 2 years and the depression of the thirties they were unable to keep up the payments. Mr. Mowez went to the owner and told him the circumstances, but he told Mowez that he would not foreclose the mortgage but he could make payments whenever he could. This was a very kind gesture as in the thirties people had very little money. This land was purchased for the oldest daughter, Julia, and her husband, Mike Burak. When they came to Canada in 1927, however instead of farming they moved to Winnipeg.

The above property had a good house on it plus a barn and garage therefore the buildings were rented to a family by the name of Watson who worked as a section man for C.N.R. at Maon 1½ miles away. When the Watson family moved away, the vacant house was rented to David Janzen and his family. Mr. Janzen worked for Eucher De Galley during this time, plus other farmers in the area. The Janzen children attended school at Sandhurst S.D. #362.

We also got our education at Sandhurst School #362. I remember the hardships during the early thirties — we had lard sandwiches in our lunch, wore gum rubber boots; for socks had strips of old blanket wrapped on our feet. We wouldn't dare take off our shoes at school. I'm sure the teachers understood. I remember when in the summer we'd run barefoot and play in the sandy drifts, which were formed by the wind in fence lines adjoining the cultivated land. In 1934 Dad Mowez sowed 80 acres of oats and at harvest only got about 80 bushels.

During the summer of 1936 our house was de-

stroyed by fire. A new house was built by fall, the basement for the house was dug by hand by Nick Mowez and his wife, Anastasia.

In the latter half of the thirties things improved for everybody, the land started to produce due to change in weather conditions; therefore everybody benefited financially. In 1938 we bought a quarter section of land and in 1944 bought our first tractor from "A. S. Stewart I.H.C. Dealer" Oak Lake, a new Farmall M, on rubber tires, starter, lights, price — \$1575.00. Prior to this all farming was done by horses. Most farmers had 10 to 20 horses for doing farm work.

War had broken out in 1939 and lasted to 1945. We had rationing of items like butter, sugar, gasoline and other items but we didn't encounter hardships like the thirties. In 1946 Mowez sold rye for \$4.15 per bushel and with this we purchased a new Plymouth car from Fred Story, Story Bros. Garage.

In September 1947 son Michael got married to Palmyre Davreux who was born in Deleau and finished her high school education at Oakwood School 1945-47. They still reside on the home farm (E½ 15-9-25), and have 5 sons and 2 daughters.

**Stanley** — the eldest, formerly with the R.C.M.P. now is in Fort St. John, British Columbia, in a business of his own. He and his wife, Maureen, have two small sons.

Son **Terry** — is employed by C.P. Rail.

**Karen** — is with the Bank of Nova Scotia in Richmond, British Columbia.

**Tim** — is also employed by C.P. Rail.

**Monica** — is attending Virden Collegiate Institute.

**Jeremy** — is in Oak Lake Junior High School.

**Kevin** — is in Grade V and attending Assiniboine School in Oak Lake.

The three oldest children of Michael and Palmyre Mowez started school in Sandhurst till it closed then went to Oak Lake School and completed their education at Virden Collegiate Institute. The four youngest have attended or are attending schools in Oak Lake before going to Virden for their high school education.

Nicholas and Anastasia Mowez's youngest daughter, Kay, married Alan Lang formerly of Winnipeg in 1952, who was employed by the C.N.R. working in the shops at Transcona. In 1962 they moved to San Leandro, California, U.S.A. Alan is employed by the Western Pacific Railroad. They have one daughter, Marianne. They also have become American citizens.

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Mowez retired from farming in 1950 to make their home in Oak Lake, with youngest daughter, Kay. They purchased the Jack

Lamond house and lived there until Nicholas Mowez passed away in his 76th year on October 26th, 1957. Mrs. Mowez continued to live there for several years, then rented the home to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Tyhy and family, till it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. John Reeves. During this period she lived with son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Palmyre of Oak Lake and daughters, Mary and husband John Phillip of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Kay and husband Alan Lang of Winnipeg, Manitoba till she passed away on October 24th, 1976 at the age of 79. The Mowez family were of Catholic faith and attended St. Athanasius Church of Oak Lake.

## Alex Munro

In 1905 my family left Scotland and decided to come to Canada. We spent two weeks in Montreal and from there to Huntindon, then on to Beaverton. The West called, and we decided to move to Elkhorn where my mother's brother lived. That was in 1907.

We farmed in the Mossgiel District and I went to school there. In 1912 we moved to Oak Lake. My two brothers, Bob and Ian, joined the Army and my brother Ian did not return.

I was in the dray business for awhile, then rented a farm, lived there for four years, then moved to Birtle. In 1933 I married Alison Wallace and we moved to a farm at Birtle. In 1937 our son, Ian, was born. He married Ruby Wood and lives at Cranbrook, British Columbia. They have four children, two girls and two boys.

From 1941-1945 we farmed at Doonside, Saskatchewan, then we returned to Birtle where we retired — tho I still do the odd job of Draying to keep out of mischief!

## The R. M. Munro Family

### Ken Munro

Bob Munro arrived in Oak Lake along with his mother and sisters, Edwardina and Bessie, and brothers, Ian and Alex, prior to the First World War. The family came to Canada from Scotland shortly after the turn of the century, first settling in Quebec and then moving west to Elkhorn, Manitoba, finally arriving at Oak Lake.

Bob and Ian, the two older boys, joined the Army at the start of the First World War and served overseas. Ian was killed in this war. While overseas, Bob married Gladys Bane of Hastwigs, Sussex. Bob and Gladys settled in Oak Lake until 1929 when they moved to Neepawa, Manitoba.

Three children were born at Oak Lake. Norma, the oldest, born in 1920, Ken born in 1922 and Helen born in 1926. Norma and Ken attended Grade One at



Runnymede School and also in Oak Lake. Memories are still vivid in our mind of the short time we lived on a farm east of Oak Lake and walked across country through the experimental farm to Runnymede School. It was a long walk for a five year old. We attended the Methodist Church and that was our start in Sunday School.

We are told our father, Bob, sang in the church choir and also was active in the town band, and soccer team.

The house still stands on No. 1 highway where Granny Munro lived and also the house where we were born is still in very good repair standing on the corner just north of the Anglican Church Manse and directly east of the old school property.

I believe one of the finest memories of Oak Lake was the beautiful way the station yards were kept. Just a mass of flowers in those days and a very busy place.

Our Mother, Gladys, passed away in 1933 at age 39. Our father, Bob, lived nearly till his 88th birthday.

Daughter **Norma** married Weldon Thompson of Neepawa and has lived in Prince George, British Columbia, for many years. They raised two daughters, Heather and Maureen.

**Helen** raised eleven children and lives in Northern Alberta.

**Ken** married in England in 1945 and raised twins, John and Janet. Ken and wife, Joyce, presently live in Russell, Manitoba where they operate the Robinson store.

### **Arthur and Marie MacDonald**

In 1962 Arthur and Marie MacDonald took over the Cafe, connected to the Texaco filling station. Two youngest members of their family, Dennis and Barbara came with them and attended Oakwood high school.

In the fall the Cafe was closed for three weeks while major renovations took place.

Mrs. MacDonald recalls, "I really enjoyed running the Cafe. Always had reliable girls, single or married, and everyone was so nice to us in the district, very cooperative, and patronized the Cafe. Sunday was exceptionally busy, people from Virden reserving tables."

The long hours affected Mrs. MacDonald's health and in 1968 they sold the business, moving to Calgary. Their three oldest sons are in Edmonton area, Dennis in Calgary, while Barbara married an American and they live in Washington, D.C.

The MacDonalds enjoy life in Calgary, but are always happy to see Oak Lake friends.



Eight, first cousins of the McBeth Clan, at the reunion at St. David's Church, August 16, 1959. Geo. McBeth, Dawson Creek, B.C., Isabel Robb Gable of St. Ignatius, Montana, Jessie McArthur Hollies, Calgary, Alta., Christina and Edward McBeth of Oak Lake, Erta Hood Lawson, Waskada, Man., Maggie Bailey White, Saskatoon, Glad Slimmon, Brandon, Man.

### **Dan McBeth**

Donald (Dan) McBeth came west from Ontario in 1882 and acquired a homestead, on 20-10-24. Dan built his home, and in 1884 he sent for his wife, Isabella Brown Robb, and two little girls. Three more children were born. Mrs. McBeth died in 1891 at the age of 30 leaving five small children, the oldest only ten.

Dan's mother then came west to care for this young family, and she later lived in the town of Oak Lake where she died in 1915 at age 87. It was said of her, that no one ever left her door hungry.

Dan McBeth, 1852-1911, was noted for his contribution to missions and help in all the work of St. David's Church, and also for his purebred horses and cattle. His family were Catherine (Mrs. Robert Scott) 1880-1942, Jessie (unmarried) 1882-1915, Margaret (Mrs. Charles Forrest) 1885-1915, Edward 1887-1968, and Christine 1889-1968. There are nine grandchildren.

**Edward and Christine McBeth** continued on the farm and later retired to Oak Lake where their deaths occurred. They were a well known sister and brother who had spent their entire lives in the St. David's District and Oak Lake.

The McBeth farm is now the home of the Allen Scotts, a grandson of Dan McBeth.

### **Robert McBeth**

Robert McBeth came from Ontario in 1882 with his brother, Dan, and settled in the Hagyard School District. He married Ella Frame, a twin sister of Mrs.

John Goodwin. Mr. McBeth was very active in the work of St. David's Church and Sunday School.

The McBeths later moved to Dauphin and from there to the River Valley District (east of Virden). Mrs. McBeth died while on this farm. Mr. McBeth moved to Virden where he spent the remaining years of his life. During this time he enjoyed his favourite hobbies — wood work and reading. He also spent a great deal of time visiting the sick.

The Robert McBeth family consisted of five sons — Willie, Tom, Jim, George and Howard.

### Alexander McDonald

The late Alexander McDonald came from Dunnville, Ontario in the 1880's. He filed homestead rights on 14-10-24. After his passing, the farm was operated by his son, John McDonald, and then his grandson, Kenneth McDonald. Mr. Alex McDonald passed away in October 1895.

He was followed by three sons, **Dougald**, who settled in what is now known as Blair district, **Duncan** settled in Hagyard district, **John** and one daughter, **Almeda**, Mrs. Walter Forrest, settled in St. David's district.

The late **John McDonald**, son of Alexander, was born in Dunnville, Ontario on December 27th, 1863 and came to Manitoba in the early spring of 1883, settling on a farm four miles north of Oak Lake, N.E. 10-10-24. His first crop was frozen out, the second dried out, and he spent two winters travelling on foot to the Riding Mountains to cut ties.

On January 27th, 1899, he married Mary Young at Arnprior, Ontario.



Mr. and Mrs. John McDonald.

In 1901 they built a new barn and in 1902 a new home, both of which are still standing and in excellent condition.

They had three sons, Alex, Melville and Kenneth, and one daughter, Margaret.

Mr. and Mrs. John McDonald retired to Oak Lake

in April 1937. John resided there until his death in December 1945, at the age of 82. He was predeceased by his wife, Mary, in 1938 at the age of 68.

Mr. McDonald was a former trustee of Johnston School, serving in that capacity for over forty years. He was past President of Oak Lake Agriculture Society, a member of the United Grain Growers for many years, a former member of St. David's Church management board, and a member of Oak Lake Masonic Lodge No. 44. He also organized the first Boys Calf and Swine Club in Oak Lake.

Mrs. McDonald was very interested in all church and community affairs and she always had the welcome mat out.

**Alex**, eldest son of John and Mary McDonald, married Jean McCrae of Wellwood in 1929 and resided in Johnston District until her passing in 1937. They had two children, Morley and Joan. **Morley** was born August 10, 1931, married Lucille Broom of Tisdale, Saskatchewan, in 1956. They have four girls. **Joan**, a nurse, married Allan Olmstead of Carberry. They had three children. Allan died in 1970. Joan lives and nurses at Brookdale. Alex passed away on April 12th, 1979 after spending many years as farm supervisor at Headingly Jail.

**Margaret** — married Jack McLeish in 1943 and farmed south of Oak Lake. They had one son, **Brian**, who married Lynda McMunday of Winnipeg, in 1945. They have two daughters, Stacey and Melanie. Jack and Margaret retired to Oak Lake in May 1981.

### Melville McDonald

Melville McDonald married the former Beatrice Wallace of Griswold in 1937. They had one daughter, Beverly, who married Tony Boreham and they have three children, Brenda, Melvin and Darcy.

Both Mel and Bea were very active in the Oak Lake Agriculture Society. Mel served both as director and an energetic president, while Bea was on the Ladies Section of the fair board. Both were staunch supporters of St. David's Church. Mel presented a 4-H trophy to the winner in the Calf Club, for a number of years — in memory of his father. Their farm, where grain and Shorthorn cattle predominated, was noted for its tidy and well kept appearance.

Melville farmed the home farm until his retirement to Virden in May 1974. Now he follows the horse racing circuit and baseball games for recreation.

Harold and Stella Edwards and son, Dale, now own the old McDonald farm and it is a pleasure to drive by and see how well it is kept up.

### Ken McDonald

submitted by Ken and Ida McDonald

Ken McDonald, third son of John and Mary

McDonald, grew up on the home farm, 10-10-24, which was homesteaded in 1893. Ken was born March 13, 1908, and received his education at Johnston and Oak Lake schools; took Agriculture at the University of Manitoba and attended St. David's and Oak Lake United Churches.

On November 18, 1936, Ken married Ida Finlay, third daughter of Robert and Ida Finlay. Ida was born in Virden, Manitoba, on April 11, 1913. Together they set up farming on SE¼ 14-10-24, one mile east of the McDonald home farm. Their farm was situated east of what is called "The Beaver Dam Hills", named for that busy animal, the beaver. As well as a beauty spot, it is a good lookout spot and on a clear day one can count eight towns visible to the naked eye. On the farm were snake pits and buffalo runs, where the beasts were driven in herds over a steep cliff and slaughtered for meat and hides. It has been a haven for all wild life, but this is quickly disappearing to the beat of progress.

When Grant was six years old, we boarded him in town, buying a house there in 1948, in order to give the boys an education. In 1960 a mile of road was built in to our farm.

Ken and Ida have a family of two boys. **Grant** was born in Oak Lake on June 23, 1939 and received his education in Oak Lake and Brandon. He attended St. David's, Oak Lake and Brandon churches. Grant has a family of three, living in Brandon — Kimberley, Sharon and Russell, all in school.

**Murray**, born in Virden on January 15, 1943, lives in Charleswood, Manitoba. He has a family of two — Heather, in school, and Scott, three years of age. Grant and Murray, with a son each, will keep the McDonald name going for another generation.

In 1975 the farm was sold and the McDonalds retired to live in Brandon.

### **Donald McFarlane McFarlane histories submitted by Bessie (McFarlane) Dodds**

Donald McFarlane, brother of William McFarlane gained his homestead south west of Oak Lake. It was on his farm that Mr. and Mrs. Jack McLeish lived until the summer of 1981. Part of the original log home built by the Donald McFarlanes was still well restored and used in 1981.

Members of the Donald McFarlane family — two sons Donald Jr. and Jock, three daughters Marjorie, Jessie and Elizabeth, better known as **Lizzie**, who was an excellent cook. She found employment, as a cook on a boat — a pleasure cruiser, was an ardent gardener and an exceptionally good curler.

**Marjorie** married Miller Taylor of Oak Lake.

They lived in Carberry, Winnipeg and Saskatoon. Miller was a veterinarian. They had two sons.

**Jessie** a school teacher, married and later retired in Vancouver. I understand they had one daughter.

### **Wm. McFarlane Family**

One of the early pioneer families of Oak Lake, was the Wm. McFarlanes, who arrived in the early 1880's. William was born in Milltown, Strathbronn Parish, Perthshire, Scotland, February 29th, 1840. As a young man he served on the Police Force. In 1863 he married Margaret Hood of Perth, Scotland. In 1866 they migrated to Canada, settling near Clinton, Brucefield County, Ontario. They were accompanied by two grandfathers, two brothers, Donald and James and their small son James. After arriving in Ontario, six more children were born, one died in infancy, and one at the age of five. Mrs. McFarlane died in 1978. Two years later William was re-married to Jessie Gordon, who had come to Canada, from Scotland with her parents who had crossed the Atlantic Ocean by sail boat in six weeks. Two children were born in this second family, Catherine and William Jr.

The McFarlane family travelled to Manitoba by rail, bringing with them a few horses, cows, machinery and enough lumber for their first small home. The children also brought one dog and two cats. They began farming on their homestead, 4½ miles south west of Oak Lake, NE¼ 4-9-24 in the very midst of marshland and bush. Oxen were used to break the land, which produced good crops in the very early days. Soon they were forced to depend on livestock and dairy products for their livelihood. On this homestead, later known as Sunnyside Farm, a third child was born — Dorothee.

As this family grew up, married and found their own homes, Mr. and Mrs. McFarlane and their three youngest children moved to a second homestead one mile west of Oak Lake, north side of C.P.R. NE¼ 22-9-24. Later they gained land south of the track. This farm was named "Poplar Grove". Keith Dixon now owns this farm. These early settlers were very pious people. Grandfather McFarlane always said a table blessing before and after meals and a daily passage was read from the Bible. Sometimes it was read in Gaelic from a very old Gaelic Bible. We understand the first Oak Lake Sunday School was held in their log house, which I believe is still standing on this location. Wm. McFarlane later became Superintendent of Oak Lake Sunday School. His wife taught in the Sunday School. They carried on this work for many years. The three children of this family, Catherine, William Jr. and Dorothee all attended Oakwood School and Oak Lake Church.



William McFarlane Family.

### First Family of Wm. McFarlane

**Jim**, the eldest in the family, married Agnes Lang of the Sandhurst District and settled on their homestead 3½ miles west of Oak Lake, 30-9-24. They had a family of four, all of whom attended Oakwood School and church.

**Mae** — became a school teacher — later married Bert Austin. They had a family of four.

**Colin** — married Mabel Chapman of Oak Lake just before he enlisted with the Canadian Armed Forces in 1916. After the war they moved to Calgary where Colin became a travelling salesman with the Imperial Oil Co. They had 3 girls.

**Margaret** — also became a school teacher. She married Jack Nolan, night operator at Oak Lake C.P.R. Station. They had no family. Jack was a noted pitcher for the Oak Lake baseball team.

**Della** — remained with her parents, managing their home, taking in boarders and later became employed as a telephone operator in Oak Lake.

Jim sold his farm, and built a new home in Oak Lake 1914-1915. He was caretaker of Oak Lake curling rink for some years. In the summer he had a splendid garden. Mrs. Jim McFarlane passed away in 1928. Della and her father rented their home and moved to Calgary. Della married Douglas Marsdon. They had two sons.

Jim made his home with his son Colin, wife and family. He died in 1940. This McFarlane family have all passed away, leaving grandchildren and great grandchildren all of whom live in the West and U.S.A.

The grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Wm. McFarlane retired to Oak Lake and lived in a small cottage where Oakwood Place gardens are today. Grandfather planted a row of trees in front of his home. They are still flourishing on the north border of these grounds.

**Margaret** the eldest daughter, married R. L. Lang in 1885 in Oak Lake and settled on their home-



stead, 36-8-25 just north of the lake, in the Sandhurst District. This farm was later known as "Spruce Bank". They lived in their first log house until nine children were born. In 1905 a beautiful large home was built, a centre for many picnics and house parties. This home is presently owned by Betty Plaisier.

**Dora and Grace** became stenographers and moved to Vancouver. They both married there.

**Mabel** — a registered nurse, became matron of Watrous Hospital, Watrous, Saskatchewan, where she nursed for many years. Later she served in South Africa in the 2nd World War. She married Dr. R. Stipe, later in life and retired in Vancouver.

**Thearne** — died at the age of three.

**Alvin** — served overseas in World War I, died at Vimy Ridge.

Luella, Myrtle and Anne — all became school teachers.

**Luella** — married a farmer, Harvey Beare, at Fillmore, Saskatchewan, had a family of four. Later retired in Vancouver.

**Myrtle** — married Bert Lamond in Oak Lake. They had three sons. Myrtle retired in Vancouver.

**Anne** — married Alex Walker of Birtle. They moved to Vancouver, lived there for many years.

**Earle** — the youngest member of this family (book-keeper) had two sons and lived in Vancouver.

Only two members of this family of nine are still living. Myrtle, Mrs. Bert Lamond, Vancouver and Anne, Mrs. Alex Walker, Vancouver.

**Mary** — daughter of Wm. McFarlane married Will Mason in Oak Lake 1898. They farmed for nine years, one mile west of the Wm. McFarlane homestead. They had one son, Bill and two daughters. In 1907 Grandfather Mason and the Will Mason family moved to Nokomis, Saskatchewan, where they began a hardware business which the Masons carried on for three generations. Mary died in 1932.

**Ann** — married Wm. Henderson. They farmed south of Oak Lake, Ann died when her first child was born.

**John McFarlane** — second son of Wm. McFarlane married Isabella McIntosh of Souris 1901. They farmed 4½ miles south west of Oak Lake, on his father's homestead 4-9-24. They lived here for 27 years carrying on a mixed farming operation. John served on the Sandhurst School Board for many years, was a member of the United Church and a member of the Odd Fellows' Lodge. After selling the farm, John then became employed with the "Good Roads" maintaining a portion of Highway #28 — now 21. John was truly "a man of the sod". He loved the great out-doors, summer and winter alike. He was known to always bring home a spade full of earth enriched with each wild flower in its season. He



John and Isabella McFarlane's Wedding 1901.

also studied and enjoyed the stars and constellations also the Northern lights (the merry dancers, as he called them). He would often call the family out to view a vivid mirage or an exceptional rainbow. He was an ardent hunter and fisherman and a great all round sportsman. He played on the first Oak Lake football team and often remarked he had never missed attending the Oak Lake July 1st celebration for 60 years. He was a keen curler and also enjoyed designing carnival costumes. The carnival in Oak Lake was a big event for many years. He began this hobby when his son Johnnie was old enough to skate. Some of his outstanding costumes were — "a fish", "My Mither and Me" and a Scotch curler — equipped with tammy-shanter and a pair of wooden curling rocks. I think one of his last and most talked of costumes was "The O'Grady Curling Cup" which hung in the rink for many years. We don't ever remember one of his creations, that didn't capture a first prize. In later years when he had to put down his curling rocks, he played pool and became a most interested radio hockey fan.

Mrs. John McFarlane was a very energetic person; always planted a large garden, kept beautiful house plants — roses being her specialty. She raised poultry, helped with the milking — churned and sold



butter and always picked and preserved her own fruit and jelly, cured their meat and did all her own baking. In the winter months she hooked beautiful rugs, made quilts and enjoyed reading. She belonged to the United Church — sang in the choir and taught in the Sunday School for many years. She also belonged to the Rebekah Lodge. When they moved to Oak Lake she still planted a garden and kept boarders for some years.

She was an active member of the church organizations, curled and belonged to a ladies' bridge club. Due to ill health Mr. and Mrs. John McFarlane moved out to the Shiloh District to make their home with their son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Mrs. Les Dodds and family. John McFarlane passed away November 19, 1948 and Mrs. McFarlane October 12th, 1951. There were two children, John W. and Elizabeth Anne (Bessie).

In 1910 there was great excitement in the air. People were living in fear and awe awaiting the appearance of Halley's Comet. John McFarlane and cousin, Ducan McFarlane, a pair of jokers decided to have a bit of fun. They constructed a large kite with an exceptionally long tail, which they soaked in kerosene and to this they attached a lighted coal-oil lantern. Their efforts were well rewarded, when they managed to set this spectacular feat of art into space. What a sight! Just what these two had planned. Word travelled fast. Many Oak Lakers were known to have climbed to the highest spots available to view this strange object. For many years this event was referred to, as the McFarlane comet. I believe this Halley's Comet is to re-appear in 1985 or 1986.

**John W. McFarlane** son of Mr. and Mrs. John and Isabella McFarlane was born July 6th, 1902 at Sunny-side farm. After school he took a business course in Brandon and for a short time he worked on the farm with his father and ran a trap line during the winter and spring. This netted him over \$500.00 per season — a gold mine at that time, just at the beginning of the "Dirty Thirties". He was an active and most interested ball player (base-ball) also hockey player (usually played centre). Later he became interested in curling and golf. He found employment with his cousin Wm. Mason Jr., Lockwood, Saskatchewan, in the Hardware business. Later he managed Hardware and Lumber Companies in both Saskatchewan and Alberta (Monarch Lumber Co., Ltd.). On December 16th, 1930 John married Anne Kane of Lockwood, Saskatchewan. They had two sons Kenneth and James. They moved to Kindersley, Saskatchewan in 1942, where John worked with the C.N.R. for twenty-five years until his retirement. Anne died suddenly December 7, 1973. John followed on April 29th, 1975.

**Elizabeth Anne (Bessie) McFarlane**, daughter of John and Isabella McFarlane was born May 21, 1910, at "Sunny-Side" farm NE¼ 4-10-24. After completing high school she attended Brandon Normal School. She taught for ten years before marrying R. L. Dodds (Les) July 15, 1942. They still farm in the Shiloh District (5 miles south of Harding). They have two sons **Myron** Leslie — Resident Engineer with Manitoba Highways and Transportation. He is stationed at Thompson, Manitoba. **Cameron** Lee — farms with his father.

#### **Second Family of Wm. McFarlane**

Catherine (Katie), William Jr. and Dorothie, all became teachers. **Katie** taught south of Griswold, **William Jr.** at Harvey, north of Oak Lake and **Dorothie** at Lansdowne, south of Oak Lake. Later they all moved to Yorkton, Saskatchewan and taught there. William Jr. married Constance Balderson, a milliner. They had one son. This family, too, retired in Vancouver. Their son became a medical doctor. He still practices in Vancouver. All three of this 2nd McFarlane family have now passed away.

#### **Strachan McKay**

Strachan McKay and his wife, Susie (Gammon), were both originally from Nova Scotia.

They came to Oak Lake in 1912 and worked for Mr. Jack Baillie and Mr. Wm. Gompf. In 1913 they farmed the Jim Black farm east of Oak Lake, moving in 1915 to the farm presently owned by Jim Smith. Later they moved into the town of Oak Lake where Mr. McKay was employed in his trade as a carpenter. He helped build Mr. E. Williams home and assisted in the construction of the barn on the F. Taylor farm.



Irene McKinnon and Marg. McKay.

They left Oak Lake in 1920 and returned in 1930 staying with Mr. Wm. Gompf for a few months and then they went to Winnipeg. In 1936 they returned to Oak Lake to the Haddon Johnston farm and from there to the "Smith farm" south east of Oak Lake. They left our area in 1950.

Their only daughter, **Margaret**, married James Hewitt, who, soon after their marriage, was posted overseas with the armed forces. Jim had worked for Alex. Henderson and Jimmie Jiggins before enlisting in the army. After returning from overseas he came to Oak Lake. In a year's time he rejoined the army, where he served until his retirement 17 years later.

They had two children born at Oak Lake, Elizabeth and Vincent, and a son, Marvin, who was born at Shilo.

### **Duncan McKinnon**

**submitted by Mary (McKinnon) Stewart**

Duncan McKinnon was the son of Laughlin and Isabella (McGregor) McKinnon, who came from the Isle of Skye, Scotland. They came to Truro, Nova Scotia, where sons John and Gregor were born. They journeyed on to Teeswater, Ontario, where Duncan, three sisters and a brother were added to their family.

Laughlin passed away in 1865, at the age of 42.

Isabella, with members of her family, came to Manitoba, homesteading near Lenore, Manitoba.

**Duncan** at age of 21 years, came west along with Weddal Hagyard, both of Teeswater. Duncan came to the end of steel "Flat Creek". He worked the winter of 1881-82 at the Leitch Flour and Grist Mill. In the spring of 1882, he joined Mr. Hagyard in the search of homesteads. They walked from Brandon to Birtle and made entry, on land, ten miles north of Oak Lake, both on the same section and on the same day. Duncan NE¼ 2-11-24. Mr. Hagyard SE 2-11-24. They both obtained Pre-emptions later.

Duncan built a log shanty and a sod stable. He bought a plow and a team of oxen, later a horse. He bought his bread from a pioneer family, a few miles east. He told of returning home with his weekly supply of bread in a blizzard. He was sure he was lost, until his horse stopped. Putting out his hand he touched his shanty. When asked, "how he felt, knowing he was safe", he replied, "humble and grateful".

He worked at the mill and any kind of work he could get, when homestead duties permitted.

He built a frame house 12 x 16 and a log stable in 1885. He married, Elizabeth Young in 1888.

Elizabeth's parents came from Edinburgh, Scotland, settling at Walkerton, Ontario, where four children were born. She found life on the homestead very lonely, especially in the autumn, when, Duncan,

who had bought a threshing outfit, was away doing custom work for several weeks each year.

Sunday was his only day at home, as time drew near for his return home, she would sit by her window each evening listening. She heard a steam engine whistle in the distance and quickly lit the coal oil lamp and placed it in the window to let him know she had received his message.

The first years were anxious ones for those pioneer women. Elizabeth's life centered around her family, home and church. Duncan too, had these interests, but farming and council business was a real challenge.

Duncan and Elizabeth had seven children.

**Murray**, who married Jessie McLean in 1920 farmed in the St. David's district.

**Annie** spent her younger years in the St. David's district. After taking her teachers training, she taught Rosewood School, south of Lemberg, Saskatchewan. Here she met and later married Dick Acton, a farmer. They had eight children — Beth, Sam, Duncan, Elinor, Doris, Richard, Donald and Clifford. Dick and Annie spent almost sixty happy years together. Annie passed away December 17, 1980.

**Eva** lives in her Brandon home, caring for herself, as she had cared for her parents and many elderly people through the years. Eva is a frequent visitor to Oak Lake.

**Howard** and his wife Gertrude live in Kelowna, British Columbia.

**Alex** and his wife Annie live in Regina.

**Roy** and his wife Eva live in Lemberg.

**Mary** lives in Oak Lake. She was married to Jim Stewart in 1942, after her return from Geneva, New York, where she had worked 5½ years as an R.N. in the General Hospital.

Jim passed away in 1970. Their son, Bob is on the "Stewart Home Farm", with his wife the former Rita Pouteau of Mariapolis. They have three children, Brenda, Bonnie and James.

Duncan and Elizabeth, passed away in 1918 and 1926 respectively, after a happy active life in this wonderful country they had chosen as their home.

### **Murray McKinnon**

Murray McKinnon, son of Duncan McKinnon farmed on Section 35-10-24 from 1911 to 1953. In 1920 he married Jessie McLean, daughter of Archie McLean. He passed away on May 6, 1953 and Jessie on July 28, 1956. They had five children, Irene, Lorne, Bruce, Myrtle and Joyce. **Irene** married Everett Elkington and has two sons — Donald and Brent, and reside in Regina, Saskatchewan. **Lorne** married Lucille Irwin, they have two daughters — Donna and Karen and one son Murray. They reside at

Delta, British Columbia. **Myrtle**, married Allan Lewis and has two sons — Perry and Craig and one daughter Shelley. They reside in White Rock, British Columbia. **Joyce** married Robert Lewis and with their children Douglas, Michael and Patricia, reside at Richmond, British Columbia.

**Bruce** married Georgina Wolfe in 1950 and started farming on the NE quarter of 35-10-24. Following his father's death they moved to the home residence where they still reside and continue to farm. Bruce is presently serving as councillor of Woodworth Municipality. They have three children — Duncan, Brenda and Tannis. They received their education at Hagyard and Oak Lake schools each graduating from Virden Collegiate. In 1972 Brenda married Robert Masson and they have three sons — Michael, Patrick and John. They farm south of Oak Lake. November of the same year Duncan married Janice McGregor of Kenton. They took up residence and farmed for five years on the William Cowan farm. They then spent three years in Rosemary, Alberta, where Duncan was employed by the Sun Oil Co. They returned to their farm in April 1981. They have three daughters — Christy, Kimberly and Rhonda. Tannis was employed by the Credit Union in Rivers for two years and then by the Kenton Branch. On July 12, 1980, she married Keith Gardner and they farm in the Lenore area.

### **Howard McKinnon**

Howard Gordon, son of Duncan and Elizabeth McKinnon, was born March 5, 1897, spent many years farming, eventually owned the Hagyard Farm, S2-11-24. He married Gertrude Schmidt, a native of Switzerland. They had two children a daughter Jean and a son Tom, who attended Hagyard and Oakwood School. In the early fifties, they moved to Oak Lake, where they spent several years, later retiring to Kelowna, British Columbia.

Writing poetry was a hobby he enjoyed, and in 1970, a book of poems was published. Now another book is completed.

Daughter Jean, (Mrs. McIntosh) lives in Winnipeg with her husband and family.

Son Tom and his wife have a family of two, Terry Lee and Dustin Howard Lee, living near Kelowna.

### **Alex McKinnon**

Alex McKinnon, third son of Mr. and Mrs. Duncan McKinnon was born in the St. David's District. He attended Hagyard School.

Alex married Annie Louse Gompf of the Harvey District. They lived for a time at Prince Rupert, British Columbia, moving from there to Lemberg Saskatchewan, where they lived for many years be-

fore making their home in Regina where they now reside.

They have a family of four — Viola, Pearl, Wayne and Heather. All three girls are nurses, graduates of the Regina General Hospital. Wayne is a successful lawyer in Waterloo, Ontario.

### **Roy McKinnon**

Duncan Roy, youngest son of Duncan and Elizabeth McKinnon was born in Oak Lake, Manitoba. He remained on the farm, until 1929.

In 1931, he went to Lemberg, Saskatchewan, where he was in the trucking business and later took over the Imperial Oil Agency.

In August 1938, he married Eva Heil of Lemberg.

In November 1975, he retired, but continues to help out in the busy time at his son's farm.

Roy and Eva have two sons, Ronald Roy and Duncan Garry.

### **John McLaren**

John McLaren came out from Vankluk Hill to 6-10-24 in the early eighties. He married a McNab and from this union four children were born — William, Elma, Jean and Norman.

The children attended a school called Arsenault, located on the southeast corner of their farm — later renamed Pleasant Plains. Close neighbors were the Andrew Gillespie, Jim McFarlane, Jim Lamberts and Modeland families.

The family moved to Wallace municipality in 1901 to 18-11-26.

**William** married Lena Stinson and they had two sons, Harold and Jack. Jack married Kathleen Lucking — Virden and Harold married Gladys Suter — Brandon.

### **Norman McLean**

Norman McLean was born in Oak Lake but at an early age moved with his parents to Portage la Prairie. After completing his schooling in Portage and Winnipeg he taught school in Norwood for four years. In 1941 he joined the R.C.A.F. and upon discharge in 1945 with his wife, Beatty, and daughter, Jacque, returned to make their home in Oak Lake.

Norm worked with his uncle, A. S. Stewart, until Mr. Stewart's retirement and sale of the dealership in 1952. Norm and Beatty's second daughter, Maureen, was born in 1946.

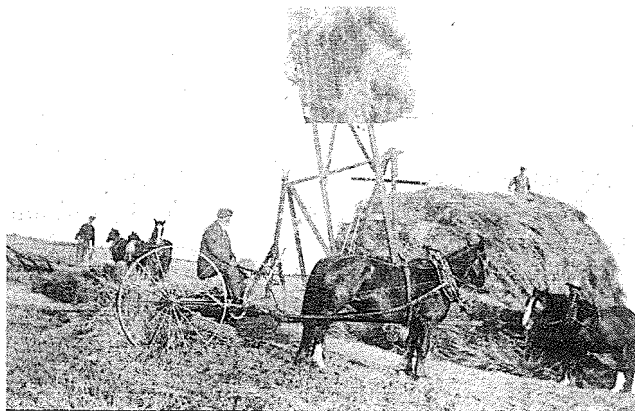
In 1952 the family took up residence in Winnipeg where Norm joined the staff of the Winnipeg Regional Office of Statistics Canada, retiring in September 1981. A third daughter, Debra Joanne, was born in 1955.

Beatty and Norm still reside in Winnipeg. Jac-

quie (Mrs. Geo. Stew) is in Saskatoon, Maureen (Mrs. Gerald Buchanan) in Winnipeg, and Debby in Calgary.

### The McLeish Family

Daniel McLeish was born in Perthshire, Scotland, November 18, 1835. He was one of six children of John McLeish and Grace (nee Young) who farmed Macmeridge Farm near Butterstone.



Daniel McLeish on rake, Haying with Sons.

In 1867 Daniel married Mary Green, a milliner from Trinity College. Daniel and Mary had ten children.

The original deal for land in the Oak Lake area was made by Daniel in the late 1880's, through the C.P.R. Grandfather Daniel came to Oak Lake in 1898, followed a short time later by sons, David and Phillip. George came in 1901, while Val, the youngest son, came several years later. Daniel bought three sections of land, often referred to as the "McLeish Ranch". They were operated jointly by Dave, Phil and George, until Dave married Laura Horsman, and took over the easterly section. George married Clara Gillespie of Terrance district and farmed the west section. Phil never married and operated the original section until his retirement.

Daniel returned to Scotland after his pioneering summer, with a trunk full of clothes to be mended. Each spring he would return with hand knit clothes for the boys, work with them on the farm all summer, and return to Scotland in the fall with more worn out clothes. There seems to be no record of the number of trips he made.

It was to this set-up that another young Perthshire lad, Davidson Thompson, came to begin life in Canada. He later became a well known Winnipeg singer and musician. Many years later he would return to perform one last service for his friend George — singing, "My Aine Countrie", at his funeral.

### George McLeish Story as told by daughter, Margaret Gillman

My Father, George Coates McLeish, was born in the Village of Methven, just outside of Perth, Scotland . . . he came to Canada, directly to Oak Lake as a young man about 1901.



Phil and Geo. McLeish on old "jigger".

Mother, Clara Cecelia Gillespie, was born at Millbank, Ontario; her family moved to the Griswold area in the late 1880's.

Mother and Father were married at Griswold in April 1908. Dad, with the help of his two brothers, David and Phillip, plus neighbours, built the family four room house . . . two bedrooms upstairs, kitchen and parlor downstairs, plus a back shed that was used as a summer kitchen or cooking area during hot weather.

Between June 1909 and February 1918 seven children, six boys and one girl, were born: all nine of us lived in that little house till each in turn left the home nest.

Mother and Dad eventually sold the farm and moved into town in 1944.

My early recollections are mostly family oriented . . . I remember that our farm was about half way between two Indian Reservations, Griswold and Pipestone. Horse and wagon was the mode of transportation in those days and very often the Indians would stop at our place to water their horses while travelling between the two Reservations. I don't remember that they ever asked for food, but often a drink for the children and tea for the adults. It wasn't too unusual to come home from school and find Mother at the stove making tea for a big Buck Indian who was sitting at the table.

One Saturday I made a batch of Bran Muffins and forgot to put in the baking powder — consequently, they were as hard as rocks. While Mom and I wondered what we could do with them (they were too good to throw away as they were loaded with dates) . . . a wagon load of Indians came by and stopped to water the horses. This was the answer to the problem . . . I'd give them to the children, needless to say they were delighted. Monday, on my way to school, there were the muffins all along the road. Obviously the Indians wouldn't eat them either and had used them to throw at gophers and telephone poles. We laughed about that for years.

I often think about our Christmas Concerts in the Town Hall, a real fire trap with one exit with wooden steps down to the street. The real live tree would be adorned with lighted wax candles — on the stage. The Hall would be packed to the back with Grandparents, Parents, Children, even Babes in arms — even the aisles were crowded.

Dad was a mixed farmer . . . some grain, hay and cattle. He went into the Dairy business and he and the boys operated this small business seven days a week for some time. There was no such thing as pasteurization in those days but the herd was tested once a year. Milk sold for ten cents a quart and cream for twenty cents a pint.

Local entertainment, particularly through the winter included plays put on by local people . . . Dad was often the director; I'm sure that they were extremely amateurish, but we thought that they were "real grand" — to the point of taking the cast and the crew to Griswold, Alexander, etc. for one night stands. I remember one year that Dad did a Minstrel Show. I was the only female in the cast, about eight years old and did the "Cork Legged Jig". I remember feeling very much like a Star, but in retrospect I'm sure was a blasted nuisance and an unpopular and unnecessary addition among the rest of the cast, all men, — especially back in the dressing rooms.

I still have happy memories of the great July First Celebrations . . . the Parades . . . races . . . ball games and the Dances at night . . . 1927 was a big year, Canada was 60 years old, I still have the bronze medal given to all of the school children . . . I remember that Dad made a Red River Cart for THAT Parade and drove it proudly, unfortunately, he couldn't get an ox and had to settle for one of the farm horses to pull it. Geordie usually ran in the big race — several of the boys played in the ball teams.

The Hatch Girls soft ball team was in the Ladies League and that was great excitement — of such are my memories.

Dan recalls: All the George McLeish family were born on the farm in the house George built. All were

baptised in Oak Lake United Church, and were educated at Oakwood. We all walked to and from school, winter and summer, approximately two miles.

I often think of the time Mum had, packing individual lunches for us, each one just a little different from the other.

Summer holidays for us meant many hours in the hay fields, and milking up to twenty cows night and morning by hand, and delivering milk in town every day of the year.

George passed away in 1954 and Clara in 1972.

**Jack** — married Margaret McDonald in Brandon. They have one son, Brian. Marg and Jack have lived all of their lives in Oak Lake.

**George** — was in the Air Force. He married Jessie McPhee at London, Ontario and they have lived all of their married lives at London.

**Norman** — married Minnie Daum, an Oak Lake girl, later he rode the rods to Vancouver, British Columbia. Minnie died following heart surgery years later. They had two children, Patricia and Curtis. Norman remarried in 1979 to a Vancouver girl and they live in Burnaby, British Columbia.

**Ronald** — joined the Air Force. Met and married Ann Langdon at Trenton, Ontario. They had four children, James, William, Barbara and Douglas. After retiring from the Air Force they settled at Richmond, British Columbia and are still there.

**Neil** — joined the Air Force and spent time in England, Ceylon and Europe. He came back to Oak Lake and married his High School Sweetheart, Vera Smeltz, from Cromer. After retiring from the forces, they settled in Calgary and are still there. Two children were born: Dennis and Wendy. Dennis died of leukemia about three years ago at the age of 23 years.

**Daniel (Danny)** — joined the Air Force and served overseas as well as in Canada. On retirement from forces settled in Brandon and worked in the Brandon Post Office. Married Betty (Wilson) Noakes, a London, England War Widow who had come to Brandon to live. Three children — Bruce, Kerry and Scott.

**Margaret** — Herb and I, an R. N., have three children, Robert (Bob), Sandra and William (Bill) and live in Thunder Bay.

## **David McLeish Family**

### **Grace (McLeish) Watson**

It is regrettable that we know little of the social life of this newly-arrived family, or how, after spotting the neighbour lass riding across the prairie, hair flying, David managed to court Laura, the youngest daughter of John and Elizabeth Horsman, new arrivals from Guelph, Ontario. They were married in St. Alban's Church on December 2nd, 1903.



Following a honeymoon spent in Scotland, they took up residence in their newly built home on the Easterly Section of the three purchased by Daniel. But, with only green wood and no storm windows, it was cold comfort. David contacted Rheumatic Fever. His recovery slow; aftermath, a permanently damaged heart, from which he never fully recovered. He died in 1922, in his forty-ninth year.

By this time the family had become established in town. The two daughters finished High School, studied in Brandon and Winnipeg, qualifying as teachers.



Betty and Grace McLeish — Daughters of David and Laura.

Betty became Art Supervisor in Brandon. During this time she co-operated in introducing the Radio School program "It's Fun to Draw". This continued for twenty-five years, eventually including all Prairie provinces. Upon her return from England, where she had obtained an Associateship of the University of London, she joined the staff of Manitoba Teachers' College. Later, the M.T.C. was included in the University program. Her work with "It's Fun to Draw" continued until her retirement from the Faculty of Education in 1972. Stricken with cancer, she died in 1980 in Victoria, British Columbia.

After several years teaching in Manitoba and a

season travelling as Superintendent of Canadian Chautauquas, Grace married Frank Watson in St. Alban's Church on December 23rd, 1929. Lived in Oak Lake until after disposing of the business. They moved to Victoria, British Columbia in 1946, where the family, David and Mary, completed their education: David in the Electrical field and Mary training as a nurse. Both now married — Mary living in Montreal and David in Victoria.

Laura McLeish lived for many years in Rice Lake, Wisconsin, where she had gone in the early thirties. Later, coming to Victoria, she died in 1962.

Frank Watson died in 1978 at the age of ninety-one. Born in Pilot Mound, Manitoba. World War I veteran. Came to Oak Lake in the early twenties. Joined the firm of W. C. Burns, and upon the death of Mr. Burns took over the business. During his life in Oak Lake Frank became active in sports and served several terms on the Town Council.

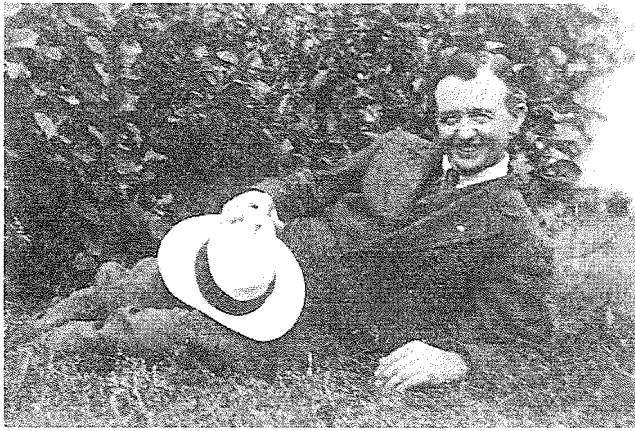
An event which had a lasting effect on the lives of this family was the arrival from Japan of Edward Ruse, aged seven, to live in the Sharman home. He was at once a new cousin, and as such the three grew up together.

John Reeves, a Bernardo Boy who came to Canada at an early age, became an institution in this family, carrying on the workings of the farm which the ailing father was unable to do.

In an attempt to keep in touch with enlisted Oak Lakers in World War II a circular letter, started by Grace Watson, evolved into a monthly publication. Printed in Winnipeg; addressed and mailed by a committee of three . . . E. A. Paul, E. M. Parsons, and H. M. Smith. Financed by local subscriptions and loyally supported by the recipients from whose letters many extracts were printed. This provided a means of personal contact, and continued until the end of hostilities. A large file of appreciative letters from all theatres of War testifies to the acceptance of this venture.

### Val McLeish

In 1910, Daniel's youngest son, Val, a recent graduate of Edinburgh Veterinary College arrived in Oak Lake. Dr. McLeish practised as a veterinarian for about fifteen years, and was an active member of the school board, the Presbyterian Church, and the Oddfellows Lodge. On July 19, 1920 he married Bella Lamond, youngest Lamond daughter. Their first child, Sheila Anne, was born November 23, 1922. Around 1924 he joined the Federal Department of Agriculture and moved to Winnipeg. A second daughter, Glenna Gowan (Patsy) was born there January 5, 1926. In 1929 the family was transferred to



Val McLeish.

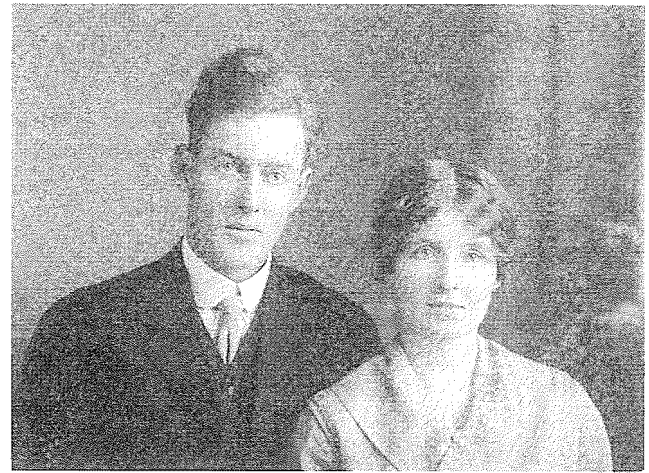
Vancouver. Val passed away in 1948 and Bella in 1947.

**Sheila Anne** — Mrs. Jack Ferry of Burnaby, British Columbia. They have two children, Craig and Lisa.

**Glenna Gowan** — Mrs. J. D. McPherson of Vancouver, British Columbia. Children are: Lorna, Ian and Nancy.

### John B. McQuarrie

Jack McQuarrie was born and grew up in Fergus, Ontario. At the age of 21 he was employed in Steele's store there. That spring he decided to come west and on March 10, 1910, Good Friday, he and his friend, Bert Maveal, landed in Oak Lake, where he soon located his uncle, William Borthwick. On Monday morning he began work with John Scott. Accustomed to handling horses, he had no trouble in the field. He worked through the summer and fall before going to Jack Aitkens for the winter. There he and the other hired men batched and cared for a carload of stock for the spring market. That was a cold rough winter, and digging straw from a drifted stack on a stormy day was not fun, but the winter passed, and another summer and winter. In the spring of 1912, Jack and Bert decided to move on farther west. They ended up at North Battleford, then a new little town where from daylight till dark the sound of hammers, was in the air. Bert got work in a butcher shop and Jack with the sash and door factory. He was a member of the Lacrosse team and through it became familiar with the country for miles around. Agents were busy everywhere peddling lots, in new towns that were springing up. He bought a lot in Vegreville, Alberta which later proved to be at the bottom of a lake! He and Bert lived in a tent set in a friend's yard and took their meals with the family. With the coming of cold weather, they set up a small stove and to remove the ashes, what came to hand was the hard starched front of an old dress shirt!



Mr. and Mrs. J. B. McQuarrie 1917.

Jack came back to Oak Lake in 1915 and once more took up farm work. In 1917 he married Agnes Scott, and in 1923, with three children, they moved to the Carey farm in the valley where they lived for thirteen years. They left the valley the spring of 1936, and lived in the Runnymede district until the end of 1938 when they rented the farm west of town which was owned by John Scott. The two older boys, Neil and Murray, joined the armed forces, and the oldest daughter, Gwen, found employment with her aunt, Mrs. Gillespie. The three younger children attended school in Oak Lake. In 1942, **Gwen** married Jack Dean who at that time was in the Air Force, and in 1946, **Margaret** married Raymond Peel of Norland, Ontario. She has three daughters, Karen, Valerie, and Vivian. After active service in Europe, and eleven months spent by Neil in a German prison camp, he and Murray returned home safely in 1945. **Murray** went to British Columbia and spent some years in construction of power plants in the northern part of the province, before settling in Revelstoke, where he married the former Marlene Tooley. Murray is a



McQuarrie Children, Gwen, Murray on "Darky", Neil, Peggy, Danny, Jean.

conductor on the C.P.R. He and Marlene have two sons, Gregor and Brian.

**Neil** spent several years with the forestry service in Ontario before rejoining the Army. On his first Peace Force mission to Germany, he met and married Mary Ellen Crowley. He was a part of two more Peace missions, one to Cyprus and another to Germany. He retired from the army in 1968, and since then has worked with the B.C. Forestry in Nelson. He has one son, Robert, and two daughters, Colleen and Donna.

**Dan** also went to British Columbia where he worked on construction. His first job was on that marvellous piece of road through Roger's Pass. He married Laura Heide in 1966, and is presently employed with the C.P.R. in Nelson. They have a daughter, Dianna, and a son, Scott.

**Jean**, the youngest member of the family, taught for nearly twenty-five years. She gradually worked her way through to her B.A. and B.Ed. degrees. She taught in Virden, Oak Lake, and Castlegar, British Columbia but after her father's death, came home and for seven years was principal of the Junior High School. At present she is working part time in our Municipal Office.

In 1956, Mr. McQuarrie, in failing health, gave up farming and he and his wife moved into town. For a few summers he was caretaker of the golf course, a position which he enjoyed because of the opportunity it gave for meeting new people. He died during the summer of 1967, aged 78 years.

Now well on in her 92nd year, his wife, Agnes, has remarkably good health, maintains a lively interest in her church and community, enjoys reading and learning about all things newly discovered or invented, marvels at man's scientific achievements, writes occasionally for the local paper, and keeps her personal diary up to date. There are now twelve grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

### **John Neufeld**

John and Helen came to Canada in the spring of 1930. They landed at Halifax, Nova Scotia, with three children, John, Mary and Helen (6 months old). They lived with relatives at Whitewater, Manitoba for a short time. In 1931 they lived in Griswold. In 1933 they moved into the Oak Lake area. In 1936 my Dad worked for E. De Galley and we children attended Oak View School.

This poem was written about Oak View School. The member of the school board was Joe Dupaul. The teacher was Miss Lillian Hatch and I was the little girl sitting on the teacher's knee on the way to the field day.

### **Off to the Field Day**

A country school field day  
Was something to see,  
If one of the children  
You happened to be.  
For weeks we were marching  
Each step was in time  
We chanted our slogan  
We said it in rhyme  
Then on that bright morning  
Imagine the luck  
Came one of the school board  
With his Model T truck  
Then into our places  
Excitement rose high  
In the spring breezes  
Out under the sky.  
With a turn of the crank  
And a sputter and sneeze  
The motor was roaring  
With greatest of ease.  
Hi Ho for the field day  
Come rain or come shine  
With banner and caps  
We'll be marching in line  
And over that humpety bumpety road  
Went the Model T truck  
And its big happy load.  
I wish you had seen us  
The Old Model T,  
The school board, the teacher,  
The children, and me.

In 1938 we moved back to Griswold. This time onto a farm, which my Dad later bought. The crops grew, and so did the children. They had ten, five boys and five girls. The children are all grown up, married and have their own families.

**John** — married Anne Reimer, living in Brandon. **Mary** — married John Rempel, living in Winnipeg. **Helen** — married George Neufeld, living at Crystal City. **Peter** — married Elaine Busch, living at Griswold. **Anne** — married Merle Hart, living at Vancouver. **Abe** — married Alvina Zacharias. **Henry** — married Gert Falk. Both Abe and Henry live at Stonewall. **Kathy** — (Tina) and family, living at Chillicothe, Ohio. **Dave** — married Carolyn Hillier, living in Calgary. **Susie** — married Henry Friesen, living at Killarney.

Now some of us are living many miles away, but those of us that attended Oak View School have many fond memories of our little country school.

My Dad died in 1967, and Mother lives at Boissevain, Manitoba, in her own home.

by **Helen Neufeld**

## **Alphonse and Theresa Nevraumont** by Charlotte Hutton

Mr. and Mrs. Alphonse Nevraumont and their nine children arrived from Belgium in 1914, first farming in the Belleview, Manitoba area and then in the Deleau area. Two more children were born here. With their eleven children they then moved to the Henderson farm (now Thiry's) in 1918. They lived in the Lansdowne area for four years, most of the children going to Lansdowne School.

One day a very bad blizzard hit the area and the children were all sent home. The Nevraumont children went home with the Gordon's and Mrs. Nevraumont had sent the oldest boy, Julian, to get the children. When Julian arrived at the school, everyone was gone and he decided to stay, for he thought it would be safer. Mrs. Nevraumont, fearing for his safety, started walking. Lost, she came to a granary and set fire to it, hoping Julian would find his way home with the aid of the fire. Neighbours came and everything turned out fine.

One of their daughters, Erma, married Thomas Hellyer and farmed in the Pipestone area, their daughter, Charlotte, is now married to Fred Hutton and lives at Oak Lake Resort. Fred and Charlotte have one son, Darren, who attended Oak Lake school from Grade five to nine. They have started a Camp Ground near Oak Lake, buying the land from a M. Gerluk who had purchased the land from C. Bothe of Oak Lake.

The Nevraumont family moved back to the Gonty farm at Belleview, Manitoba.

## **George Newton**

George and Ruth Newton arrived in Oak Lake area in 1947 with their three children, Gordon, Lynne and Nora. Gordon was in Grade Ten and took the remainder of his high school in Oak Lake. Lynne also completed High school in Oak Lake. Nora finished her education in Winnipeg when they moved there in 1952.

George Newton was a railway man. He worked for the C.N.R. in Elgin, Hartney, Roseile, Algar (2 miles south of Oak Lake) and Winnipeg. He was originally from England, coming to Canada as a young man.

Gordon remembers how they drove a horse to school in the winter from Algar to Oak Lake. He also remembers getting his driver's licence so they could take his Dad's car, also used to go to lots of Kenton, Oak Lake and Virden dances.

Ruth Newton was a Hatch from Hartney.

Gordon, Lynne and Nora all became school teachers and all are still involved in Education. **Gordon** is a school superintendent in St. Vital. He is

married to Margaret Etsell who came from the Hagyard district. They have a son, David, and two daughters, Barbara and Kathy.

**Lynne** is married to George Hamende from Gladstone. They have two daughters, Janet and Carrie.

**Nora's** husband is William Stark who comes from Scotland. Their children are Heather and Russell.

George Newton died in 1957. Mrs. Newton has lived in Winnipeg since leaving Oak Lake.

Gordon, Lynne and Nora have good memories of their high school years in Oak Lake and still keep in touch with some of the friends they made there.

## **Laurence Newton Family**

Laurence Newton came to the Lansdowne area in December, 1944, settling on the Kufflick place, W½ 6-9-25. Later he purchased W½ 6-9-23, and in '62 the Maziary farm.

In 1955 he married Linda Bohn, of Steelman, Saskatchewan. They had five children: Sandra, Gene, Holly, Owen and Trudy. The first two started to school at Oakwood.

Laurence and Linda ran a cow-calf operation, and raised sheep. They milked cows, selling the cream. Laurence supplemented the family income by doing a lot of custom shearing.

They farmed until 1966, then decided to try something a little easier. Selling out, they moved to Regina. Both took barbering courses, and today ply their skill at "Newtons Regent Park Barber Shop", in the Queen City.

## **Erlin Noecker Family**

Ruby Forrest, eldest daughter of John and Christina Forrest of the St. David's District, married Erlin Noecker, November 19th, 1919. After their marriage they farmed near Glenallen, Ontario.

In 1927 with their three children, they moved to Manitoba and spent a few years in the St. David's area before moving to the Harding District, where they farmed for fourteen years. Two daughters were born during this time.

In 1944 the family returned to Ontario where they farmed. In 1955 they moved to a new home in Moorefield, Ontario. Erlin conducted a Purina Feed business for eleven years before his retirement in 1966. Ruby and Erlin were involved in the work of the church and in community activities.

Erlin's death occurred on June 27th, 1979. Ruby continues to reside in their home in the village.

Their five children are —

**Thelma** — (Mrs. Norman Horne) is a school teacher.



**Morris** — who farms, married Shirley Cunningham.

**Ralph** — married Ruth Franklin. Ralph farms and is a road superintendent for Maryborough township.

**Earla** — a school teacher, married Keith Dickson, a farmer.

**Norma** — a school teacher, married David Wand.

### William Henry Olive

William Henry Olive was born in Fitzroy Township, Ontario, in 1864. His parents were born in Ontario. He was an Anglican by faith, fraternally a member of the Loyal Orange Lodge and politically a Conservative. He married Sarah Jane Hope of Arnprior, Ontario and at that time moved from Dunrobin, Ontario to Oxdrift, Ontario.

He came to Tyndall, Manitoba in 1903 working as a contractor for road building. He graded the road bed for the C.P.R. double track west to Brandon. In 1915 he moved to Elkhorn, Manitoba where he had a contract working on the Maryfield road. It was the first road to be graded in the Municipality of Wallace.

The equipment used at that time was horse and

mule drawn scrapers, water tanks and false bottom wagons used for hauling gravel. Tents were used for the cooking, and as sleeping accommodation. Later bunk houses and cook cars were built on wheels. In the twenties, tractors were beginning to replace horses and mules.

The family moved to Oak Lake in 1917, where Mr. Olive was engaged in highway construction and farming on 30-9-23 until retiring in 1930 to live in Oak Lake. He died in 1932 and Mrs. Olive in 1959. They had six sons and two daughters — Guy, Thomas, Wellington, Ernie, Edward, Frederick, Irene and Thelma.

**Guy** — married Blanche Boys of Elkhorn in 1918. He was killed in action during the First World War.

**Ernie** — was a Royal Canadian Engineers veteran of the Second World War. After he was discharged he was in partnership in a tourist resort at Temagami, Ontario and icemaker at the curling rink at New Lisgard, Ontario. He died in 1972.

**Edward** — worked with his father on road construction. He died at 25, in 1930 from heart failure.

**Fred** — married Gertrude Nattress of Treherne, Manitoba in 1937. Gertie died in 1965. They had two



Olive Family 1928. Back Row (Left to Right) — Irene Costley, Ernie Olive, Eugene Costley, William Olive, Mrs. William Olive, Irene Olive, Tom Olive, Lorne Boys, Fred Olive, Terrence Murphy, Hazel Olive, Dick Boys, Wellington Olive, Arthur Boys, Ed Olive. Front Row (Left to Right) — Guy Costley, Tom Costley, Jack Olive, Jim Olive.



sons, Albert and George, and one daughter, Laurel (Mrs. J. Saunders) of Calgary, Alberta. Fred was a veteran of the R.C.A.F. and remained in the force in Calgary until his retirement.

His second marriage to Maud Stevens took place in 1970. They are now living in Toronto, Ontario. There are four grandchildren all living in Calgary.

**Irene** — married Eugene Costley of Oak Lake. They had three boys, Guy, Tom and Fred. Eugene died in 1978 and Irene in 1980.

**Thelma** — married Truman Dixon of Oak Lake. They had two children, Fay and Doug. Truman died in 1977. Thelma lives in Brandon with their daughter, Fay.

### **Thomas G. Olive**

Tom married Irene Costley in 1925. They were engaged in highway construction and farming in the Runnymede district on section 29-9-23 for forty-three years. They were members of the Oak Lake United Church.

Tom served eighteen years as a councillor for the R. M. of Sifton and served on the Virden Health Unit board as a representative for Sifton for all those years.

Fraternally he was a Mason and a member of the Eastern Star and Canadian Order of Foresters. Mrs. Olive is a member of the Eastern Star.

They retired to Oak Lake in 1968. Tom died in 1973 and Mrs. Olive still resides in their home in town.

### **Wellington H. Olive**

Wellington married Hazel Boys in 1924. They had two sons, James and John, and two daughters, Joyce and Nora. They were engaged in road construction and farming on section 20-9-23, in the Runnymede district for 51 years. Their children attended Runnymede School and later Oak Lake High School.

Fraternally Wellington is a member of the Canadian Order of Foresters and for many years was a trustee of Runnymede School District.

They retired to live in Oak Lake in 1975. Mrs. Olive died in 1980 and Wellington still lives in his home.

There are eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

**Jim** and **Jack**, Wellington's sons, are still farming the same land. Jim and his son have 20-9-23 and Jack has the "home place". Jim lives on the farm and Jack drives out every day from town.

The boys attended Runnymede School and then Jim rode his pony to Oakwood. When Runnymede closed they drove a buggy or a cutter to town. Those

ponies they drove were very fast and worried some of the teachers.

In 1949 Jim married Betty Skinner of Griswold. They have two children, their daughter, Terry, and son Murray. They attended Runnymede and Oakwood schools and graduated from Virden Collegiate Institute.

Terry married Fraser Wood of Virden. They now live in Red Deer, Alberta. Fraser works for Calgary Power and Terry is assistant manager of one of the branches of the Credit Union. They have two children, Chris and Heather.

Murray is farming with his father. He lives in the buildings vacated by Wellington Olive. He married Trudy Cook of Virden and they have one daughter, Melanie.

**John** married Alice Henderson of Oak Lake in 1955. They have two children, Patricia and Kenneth. Both attended elementary and junior high school in Oak Lake and graduated from Virden Collegiate. Patti graduated from Brandon General Hospital School of Nursing in 1978 and was employed by Brandon Hospital for two years before marrying Bev Patterson of Flin Flon, formerly of Boissevain, in September 1980. They lived and worked in Flin Flon for ten months before Bev was transferred as Hardware Manager to Revelstoke Lumber in Brandon in July 1981. Patti is continuing her nursing career in Brandon.

Ken took one year of Business Administration at Assiniboine College in Brandon, then took a Trainman's Course with the C.P.R. in 1981. He worked out of Brandon and Minnedosa and is presently working for C.P. Rail at Red Deer, Alta.

Alice resumed her teaching career when both children were in school with Grade One at Oakwood School in 1965, later Assiniboine Elementary, where she is presently employed.

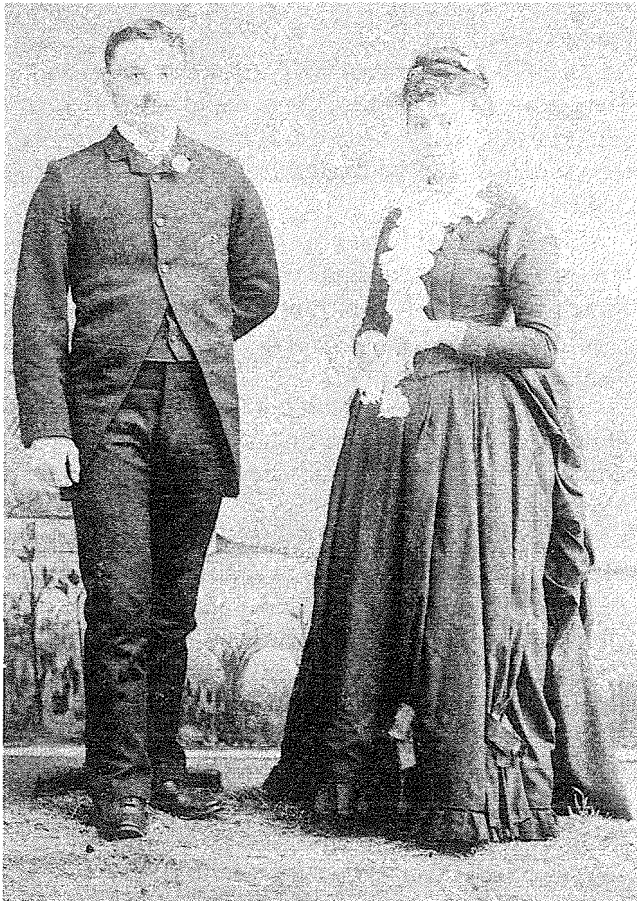
**Joyce** married Vern Waidson and lived in Vancouver, B.C. They had one daughter, Wendy. Joyce now lives in Castlegar, B.C.

**Nora** married Dave Scott of Vancouver. They had three girls, Donna, Lynda (Mrs. Herbert) and Janet. Lynda has one son, Chris. Nora was killed in a car accident in 1974.

### **Charles Olivier**

Charles Olivier was born September 22, 1866, at Three Rivers, Quebec. He married Marie Aurez dit La ferriere on February 19, 1889.

About 1886 he homesteaded N.E. ¼ 16-8-24, later, probably '92 or '93 he bought N½ 15-8-24, built a house and made this his home. Here he raised cattle as the land was close to the marsh, not suited for grain.



Charles and Marie Olivier 1889.

Nine children were born to Charles and Marie: Edouard Victor 1890-1910, Marie 1892-1893, John 1894-1896, Alice 1895-1913, Annette 1897-1924, Jos. Gustave 1898-1899, Bernadette 1899, Charles 1902, Blanche 1904.

Marie died quite early leaving her young family to grow up without a Mother's care.

**Alice** — married Joe Cote.

**Bernadette** — left the farm in 1937, working in Winnipeg before being married to Dave Thomas and returning, to live on the old home place.

**Blanche** — married Ross Smith of Virden who was a member of the R.C.M.P. The last years they retired in Virden.

**Annie** — married Desiré Van Loo and passed away in 1968.

**Charlie or "Chum"** as he was called, farmed with his Dad, predeceasing his Father in 1946 by a year.

## Parkes

submitted by Betty Parkes Plaisier

My Grandparents, Thomas and Elizabeth Parkes, came by ship from England about 1906, bringing their children Alice, Florence, Mary, Elenor (Nell),

Harry, and our father, Joseph Arthur (Joe) who was just a wee baby. Aunt Ida was born in Canada in 1907.

Grandfather settled on a farm in the Oak Lake community just a mile and a half west of what is known now as No. 1 Highway. Grandfather's trade in England was that of gardener but in Canada he farmed and then operated the Parkes Dairy for many years.

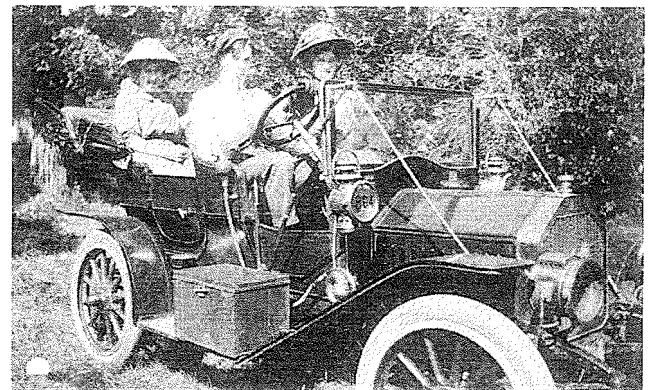
Aunt Ida married Emery Masson of Oak Lake and lived on the same farm continuing on with the Parkes Dairy.

Joe, as everyone knew him, married Mary Waugh and farmed until he retired in 1957. He then had a shoe repair shop in the former Anderson Store. They had two girls, Mary Elizabeth (Betty) and Margaret Jean. Betty and Jean received their education in the Oak Lake School. **Betty** married Richard E. (Dick) Plaisier, eldest son of Constant and Mary Plaisier in 1947. They took up residence on their farm just off the north shore of the Lake, now known as "Cherry Point".

My sister, **Jean**, married Sam Brown in 1955, son of Thomas and Mary Brown, formerly from Renwer, Manitoba. Sam owned and operated the Esso Garage in Oak Lake for a number of years and then moved to Kelvington, Saskatchewan, where he accepted a position with the Co-op garage. Jean works as bookkeeper with McLeods. Jean and Sam have two children, Daryl Stuart and Heather Maureen.

## Thomas James Parsons submitted by Elsie Wallace

My grandfather, Thomas James Parsons, was born in Southall, Middlesex, England in 1855. He married Susanna Baker in Acton, England in 1881 and they came to Canada in 1884, settling in Brandon. Grandfather was an iron-worker and he did beautiful wrought iron work. In 1886 they moved to New York City, but because of Grannie's health, the



Ready for a Ride in the Parsons Car.

high humidity and heat, they returned to Canada after four years, settling in Oak Lake. Grandfather opened up a hardware store which he managed till 1922, the building was where our present Municipal Office is situated. He then worked as a tinsmith in S. P. Fall's garage. Grandfather died in 1937, Grannie in 1946.

Grandfather and Grannie were members of St. Alban's Anglican Church. He was envelope secretary for years also a member of the tenor section of the choir. Grannie played the organ for several years.

There were three children born to this union: Tessa, Elsie and Francis (Frank).

**Tessa** — was a baby when her parents immigrated to Canada. She was very active in the musical circles of Oak Lake. She took her training in Winnipeg, both piano and voice, also taught school there, at Havergal's private school for girls, which later became "Rupertsland", and is now "Balmoral Hall". She was pianist in the local orchestra, sang at many concerts and weddings, taught piano and voice until 1955 when ill health forced her to retire. Prior to her marriage to Percy Wallace, she taught dancing also, using the large kitchen in her parents' Home as her studio.

**Elsie** — was born in New York City, she also was musical, having a beautiful contralto voice, her singing of "Danny Boy" will remain with me always. She worked at the Bank of Montreal until it closed. She remained in Oak Lake caring for her aging parents. She was secretary treasurer of Oakwood school board for several years, also worked in the Post Office. She was a faithful member of St. Alban's, singing in the choir, also envelope secretary for many years. She died in 1969.

**Frank** — was born in Oak Lake and was educated here. He married Annie Lamond and they moved to Winnipeg where he was employed. They had five children, Nina, Robert, Glen, Frances and Ronald. Annie died in 1960. In 1963 Frank and his second wife, Barbara, came from Ontario to live in Oak Lake, in the house now occupied by Wellington Olive. They stayed for two years then moved to Brandon as Barbara became an employee of Brandon University. He died in 1974 and Barbara still lives in Brandon.

My fondest memory of Grandfather was his walking out from town to our farm in the summertime on a Sunday afternoon. He would have supper with us then Dad would take him back home with the horse and buggy. Grannie was a wonderful cook, and did beautiful hand embroidery and crocheting. My grandparents had a cottage at Oak Lake and we as children always spent a week there in the summertime, Mother went too. Their cottage was rather unique as the verandah was built around a huge oak

tree, the top of the tree came through the roof. There also was a huge fireplace, and we always wished for one evening of rain so that we could have a fire in it, and popcorn. The cottage isn't there any more. It was sold and torn down.

Grandfather and Grannie were some of the early settlers in town and I'm sure contributed much to the community. I believe that Grandfather had the first car in town, a Maclaughlin-Buick.

### **The William Parsons Family submitted by Ruth (Parsons) Story**

William Parsons and his wife Louisa; their family of five boys and two girls, arrived in Brandon from Wiltshire, England in the fall of 1882. The baby was under one year old.

They spent the winter there, going west in the spring. My grandparents settled on their homestead two miles west of Oak Lake on the north side of the C.P.R. in May 1883. They were one of the earliest settlers in the district; this point being the end of the steel on the C.P.R. At the time of their arrival Brandon was the nearest town.

The present Mennonite Church stands on the south border of the old homestead. My Grandfather worked for a time on the railway but soon left to take up farming full time.

Over the years the family grew up, the youngest son, Ralph, being born four years after their arrival. A comfortable home was built and the boys with their father continued farming. The older girl, Rose, married Tom Tarleton and went to live on his farm near Griswold, and raised five girls. Harry, the oldest boy, worked for years in Flour Mills in Saskatchewan, where he married. Returning to Virden to retire, he died there in 1959 at the age of 88. He had no family.

My father, Frank, married the oldest Chapman girl, Alice, in 1910 and moved to a farm in the Assiniboine Valley, which he and his brothers had purchased. This was the farm Kelly Taylor now lives on.

Fred, the third son, worked for the C.P.R. for many years in British Columbia, Ontario and Manitoba, retiring to Winnipeg where he died in 1957 at the age of 79. His only son, Fred Jr. lives in Ajax, Ontario.

Tom Parsons remained on the homestead until 1919 when he married Edna Chapman, sister to Alice, my Mother. They moved to Indian Head, Saskatchewan where he was engaged in the farm implement business and later farming. He retired, remaining there till his death in 1970 at age 90. His wife was killed in a car accident in 1959. There was no family.

Oliver stayed on the farm, building his own home a short distance from the family home when he married in 1922.

My Grandmother died in January 1922 and around that time her Granddaughter, Lily Tarleton, came to do the housekeeping.

Edith, the younger daughter, who lived at home died in January 1923.

Ralph also remained on the home farm till it was sold in the late 1920's to a Mr. Frank Thiessen. He and his niece then moved to Brandon, living there till he died in 1961. He never married. Lily, now past 90, resides at Assiniboine Hospital in Brandon.

My Grandfather, William Parsons, died in 1928; enjoying good health all his life; a few days short of his 92nd birthday. He died at the home of Oliver on the old farm. A write up taken from the Winnipeg Tribune at the time said, "He endured hardships of the early days when oxen were the common mode of transportation. He has what is probably an unprecedented record of having lived for forty-five years on the same farm, only spending one night away from home, that being when he journeyed to Brandon to file on his homestead shortly after his arrival here."

Oliver, his wife and twin girls soon moved to Nanton, Alberta, remaining there till his death in 1969. His daughters both live in Calgary.

I was born on the Kelly Taylor farm — though I doubt there is much resemblance to the house now, as it was then. At school age it was necessary for me to attend school in town as my country school, "Pleasant Plains" was closed due to lack of children. My Father later sold the valley farm to Dave Taylor and we lived in the Bill Anderson house on Main Street, later moving to the house where Motherals now live.

Tom Story and I were married in that house in September 1938. Our older boy, Clarke, was born in 1940 and David in 1947. My parents continued living in the "big red house" until it was impossible for them to take care of the house and grounds. Around 1949 they traded houses with Motherals and lived in the small house on the south side of the highway across from the rink. My father died in 1955 and in 1958 Mother sold the house and went to live in Middlechurch Senior Citizens Home. She only lived there two months when she died in November 1958 at age 77.

Tom joined the Manitoba Telephone System in 1949 and moved to Morris in 1957, later to Morden. Upon retiring in 1976 we moved to Vernon, British Columbia where David, his wife and two children live. David is employed by B.C. Tel.

Clarke is also an employee of M.T.S. and lives in Brandon with his wife and three children.

For the past two years we have lived in a Mobile Home Park north of Vernon.



Back Row (Left to Right) — D. Paterson, E. Bryant, J. Bryant, K. Paterson, J. Waite. Front Row (Left to Right) — B. Waite, J. Paterson, M. Paterson, A. Waite, May Clark (in front).

### John Paterson

John Paterson, his sisters Annie and Kate, brothers William, Donald and Angus came from Inverness, Scotland and settled in the Verity district.

John married a widow, Minnie Harvatt, who with her two children, Harold and May, came to Canada from England to keep house for her two uncles, John and Robert Waite.

Later the Patersons moved to the Ryerson district.

Mrs. Paterson was much in demand as a trained mid-wife and brought scores of babies into the world.

During the flu epidemic of 1918 she nursed a couple of bachelors. Others wouldn't go near them fearing contamination, but she changed her clothes each time she went in or came out of their shack, depending on the sub zero weather to kill the germs.

John Paterson died in 1945 and Minnie Paterson in 1965, in her 95th year.

They had a family of four: Tom, Emily, Mary and Minnie.

**Tom** married Barbara Campbell of Kenton and settled on the home farm. They had four children. Gerald married Stella McIntyre and lives in Brandon. There are three children. Harvey married Barbara Schwartz. They live at Forrest and have two children. Beatrice, a teacher, married Chester Sparr and live at Boyle, Alberta. Barbara Anne, a nurse, married Ted Smith, live in Brandon and have two children.

**Emily** — married John Gow of Oak Lake.

**Mary** married Stewart Lindsay and farmed in Verity district. They had two children. Donald farms at Deleau. Marion married Gary Crampain. They have two children, Wayne and Julie. Marion, a for-

mer telephone operator now works for Valleyview Co-op in Oak Lake. Gary is employed by the Department of Highways. He is involved in many sports, and coaches hockey.

**Minnie** — married Mel Hart of Oak Lake.

From Mrs. Paterson's first family, a daughter, May Harvatt married William Clark and her son Harold married Amy Gordon, while overseas in World War I.

### **Mr. and Mrs. P. W. Paul and Family by Emily (Paul) Dickson**

Percy Walter Paul was born in Somerset, England and received most of his education there.

After serving in the Royal West Kent Regiment, (The Buffs) in the South African (Boer) War, he returned to England, but owing to the unsettled conditions there, he decided to emigrate to Canada. He came to Canada in 1907 and looked for work at his trade, contracting and building, in Winnipeg. There being a strike in the City at that time, he came west to Oak Lake and worked on a farm in the Sandhurst district. After a short time at farm work and having been joined by his family from England, he moved to Town where he worked as a contractor in Town and surrounding district.

When the First World War broke out he enlisted in the 45th battalion and served Overseas in France and later in Germany, returning to Canada in 1919 with the 2nd Division, Canadian Machine Guns.

P. W. Paul was a member of the Masonic Lodge, the Royal Canadian Legion, Oak Lake Citizens Band, the Oddfellows and Rebekah Lodges, the Eastern Star, and St. Alban's Church choir, also a Licensed Lay-reader of the Church. He also served for many years as Secretary of the Oakwood School board and had several terms on the local council as Mayor and Councillor.

Mrs. Paul was born in Birmingham, England and was a dedicated worker for Church, Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion and Lodges.

During the Second World War, P. W. Paul served in civilian capacity with the Air Force Training School at Souris and Brandon. He also worked with the Red Cross and with the re-habilitation of Veterans after World War II. He was for a number of years, Justice of the Peace.

On April 29th, 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Paul celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Son Percy and daughter Emily, were both educated in England and at Oakwood School graduating with honours.

Percy is now living in Regina, Saskatchewan, with his wife, the former Gladys Beard of Neepawa. Prior to retirement he worked with the Bank of



Mr. and Mrs. Paul's Golden Wedding.

Montreal. Emily worked as Assistant Secretary Treasurer, then as Secretary Treasurer with the Town of Oak Lake and the Rural Municipality of Sifton until retirement. She married Peter B. Dickson.

### **Peter Penner**

Rev. and Mrs. Peter Penner came to the Pleasant Plains district from Morden with a family of four girls and three boys. (Originally, they had emigrated from Russia to Morden in 1926.) In 1929, at the beginning of the depression, they took up farming on the SE of 1-10-25.

Some of the children attended Pleasant Plains School, and later, when it closed, attended Routledge School. Rev. Penner was the minister to the Mennonite congregation in the Oak Lake area. Services were held in the homes until 1941, when Pleasant Plains became available for services.

Mrs. Penner passed away in 1938 and Mr. Penner in 1945.

**Pete** — their oldest son, farmed (also on 1-10-25) for a number of years. He and his wife, Tina, now reside in Virden. Their children — Otto, Helen, Eric and Louise — attended school in Oak Lake.

**Anne** - (Mrs. Ed Schroeder) lives in Winnipeg and has two children — Ulrich and Kirsten.

**Katie** — (Mrs. Klippenstine) and her husband, Pete, resided on 7-10-23 to the northeast of Oak Lake. They now live in Brandon. Their children are Albert, Peter, Ernie, and Irene.



**Mary** — (Mrs. Hank Penner) lives in Winnipeg and has four sons — Don, Barry, Dale and David.

**Henry** — and wife, Ida, now live on Vancouver Island. They farmed on 12-10-25 for a time. Their children — Brent, Arden, Lynn and Erin — took part of their schooling in Oak Lake.

**Cornie** — and his wife, Thelma, live on 30-9-24. Their children are Heather, Tim, and Rob.

**Beth** — (Mrs. Kathler) and her husband, Bill, live at Winnipeg. They have four children — Doug, Kelly, Patricia and Allison.

### **John and Sarah Penny**

John and Sarah Penny came to Oak Lake area from Kenton in 1911, originally they were from Scotland.

They farmed first on NW¼ 10-9-24 moving to SE¼ 30-9-24 in 1914, living there until John died suddenly in 1921.

The family moved to Oak Lake where they went to school, later moving north-west of town, where they went to Hagyard School.

There were seven children in the family, Ina, Alexander, Edwin, Edna, Samuel, Gordon and Aurora. Only two are still living, Ina (Strachan) of Kelowna, British Columbia, and Sam of Virden. John, Sarah, and three children, Aurora, Gordon and Alex are buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery.

### **Alexander Phillips**

#### **Ella Graham**

Mr. Alexander H. Phillips came to Manitoba from Arnprior, Ontario. In 1906 he married Amelia Grace (Millie) Goodwin, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Goodwin who were pioneers in the St. David's district.

The young couple lived in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan, where Alex was employed by the C.P.R. Three children were born to them there — Clarence, who died as a baby, Lawrence (Larry) and Ella.

The family moved back to Manitoba in 1918 and in 1923 rented the farm of Dave Goodwin, one half mile north of Hagyard School which Larry and Ella attended.

In 1935 Mr. and Mrs. Phillips and Larry moved to Brandon where they remained until Mr. Phillips died in 1954 and Mrs. Phillips in 1961. After a long illness, Larry became a well known photographer in Brandon. He married Molly Hawkins of Reston who was a former teacher at Hagyard School. She died in 1960 and Larry in 1962. They had no family.

In 1934 Ella married Ivan Graham, a farmer in the Shiloh district. They have two children — Phil of Winnipeg and Linda who is married to John Kellsey of Lenore. They live in Ft. Frances, Ontario and have two children, Vicki and Vincent.

Ella and Ivan Graham still live in the Shiloh-Kenton district.

### **Paul Henry Phillips**

#### **submitted by Jack (Truman) Phillips**

My father, Paul Henry Phillips, born September 29, 1876, arrived in Oak Lake in 1903. He worked first for a man named Grandmason whose farm was out south of Oak Lake, and I believe this man was a relative of the Carberry family. My Dad was born in London, England, and I recall him telling of the terrible discomfort he endured from mosquitoes while working in the hayfields and sleeping in sheds with no netting — mosquitoes like Englishmen! Next he worked for a Mr. Harvey who was the father of Art and Helen Harvey and whose farm was a few miles north of Oak Lake. Next he purchased a farm, which was right across the road from Bob Montgomery's farm. The buildings have long since been burned and destroyed. Glad Slimmon owned the farm after my Dad sold it in 1916.



Mr. and Mrs. Phillips with 1st Grandchild.

My mother, Kathleen Frances Cropp, born January 18, 1885, in London, England, came out to Canada in 1912 and they were married in St. John, New Brunswick, March 25, 1912. I was in St. John recently, found the church, and the secretary looked up the Book of Recorded Marriages and found their names for me.

In 1916 my mother, father, sisters Helen and Margaret moved to the farm, just a mile from Oak Lake, I still remember the section number 25-9-24. I was born on the farm in August, 1918 and my brother, Jeff, in 1922.

We all went to St. Alban's Church and attended Oakwood School.

I don't remember my mother and father talking so much about hardships, as they did about "hard times" — wheat 27¢ a bushel No. 1 hard — eggs

10-15¢ a dozen — butter 15¢ a pound in middle of winter. I personally sold a year old steer for just 20% of what my dinner cost tonight at an ordinary restaurant. Those were hard times.

Our worst tragedy was in 1926 when all but one, of our farm buildings were burned. The straw pile caught fire, right beside me, from a spark from the straw burning steam engine, running the threshing machine. Although only eight years old, I well remember the neighbours coming over to help build a new barn. No wages were asked! A few days after the fire Mr. Alex Smith sent two men and two huge loads of hay over to help out — no charge!! People were like that — I wonder if they are today? Several years later I recall taking two big loads of oat sheaves out to Mr. Alex Smith's farm after he had some sort of disaster. Alex Smith was Nora Doherty's father.

My mother and father were not 'pioneers' in as much as they did not break sod and homestead, but they did wrestle a hard fought living for four children, without government handouts, welfare, unemployment insurance, hospital insurance, mental health care, etc. etc. They paid all their bills and taxes by depriving themselves. Some years the total return for our grain crops was less than the taxes on the farm.

Today all four of Paul and Kathleen Phillips' children are alive and healthy and strung out half way around the world.

**Helen** — London, England.

**Jack** (Truman) — Mississauga, Ontario.

**Jeff** — Vancouver, British Columbia.

**Margaret** — Hawaii, United States.

We are sure proud to have been raised in Oak Lake and to have known the fine people that live there.

My Dad's favourite anecdote concerned the Oak Lake Constable back around 1915 I believe. Apparently the Constable liked "a drop of the bottle" — so on one fine July 1st holiday, he and a few cronies of like taste got a bottle of liquor and went off to a secluded corner of the Fairgrounds to sample the liquor. When they had become quite drunk — the Constable pulled himself together — arrested his cronies for being drunk in a public place and put them in the cells in the old Firehall! The story was told as truth.

## **Ernest Pickford 1891-1974**

**submitted by his daughter, Jean D. Wilson**

Ernest Pickford, son of Tom and Frances Pickford, was born April 14, 1891 near the county jail in Northampton, England. His parents wanted him to go to theological school but that was not what he had

in mind. He was sent to learn the butcher business, which he liked.

This account is submitted by the eldest daughter of Ernest Pickford. The account was typed a short time before Ernest died in 1974. He did it for something to do while he was fighting against cancer. The rest of the story is in his own words. He doesn't mention names which is a pity. Some of his good friends should be named for he thought a lot of them. Some I've heard him speak of — Cowings, Cairns, Lyals.

"In the spring of 1910 I took off for Canada and arrived at Oak Lake, Manitoba where I had an uncle. I stayed with them a week then out to the farm with a bachelor for three hundred dollars for the year. The farmer stayed until the crop was in then went to England, leaving me alone with the farm. He didn't return until November when I had the crop all threshed and the land all plowed up.

In the spring, on completion of contract, I could not get a raise in salary, left him and went to town and secured employment with a farmer close to town. The first morning he called me at four a.m., put me to work cleaning out a barn which had not been touched for a long time. I had to dig down under the doorway to enter. Go down, then up and you were in. I stayed that day. I soon was occupied again. This time with a widow. She liked to have the fence posts sharpened among other jobs while "resting" during the noon hour.

I rented a farm about twelve miles out of Oak Lake and started housekeeping. I had a weekly dish washing every Sunday after using both sides all week. Many times, came in from the field, went out and dug potatoes, down to the slough to get a duck or a prairie chicken, cut off the breast and had dinner cooked in the frying pan in about twenty minutes.

Later, I had two men come to stay with me for the balance of the winter. They had come over with me in 1912. With other bachelor friends in the area we usually got together for company. We each had some kind of musical instrument and gave them a real workout for most of the night.

My nearest neighbour lived about one half mile from me. One day I walked over after dinner. He had not yet had his. On enquiring why he was late I found he was waiting for the hen to lay.

On Sundays we used to go to the Indian Reserve to church where the service was in two languages. Sometimes we went to the Presbyterian church some distance away. On the way home we usually staged buggy races. It was rough riding.

We had good skating during the winter. One night three others and I invaded a private rink where a very unfriendly person lived with three daughters. We

dressed up in women's clothes with fur hats and coats so he couldn't recognize us and did some skating. He came out on the ice. We just kept on skating. He couldn't catch up so he gave up. He never knew who his guests were. Two of these boys, my cousins, were both killed in the war at one time and the other boy later. (Buswell boys were cousins.)

On Hallowe'en we gathered together with others from outside the district which made us powerful enough to move heavy articles. We invaded a farm where the threshers were sleeping in a caboose. The water tank was moved up to the building, the door barricaded then the hose turned through the window. There was some strange language flying when the pump was started. We were chased across country by two men armed with shotguns in a buggy.

We used to travel all over on horseback and would have races. Wild horse racing was a great Sunday pastime in the few hours we had to ourselves. We also did a little wrestling, played a little football and other athletics.

We sometimes went to the lake to fish. We would turn the sleigh box upside down for sleeping. We put a line across the Pipestone Creek where it entered the lake and hung down about ten lines, baited with a piece of rag. It kept us busy taking the fish off the hooks — all pike. We took them home and threw them on the roof for the winter's supply. There were lots of Prairie Chickens available.

There was always an open house and meals wherever one made a stop. One night I stopped at a farm as it was very stormy. So I was escorted to the bedroom with a stable lantern. I slid into bed. Soon after the light was out it was like a hailstorm on the bed. Then things started to tickle. I put on the light and got off the bed. The bugs were running in all directions. As I had never seen a bed bug before I guessed at what they were. Well I left that house and out into the stable where I found a manger more to my liking. The owner came in the morning and asked what I was doing out there. I said the bugs carried me out.

Soon after the outbreak of World War I, I tried to enlist but was not accepted on account of a big knee which I got playing football. Finally at the end of 1915 they were not quite so fussy. Eventually we were sent to Camp Hughes which is Shilo now. Thence overseas and into the battle where I was wounded, sent to England and back to battle again.

After that mess was over Win Smith and I were married April 24, 1919. We came back to Canada and to Oak Lake in August. We stayed there a few days then both went out to the farm for threshing (probably Cairns). After two days I had to give it up. It was much too heavy. So we left and took the train to

Wapella where we stayed with Aunt Maria Buswell for a few days until I located a farm four miles out."

Ernest and Win raised seven children, Raymond, Winnie, Jean, Kathleen, Kenneth, Betty and Jack.

Mrs. Pickford died in August, 1951 and Ernest in April 1974 at White Rock, British Columbia where his second wife still lives.

### Constant Plaisier Family

Constant Plaisier was born on March 6th, 1888 in Thorout, West Flanders, Belgium where the family owned a brick foundry. Constant left Belgium in April 1910 via Cunard Lines, landing in New York, journeying to Grand Claire, Manitoba and then on to Kennedy, Saskatchewan. He worked on the railroad as a section hand. Returning to Belgium in 1912 he married Maria-Louisa Damme of Aertryche, Belgium who was born January 9th, 1892. They were to have travelled to Canada on the Titanic but fortunately remained until they returned in 1914 via Montreal to Maon (Sandhurst District).



Plaisier Family.

Constant and Maria acquired homestead rights for NW 24-9-25. They lived in a log cabin, where most of their family was born. While clearing his own land, Constant worked out at various farms. In 1925 they bought SW 13-9-25 from Rob Scott. The family farm grew as various parcels of land were purchased to a total of 17 quarters. The Plaisiers' first car was a 1926 Model T Touring Ford and then a second Ford Deluxe was bought in 1929 from Addie Stewart. Upon returning home with the new car they were completely hailed out. While in the community, Constant served as a trustee and chairman of the Sandhurst School district for 28 years. Constant, Maria and family were devout Roman Catholic par-

ishioners of both Saint Athanasius of Oak Lake and Sacred Heart of Virden. Constant was a trustee of both of these churches also helping with the construction of Sacred Heart. Mr. and Mrs. Plaisier with their youngest, Yvonne, retired to Virden in 1945 on Lyons Street. While living in Virden, Constant was employed by the Department of Highways and the Rural Municipality of Sifton. In 1953 he built a new home on 3rd Avenue. Enjoying his retirement he excelled in gardening at their new residence. On July 17th, 1967 they celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary. Maria-Louisa passed away on January 12, 1968 and Constant followed two short years after on February 25, 1970. They are both buried in the family plot in the Oak Lake Cemetery. Constant and Maria had a family of nine children, five girls and four boys.

**Magdalena Maria** — was born on June 7th, 1913 at Thorout, Belgium. At the age of 18 months she was badly burned by the Germans and as a result died in 1915.

**Alice Maria** — was born September 6th, 1914. She married Zerome Sobry at Oak Lake in 1937. They farmed at Tilston, Manitoba having a family of six; August, Elsie, Beatrice, Maurice, Andrew and Jean. Alice passed away on August 2nd, 1965.

**Beatrice Maria** — was born December 1, 1916. In 1934 she married Maurice Van Daele and they farmed at Medora. They had two children; Eileen and Floyd. Beatrice passed away February 20, 1968.

**Richard (Dick) Emile Joseph** — was born November 15, 1918 and attended Sandhurst School. In 1939, Dick enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces — 12th Manitoba Dragoons and later the 8th Armoured Car Division where he was badly injured in Falaise, France in 1943. After a lengthy time in hospital he returned to Oak Lake. In 1947 Dick married Mary Elizabeth (Betty) Parkes and they purchased the Bob Lang Farm NE 36-8-25. Dick also maintained Cherry Point Island Provincial Park Resort. While farming they also raised 12 foster children. Dick fell ill in 1970 and has since remained in hospital; Betty still resides on the farm. They had a family of two.

**Richard Joseph** — born August 1st, 1948. He married Marie Cwiertnia of Brandon in 1973 and they have three sons; Kent, Todd and Shawn. Rick taught in Rosssburn for eleven years where he was also a town councillor and mayor. At present they reside in Virden where Rick is the supervising principal of Virden Junior High.

**Mary Helen** was born September 29, 1949 and after completing a secretarial course Mary married James Procyk of Scarth in 1969. They have a family

of three; Michael, Lee and Nicole, and reside in Rosssburn.

**August Euchre Joseph** — was born March 22nd, 1922; he attended Sandhurst School for nine years. In 1941 he joined the Royal Canadian Armed Forces and was discharged in June 1945. August farmed the Jim Lang place. In October of 1954 he married Marion Eleanor Brown of Renwer. In August of 1975 they sold their farm and moved to Virden where August is employed by the Department of Highways. They have five sons.

**Gerald (7/8/55)** married Janet Sparham in August of 1975. They have two daughters and reside in Killarney.

**Perry (11/9/56)** married Donna McLeod in September of 1975. They live in Petersfield and have one daughter.

**Brian (21/10/57)** married Jackie Worniuick in June of 1981 and they live in Flin Flon.

**Brent (7/11/60)** married Rose Mary Churchill in 1980 and they reside in Medicine Hat, Alberta.

**Bruce (23/7/63)** graduated in June of 1981 and is living at home.

**Gaston Camile Joseph** — was born March 28th, 1924, acquiring his education at Sandhurst School. Gaston purchased the home farm SW 13-9-25 in 1945. In 1953 he rented out land and went to work at International Harvester for Bill Thiry and later onto the oil fields in Virden for France Construction. While in the community Gaston served as a Sandhurst School trustee. On April 28th, 1956, Gaston married Doreen May Allum of Oak Lake. In 1958 Gaston took employment with Manitoba Government Department of Highways; a few years were spent mobile home living in several towns. Since 1965 they have made their home in Brandon. Gaston and Doreen have three children, Douglas, Deborah Agnes and Cameron Shawn.

**Rene August Constant** — was born February 23rd, 1926. He took up farming on the former Lang farm which his father had bought a few years earlier. In 1947 he built a house on 1-9-25 where he still resides. Rene, alone, of the 4 brothers remains farming. In 1948 he married Dorothy Sherrer of Swan River. They had seven children.

**Janie** — married John Kalmakoff and they are posted in Germany. They have two children; Jacqueline and Jerry.

**Charles** — married Barbara Fefchak in 1970. In 1975 he bought and now resides on his Uncle August's farm 6-9-24. They have one child, Rhonda.

**Patrick** — resides in Virden and has two sons.

**Marie** — married Lynn Coulter in 1974. He is employed by the CPR and resides in Oak Lake. They have two sons, Chris and Cory.

**Mark** — resides in Virden.

A daughter Lori deceased.

A son **James** resides with his parents.

**Theresa** — died at birth in 1928.

**Yvonne Irma Theresa** — was born February 11th, 1932. She attended Sandhurst and finished her schooling at Virden Collegiate. She worked at several businesses in Virden including Marshall Motors. Yvonne died on January 8th, 1961 as a result of an automobile accident.

### **Henry James Plummer**

Henry James Plummer married Sarah Jane Horrex, May 26, 1896 in Oxworth, England.

After spending some time in the butcher business with his father, Henry with his wife Sarah and nine month old daughter, Edna came to Canada, arriving in Oak Lake October 1898.

They were accompanied by Mrs. Plummer's parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Horrex, whose son Jack, had already settled on a farm west of Oak Lake with his wife and family.

They arrived at 6:00 A.M. one very cold and frosty day. Since their arrival was a day earlier than expected, no one was there to meet them.

Mr. A. S. Stewart came to the rescue with his team and sleigh, warm blankets and heated bricks for their feet and drove them to the Horrex farm. Shortly after their arrival they sat down to a delicious breakfast of fried prairie chicken.

Winter was spent on the farm but in the spring they homesteaded south of Routledge.

In 1900 Henry Plummer started working for a farmer, Herbert Moody where he remained for five years before moving in to Routledge to work for the C.P.R., under James Beech.

In 1906 the Plummers moved to Oak Lake where Henry was employed by Malcolm Leitch and his sister Mrs. Moore and later by Mrs. Leitch, until she moved to British Columbia. He then became caretaker of the town hall and the park until his retirement. Henry Plummer passed away in 1953 and his wife Sarah in 1954.

**Edna** was night operator at the Oak Lake telephone office for over 14 years. In 1962 she moved to the Bulloch-Booth Senior Citizen's Home in Brandon — now resides in Fairview Home.

### **Christian Pommer Family submitted by Minnie (Pommer) Herkes**

Christian Pommer, seventh son of a family of fourteen, was born at Wellesley, Ontario in 1857 and came by train in 1889 to Wallace Municipality, twelve miles northwest of Virden, settling on Section 31-11-26. In 1891 he returned to Listowel, Ontario to marry Katherine Gompf (born 1865), eldest of a

family of ten. They had five children — Frieda, Albert, Wilhelmina (Minnie) and twins Julia and Edward. The three oldest children attended Joslin School for a period of time.

In 1905 it was decided that four miles was too far for the children to travel to school in the winter, so the farm was sold and in November Christian set out by wagon and sleigh with family, brother William, livestock and other possessions for S.E. ¼ 8-10-23 in the Harvey District, Woodworth Municipality. A snow-storm stranded the travellers in the St. David's area where the family and livestock were well cared for by the John Forrests. The newly established Pommer farm was across the road from that of R. K. Smith. Christian became noted for his outstanding success in producing high-yield grain crops. The Pommer children attended Harvey School and later Oakwood High. The family worshipped at Ryerson Church.

**Frieda** — married Frank Andrews and went to live in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan. A year later she died leaving a nine-day old daughter, Catherine. The baby was brought to Oak Lake to be raised by the Pommer family. She attended Oakwood School and was awarded an IODE scholarship to Brandon College. Catherine taught school until she married Stephen Hayhurst. She was involved in social work in Ottawa, Saskatoon, and Victoria where she now lives.

**Albert** — continued his education at Brandon College then enrolled in the Dental College at Northwestern University, Chicago. His training was interrupted when he enlisted in the Canadian Dental Corps during the First World War. He married Grace Roderick and practised dentistry in Manitou, Manitoba. After serving as a Member of Parliament for Lisgar, he continued his practice in Winnipeg. Grace and Albert had two daughters — Mary Armitage residing in Minneapolis and Helen Maunder living in Calgary.

**Minnie** — attended Brandon Normal School and after several years of teaching (including Harvey School) she married Irving Herkes. Their wedding day was unique as the Assiniboine River was in flood and the bride, her mother and niece had to cross by rowboat to reach the church in Oak Lake. Minnie and Irving left Virden in 1927 for the west coast and in 1930 established the first drive-in type restaurant on Vancouver Island. They have a son, William, and daughters, Joyce and Wilma, all residing in Victoria.

**Julia** — attended Brandon Normal School and taught in the area. She later married Dr. Crawford Rose and spent several years in Alberta and Saskatchewan before Crawford established a practice in Aurora, Ontario. Julia assisted in the practice as



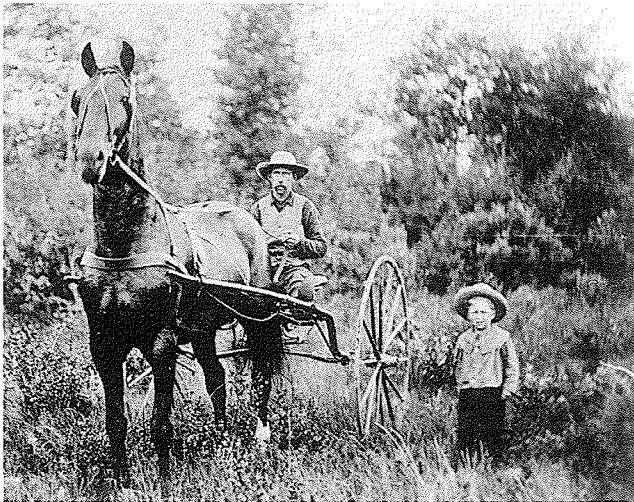
bookkeeper and receptionist. Julia and Crawford had sons, Clayton and William, and a daughter, Mary.

**Edward** — graduated from Brandon College and studied dentistry at Northwestern University in Chicago. He practised his profession in Chicago and Cherry Valley, Illinois. He married Virginia Parker and they had children, Edward and Judith.

Christian Pommer died in 1920 and three years after his death his wife and granddaughter, Catherine, moved into Oak Lake. Later, Edward also left the farm which was sold to the Gompf family. Catherine Andrews' subsequent departure to teach and Katherine Pommer's death in 1941 meant that the Christian Pommer family was no longer represented in the district.

### The Quarrie Family

Allan Quarrie, was born in Galt, Ontario, 1858. He was married in Emerson, Manitoba, April 2, 1885 to Lydia Eveline Goddard, born London, England 1860. The two settled on a farm two or three miles west of the town of Oak Lake in 1886. At the same time he purchased property on the south side of the railway tracks in town, presently owned by his great granddaughter.



Allan Quarrie and Son Willie. Pacer horse called "Chaske" after Sioux Chief.

Allan Quarrie was the Indian agent to the Sioux, who moved north from the United States to avoid the 7th Cavalry, and settled around the Oak Lake area. He also farmed, raised pacers and hackney horses and ran the town livery. He was badly burned when the livery was destroyed by fire and had to give up farming. His wife Lydia, began collecting beadwork from the Sioux Indian Band and eventually had one of the largest privately owned collections in western Canada. Some items were said to have been worn and

used through the Custer Massacre. Pauline Johnson, famous Indian writer, stopped off at Oak Lake to view her beadwork collection. A large portion of this collection went to the Hudson Bay Museum in Winnipeg and the balance is kept by the family.

Allan and Lydia Quarrie had three children: William, Mary Alice and Effie.

**Mary Alice** — known better as "Polly" married Arthur Albert Rogers, who was the railway station agent at Oak Lake from 1908-11. They had 5 children: Marguerite, Edna, William, Arthur Jr. and John.

John's daughter, Mrs. Jacqueline MacQuarrie Moore is present holder of the land title of the original property in the town of Oak Lake, which has remained in the family since 1886.

Allan died in 1928 and Lydia Quarrie in 1950. They and daughter, Mary Alice are all buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery.

### The Laurence Ramptons

The original Homestead of Duncan McKinnon, 2-11-24, was purchased from Bob Foster in 1961 by Laurence and Vi Rampton.

Laurence was born at Craik, Saskatchewan in 1920, second eldest of seven children. His parents, Basil Walter Rampton and the former Leona Frances Townsend were married in 1917 in Gervin, Saskatchewan. They moved to Morden in 1925, where his Mother, 2 brothers and 1 sister still reside.

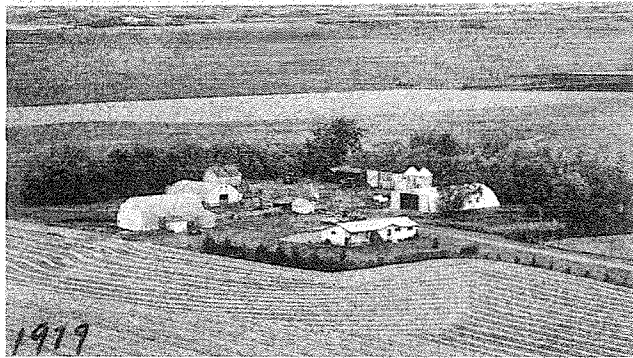
On December 8, 1939 Laurence married Viola Pearl Scales in Carman, Manitoba.

I (Viola or Vi) was born in Morden in 1921, only daughter of a family of six. My parents, Robert William Scales and the former Viola Pearl MacCabe, were married in Windygates, Manitoba in 1913. They moved to Morden in 1919.

Laurence and I took all our education and grew up in Morden. Our principal of the school in Morden at that time was K. B. Thorkelson. Later he was to become Inspector of the Virden, Oak Lake schools.

After we were married we farmed for Laurence's Father for seven years. Our three oldest children were born while we lived at Morden. In 1947 we moved to Culross, Manitoba where we farmed for 14 years. Our three youngest children were born while we lived there.

On November 4, 1961, we moved to Oak Lake and our newly purchased farm in the St. David's area. Christmas Day, six weeks after we had moved, our barn burned down and we lost six cows, a neighbour's pony and some machinery. I'm sure many of our neighbours will remember that fire, as it delayed many a Christmas dinner and spoiled ours. But by



Rampton Farm.

the next summer we had a new barn thanks to good neighbours and lots of hard work.

Then in October 1964 we moved into a new house, situated just a little south of the old one. The old house built of brick had served its tenants well for almost a century.

We farmed the home section for a few years, then, as time passed, we bought the Mervin Walton farm, the Ed Slimmon farm south of St. David's Church where we keep some cattle, the T. L. Wisner farm, the Alec Forrest farm where we have a cow-calf operation, and the original Wright farm purchased from Malvin Iverson. Our son, Stan, owns that ½ section now and farms with his Dad.

Our six children are all married now.

**Crosby William** — born in 1941, lives in Sardis, British Columbia. He has just become a partner in an Insurance Adjusters Firm in Chilliwack. He and his wife, Mary, have three children, Lori Susan, Crosby Jr., and Matthew. Crosby has three children from a previous marriage, Lori Lynn, Christopher, and Alaina.

**Glenn Murray** — born in 1943, lives in Ottawa, Ontario. He is a Lt. Col. in the Armed Forces. He and his wife, Barbara, have three children, Richard, Marla and Sherene.

**Lorrel Nadine** — was born in 1946 and lives in Swan River, Manitoba. She is married to Terry Scales, a druggist. They have three children, Robert, Kevin and Richelle.

**Janis Ivadell** — born in 1948, lives in Medley (Cold Lake), Alberta. She is married to Captain Harvey Wregget, a pilot in the Air Force. They have two sons, Jason and Joel.

**Stanley Grant** — born in 1954, is a farmer and lives in the St. David's district. He and his wife, Pat, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Kool of Cromer, Man., have three children, Cameron, Robin and Shalen.

**Merrilee Elva** — born in 1960, lives near Kenton, Manitoba. She is married to Ken Bond who farms in the Shiloh district. They have one daughter, Megan.

We have lived here now for 20 years and in that time have seen many changes in our district. Many of the older farmers have retired and the younger ones have taken over but just as when we moved here we still feel it's a great place to live.

### Reeves Story as told by daughters, Gwen and Betty

John Reeves of Nottinghill Gate London, England was born in 1895. When ten years old he came to make his home in Oak Lake. This being possible through "the Dr. Barnardo Home" for boys. He lived for a time with Mr. and Mrs. George Dean, and later made his home with Dave and Laura McLeish, on a farm south of town. He attended Oakwood School and the Anglican Church.



Mr. Reeves Feeding Geese, Harold in background.

Later John worked on the farm of Philip McLeish for a period of time. Then he worked on a farm in Saskatchewan, where he met and married Faith Todd, who originated from Lansdowne, Ontario. John and Faith returned to Oak Lake to the Philip McLeish farm in 1924. Later they moved into the town of Oak Lake where they lived the rest of their lives.

John had a variety of jobs on farms and in town. He had a team of horses, and he hauled cord wood for Oakwood School. He also hauled blocks of ice from the river for ice houses and soft water for homes. John's travelling companion on these trips was usually his dog.

John had a limp, and at one time it was amusing to see him, travelling with a dog and a horse who also limped. He trapped in the winter. Skinning weasels and stretching their pelts was a common event at our house. He also raised turkeys and chickens. John

enjoyed Nature, especially bird life and their calls. In his younger days he was considered to be a good horseman and enjoyed and told fascinating stories of how he hunted down coyotes on horseback in the South Country. John's garden was an exciting place for him and he spent hours tending his potatoes, or as he referred to them, "my spuds". He was fond of pigeons and later in life he kept a flock which would come and feed from his hand.

"Johnny" as he was referred to will be remembered by the younger people as the caretaker of the old skating rink, and he was often visited by them when holidaying in town. They would reminisce of some of their carrying on, and getting kicked out of the rink by Johnny. He liked to play cards and pool, and was no slouch in a good argument.

Faith worked in cafes for several years and tended her family. She later managed the cafe at the hotel, and was known as a pretty good cook. She was an ardent curler and belonged to the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Legion. Faith was fun loving. When she first came west from Ontario, she lived with her Uncle Harvey Austin, who was a grain buyer. As children do, I recall asking Mother how she came about marrying our Dad and she said, "because, he was a good dancer". With Dad being crippled this was difficult for us children to visualize, until Dad would entertain us with a little jig to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw". Faith enjoyed having company or attending Saturday night house parties. We, as children, thought they were a lot of fun too, as we could visit with our friends and hide and listen to the big people gossip. We could stay up very late and ride home in the wagon box behind the team.

Faith at times must have missed her family in Ontario, as from the time she came out west until she returned to her home was 21 years. Faith was always excited when her family was coming home for a visit. Many hours would be spent in the preparation of cooking and pie baking.

John and Faith raised five children in Oak Lake. John Reeves passed away in 1977, Faith Reeves passed away in 1972. They are both buried in Oak Lake Cemetery.

**Harold** — their first born joined the Canadian Army. Later he worked for M.T.S. and now works for Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting. He and his wife Audrey (Cutt) live at Flin Flon. They have four sons, Rex, Russel, John and Scott and three grandchildren.

**Gwen** — (Reeves) MacDonald graduated from Brandon General Hospital as an R.N. She married Ken MacDonald. They live in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and have seven children — Bill, Bob, Donna, Nola, Marion, Rod and Greg.

**Bob** — worked several years in the North, driving a tractor train in the winter. He married Alice Hayward from Virden area and they now live in Gillam, Manitoba. They have four children — Ken, Blake, Pat and Glenna and two grandchildren. Bob works for Manitoba Hydro.

**Betty** — married Clarence (Red) Winmill and they live in Oak Lake.

**Neil** — works for Manitoba Highway. He married Carole Gordon of Oak Lake and they now live at Rivers, Manitoba.

All the Reeves children attended Oakwood School and still fondly refer to Oak Lake as home.

### **Herbert A. Roberts and (Rev.) Carol B. Roberts**

The Roberts family came to Oak Lake July 1st, 1967, and remained until June 30th, 1970. Carol served as the minister of the United Church during those years, conducting services also at St. David's and Griswold churches.

We remember Oak Lake as the place where:

Theresa grew from babyhood to little-girl hood; Christine and Marcia started school; Arthur, Owen and Christine began piano lessons with Miss Elsie Wallace; Carol had cancer surgery in 1968.

We remember also inter-faith services and concerts, shared with Anglicans, Catholics and Mennonites of the area.

We now live in Strathclair, where Carol is the minister and Herb and Arthur plan to farm near Newdale. Christine is married to Martin Belanger, lives near Montreal and is taking the diploma course in Agriculture at MacDonald College, Ste. Anne de Bellevue. Owen has completed his B.Sc. at Brandon University, where Marcia is presently enrolled in the School of Music. Theresa is taking Grade X at Strathclair Collegiate.

The years have passed quickly and with a great deal of meaning for all of us.

### **Nicholas and Fanny Robinson written by Edith Quennell**

It was the summer of 1888 **Nicholas Robinson** started to build himself a house on the SE¼ of 12-8-24 as he was planning on getting married. That fall after the harvesting was over he left for England to see what he could find. On March 7, 1889 he married Fanny Bristow. She was a dress-maker who was in partnership with her sister in a dress making shop.

They had a very rough and cold trip on the boat and nearly every one was sea sick. The ride on the train from Montreal to Oak Lake was not much better, Mother thought they would never make it to their new home. The first while mother found it very



Nicholas and Fanny Robinson.

lonesome and everything so strange to her. The babies started coming and she hadn't the time to be lonesome after that. They attended the Anglican Church.

**Leslie** — was born January 8, 1890 and passed away August 5, 1907.

**Clarence** — was born August 18, 1891. He went west as a young man and took up land near Aneroid Saskatchewan and it was there he met his future wife Grace Kruger. They were married May 19, 1920 at Pipestone, Manitoba and settled on land near Medstead, Saskatchewan where they raised their family of three boys and three girls. Clarence died January 17, 1957 of a heart attack, he and Grace were visiting relatives and friends at Oak Lake at the time.

**Neville** — was born February 2, 1893. He spent most of his life on the home farm. He served overseas during the first world war with 18th Canadian Reserve. He passed away April 26, 1964 from leukemia.

**Muriel** — was born March 19, 1894. After getting her grade eight at Lansdowne School she went to Souris and got two years high school. In those days you could teach with two years high school and three months normal training which you could take in Brandon. After teaching for a few years she took a tour trip with a group of teachers to the British Isles and Europe. While in Europe the first world war broke out and they had quite a time getting home. Muriel married Glenn Binkley of Souris the summer of 1916. Glenn and his brother had opened a furniture store and funeral parlor in Shaunavon, Saskatchewan

and that is where they made their home. They had three children, two boys and a girl. Muriel passed away March 18, 1937 from cancer.

**Edith** — was born August 14, 1897. Writing my own history should be easy but there are so many things I did not like about my childhood. The older ones would never let me play with them and the younger ones I had to babysit. In the summer time it was fine, I went off by myself when I could. I knew where to find all the berry patches and took my little pail with me. As long as I came home with a pail of berries it was fine, but if all I had was a bouquet of flowers I was told I was wasting time.

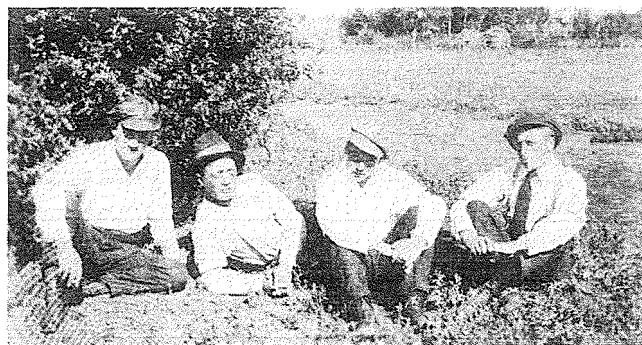
I got my grade eight at Lansdowne School but was not able to get away to take high school. I did try for a business course but found it too hard, only having grade eight, so switched to bookkeeping. During the Christmas holidays 1916 I left Shaunavon, Saskatchewan to visit my sister and family. I got myself a bookkeeping job with the Imperial Oil Co. and the agent had a dray line business. It was very interesting and I met a lot of people including my future husband Roy Quennell. We were married November 25, 1919. Our family consisted of three girls, Jean, Vivianne and Doreen. I am the great grandmother of seven children, four girls and three boys.

**Roy** passed away July 31, 1977, two weeks after his eighty-eighth birthday. I am still living in my own home in Shaunavon and able to take care of myself. I keep busy with my hobbies, crocheting, fancy work, reading, and of course watching television at times.

**Millie** — was born July 26, 1899. When two years old she took polio and was not able to walk any more. Mother used to lay her on a pillow on the table so she could see what was going on. The spring of 1904 the doctor put her in the Brandon Hospital for treatment but she caught pneumonia and died.

**Harold** — was born July 1, 1901, so he was able to celebrate his birthday with all of Canada.

He spent his time on the homefarm along with his brother Neville farming and raising stock. In 1950 he



Harold, Clarence, Frank and Neville Robinson.

married Margaret Wardman who was a widow with two sons Douglas and Jack and a daughter Janet. Owing to poor health, Harold had to leave the farm, so he and his wife moved to Virden. On March 7, 1978 Harold passed away. Margaret is still living in Virden.

**Frank** — was born July 13, 1903. He spent his early life on the home farm until he married Mary Patterson and moved to the Terence district to live on a farm south of Griswold. They had no family. Frank passed away very suddenly February 25, 1959 from a heart attack and Mary died April 12, 1973.

**Gladys** — was born August 14, 1907, two weeks after Leslie died and on my birthday. Gladys went to Lansdowne School getting her grade eight and then to Oak Lake for her high school education. She taught school for a number of years. She married Charles Stevens December 27, 1929. They have lived in several different places but their home now is in Winnipeg.

Their family, a son and a daughter Kenneth and Joan are both married.

Our home life was quite hard at times, we all had to do our chores and money was scarce. We would be lucky if we had a nickel in our pocket to buy a bag of candy and you got a nice bag full for a nickel those days. We never went hungry, and had clothes to wear even though they were hand-me-downs. I can well remember the first new dress I ever had, and it was black and white check trimmed with red. Mother, being a dress maker did a lot of sewing and making over things for all of us and taught us all to use the sewing machine.

We used to have quite a lot of music at home. Mother had an organ and there was a violin, auto-harp, beside the mouthorgan and jewsharp. Neville and I were the only ones who could not pick up an instrument and get some kind of a tune out of it and they could not understand why. In the winter time the boys made a skating rink and on Sundays and holidays there was always a number of boys around playing hockey and having a lot of fun.

In the spring of 1931 Dad had a bad stroke and was paralyzed. He spent two weeks in the Souris Hospital and mother brought him home and looked after him for five years. She took a heart attack and they had to have a nurse and help in the house until Dad passed away May 11, 1938. Mother got along from then on, with Neville and Harold's help, until she passed on January 2, 1947.

### **Nicholas and Mary Robinson** written by Edith Quennell

My grandparents Nicholas and Mary Robinson came from England in the late spring of 1878, along

with their two sons Nicholas and Alfred and their two daughters Amelia and Elizabeth. They took up land nine miles south of Oak Lake, the west half of 12-8-24. I can not give you any information on farming in those early years but Dad never mentioned having to use oxen.

On January 15, 1885 **Amelia** married Robt. Sutherland, the service was held in the Presbyterian Church in Virden. They farmed three miles south of Griswold. Amelia passed away in 1897 leaving three small children, **Fred, Mary and Matt.**

It was around the turn of the century Grandad figured it was time to move on and it was to Green Cove Springs, Florida, they moved. They got land and started a strawberry farm. That year a heavy frost cleaned every thing out, so they moved into the village and had a florist shop and did real well.

Aunt Elizabeth passed away in 1902 and Grandad in 1907. Uncle Alfred had gone to Cuba to look around and contacted yellow fever and died, he is buried some place in Cuba. Grandma sold the business and moved back to Oak Lake to spend the rest of her days with us. When she died she was buried at Griswold beside her daughter Amelia. My sister Gladys and her husband were in Florida a few years ago and they found Grandad and Aunt Elizabeth's graves in a lovely grove of trees. The little cemetery was called the Loyalists and was well taken care of, you could read the inscriptions on the tomb stones quite easily.

### **Rueben and Lizzie Robinson**

Reuben was born at Aurora, Ontario in 1882. He married Elizabeth Carr in 1903 and in 1911 moved to a farm at Arcola, Saskatchewan. They had five children — Earl, Eva, Gladys, Roy and Tom.

Reub. as a young man worked with a veterinarian in Ontario and so was always being called upon by neighbours for help with animal husbandry. He was also a trader of horses and so was away from home a good deal. **Earl** being the oldest, looked after the farm for many years. In 1931 the drought began and with it the endless wind and sand, the dancing sow thistle, the unexpected cyclones and the hordes of tobacco spitting grasshoppers. In 1934 the Robinson family left their farm to the wind and moved to Roblin, Manitoba. With Reub and Lizzie went Earl and his family, **Eva** (Ellis) and her family, **Gladys** (Perry) and her husband, Roy and Tom. From Roblin it was a series of moves to Dauphin in 1939 — then to Oak Lake in 1941.

At Oak Lake they purchased a farm north of town from Nelson Banister known as the "Woodland Grange". **Tom** enlisted in the army and **Roy** remained at Dauphin. One half of the farm was sold to



Ken Doherty when Reub's health failed and the work load became too much for Earl. They built a home on the other half. In 1946 Reub retired, sold the farm and eventually moved to Brandon, and Earl moved into Oak Lake to start on his own. Reub worked at the livestock yards until a heart attack forced him to permanently retire. In 1963 they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary and when Reub was asked if there was one wish that he could make he replied, "To see the 61st." Which he did, and the 62nd as well. He died in November 1966, two days before their 63rd anniversary, at the age of 84.

Lizzie then sold their home and went to live with her daughter Eva. In 1969 at 87 years of age she passed away and was laid to rest beside her husband and granddaughter Irene in the family plot in Virden Cemetery.

### Earl and Meta Robinson

Earl was the eldest son of Reuben and Lizzie (Carr) Robinson. He was born in 1904 in Ontario and came with his parents to Arcola, Saskatchewan in 1911. In 1929 he married Meta Ludtke of Willmar, Saskatchewan. They had two children Ada and Irene. They farmed with his parents for many years. In 1934 the drought forced them to pull up stakes and leave the farm that they had worked so hard to keep. They lived at Roblin and Dauphin before coming to Oak Lake in 1941.



December Picnic on Hillside. Left to Right — Charlie Goodwin, Heather Anderson, Irene Robinson, Mrs. Goodwin, Ada Robinson.

After his Dad retired from farming in 1946, Earl started out on his own — buying horses. He bought a farm south of town. Earl inherited his dad's instincts for dealing and soon the farm was sold. He then worked for a time with Dave Taylor. Buying horses and cattle, his wanderings took him to Cromer, Swan

River and finally to Benito where they have now lived for nine years. This is a record because in forty years they had moved forty-one times.

As a young boy Earl always wanted to build roads, drive a car, work in a lumber camp and own a garage. After he started on his own he made his boyhood dreams come true. He worked on road construction, in a lumber camp, ran a municipal car, spent a winter at Searle Farms, travelled with the Carlberg horses, attending the Toronto Royal with an eight horse hitch and their fabulous wagon. His main interest, however has always been in the livestock dealership — a career in which he is actively engaged.

Meta, the oldest in a family of ten consequently knew hard work at an early age. After her marriage to Earl she was always busy fixing up her latest new home or packing up for the next move. She always had her cookie jar full for one never knew who or how many she might have for dinner or supper. Failing eyesight has curtailed a lot of her hobbies which included fancy work, the growing of house plants and gardening.

They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1979 in Elkhorn at their daughter Ada's home.

Although this family has never stayed long enough in one place to put down roots, they have enjoyed a very interesting life and have met many people and made some very dear friends.

### Ada and Bill Brennan

Ada was born in 1931 at Arcola, Saskatchewan. She started school in Roblin and later attended school in Dauphin. The remainder of her schooling was taken at Oakwood School, Oak Lake. During the school years she was active in C.G.I.T. and church group activities.

She graduated from High School in 1949. Prior to her marriage she worked for two summers in the Telephone Office. In 1949 she married Bill Brennan of Pelly, Saskatchewan who had worked in the Oak Lake area, and they had two sons, Beryl and Terry. Since her marriage she has worked at the Elkhorn Creamery, Personal Care Home in Virden and is now employed at Elkhorn Hospital. She is keenly interested in oil painting and pottery.

Bill was the first child born to Jack and Ruth Brennan of Pelly, Saskatchewan. He received his education in that district. He came to Oak Lake in 1946 and worked for Dave Taylor. He also worked for Ken Doherty and Everett Kruger. After their marriage he worked at a number of jobs as well as farmed. In 1957 they moved to Elkhorn.

Today they operate a dairy farm of Registered Jerseys, known as the "Brenada Jerseys".

## **Irene (Robinson) Atkins**

submitted by **Ada (Robinson) Brennan**

Irene was born at Arcola, Saskatchewan in 1932 and moved with her family to Roblin, Dauphin and Oak Lake. She received most of her education in Oak Lake and graduated in 1950. In 1951 she attended Normal School in Winnipeg. Her first teaching job was at Ewart and then in St. James. After her marriage to Charlie Atkins of Oak Lake, they moved to Pointe du Bois where they were both employed as teachers by City Hydro.

They had one son Brent. Irene passed away in 1963 at her home in Pointe du Bois.



Rudolph and Annie Ronberg.

## **Martin and Elna Ronberg**

Martin and Elna Ronberg were born in Sweden and emigrated to Minnesota, U.S.A. in 1881. They moved onto Brandon the same year, where Martin was employed with the C.P.R. construction going west to Flat Creek. The family of three children Rudolph, Ellen and Annie moved to Oak Lake in 1883. Another daughter Dagmar was born in Oak Lake in 1889 and passed away in 1910.

Martin was the first section foreman, and Elna kept busy baking 100 lbs. of flour into bread each day in an outside oven to feed the crew. They also milked cows to provide the necessary dairy needs. Rudolph delivered the milk in large cans to the families, with a special can for babies with milk from one cow. Later Martin gave up railway work and moved the family to his homestead three miles West of Oak Lake where he farmed until 1916.

**Rudolph** married Annie Modeland in 1903 and moved to his own farm south of his father. **Ellen** married Robert Reid, who passed away in Oak Lake in 1916, she later moved to Quill Lake and married Bert Emery. Both deceased.

**Annie** married Robert Bannatyne who operated the Oakland Hotel and later moved to Quill Lake. Both deceased.

In 1916 Grandpa and Grandma as they were familiarly known, took up residence in the south half of the home farm now occupied by the Daums. They spent their remaining years in their cottage on Rudolph's farm. The cottage was moved and is now owned by Gavin and Muriel Gillespie.

Elna passed away in 1926 and Martin in 1928.

## **Rudolph and Annie Ronberg**

Rudolph was born in 1874 in Malmo, Sweden immigrating to Minnesota. He came to Brandon and later moved to Oak Lake with his family in 1883. He received schooling in Sweden, Brandon and Oak Lake where one of his teachers was Mrs. Sharman.

He was able to speak several languages, Swedish, Norwegian, German, English and Sioux.

During his early years he and Molly Lind played with the Native Indian children at their camp where the Ronbergs later farmed. He helped at home and worked with the C.P.R., until he took up farming. December 13, 1903 he married Annie Modeland, who was born in Portage la Prairie in 1882 and had moved with her family to Oak Lake in 1884. She attended Pleasant Plain School near their home and next to the Taylor farm.

Rudolph and Annie farmed south of his father's farm, where Bud and Jessie Taylor now reside. Their son Ernest was born October 20, 1904 and a daughter Ella July 25, 1906. In 1912 they had a farm sale and moved to Oak Lake so the children could attend school.

Rudolph was employed by Leitch Flour Mill and also other dray work. A year later they again took up farming on the Hood farm north of Oak Lake, Hoods taking up residence in their house in town. A son Seward was born May 31, 1915 and passed away June 1915. William was born July 25, 1916. In 1920 Rudolph purchased the Burns farm, 16-9-24 and moved the family there. June 7, 1921 a son Norman was born. The children attended Oakwood School and the family were all members of the United Church. Rudolph was a steward of the Church, member of C.O.O.F., director of Agricultural Society also the Pool Association, on the school board, an ardent curler and active in all community activities.

Annie was a member of Eastern Star, W.M.S. Ladies' Aid, Legion Auxiliary, curling club and always active in community affairs.

Rudolph passed away suddenly October 1934. Annie remained on the farm with her sons. **Ernest** later took over the farm and he married Frances Anderson in 1938.

In 1926 Ella attended Normal School and taught in Saskatchewan and Manitoba until 1932 when she married Henry Gordon. They farmed south of Oak Lake on the J. B. Lang farm.

**William** (Bill) attended Molar Tec. School in Winnipeg in 1935 taking a barbers course. He had a



Ella, Norman, Bill, Ernie and Mother Ronberg.

Barber Shop in Oak Lake in 1936. He joined the R.C.A.F. in July 1936 and this became his career. He retired from the R.C.A.F. after 32 years and then worked for 13 years with the Government of Canada retiring in 1981. He lives in Ottawa with his wife Roma (Griesdale) of Bowsman. They have two children Ted and Cathy.

**Norman** joined the R.C.A.F. in July 1939, and after 37 years retired and resides in Mississauga, Ontario with his wife Thelma (Herrington). Their only child, daughter Pat Bignell resides in Toronto.

Annie moved to her cottage (Gavin and Muriel Gillespie's home now) in 1940. She married Wm. Hatch in 1943, he passed away in 1951. Later she lived with her brothers William and Norman Modeland on the Banister Farm until 1964 when they took up residence in Souris. In 1973 she moved to Fairview Home in Brandon and passed away in November 1977.

### **Ernest, Frances and Rudy Ronberg submitted by Ernest and Frances Ronberg**

Ernest E. Ronberg the oldest of Rudolph and Annie Ronberg's family was born October 20th, 1904 on SE 20-9-24. On birth date Rudolph, when called to go for the doctor, had to leave a prairie fire which threatened 75 stacks of grain and hay. Rudolph arrived in town only to find that Dr. Wright was out

north. Sometime later Dr. Wright and Rudolph arrived to find a little boy, 4 lbs. had arrived and was dressed and sleeping in his Mother's arms under Mrs. Finlay's loving care. The neighbors had fought hard to control the blaze, saving Rudolph's stacks but many others suffered misfortune.

Ernest won a trip to Winnipeg on October 8th, 1918 for having first prize for his pair of pigs, at the first Boys and Girls Club, under the leadership of Messrs. G. Gordon, John McDonald and Mr. Clarke manager of The Merchant Bank. Due to the flu the trip wasn't made until the spring of 1919.

Ernest, helping his Dad, learned much of value which aided him in future years. The outstanding trait was Honesty and when payment couldn't be made by a certain date — go to the man and make necessary arrangements. So Ernest's word, as his Dad's, was as good as a bond.

Ernest carried on farming at Cloverdale Farm, successfully with his Mother, where the Ronberg home was indeed "A house by the side of the road", where no one was ever turned away.

Ernest married Frances Anderson at Lenore, Manitoba in 1938. They too farmed together making many friends, helping in every worthwhile project which was started in the community.

Their son **William Rudolph** was born in 1945, taking his schooling in Oakwood School, later working for Duck's Unlimited of Canada; at the Potash Mine at Gurnsey, Saskatchewan. Having health problems he couldn't farm, so now lives on the west side of Virden working for Chapman's Trucking.

Rudy married Barbara Bailey in 1980 and they have one son Michael.

Ernest and Rudy worked and built for the Oak Lake Agriculture Society where Frances was a Lady Director.

Ernest was Chairman of Oakwood School Board, he was a Past Master of Oak Lake Masonic Lodge No. 44 and is the first of the Brethren to receive his 50th year jewel. Rudy is also a Mason.

Frances is a good homemaker and carried on the Ronberg tradition of hospitality. She has many hobbies. As a member of Oak Lake United Church she helped for 45 years.

Ernest lived 76 years in Oakwood School District. With failing health Ernest and Frances sold Cloverdale Farm 26-9-24 in May 1981 and retired to Virden.

### **The Wm. J. Roszell Family**

Margaret Atchison, was born in Erin County, Wellington, Ontario, November 20th, 1865. She married Wm. J. Roszell in 1889, coming west in 1908, and settling in Oak Lake, Manitoba.



Mr. and Mrs. James Rozell.

They had one daughter, Stella who had a milliner shop in Oak Lake for many years, giving the ladies a very smart look. She married Alex McCauley and they had one son Kenneth.

Mr. Rozell passed away in 1927. Mrs. Rozell was an active member of the United Church, the Ladies' Aid and Hearts of Oak Rebekah Lodge. She passed away in 1939. Both Mr. and Mrs. Rozell are buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery. Mrs. Rozell was a sister of the late Mrs. James Black.

### Rousson

Clephas Rousson, born May 23, 1911 married Marguerite Carpentier, born April 29, 1918 on May 20, 1941 at Zenon Park, Saskatchewan. On June 2, 1946 they purchased the farm previously owned by Chester Maxwell and began to raise livestock and sell hay. The home quarter is the NE 5-9-24.

Cliff and Marguerite are members of St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church. They have three children born to them, Paul Alexandre, Marie Diane and Dolores (died at birth). **Diane** was born April 28, 1947 in Virden, Manitoba, received her education at Sandhurst School, Oak Lake and St. Michael's Academy in Brandon. She took her hair dressing course at Marvel's Hair Dressing and is presently living in Winnipeg. Diane married Wally Walterson, of Brandon April 15, 1967 and has one daughter, Tammy, born October 7, 1967.

**Paul** Alexandre Rousson, born July 17, 1942 at Zenon Park, Saskatchewan, attended Sandhurst School, Oak Lake and then started farming with his father. On November 12, 1966 he married Margaret Ann Bulloch of Reston, at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Souris, Manitoba. Paul, Margaret Ann and their two children attend St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church. Their children are: **Dean Alexandre**, born July 29, 1973 in Brandon General Hospital, presently attending Assiniboine School in Oak Lake; and **Shannon Lee**, born January 31, 1976 in Grace Hospital, Winnipeg, presently attending Assiniboine School in Oak Lake. Shannon was born on her Great, Great Aunt Agnes Campbell's 95th birthday. Shannon's Grandma Margaret Bulloch of Reston was in attendance at Aunt Agnes' 100th birthday on January 31, 1981 in Whitehorse, Yukon.

Paul and Margaret Ann bought the farm (cattle ranch) from Cliff and Marguerite on June 1, 1979. On October 25, 1979 Cliff and Marguerite moved into their new home in Oak Lake.

### The Roziere Family

Adolphe and Henriette Roziere, with their children, Maria, Renee, Paulette and Normand, came to this district from Notre Dame de Lourdes in April 1952. They resided in the Routledge area on what is presently the Fred Faucher farm. Adolphe farmed and worked on the oil fields in Virden and Henriette learned that "wild" cows are sometimes just thirsty! Diane and David were born on this farm.

In April 1955, they moved to Oak Lake and lived in the Catholic rectory, where a problem arose, trying to keep clothes on 3 year old Diane, as the churchgoers arrived Sunday mornings. "Dof" worked as a carpenter on construction and spent much time away from home. However, he was home some of the time as Peggy was born in '56, Tony in '57, Gisele in '59 and Roger in '61.

The family then moved to Griswold in 1961 where Robert was born in 1963. They returned to Oak Lake in 1964 where Dof bought the former Banister farm. The twelfth member of the family, Michael, was born in 1968. The family resides there today but the original home was replaced in 1980 by a new split-level house built by Dof with help from the family.

The school doors had to be locked to stop **Maria** from running away from school, at an early age, but as time passed she went on to University, became a teacher in Shilo and met Lewis Branum, whom she married in 1966. The Branums have 3 children, Roger, Angela and Jon. They are presently living in Lahr, West Germany where Lew is second in com-

mand of the artillery regiment. They wish to retire to the Lorne Griffith farm in Griswold.

**Renee** — following high school, took one year of commercial college in Virden. Upon completion, she worked for the Oak Lake Co-op. Here, in 1967, she met Bob Findlay, whom she married in 1973. They reside in Oak Lake with their children, Jason, Stephen, Laura and Cindy. Bob works at the Regional Emergency Headquarters in Shilo and also has a small electrical contracting business in town.

**Paulette** — became a book-keeper and worked for Wien's Gulf. In 1971, she married William Smith of Griswold. They now reside on the former Matt Sutherland farm with their three children, James, Tracy and Erin. As well as farming, William works for Spence Welding. "Polly" is a part-time waitress at the J n' A.

**Normand** — finished high school and worked at several jobs including one with Lewis Cattle Oiler. He married Norma Topp in 1972 and has been a fire-fighter in Brandon since 1973. They live in the city with their four sons, Jeff, Rick, Kevin and Greg.

**Diane** — went to University in Brandon and later worked in Woolco. She married Dale McLaren in 1973. They, with their children, Rhonda, Chris, Mark and Jaclyn live in Rosetown, Saskatchewan, where Dale is assistant manager for the Toronto Dominion Bank.

**David** — finished high school at Crocus Plains in Brandon. He has been employed as a baker's helper at Green Acres Bakery since 1977.

**Peggy** — graduated from St. Boniface General Hospital as a registered nurse in 1976. She worked in The Pas and Brandon and is presently employed at the Health Sciences Center in Winnipeg.

**Tony** — attended University of Manitoba for one year. In 1979, he completed Business Administration at Assiniboine Community College in Brandon. He is presently employed by the Federal Government in Winnipeg.

**Gisele** — attended University in Brandon for three years and completed a Stenography course at Assiniboine Community College in 1981. She is working as a secretary in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

**Roger** — the confirmed bachelor of the family, has been working for C.N.R. since graduating in 1979.

**Robert** — is presently in Grade 12 and is a member of the Virden Golden Bears Football Team.

**Michael** — is in Grade 8 and is active in the hockey league.

Dof now does general construction contracting in and around Oak Lake and Henriette is well known for her fine sewing. All of the children have numerous hobbies, from needlework to hunting, but probably

the best enjoyment for this large and closely-knit family are the reunions in summer and at Christmas where their home is truly "a houseful".

### **Mr. Herbert James Sagon**

It was in 1890 that dad first came to Canada. A boy in his teens, eager for adventure, he left his home in London, England, and crossed the rough Atlantic on the Elder Dempster Steamship, "Oregon." After 12 days of violent upheaval he disembarked from the ship quite literally, a green Englishman. But with the undaunted zeal of youth he journeyed to Oak Lake, Manitoba.

At this time Oak Lake boasted a school, a church, a general store, a flour mill, a post office, a population of approximately 250 people and little else. The majority of settlers on the surrounding farms were mostly from the eastern provinces and newcomers from England bore the brunt of many a practical joke.

With very little capital but a great deal of confidence, dad succeeded in getting a job on one of the small farms. His London upbringing proved to be poor preparation for his new undertaking and he ran into a lot of trouble. But with characteristic tenacity he stuck to it. In time, he mastered the fine art of geeing and hawing the oxen. After many vigorous attempts he found he could ride a horse all day without disastrous repercussions when he seated himself at night. During fly time he became quite adept at downing his tea before more than five or six of his winged friends met with a wet and warm fate in his cup.

There were those unscrupulous settlers who tried to take advantage of dad, thinking him an inexperienced youth, easy to fleece. But dad, much to their chagrin had a clever mind — a mind alert to all their connivances.

The family often laugh about Mr. Rogers, a short, rotund man who tried to sell dad the sway-backed horse. Dad was quite anxious to obtain a saddle pony and he listened attentively while Mr. Rogers volubly explained that the animal was a special rare type of riding horse — a breed secured with great difficulty from the east. He assured dad that the pronounced dip in the horse's back provided the very maximum amount of comfort and would be particularly appreciated by anyone who did not list riding as one of their accomplishments. Dad waited patiently until he had finished, then he firmly refused to purchase the horse. He politely agreed that he could understand where a man of Mr. Roger's build would perhaps find the dipped back an advantage, but a person as tall and long-legged as himself would find it rather tiresome keeping his feet from dragging on the ground.



From then on each time he encountered Mr. Rogers surrounded by people, dad took a fiendish delight in asking after "the comfortable saddle horse".

At the end of 10 years dad returned to England. During his stay he had encountered the bucking pole at threshing time, worked long days in the mill carrying heavy sacks of grain and learned to withstand the cold stormy winters. Financially he had gained little, but his general knowledge, to say nothing of his vocabulary, was greatly enriched.

Dad returned to Canada in 1903 with the Barr Colonists and homesteaded at Perdue, Saskatchewan, went back to England in 1907 and married mother. They farmed at Perdue until 1919 then went to Biggar where they farmed, retiring there until both passed on.

Excerpts from a write-up by Mrs. Olive Coldie about her father done for the Western Producer in 1957, and sent to us by daughter, Dorothy (Sagon) Ward, of B.C.

### History of the Sandell Family in Relation to Oak Lake

Thomas Sandell was born on 6th October, 1873 at Lissanoure, County Antrim, Ireland.

Gertrude Mary Huxtable was born 18th October 1873 at North Molton, Devonshire, England.

They were married on 26th December 1900 at St. Saviour's Church, Hungerford, Berkshire, England.



They left England for Canada on 9th June 1903 and took up a harness making business in Oak Lake in 1904. Later acquiring another business in Virden.

Thomas Sandell took a great interest in the public

affairs of the town. He was a Free Mason, an Odd-fellow and a licenced Lay Reader of the Anglican Church. He was at one time a Mayor of the town and a Justice of the Peace. His interests included Oakwood School, where as Secretary and Trustee, he was instrumental in obtaining the services of two Headmasters from Ireland, Mr. Boyd and Mr. English.

Mrs. Gertrude Sandell was a member of the Rebekah Lodge and the Women's Auxiliary. She was also President of the Women's Guild and in that capacity did a great deal towards raising funds for the new Anglican rectory being built at that time.

They had 5 children who grew up in Oak Lake and attended Oakwood School.

When the family left Oak Lake for England in January 1927 the town presented Thomas Sandell with a purse of gold pieces.

The issue now includes 3 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren equally distributed in Canada, England and South Africa.

### The Sawatsky Family History

Henry Sawatsky, born Heinrich Johann Sawatsky in Schoenhorst, Russia, with his wife Sara, born in Schoeneberg, Russia, and their family, came to Canada in 1925. They arrived at McTavish, Manitoba, took up farming at McAuley the following year, and finally settled down on the A. T. Scott farm, SW 7-9-24, in the Sandhurst district in the fall of 1930. They soon became members of the local Mennonite congregation and in the early years often hosted Sunday services in their home.

The farm records of 1931-33 speak of hard times. The total amount of cash remaining from grain and livestock sales, after the farm payment had been made was \$284.00 against expenditures of \$530.00. This income was supplemented by cream cheques (5 gals. of cream for 100 lbs. of flour was considered a fair price), and more notably from the produce of a large family garden. Mrs. Sawatsky made regular trips to town during the summer months to market her produce in door to door sales. The proceeds more than paid for the land taxes. Money was scarce and an extreme case of economizing occurred when daughter Helen needed to undergo an appendectomy. Dr. Donaldson and Dr. Yule agreed to perform the operation in the farm home. An upstairs bedroom was prepared, walls and ceiling covered with sterilized sheets, and the operation turned out well. When the doctor returned for a routine check up he was prevailed upon to pull the aching tooth of another family member.

The farm was sold to son Jake in 1947, but the parents continued to live there through the early

years of retirement, later moving to the home of Pete and Tena Penner (daughter). Mr. Sawatsky passed away in 1962. Mrs. Sawatsky spent her last years at the home of Henry and Nettie Sawatsky (son), and passed away in 1971, leaving a total of 86 direct descendants.

The family members are:

**Agnès** (Mrs. Peter Froese), Niverville. Their children are; Tena, Sara, Henry, Mary, Jake, Betty, Peter. The Froese family shared the parents home in the Sandhurst district for one winter.

**Elizabeth**, a long time resident at Brandon Mental Health Centre.

**Sara** (Mrs. David Janzen), Virden. Their children are; Sara, Mary, Henry, Abe, John, Helen, Art. They lived briefly on the Redfern place, from there to the Dupaul place on Pipestone Creek in the Oakview district, from there to the Municipality of Pipestone.

**John** married Anne Penner of Elm Creek in 1940 and built up a farm on NW 6-9-24 in 1943. They bought and moved to the George Scott farm SE 12-9-25 in 1949, where they still reside. Their children are; Frieda (Mrs. Ernest Carrillo), Killarney, Ruth (Mrs. Claude O'Hara), Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia, John Jr. who has built a home on SE 6-9-24, Edna, Winnipeg.

**Henry** married Nettie Rempel of Hochfeld, Manitoba in 1946. They lived on SW 18-9-25 until 1980 when they moved to Virden. Henry passed away in December 1980. Their children are; Helen (Mrs. Dave Sihrul) Sifton, Peter of Virden, Elizabeth, Winnipeg.

**Helen** married Alex Cosford in 1934. They lived on NW 17-10-24 until 1956 when they retired to Brandon. Alex passed away in 1961. Their children are; Jim, Vancouver, British Columbia and Margaret (Mrs. Bill Beam), of Stayner, Ontario.

**Tena** (Katherine) married Peter Penner in 1938. They lived on the Fred Breh farm in the valley until moving to the Penner home farm, SE 1-10-25 in 1945. From there they moved to the Woodnorth district west of Virden. They have now retired to Virden. Their children are; Otto, who married Marlene Gompf and lives at Russell, Helen (Mrs. Wes Tolton), Oak Lake; the Toltons have two daughters, Leah Marie and Darlene Faye; Eric, who married Lee Hatch and lives in Brandon, and Louise (Mrs. Louis Andre) of Greenwood, Nova Scotia.

**Mary** married George Thiessen in 1944. They lived first in the Routledge district, then on SW 16-10-25 in the Virden area, from there they moved to Virden, Killarney, Deloraine and now again to Virden. Their children are; Marlene (Mrs. Ken Milne), of Calgary, Alberta, Linda (Mrs. Elmer Arnt), of Stonewall, and Wayne of Brant, Alberta.

**Jake** married Rosie Thiessen of Griswold in 1950. They live on NW 6-9-24. Their children are; Milli (Mrs. Ed Hildebrand), Winnipeg, Dan, who has bought and farms S½ 12-9-25 and has built a house to the east of his parent's yard, Kathy (Mrs. David Hogue), Springstein, Winnie, David, Loretta and Dorothy.

### The Scherz Family

The Doctor in Oak Lake for the past 28 years has been Dr. Mark Scherz. He and his wife, Stefanie, and their little daughter, Eveline, moved to Oak Lake in 1953 after having resided in Sandy Lake and Winnipeg. In 1951 Mark and Steffie immigrated from Bruxelles, Belgium, to Winnipeg, where Eveline was born. They received their Canadian citizenship in 1956, in Brandon, Manitoba.

During their first year in Oak Lake, a son, Harold, was born. At this time, Steffie and Mark lived in the house where McQuarries now live. Later they moved to the house at the corner of North Railway and Second Avenue, where they presently reside.

In 1962 Dr. Scherz suffered the loss of his medical office in a downtown fire. At that time, he did build an addition on to his residence, where the office now stands.

In January of 1978, the Scherzs and Dave Penny of Routledge suffered an even greater ordeal. They were held hostages at the hand of Herbert Bruce Archer for four days in the Scherz's home. This was known as "The Oak Lake Incident" and had a great impact on the Scherz family and the town of Oak Lake.

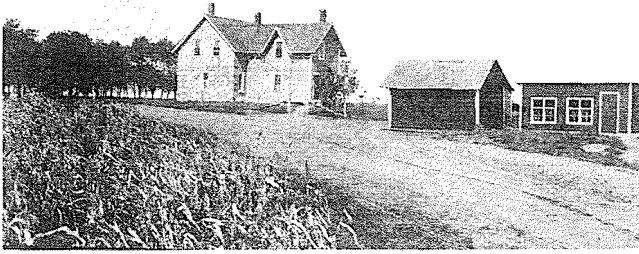
In 1972 **Eveline** married Derek Anderson, of Virden. Their daughter, Lisa, is one year old and they reside in Brandon. In 1979 **Harold** married Susan Argue, of Brandon and they live now in Vernon, British Columbia.

Presently, Mark continues to practice medicine and Steffie contributes her time and talents to volunteer work in Oak Lake. They enjoy their family, their cottage at the Oak Lake Beach, and each other.

### Mr. Willard Schlosser

Mr. and Mrs. Willard Schlosser and their daughter H. Avis Schlosser, arrived in Canada in March of 1925. Mr. Schlosser was the manager of the International Harvester Co. Demonstration farm, 3 miles east of Oak Lake, which included 1½ sections of land. Presently this land is farmed by the Heath family.

Working for Mr. Schlosser was George Thiessen and Will Wallace. The research which was conducted



Schlosser Home, known as Experimental Farm.

under Mr. Schlosser's supervision, was short termed due to his sudden death resulting from cancer.

Mrs. Nettie Schlosser and her daughter, Avis, returned to North Dakota in 1930.

### **Lovell, Edith, Donna and James Schmaus**

We took over the dry goods and variety store located in the old Bank of Montreal building, opening up for business the first week of September 1946. We continued here until 1951.

During this period, we organized the first Santa Claus parade in Oak Lake. Nurse Smith, the district nurse gave us much assistance in making this event a success.

It was my privilege to reorganize the Oak Lake Legion Band and we had many hours of pleasure practicing and playing for the annual fair and sports day. Our first parade was led by Captain Fall, who at that time was one of the oldest living members of the Legion in Canada.

Edith is a charter member of the Order of the Eastern Star. We both still carry our memberships with the "Star" and the "Masons".

**Donna** started school in Oak Lake and has many memories of various schoolmates. She is married and living in Edmonton. She has two children; Tracy and Trevor.

We left Oak Lake in 1951 as I was appointed as a representative for Robinson, Little & Co. of Winnipeg, working out of Brandon. In 1956 I was transferred to Wetaskiwin, Alberta to open the first company store in that province. Our son, **James** was born in Wetaskiwin and is presently living in Winnipeg.

In 1967 I was transferred to head office in Winnipeg and retired in 1979. Edith worked for Eaton's during our time in Winnipeg and retired from there at the same time and we are now living in Edmonton, Alberta.

### **Carl Schwindt**

Carl Schwindt moved from Shell Lake, Saskatchewan in 1942 and worked as a carpenter at the Shilo Army Camp. One weekend he went to visit his sister, Hazel Madill, in Oak Lake and Melvin Madill told him that there was a farm for sale in the Algar district, two miles south of Oak Lake. He liked the Oak Lake area and the farm, so purchased it and decided to settle there. A few months later his wife, Edna, and six of their ten children joined him. **Delmar** helped his father on the farm and **Hazel** started to work for Manitoba Telephone Company. The four youngest children, **Inez, Earl, Esther** and **Clifford** attended school in Oak Lake. The rest of the family, **Gladys, Audrey, Eldon,** and **Olive** later moved to the area.

**Esther** — married Roy Newman of Virden on September 1, 1956. Following numerous moves they settled in Cranbrook, British Columbia, where they now reside. Esther and Roy have four boys, Brian, Ken, and twins Randy and Ron.

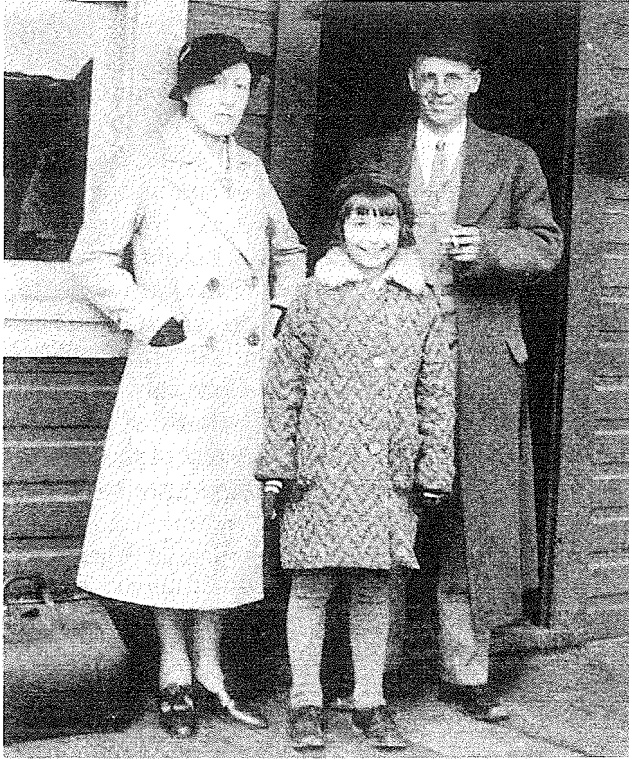
Esther entered the Real Estate Profession in 1975 and is now employed by the Permanent-Cranbrook Agencies Ltd. as office and sales manager. Roy is employed as City Lands manager by the City of Cranbrook.

Carl and Edna lived in the Oak Lake area until 1957 when they moved to Cranbrook, British Columbia. Edna passed away in 1968 and Carl is still living at the age of 92, and in very good health.

### **Charles and Christina Scott submitted by Christina Scott**

We moved to Oak Lake, Manitoba in the year 1938, from Piapot, Saskatchewan, during the dry years of the thirties. My husband Charlie Scott, had bought a farm from Mr. Alex Cameron, two and a half miles south of the town of Oak Lake. The farm didn't have a house on it, as it had burned down a few years before. So he and Tom Milligan, (the hired man) hauled lumber from Saskatchewan to build a house. With the help of Mr. Tom Stonham, they built a large four bedroom home on the same lot, which was a bad mistake. It was in a low spot and as the wet years came back water came in the basement, and every spring from there on.

We raised cattle, sheep, chickens and turkeys. Putting up hay with horses was a big job. It was an everlasting chore. We lived on the farm for almost twenty years, until Charlie's health began to fail. He was advised by Dr. Purdie to give up farming and stay off machinery. We advertised our home and property for sale and before many weeks had gone by, it was sold to Mr. Batho of Minnedosa, Manitoba. During



Scott Family 1938.

our years on the farm Charlie served three terms on Sifton Council.

After selling the farm, we moved into the town of Oak Lake and bought the butcher shop from Casey Pearsall, and went into the meat and butcher business, which we liked very much. However four years later we had a chance to sell, and Ann and Leo Jaeb became the new owners of the Oak Lake Meat Market. We have fond memories of our years at Oak Lake, and can recall many good times we enjoyed with our friends and neighbors.

We went to Brandon to live for a couple of years. We bought a mobile home and moved to a trailer court. We soon found there was nothing for us in Brandon, so we sold everything and moved to Lethbridge, Alberta, where we settled down and really enjoyed our home and life there. Charlie was fortunate to find work with Holiday Trailers, and before long was made General Manager of the company. He worked there until he retired, and I (Chris) worked in a department store all the years we lived in Lethbridge.

When we lived in Saskatchewan, two girls were born to us, Inez and Shirley. **Shirley** died when she was four months old. Inez had started to school and was in grade three when we moved to the Oak Lake District. There was no country school close, so she went to Oakwood, with Miss Irene Smeltz as her first teacher. **Inez** did well in school and took her grade

eleven and twelve in Winnipeg. She later trained for a nurse and after a few years of nursing, married Bill Clarke of Minnedosa. Three children were born to them, Donald, Gary and Janice.

When we both retired from work, we decided we would like to be closer to our family. We sold our house and property in Lethbridge and moved back to Brandon in 1978, and that is where we are living now.

### **George Scott Sr.**

George Scott Sr. came to Canada as a young man from Scotland. He settled near London, Ontario where he and his wife, Ann Telfer Scott, raised their family of three sons and four daughters.

During the early 1870's he came west and for four years, 1874-1878, he was at Cochrane Ranch near Calgary with his friend, Colonel Walker, who at that time was manager of the ranch. George Scott was not a member of the R.C.M.P. but rode with the forces as Aid to Col. Walker.

In later years, George Scott acquired land near his son, James, the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of 30-9-24 west of Oak Lake where he lived in his log cabin and farmed on a small scale the rest of his life. He died in October of 1896.

### **James Scott** by Agnes McQuarrie

Originally from near London, Ontario and of Scottish parentage, James Scott had spent some years in the western States before coming with his wife and two year old daughter by covered wagon from southern Kansas to Winnipeg during the spring of 1877. He located at Cook's Creek and farmed there for five years. During January of 1882, he came west by C.P.R. to the end of steel at Flat Creek. On snowshoes he struck out in a south westerly direction towards the lake until, halfway between lake and sandhills he located his homestead — the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of 12-9-25. Robert Lang Sr. with his family, was already settled a mile to the south on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of 6-9-24.

The following summer was busy with homestead duties, well digging, the building of a small frame house — one room with upstairs — and a log stable. By the spring of 1883, he was able to bring his wife and four children, with household goods, implements and some stock to their new home. Busy years followed. He bought his pre-emption, the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the section and later he also bought the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ . He had good horses so he did not use oxen. The early 80's were years of high water, and it is noticeable that as settlers came, these first homes in that area were all located on the highest point of the homestead.

There was a small log school situated on the east side of 6-9-24. The two oldest Scott children were of



James Scott.

school age and their father plowed a furrow from their home down over the hillside and away across the flat land to the school so the children had a good path to follow. But a new building more centrally located was soon needed. Sandhurst District was formed, Mr. Lang Sr. donated the school site on the north side of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of 1-9-25, just opposite the Scott home. Mr. Hamilton Foot did the building, and the school opened in 1884 with William Speck, an English gentleman as teacher.

In church matters too, Jim Scott did his part. He was a member of the Board entrusted with arranging for the building of the first little church in Oak Lake, and was a member of its Session until his death. He was a quiet, friendly man, greatly interested in the growth and well-being of the community and ready to help in any way possible. Once, in the early 80's before there was a resident doctor in the area, word reached him of the violent illness of two of Mr. Lang's family. They had eaten the root of a poisonous plant. The C.P.R. had a doctor in connection with their work gangs, and Jim Scott organized a relay team of the fastest horses available so that when the doctor was located he was able to reach the Lang home in time to save the sick. A happier occasion was the

wedding of his good friend and neighbour, Hamilton Foot, to Miss Hornebrook. The happy couple had driven to Virden during the morning for the marriage ceremony, then back to Sandhurst School where their neighbours and a sumptuous meal awaited them. They were leaving the district to start their new life in Vancouver, and Jim Scott with four good horses in a tandem hitch drove them and their luggage in a democrat to Oak Lake to board the train for Vancouver. R. L. Lang may have been a partner in that piece of fun making.

In those early years wheat straw was not considered a suitable fodder so great quantities of hay were needed for winter feeding. Tons and tons of long course marsh hay around the lake were cut and hauled home to be piled into long stacks in the hay yard behind the stable.

There was plenty of wood to be got in the hills, and these green poplar poles were built into a tepee to dry for the cook stove. When enough poles were used from the tepee so that a child could squeeze through to the shaded interior, they made a fine cool play-house.

The Red Fife wheat in use at that time was a very good milling grain, and in the fall of 1890 Jim Scott shipped six car loads of Manitoba Wheat to the East. It was consigned to Thomas Todd & Son, Commission Merchants, Galt, Canada. The grain cars at that time were much smaller. The heaviest of the six weighed out at 696  $\frac{4}{6}$  bushels, sold at \$1.03 and after all deductions for freight, demurrage, commission, and inspection, it netted him \$507.63. The six cars together brought him \$2646.75. One fall, on a trip east, he had a carload of apples shipped out, which he sold locally by the barrel.

The C.P.R. section, 7-9-24, lying just to the east of the Scott homestead and pre-emption was low land with the Little Lake on the far corner. This section was added to the Scott acreage, giving pasture for a growing herd and hay for winter feed. Miles of fencing were built, and a two storey log granary which also sheltered a well was erected. Additions were made to the house, and the inside plastered and woodwork painted. Oil lamps and lanterns were the principal source of lighting, but home made tallow candles were always in supply as a convenient movable light in the house.

In all farm activities the mother and older children played an important role. With her sewing machine and some knowledge of tailoring, Mrs. Scott made practically all of the family's everyday clothing. Socks and stockings were all hand knit, although cotton stockings were available for summer use for those past the barefoot age. A large garden was needed, calves, pigs — big and little — and



chickens, all had to be cared for — and always the wood box was there to refill. Every summer the kitchen and living room floors had to be repainted and some rooms white-washed again. There were always seven or eight cows to milk for the extra butter and eggs traded to the store helped to pay the grocery bill.

But by the late 80's Jim Scott's health had failed badly so that by the early 90's he was unable to walk without the aid of two canes. But with hired help and the family support, he kept things going. The first windbreaks had done well. Now more were planted, berry bushes set out, and the farm was named "Maple Hill".

James Scott died in May of 1897 in his 51st year leaving his wife and family of four sons and three daughters. The two eldest boys were twenty and sixteen years of age, and the family decided to stay with the farm. The two older girls married in 1899;

the third daughter taught for a time and later also married. The four sons all farmed their portions of the estate, but the next generation found their interests elsewhere. John Sawatsky now lives where the original home stood and his nephew and brother farm the land.

### **Robert Scott**

Robert was the oldest son of James Scott, born 1877 at Springfield, Manitoba and came to Oak Lake in 1882 when the family settled on 12-9-25 in the Sandhurst District.

As was customary the sons acquired property on neighboring quarters and Robert's was to the north of his Father's. There he built a home.

In 1909 he married Catherine Sutherland McBeth, oldest daughter of Dan McBeth. She was born in 1880 in Bruce County Ontario and came with her parents to the Hagyard District in 1884 where her



Mrs. James Scott and Family 1898. Left to Right standing — Robert, Jane, Agnes, Adam. Seated Left to Right — John, Annie, George, Mrs. Scott (Margaret Hannah).

Father had established his homestead in 1882 on 20-10-24.

Robert and Kate lived at Sandhurst until, upon the death of Jessie McBeth in 1915 they moved to the west half of the McBeth farm. This remained the family home, with the exception of a few years when they lived just west of the town of Oak Lake, for the convenience of school for the six children. They were staunch Presbyterians and later United Church workers, and always good neighbors with room for another at the table, so typical of the Pioneers of Manitoba. For many years Mr. Jimmy Cordick was the loyal "hired man", and Mr. Joe Hart came for "odd jobs".

They were both fond of horses and Kate used to drive the team and buggy, often taking two or three small children to visit her Grandmother McBeth in Oak Lake, a distance of 8 miles with roads not what they are today including the Assiniboine Hills which she had to cross.

Mrs. Scott died in 1942 and Mr. Scott in 1946, the family of six are all alive.

**Margaret** — a retired nurse returned from 30 years in Toronto to live near her sister Ethel.

**Ethel** — a school teacher, is Mrs. George Hendry and they live east of Virden in the Assiniboine Valley in the Blair District. They have one son.

**George** — who served Overseas in World War II and returned to the home farm where he married Patricia Pearn. They have two daughters and one son. George and Pat now live in Oak Lake.

**Helen** — is a retired Civil Servant — 35 years with the Government and makes her home in Ottawa.

**Mildred** — is a retired Secretary — 22 years with the Pulp and Paper Co. in Marathon, Ontario. She now makes her home in Winnipeg.

**Allan** Scott married Marion MacLean of Summerside, Prince Edward Island, and they live on the farm that Allan's grandfather, Dan McBeth homesteaded. They have four daughters and one son — **Marilyn** is a secretary with a Life Insurance Company in Calgary, **Sharon** married Douglas McNish of Lyleton, Manitoba and they have three children, Jeffrey, Karl and Rhonda. They live in Regina and are both Real Estate agents. **Carolyn** married Randall Manske of Calgary and works in a bank in Calgary. **Heather** lives in Brandon and is an Optician. **Donald** has been working with the C.P.R.

### **John R. Scott**

John R. Scott was born at Cook's Creek, north east of Winnipeg, in 1881, the second son of James and Margaret Scott, and came with the family to their homestead, the SE¼ of 12-9-25 in 1883. He got his early education at Sandhurst School, limited because

by the time he entered his teens his father was an invalid and died just after John's 16th birthday. He and his older brother, Robert, his senior by four years, carried on the farm work under Mother's guidance and wise counselling. Indeed, the whole family, girls and boys, worked well together. Even Adam, then twelve years of age, drove a team in the field that summer, and we younger ones always knew the security of a good home.

In 1899, the two older girls both married, **Jane** to Harry Testar and **Ann** to Andrew Gillespie and by 1900 Robert had established himself on his own place. John inherited his father's pre-emption, the NE¼ of 12-9-25 and also worked the home quarter in agreement with his mother. He lived at home with his mother and younger members of the family. By 1900 the old stables would not suffice and in 1901 he cut and hauled oak logs from the Island for foundation blocks and Harry Foot built a small frame barn. A few years later an addition was added and a new well bored with windmill and large tanks giving a plentiful water supply. The barn still stands.

In 1900, when his brother-in-law, Harry Testar, moved to Saskatchewan, John bought his land, the SW¼ of 12-9-25 which was originally the Speck homestead. After his brother, Adam, built on section 7-9-24, established his herd, and broke up the land, the brothers needed more pasture. John bought three quarters of 18-9-24 in the sand hills. With a dugout and later a windmill for water supply, this made an excellent pasture for their combined herds. Also, with plenty of shelter, young horses wintered there well.

During the summer of 1916 the old house was burned, and that fall John Scott moved north to the Pleasant Plain District to the farm then owned by his youngest brother, George, who was leaving for service overseas. Thus, with hired help, both farms were kept in production. In 1920, George took over the original Sandhurst farm. John stayed on where he was and later bought the NE¼ of 29-9-24 also.

During the summer of 1938, he suffered a serious illness, leased the farm and retired from active farm operations. The next year he became the first mailman on R.R. #1 out of Oak Lake. For several years he also did a lively insurance business as agent for the Wawanesa Insurance Company.

Although he never married, he led a very useful and interesting life, taking part in many community affairs. He was a trustee for Sandhurst S.D. and later for Pleasant Plain; a member of the Board of Managers in the Presbyterian Church and later a steward in the United Church, and a member of the Agricultural Society through all his active years. He lived to

be 91 years of age and always his interests lay in things rural.

### **Adam T. Scott**

Adam, third son of James and Margaret Scott was born October 3, 1884, on their homestead, SE 12-9-25. He attended Sandhurst Public School across the road from his home, and became a member of the Oak Lake United Church.

As a young man he went farming on his own just east of his parent's farm. Trees were planted, and farm buildings including a house gradually established.

In 1918 Adam married Juanita Telfer, a piano teacher and accomplished musician from Ilderton, Ontario.

Being an ardent horse enthusiast, Ad participated in many county fairs, his favorite "Brownie" being well known throughout the area.

In 1929 they moved off the farm because of Nita's poor health, spending the winter in the Andrew Gillespie house on the corner of Railway Ave. and 4th. The following June, 1930, they moved a mile west of Oak Lake, the present residence of Keith Dickson, farming in a limited way, mainly raising cattle. The depressed prices were such that as an example in 1935, Ad sold twelve steers, receiving 2¢ lb. for one steer, and 1½¢ lb. for the remaining eleven, realizing approximately \$180.00 in total.

As a result of the depression years, they found it necessary in 1936 to re-locate. Nita had contracted pneumonia in early summer, followed by a lengthy recuperation. Ad moved his family and what stock and equipment he had to his father's homestead from which his brother George had retired. Here he farmed until and during the war years, until 1945, when he suffered a serious heart attack and was forced to retire in 1948.

At this time they moved to the C.P.R. Pump house. On Christmas Day, 1948, while the family was at their daughter, Berenice's home, the house burned to the ground and all belongings were lost. In the summer of 1949 they bought the home of J. Furtney, the present home of Beatrice Smith.

Ad and Nita had five children: Eleanor, Berenice, Ord, Carol and Telfer.

**Eleanor** a registered nurse, married Henry Redfern, and lives in Brandon. They have seven children. Ray living in Rivers, Manitoba is married to Beverly Miller. Gary married Patricia McBride, their home being in Winnipeg. Lynne Ellen and her husband Rocco Wittwer reside in Calgary. Bryan married Christine Daciuk and they live in Minnedosa. Candice and her husband Greg Broome are living in Fort Sask. Ralph married Catharyn Cancade, and

they reside in Brandon. Keith is attending the University of Manitoba. Eleanor and Henry have five grandchildren.

**Berenice** married Norris Johnston. There are four children in their family, — Darlene, Dennis, Dawn and Dale.

**Ord**, served in the RCAF in World War II and worked in the oil industry in Alberta for a time. He married Florence Erickson from Killam, Alberta, where they make their home. Ord employed as manager of the Co-op Lumber and Hardware. They have a family of three: David at Killam, Valerie and her husband Bob Watkins in Hardisty, Alberta, and Doug at home attending High School.

**Carol** is a registered nurse, living in Ft. Myers, Florida, and married to Dr. Howard Harris. They have seven children. Scott, the eldest is interning towards a medical degree. Paul, Ross, Brian and Keith are attending university or college. Joy and Janice are in High School and Junior High respectively.

**Telfer** was employed with the Bank of Montreal for several years, following which he went to Air Canada in Saskatoon where he lives. His wife is the former Dorothy Gompf, and they have two children. Darren has just graduated from High School and Dawn is a High School student.

The death of Juanita occurred November 18, 1959. Adam Scott died May 19, 1968.

### **George and Annie Scott**

George Thomas Scott, sixth in the family of seven born to James and Margaret Hannah Scott was



George and Annie Scott.

born August 4, 1887 on "Maple Hill Farm" Section 12-9-25 Sandhurst district. In 1917 he married Annie Goodwin from St. David's district. After the end of World War I he returned from overseas in 1920 and that year their house was built on the same spot where the original family home had been burned. The builder was R. Robson. There their two children Keith and Gwen were born. **Keith** and his wife Elizabeth (nee Hopper) now live in Toronto. They have two children Brian and Eleanor. Brian married Marthe Beauregard, and they have a son Michael. **Gwen** married Arthur Komus. They live in Winnipeg and have three children, Lori, Scott and Carol. Carol is married to Blair Webster, and Scott married Sheelagh Runtz. Annie Scott died in 1971; George, now age 94 resides in Winnipeg.

### Agnes Scott

Agnes Scott, the youngest child of James and Margaret Scott, was born at Maple Hill Farm at Oak Lake on November 17, 1889. She received her early education at Sandhurst School, where Miss Cameron had a profound effect on the lives of her students. Agnes was a member of the first class at Sandhurst which qualified to write the entrance exams. After successfully qualifying for entrance to High School, she took grade nine at Oakwood School. From 1908 to 1911, Agnes attended Portage Collegiate and achieved her standing in first year Arts. She then taught one summer at Pleasant Plain School before taking her three month teacher's training at the Normal School in Portage la Prairie, which gave her a certificate to teach for three years.

She spent two years at Routledge School and two years in the Primary Room at Oakwood — the School Board having been able to receive an extension for her certificate.

Agnes Scott married John B. McQuarrie in 1917, and together they raised a family of three boys and three girls.

### George Scott

George Scott (eldest son of Robert Scott) re-

turned to the farm W½ 20-10-24 after World War II and married Patricia Pearn in 1948. He carried on farming until retiring to Oak Lake in 1978.

They have a family of three, who took their education at Hagyard and Johnstone Schools and high school at Oak Lake and Virden.

**Katherine** — the oldest, is a registered X-ray and Lab. technician. She married Scott McDonald who is employed by the Water Resource Department of the federal government. They lived in Kenora, two years at Baker Lake, North West Territories, and now live in Revelstoke, British Columbia. They have two children — Trevor and Erin.

**Bruce** — after high school, worked on construction. He then attended Red River College, graduating as a journeymen electrician. He is presently employed at G. and G. Electric, Elie, Manitoba.

**Roberta** — completed high school in Virden and then attended Assiniboine College, Brandon, taking a secretarial course. Following graduation, she was employed at the college. She moved to Calgary and later married Dan Roach, who is a computer programmer.

The family now own the farm known as Scott Farms. They are the fourth generation owners.

For a number of years Pat nursed at the Virden District Hospital, and now she and George are enjoying their retirement in Oak Lake.

### The Senez Family

information supplied by L. H. Senez

Louis Jean-Baptiste Senez of Montreal of French origin and Agnes Alice Lydia Melanson — Scotch and Irish background — were married in Bathurst, January 1906. There were fifteen children born from this union, five died at birth or early in life.

The Senez family came to Oak Lake about 1910, returning to Montreal in late 1914. Louis worked for Leitch Flour Mill Ltd. as Sales Manager and Secretary Treasurer.

They lived on South Railway Street and three children were born at Oak Lake: Marie Hélène Cor-



The Nine Senez Brothers.



ine, Aubrey Vincent and Marie Agnès Louise. The Senez parents were Roman Catholics and the three babies were baptized at St. Athanasius Church. Only two, Fred and Bernard, went to school in Oak Lake, while Hector went to Kindergarten.

In November 1914 when Mr. Senez left Oak Lake he was given a letter from the Leitch Co. recommending him very highly. Of interest, was that his salary was \$2400.00 a year, with a footnote stating "Other considerations made the salary about \$3500 for year 1913-14."

### **Thomas Sharman**

#### **submitted by Beverley Sharman**

Thomas Sharman came to Oak Lake by way of Emerson from Cogenhoe, Northamptonshire, England, after serving in the North West Field Force in 1885. He married Fannie Horsman, daughter of John and Elizabeth Horsman of Oak Lake.

They lived at "Homewood Farm" four miles south of Oak Lake, raising sheep, Aberdeen Angus



Sub. Lieut. John Edward Sharman.

cattle and a family of three. **Eddie**, the eldest, was killed in action, July 22nd, 1917, as Acting Flight Commander, Royal Naval Air Service, a member of the famous Black Flight. His decorations were: Distinguished Service Cross and Bar, Croix de Guerre with palm, a French government award and mention in dispatches.

**Beverley**, whose teaching career of nearly 50 years include Birtle, Lansdowne, Verity, Oak Lake and Miniota Consolidated School, as principal, and Senior Science posts at Rupert's Land and Balmoral Hall, Schools for Girls in Winnipeg, retiring in 1968. B.A., University of Manitoba, Natural and Physical Sciences, and M.A. from Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, School of Biology.

**Tom** carried on the family farm after a year at the Manitoba Agricultural College. He was a skilled mechanic and a good neighbour, his help was often in demand. After his death in 1954 the farm was sold.

**Edward Ruse** retired as Actuary from the Confederation Life Assurance Company for years and then held a position as actuarial consultant with Mutual of Omaha until 1981. Edward grew up as a member of the Sharman family, educated at Oak Lake, at St. John's College School and the University of Manitoba. With his wife, Marion, Edward lives in Toronto. Of his family of four, Peggy, Mme. Renaud Cluis, and two sons live in Marseille, France, while Mary and Elizabeth are married and living in Toronto as is Edward, Jr. During World War II, Edward was a member of the crew of an R. A. F. Lancaster Bomber, carrying out a number of missions into enemy territory.

Mrs. Sharman's paintings are in many district homes and her Prairie Crocus Hasti-Notes are well known both locally and abroad. The Hasti-Notes still sell to discriminating purchasers.

Beverley Sharman now resides in Winnipeg.

### **Cliff Sharman**

Clifford and Madeline Sharman of Northampton and Wales lived in Oak Lake for some years.

Their children: **Diana**, a graduate of Brandon University, is Mrs. R. W. F. Barrett of Spruce Grove, Alberta.

**Stephen** — holds a M. A. from U.B.C., went on to St. John's College in Winnipeg to become an ordained priest in the Anglican church, rector of St. George's, Woodlands.

**Andy**, born at Oak Lake, is the business man of the family.

**Patricia** — became a teller in the Bank of Nova Scotia, before studying to be an accountant.

Clifford and Madeline live in Brandon, Manitoba.





Fred and Mollie Simpson 1916.

**Fred Oscar Simpson**  
 submitted by Vivian Radke, Maryfield,  
 Saskatchewan

Mr. Simpson (better known as Fred) was born at Port Elgin, New Brunswick on August 27, 1884 and came West with his parents in the year 1889 to the Lippentott District. Elkhorn was their town. He received his education at the Woodville School in the Lippentott District.

In the spring and summer of 1912 he came to Oak Lake and worked on the farm for John McDonald.

In the fall of 1913 he purchased and operated the Oak Lake rink.

In 1914 he purchased the dray business and had it until 1916 when he became the owner of the Oakland Hotel.

On June 12, 1916 he married Mary Grant at Brandon, Manitoba.

Mary (best known as Mollie) was born at Booley Bay County, Wexford, Ireland on March 10, 1889 and came to Canada August 1912. She arrived in

Brandon in September. She worked at the Cecil Hotel until her wedding day.

She was known to all as a very industrious person and a home and family oriented woman. As well as leading a busy family life she excelled as an excellent cake and pastry maker. Consequently, she catered to many social events in the community of Oak Lake.

During Fred's residence in Oak Lake he acted as councillor for the town and took an active part in the Agriculture Society and in many sports. He was an ardent sportsman and took a keen interest in hunting and fishing. He was an excellent shot with both rifle and shot gun. In the earlier years he was one of the best marksmen in Oak Lake Rifle Association and won many prizes at local and outside rifle meets. He was also an ardent supporter of the local baseball team.

Fred and Mollie operated the Oakland Hotel until 1928. In 1930 they returned with their family to take up residence on the Simpson homestead in Lippentott District until 1949 when they purchased a farm at Maryfield, Saskatchewan.

Fred passed away on August 14, 1955.

Mollie passed away on November 24, 1979.

Fred and Mollie were blessed with six children. Winford, Cecil, Vivian, Lloyd and Carl were all born in the hotel at Oak Lake. Glen was born at the farm. The four oldest children went to Oakwood. Vivian's teacher was Blanche Story.

**Winford** married Lena Scott of Nova Scotia. He lives and works at Maryfield, Saskatchewan. They have a son Scott and a daughter Mary Lou.

**Cecil, Lloyd and Glen** farm at Maryfield, Saskatchewan.

**Carl** married Helen Hunt of Brandon, Manitoba. They live at Portage la Prairie. They have two sons, Bryon and Terry.

**Vivian** married Ted Radke and they live at Maryfield, Saskatchewan. They have a family of three, Ken, Garry and Betty Lynn.

**Jane McKay Slimmon**

In 1888 Mrs. Slimmon and her two small sons, John Gladstone and James Edwin, came to Oak Lake from Glenallen, Ontario. Widowed the previous year, she had a bad heart condition, and though not yet 30 had snow white hair. The Doctor in Glenallen advised her to come west. She chose Oak Lake as her brother Dan McBeth had a farm in the north district.

She purchased the two lots directly east of where the Anglican Church now stands. She built a modest four room home and a large wood shed. That little house became known as "The little brown house across the road".

Many farmers were homesteading, building log

nouses, stables and breaking land with oxen. Some bought horses, but found that the oxen were hardier, though slow. Many farmers had used up their cash and were in need of money to buy grain. Mrs. Slimmon loaned as often as she was able to.

Mrs. Slimmon was resourceful, capable, and thrifty, as well as being a pretty woman. She had always made her own clothes as well as her sons, and now turned to dress making for income. There were no dress patterns in those days, so Mrs. Slimmon had to cut her own basic pattern. There was much hand work to be done on each dress, and it often took a week or more to make one — all for the price of \$1.00 and \$1.50 each. She soon made a name for herself with her sewing. The sewing was hard on her eyes and nerves, especially the winter she had whooping cough. Along with all her troubles she had to try and cope with her grief and loneliness.

Mrs. Slimmon was a proud woman and would get up at 6 A.M. and chop wood so people would not see her at it. She said many times Rev. Hodges would come by and say, "That is no work for a woman," and would take the axe and split a nice pile that would last for days.

She was of a kindly, friendly nature and made many friends. She often spoke of a Mrs. Gaudie a friend who had been kind in the hard years, and was good with the boys, letting Mother be free to go to choir practice and an odd meeting.

Mrs. Slimmon was very strict with her sons but one punishment given one of her sons at school she resented bitterly. The lad was made to stand close to the stove pipe of the big pot bellied stove that heated the whole classroom, until noon. His face was red and swollen to about twice the natural size. He was quite sick and remained home the rest of the day. His mother protested that one.

In the pioneer years the church was the centre of many activities and gatherings.

With improved crop conditions more people came west, mostly from Ontario, friends following friends. There were many social gatherings, pie socials, public dances and private balls. These balls were invitation affairs — "no come all yuz affairs." Grand oyster suppers were held, where oyster soup was the main course. It was made in large new wash boilers and Mrs. Billie Thompson, the hotel keepers wife, was an expert at making these oyster feeds.

Romance blossomed, and on September 12, 1893 Jane McKay Slimmon and Albert E. Hood were married. With the two growing boys they went to live on the Hood farm 26-9-24.

## The Slimmons

### submitted by Gladys (Slimmon) Smith

In the year 1888 a small boy came to Oak Lake from Glenallen, Ontario with his mother and brother. This small boy was John Gladstone Slimmon, his mother Jane McKay Slimmon and his brother James Edwin Slimmon. The father and husband had died that same year with T.B.

Mrs. Slimmon had a house built in town where she and the boys lived. It was east of the present Anglican Church. It was in this house that Glad grew up. At the age of 18 he started to farm in the St. David's district.

About this time a young lady, Maud Elizabeth Perdue, came west from Lucknow, Ontario. She worked for Wm. John Young's at Griswold and the Dave Goodwin's in St. David's. It was here that Glad met her — love at first sight! They were married in 1903 and farmed in St. David's for four years.

They then bought a farm in the Ryerson district from a man named Billie Dennison. On this farm there had been a cave where the first homesteader lived before building a house. Maud and Glad raised a family of five, three boys and two girls on this farm — Don, Gladys, Jim, Charlie and Alberta.

In 1921, the Slimmon's home was destroyed by fire. A gasoline lamp exploded. The house and contents were completely destroyed. This happened on January 9 about 9 p.m. Don was burned very badly on his hands and arms, and Uncle Alf was badly gassed. What wonderful neighbours we had! The Cowings opened up their house and took us all in. They cared for us until other arrangements could be made. It was a terrible feeling not to have any clothes — only the ones on our backs. Dad was the only one with a coat — he was away at the time of the fire. The neighbours showered us with gifts and goodies to start a new home. What would we do without the kindness of neighbours!

In 1926, Dad built the new home. Charlie and Ina have raised their family in this house and still live in it.

In 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Slimmon celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They had retired to Brandon in 1948. Mom Slimmon passed away on September 19, 1961, at the age of 79. Dad passed away April 29, 1970 at the age of 88. They were laid to rest in the Johnston Cemetery.

**Don** — married Jessie Forrest and they had three girls, Marguerite, Dawna and Joy. They lived on the farm in the St. David's district until Don became employed by Manitoba Cooperative Wholesale, being located at Neepawa, Brandon and Winnipeg. Jessie passed away in 1947. Don later married Nell Koester and they had one daughter, Lillian. Don and



Mr. and Mrs. Glad Slimmon 50th Anniversary.

Glenora Pearce of Tisdale, Saskatchewan were married in 1966. Following Don's retirement from the Co-op, they spent time working in the Barbados before retiring to their present home in Brandon.

Don's family — Marguerite married Gene Cory. They and their children, Shelley and Shaun, farm at Wawanesa. Dawna married Fred Rumble and lives in Vancouver. They have three sons, Gordon, Allan, and Grant. Joy married Mike Phelps and they reside in Ottawa with their three daughters, Erica, Julie and Lindsay. Lillian married Don McRae and lives in Minneapolis.

**Gladys**, a nurse, married Fraser Smith.

**Jim** and **Charlie** farmed briefly before joining the forces, in the Second World War, Jim as an Observer in the Air Force and Charlie in the Army. They both saw service overseas. Jim and Alberta's husband, George Lyons, spent some time as prisoners of war, but by January 19th, 1946, Charlie, Jim and George were back home. Jim married Vivian Fenson of Yorkton. They have four children, Doug, Judy, John and Kim. Jim was employed by Manitoba Cooperative Wholesale in Winnipeg and then by Federated Cooperatives in Saskatoon before retiring in 1981.

Jim's family — all live in Saskatoon except Judy and family, who call Calgary home.

In 1946, Charlie took over the Slimmon farm. He married Ina Smith. They have a family of three girls and three boys. **Dianne** teaches in Winnipeg, **Wendy** is nursing in Surrey, British Columbia. **Craig** is a

veterinarian at St. Norbert Vet. Clinic. **Trevor**, a photographer, is attending the University of Manitoba. **Tannis** is in her final year of Agriculture at Guelph University and **Michael** is apprenticing in Mechanics in Red Deer, Alberta.

**Alberta** married George Lyons, and after the war they lived in Brandon where George was a butcher. They had two sons and a daughter, Dennis, Brian and Brenda. Following George's untimely death in 1974, Alberta moved to Vancouver where she is employed. Dennis also lives in Vancouver. Brian and family reside in Newmarket, Ontario. Brenda and her family live in Carman, Manitoba.

### Sloan Family

contributed by the Sloan Family

In 1895 our father, William Sloan, came to the Oak Lake District from his native Chesley, Ontario, on a harvest excursion train. It stopped unhurriedly at each station to let the young people alight temporarily to interview the local spectators on the platform. At Oak Lake, they spoke of a farmer who owned two threshing machines so at this time the 24 year old man found a job with R. K. Smith.

Liking the boss, W. Sloan remained to work on a year round basis. The rich black soil pleased him as did the friendly acceptance by the three little Smith boys. The up-to-date farming methods of "R. K." inspired him to operate a farm for himself.

In preparation for his marriage to the younger sister of Mrs. R. K. Smith he rented the half section from his future wife's parents. William Smith was 78 years old and Mary Ann Smith was 69. The wedding was March 31, 1904.

Sarah Jane (Sadie) Smith came with her parents from Ontario to the homestead "quarter". She had been born at Walkerton, Ontario not many miles from her husband's birthplace, though their families never met until at R. K. Smith's home where she often went to help her sister at busy times.

In 1883 Sadie was almost seven when she came with her mother and other young children to the two storey log house. This was before Ryerson School was built so she spent a year in Neche, North Dakota, to go to school. She learned American geography which she never forgot. She was a joy in the home of her eldest brother and his wife, Margaret, who taught her piano accompaniment for any song.

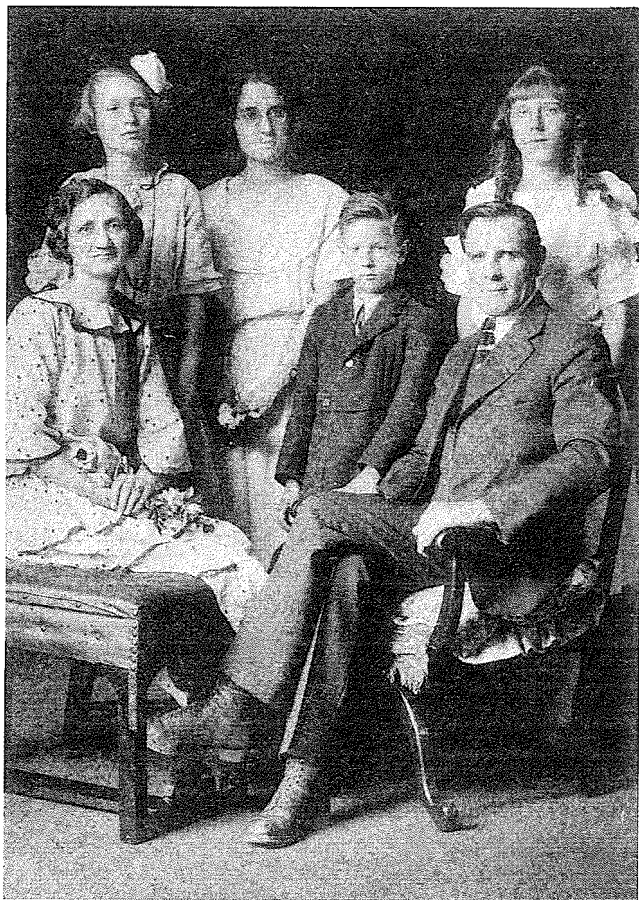
Several relatives had also come from Walkerton to farm within driving distance and short visits with them were made. The only other lengthy time Sadie was away from Oak Lake was in 1893-94 when her parents went to sell the 200 acre farm at Walkerton. There Sadie and her sister, Mary, (later Mrs. John S. Little) took dressmaking courses. Back in Manitoba

the two girls earned their living going from one home to another sewing all day until the entire family was outfitted in each place. Long before this the Smith home was no longer of logs. It was made of bricks that were made at Virden.

The Ryerson district was a busy place in those days for young people. Our Mother enjoyed her girlhood. There were Christian Endeavor meetings, Literary meetings with formal debates and many parties with singing. She sang duets with Mary and quartets with Mary and brothers, Tom (T.J.) and Rob (R.R.). Sometimes the four drove to other districts when requested to provide a variety of songs at concerts or church gatherings. Sadie was the organist.

Before his marriage and after settling the problem of giving himself to the Lord, William Sloan became a diligent student of the Bible. At Ryerson and later at each place he lived, he taught the Bible class. When in 1909, they left for Wapella, Saskatchewan, he was given a large set of Reference books from his class. His wife received a Silver Teapot set for being the organist for many years. They now had a family of two tiny daughters.

In 1918, the family, now with four children (Millie, Eunice, Edith and Russel) having received a



Willie and Sadie Sloan, Edith, Millie, Russel and Eunice.

good price for the Wapella half section, returned to the Ryerson district. They purchased the Knevitt farm, on the corner of which the Ryerson church stood. The three girls attended Ryerson school as had their mother before them. After one year this farm was bought by Cecil Smith and the Sloan family moved to Kelowna, British Columbia.

Later **Rus** taught at Fauquier on the Arrow Lakes. Vacationing from U.B.C. he earned his tuition working each summer as a purser on a ship which plied between Seattle and Alaska. While teaching at Cattle Hill, Vancouver Island, he joined the Air Force in 1941, and became a Navigator. He was listed as Missing in Action on January 20, 1944. A 7647 ft. high Mountain in the Monashee Range (East of Kelowna and in sight of the Arrow Lakes) was named for him. This will appear as Mount Sloan on future maps to honour Flying Officer William Russel Sloan.

**Eunice** — a teacher, married Earl Lundin of Westbank, British Columbia. They now live at Osoyoos, British Columbia, and have four daughters and a son, all living in British Columbia but one who lives in Ottawa. There are seven grandchildren.

**Edith** — married Bert Hewlett and they live in Kelowna and have three daughters and one son. They all live in British Columbia except one daughter who lives in England.

**Millie** — married Bill Hart, farming 34 years in the Vauxhall area and are now retired in Medicine Hat. They have three daughters and two sons.

### The Alex Smith Family submitted by Marion Smith

It was October 1881 when the C.P.R. laid the steel into Flat Creek, 167 miles west of Winnipeg. This was where the settlers from the Old Country intended to make their homes. Construction material for the following summer was unloaded here. A general store was built and tents were set up wherever there was a dry spot. In 1882 the town was moved to where Oak Lake is now. The spring came early that year and hundreds of people poured into the area. Among them was an Englishman, D. W. Banister, his wife and 3 daughters, Lillian, Ada and Blanche and 3 sons. His wife and two older daughters stayed in Winnipeg until the home was built but his youngest daughter Blanche and his 3 sons, Nelson, Clem and Garnet went on to Flat Creek where they intended to stake their claims.

Eventually the rest of Mr. Banister's family arrived, the home was built, the land broken up. Farm implements were few. Some oxen and horses were used and the land was new. The grain was planted. 125,000 bushels were produced in the Oak Lake area in 1884 and in 1886 it produced 600,000 bushels.





Three sisters, Marion Smith, Annie Milne, Nora Doherty. Seated — Geo. Milne, Cecil Smith.

Eventually **Nelson** married Queenie Wells and they settled a mile north of Oak Lake and built a home. **Clem** married Mary Laughlin and they settled in Walpole, Saskatchewan. **Garnet**, the youngest boy left for the Klondike saying he wouldn't come back until he had made his fortune. He married an American girl and they had a daughter. Years went by but Garnet never made his fortune. He was killed while operating a circular saw.

At this time there was a young man named Alex Smith who came from Perthshire, Scotland. He worked in the mill. His father had died in Scotland and he was the eldest of a big family. He thought he could make his fortune in Canada. Time went on and he married **Blanche** — the youngest of the Banister family in 1893. They lived on the home farm where 3 daughters were born — Nora, Annie and Marion. Grandpa had died by this time and we all lived in the house that Grandpa had built until my father built a new home in 1913 across the road from Grandpa's house.

We went to Runnymede School. I remember the cold drives to school but many things I remember were good. There were the times when we ate at Miss Spencer's. We thought she made the best meals in the neighborhood. Dances were held in the homes. Nell and Wallace Redfern had a big house with an upstairs which had no partition in it, so every second Friday a dance was held there so all the young people could learn to dance. We could hardly wait for Friday night!

Church was an important part of our life. We drove to Oak Lake to church every Sunday. Mother used to do a lot of work outside, especially in the hay field. We also used to love to pick cranberries with Mother.

Christmas was very special. I remember one Christmas when our Uncle Pete from Scotland spent Christmas with us. Nora's son, Ken and a cousin's son, Maurice, were with us and we didn't have a tree. Uncle Pete took the two boys to the sandhills to pick ground cedar. They got a maple tree and covered the branches with ground cedar and put candles and bells on it. No tree was ever so Christmassy or no Christmas more happy.

Mother and Dad and Nora moved to town in later years. Mother passed away in 1939 and Dad in 1945.

**Nora** was married on October 25, 1916 to Thos. Doherty of Griswold. They lived south of Griswold on the farm which is presently the Ken Patterson's. Tom was killed in an engine accident when their son Ken was only two. Nora and Ken lived with Mother and Dad for several years. Nora worked in the Drug Store in Oak Lake, also in the grocery store and later managed her own dress shop in Virden. She presently lives in Oak Lake.

**Annie** married George Milne on October 12, 1920. They farmed in the Harvey district. Harvey, their elder son lives in Vanderhoof, British Columbia, with his wife, Iris. Glen and his wife Eunice live in Calgary where Glen teaches. George and Annie later retired to Oak lake where Annie passed away in 1959 and George in 1962.

I, **Marion**, the youngest, married Cecil Smith on October 28, 1922. We purchased the Knevitt farm near Ryerson School and church. Our son, Lyman now resides there with his wife, Jean. Son Keith who is Principal of the Ag. Centre in Brandon, lives ten miles north of Brandon with his wife Joy and family. Ina, our daughter is Mrs. Chas. Slimmon and lives in the Ryerson district.

### **George Smith** submitted by Ruby Smith

George H. Smith was born in Oak Lake, Manitoba — the second son of William and Elizabeth Smith. He had four sisters (Hattie, Nancy, Lizzie and Isa) and a brother Charlie.

George was raised on the home place, north of Oak Lake, and later farmed there.

In 1926 he married Ruby Steward of Crane Valley, Saskatchewan.

They had one daughter — **Elaine**, who taught school for some time and then married Larry Ogle of Moose Jaw. They had one son, Brent Ogle.

George was very active in Community affairs,





Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Smith and Daughter Elaine.



Mr. and Mrs. Smith's Wedding.

being trustee of Harvey School and a member of the Woodworth Council. He raised registered horses, which he showed at the fair and he always could be seen driving a smart team.

In 1950 he sold the farm and he and Ruby moved to Oak Lake and built a new home. George became an expert gardener and his place was noted for beautiful flowers.

He and Ruby were active members of the United Church and George again became a school trustee. Ruby after years of baking became a judge and spent many enjoyable days at fairs testing the baking of others.

In 1976 George passed away, and in the fall of 1980, Ruby moved to Moose Jaw to take up residence there. The years spent in Oak Lake, leave such happy memories and many wonderful friends.

### Jack Smith

Jack Smith came from North Hampton, England and Eva Warley from Plymouth, England. They were married at Oak Lake, June 12, 1907. They worked on the farm of T. J. Smith and then moved into town. Mr. Smith enlisted in #226 Battalion at Camp Hughes and went overseas in 1916. He received his discharge on account of health reasons in June 1919. He then

opened a Shoe Store in Oak Lake and later bought Tom Sandal's Harness shop.

They had three sons, John, George and Ernest.

**John** — married Edrie Davidson of Kenton and has three sons; Morley (born in Oak Lake), Douglas and Derwyn.

**George** — married Blanche Kennedy of Oak Lake and has two children, Gerald (born in Oak Lake) and Judy.

**Ernie** — married Olive Chapman and had no family. Ernie died in June 1980.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith moved into Brandon in 1948 where Mr. Smith died on August 1st, 1950 and Mrs. Smith died May 31st, 1957.

### John McDonald Smith written by Dorothy Smith

John McDonald Smith was born in Invernesshire, Scotland, and came to Oak Lake in 1906, a young man of 25 years. He had three sisters but none of his family ever came across the sea. John left a sweetheart in Scotland, Annie Fraser of Aberdeenshire. In the course of the next 35 years all of Annie's family came across to Canada; two sisters, two brothers and her parents. Annie herself came in 1908, to Montreal



Left to Right — Fraser, John, Annie Smith, Glad Slimmon.  
Bottom Row — Jim, Dorothy and Gladys Smith.

and on to Winnipeg where she and John were married October 30.

When first arriving in Canada John worked for Leitch Brothers Flour Mill in Oak Lake. He worked here for the winters and proceeded to set up farming over spring and summer. He farmed in partnership with Alex Whyte to start with. However he set up on his own on the old Stevenson farm (now Ivan Butler's) when he brought his bride home. They later moved to the Ed Slimmon's farm in the St. David's District, and then to the Johnny Little farm in the Ryerson District. James McDonald Smith, the youngest son, still farms the home place.

**James** married Dorothy Archibald July 28, 1948. Dorothy and Jim are alone now. Their only son, James Craig, known as Craig, lives at Killarney. Craig took four years of Agriculture at Brandon and Manitoba Universities. He has worked for the government as a Farm Credit advisor for over five years. Craig married Linda Funk on February 23, 1980. They now have an infant son, Barrett James, born June 11, 1981.

John and Annie's first born, **Ian Alexander**, died at six months with croup. He was born October 1, 1909.

**Fraser Smith**, the second son, married Nurse Gladys Slimmon. They farmed about two years, then went to the mines at God's Lake and Flin Flon. Gladys and Fraser are retired in Brandon since 1979.

They had two children, Gary Ross and Cheryl Lynne. Gary married Lorna Cameron and they have two girls: Sharla and Charlene. They live in Calgary where Gary is an accountant for General Motors.

Cheryl and her husband, Les Negy, have two children, Kevin and Shelley, and live in Flin Flon.

John died in August 1965 and Annie May 22, 1974.

### **Robert Klock and Margaret Smith**

Robert Klock Smith was a pioneer of note in the Harvey District. He was born at Carp, Ontario in



Mr. and Mrs. R. K. Smith, Melville, baby Cecil, Errol.

1859 but at the age of thirteen his father died. Shortly after he moved to Aylmer, Quebec where he worked for his uncle R. H. Klock in a lumber mill. He did bookkeeping and telegraphy while becoming fluent in the French language.

In 1882, at the age of twenty-two, he came west via Saint Paul to Winnipeg and up the Assiniboine by riverboat to Brandon. From there he walked to Maskawata which was located at the McCallum farm, the

property of Mr. Bill Montgomery today. Filing on the C.P.R. quarter, NW 5-10-23 W1, R.K. built a shack. He worked in the woods at Rainy River and north of Portage la Prairie during the winters to finance the building of a good house in 1887. In 1889 he married Margaret Maria Smith the daughter of Mr. William Smith of the Ryerson district. From an account of the marriage written by son Melville is this excerpt:

“How the lively, active young bachelor, who went off working in the lumberwoods, could talk fluently to the French half-breeds, could sing songs, tell jokes and was a stirring factor among the young homesteaders, although frowned on by the older members of the community, met Maggie Smith the daughter of the elderly Scottish settler and persuaded her that she should come and share his lot and fortune is another story. Suffice it to say he carried on a vigorous and successful courtship but had to join the Methodist Church before maternal sanction to the wedding was obtained.”

R. K. Smith was a leader in the community. He had one of the first horsepower driven threshing outfits but later acquired two steam machines and became involved with harvesting from Souris to Harding. As always in farming, there were bad times and good. One of the bad was the time wheat was priced at forty to seventy cents a bushel and he had to sell his overcoat to pay a hired man's wages. The good times were when relatives, friends or acquaintances called to visit and stayed for an evening meal.

In politics R. K. Smith was Liberal. He was picked among thirteen farmers in the West by Immigration minister Clifford Sifton to travel to Britain to encourage immigration in 1904. His diaries of the trip made interesting reading. In April he decided to leave Liverpool early because it was seeding time in Manitoba.

R.K. farmed until his death in 1931. Mrs. Smith was laid to rest in 1939.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith had a family of five boys and two girls.

**Errol** — went through school at Ryerson and at Oak Lake, then on to the University of Chicago to become a veterinarian. He served during the First World War in that capacity in India and Persia before returning to practice at Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan. He married Charlotte Davis of Chicago, then they moved to Milwaukee where Errol worked for the Humane Society at the stockyards there. They later moved to Los Angeles where he died in 1951. Daughter Jean works as Head Counselor in a year-round Junior High School in Los Angeles and his wife, Charlotte, has retired from a business career.

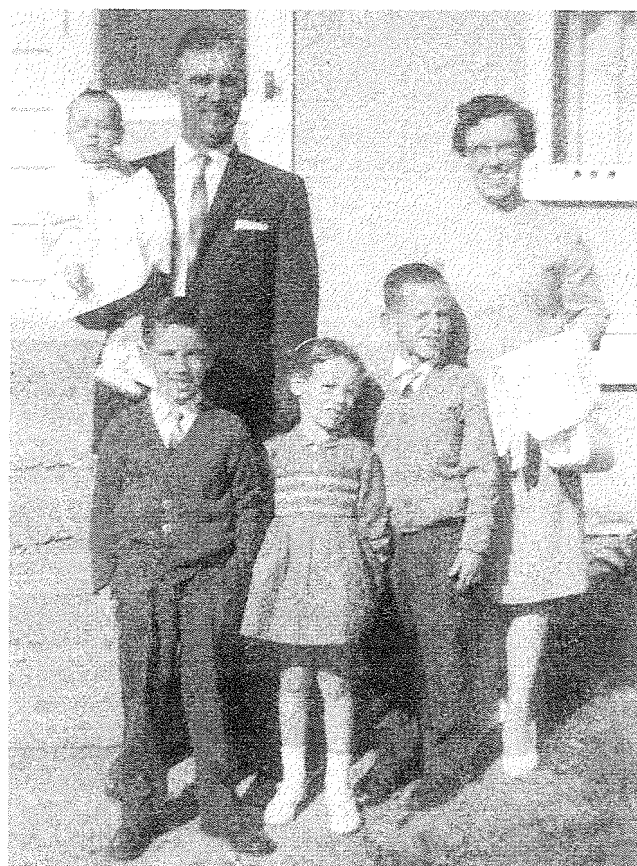
**Melville** — born in 1891, went through High

School, then took Mining Engineering at Queen's University. He was an Officer with the artillery in France after 1917. On his return to Canada he married Majorie Hodgins of Kingston. They have a son, Bob, and daughter, Mary.

**Cecil** — R.K. and Maggie's third son, was born in 1894. He completed High School and a business course before buying the J. Knevitt farm, the east half of 19-10-23 W1. In 1922 he married Marion Smith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Smith, of Oak Lake. They raised a family of three. Cecil and Marion have resided in Brandon for many years.

**Ina**, their eldest child, and husband, Charles Slimmon, farm the north half of 20-10-23.

**Lyman** married Jean Moir in 1955. They have farmed the home place and raised four children: Robert married Louise Ritchot in 1978. They have two sons, Corey, born in 1980 and Charles in 1981.



Lyman and Jean Smith and Family.

They live in Winnipeg where Robert is custodian at the Kiwanis Community Centre for the Deaf. His brother Kerry who is a carpenter married Mary Lewin of Oak Lake in 1981. They live in Oak Lake. Mary is a receptionist in a printing establishment in Brandon. Daughters Shannon and Carol both live and work in Brandon.

The third in the family of Marion and Cecil is **Keith**. Graduating in Agriculture at the University of Manitoba he took a Master's Degree then married Joy Harris of Winnipeg in 1958. Keith is principal of the Agriculture Extension Centre in Brandon. They have three boys and one girl — Richard, Janet, Brian and Murray.

R. K. Smith's fourth child was a daughter, **Grace**. After graduating from school she spent a year studying Music at a Regina College. She returned home to help her mother until her death from cancer in 1936.

Twin boys **Ralph** and **Walter** were born to the Smiths in 1900. They both took High School then Ralph farmed at Kemnay for four years. He moved back to take over the Kennedy place across the road from the home farm. Ralph married Beatrice Pollock of Kemnay in 1936. They had two daughters, Doreen and Bernice. Following their teaching careers the girls became wives and homemakers. **Doreen** married Cliff Toder of Kirkella where they reside. Cliff owns and manages a machinery dealership in Moosomin. Their four children are Darcy, Caroline, Curtis, and Darryl. **Bernice** married Bob Hay of Brandon. They live in Cranberry Portage where Bob is employed as supervisor at the school. They have two children, Michael and Tracy.

In 1972 Ralph sold his farm to Uwe Johnas and retired to Oak Lake where he passed away in 1973. Beatrice still lives in town.

Walter remained on the home farm and married Anne Taylor of Oak Lake in 1940. Their son, **Carlyle**, obtained his Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Waterloo in 1971. He has since taught Psychology at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. Carlyle married Mary Jane Rutherford in 1971 and they live near Peterborough with their two daughters, Danielle Elizabeth (1977) and Valerie Evelyn (1981). After selling their farm at Oak Lake to Volker Johnas in 1973 the Walter Smiths moved to Peterborough to live with Carlyle and Mary Jane.

The youngest daughter born to R.K. and Maggie was **Muriel** in 1905. She graduated from High School and Teacher's Training to teach for several years, Churchill being one of her positions. In 1941 she joined the R.C.A.F. where she met Marvin Hamilton, a member of the Veterans Guard. They were married in 1945 and farmed at Ochre River. Muriel died in 1978. Her husband predeceased her.

Leaving over forty descendants in the last century indicates a notable contribution made by Robert Klock and Margaret Smith.

## **William Smith** submitted by Lillian Smith

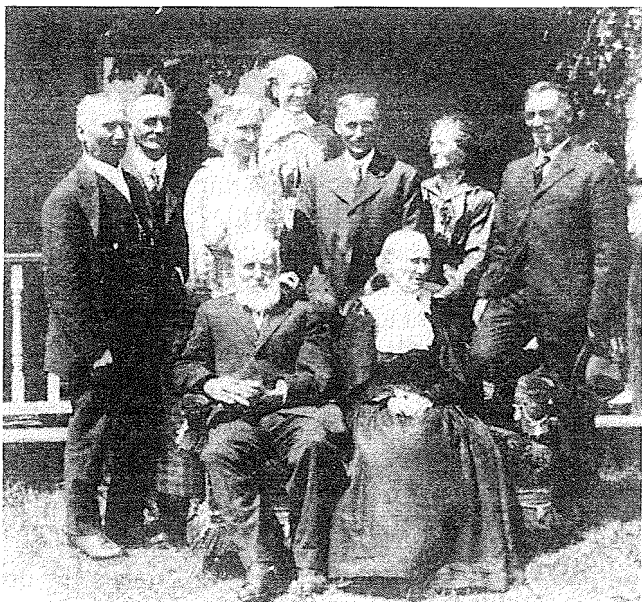
This story belongs to a dauntless Scot and a brave Irish lass. William Smith was born in Paisley, Scotland in 1825, the oldest son of a weaver, David Smith. At ten years of age he was cleaning under the idle looms. When 25 years of age, he emigrated to Canada, crossing the Atlantic in a sailing vessel, a voyage of six weeks, with great hardship.

Arriving in Ontario, he and a younger brother, Johnstone, found they could obtain free 50 acre lots by clearing roads, in a densely treed area near Durham. William chose a lot for his father, David, which he later purchased. There were the best oak, maple, pine and cherry trees available, the lumber eagerly sought after. William became a teamster, hauling logs to Durham. One time William was lost, wandering for three days without food. His cries for help were heard by Richard Guinn, an Irish settler. William was taken home, and fed, sparsely, one slice of bread. This haven in time of distress, was the first of many visits. There were many Guinn daughters, William married the eldest, Mary Ann, May 4, 1857. Those were real pioneer days, fruit was kept in containers with several layers of brown paper and tied, covered with a layer of egg white. The Mother was not dismayed by a layer of green mold — any bad germs would be destroyed. This mold was looked on with favour, as it was used successfully in healing wounds.

This home of William and Mary Ann Smith was soon part of the town of Walkerton, in the County of Bruce. Here four sons and three daughters were born. Need for land, for his sons, caused he and the second son, William R., to come to Manitoba in 1882, William Sr. choosing S.W. 24-10-24 with pre-emption N.W. 24-10-24. William chose this land for the body of water on the south west corner, referred to, by his family, as Grandpa's "Little Lake". The son, W.R., spent the winter, a cold one, alone in a tent, with no good overcoat. In the spring, March 1883, Thomas brought out a carload of settlers' effects to the end of steel, known as Flat Creek. The parents and remaining family followed in the summer, after a home had been built on the south west quarter. A substantial brick home on the north west quarter was built in 1903, first of its kind in the area. The Ontario farm had been sold.

Through these years great interest was taken in spiritual and educational activities. Church and Sunday School were held in the homes. In 1886, a school was built, William Smith using his influence to have it named Ryerson, after Edgerton Ryerson, Minister of Education in Ontario, also a noted Methodist Leader. The church, south across the road, soon





William and Mary Ann Smith and Family.

followed, appropriately Ryerson Methodist Church. Mr. Ed. Lund, one of Oak Lake's good carpenters in those early days, made a beautiful pulpit from an Ontario hardwood log, which had been safely stored in William Smith's barn loft.

In 1909, with Mr. Smith still farming at 84 years of age, a cyclone struck the buildings, only the house was left intact. The family thought their parents had enough. They moved with the William Sloan family, their daughter, Sadie, to Wapella, later to Medicine Hat.

Mr. Smith made a trip back to Scotland before leaving Walkerton, Ontario. He was a frequent visitor from province to province. Together they lived and worked in five of Canada's ten provinces. Mrs. Smith lived in six, as she was born and lived for a time in New Glasgow, Quebec. They were noted gardeners. Mary Ann's hair was always in soft waves over her forehead, the result of her homemade soap and clever fingers, later she used toilet soap. No arthritis bothered her in all her 91 years. Mr. Smith was fond of horseback riding. He never wore glasses in his 96 years. He died at the home of his daughter, Mary Little, of Kelowna, in 1921. Mrs. Smith at the same home in 1926. Is hard work a tonic?

Their family — **David Guinn** — married, lived in North Dakota, McAuley, Winnipeg.

**Margaret Maria** — became Mrs. R. K. Smith, always lived at Oak Lake.

**William Richard** — lived for a time on a farm near Oak Lake, later moved to West Bank in the Okanagan Valley.

**Thos. Johnstone** — Always lived at Oak Lake.

**Robert Richmond** — Oak Lake farmer, Medicine Hat.

**Mary Ann** — Mrs. John Little, farmed at Oak Lake, later lived in Kelowna and Penticton, British Columbia.

**Sarah Jane** — Mrs. Wm. Sloane, farmed at Oak Lake, Wapella, later lived in British Columbia.

### **William Richard Smith**

#### **Memories, recalled by Murray Smith**

My Father, **William Richard Smith** came from Walkerton, Ontario in 1880 or 81. Think he was only 16 years of age. He acquired E½ of 6-10-23 and purchased N½ of 31-9-23 in Sifton from Tom Ryan (W½ 32-9-23 according to official homestead map). Years later Harvey School was built on NE corner of 6-10-23. He married Eliza Jane Mackay January 1, 1890. Five children were born to my parents: **Marion** — June 12, 1891; **Alma** — July 18, 1893; **David** — April 22, 1895; **Murray** — January 28, 1897; **Dorothy** — January 29, 1899. Dorothy passed away about 14 years ago. Marion and Alma are in Senior Citizen's Home in Kelowna. Dave is in Vancouver in an apartment. I am living in my own home here in Chilliwack where I have resided the last 35 years.

The farm was sold in 1920 to D. W. Beaubier and we took property at Westbank as part payment. There were 145 acres in all. Land is now so expensive one could not think of buying even a lot.

While we lived at Oak Lake we attended Ryerson Methodist Church.

I recall a Mr. Hatch who had about the first car I can remember. It was a chain drive and think it was a Russell. He also had a truck that was on display at the fair grounds. While we were looking at it some man asked us if we would run down town and ask Mr. Hatch to come up to fair grounds — and he might give us a ride back in his car. Allan Milne and I were together so we ran as fast as we could and sure enough we got a ride back in the car. This was a big thing in our life then.

### **Thomas Johnstone Smith** submitted by Lillian Smith

Thomas Johnstone Smith, known as T.J., was born October 2, 1867 in Walkerton, Bruce County, Ontario. He was the third son of William and Mary Ann (Guinn) Smith.

He came to Manitoba in 1883, to the homestead taken out by his father the previous year. He arrived at Flat Creek, in March, following a cold trip, when he slept between the cattle. It was still very cold, as he drove the horses, cattle and sheep north across the ice on the Assiniboine River.

A home had to be built, and land broken. The parents and remaining family arrived by summer.





Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Smith.

Thomas, having assisted in establishing his parents, took a homestead, ¼ Section, 22-10-24 south of St. David's Church. On May 4th, his parents' wedding day, Thos. J. Smith and Elizabeth Mason Goodwin were married. Elizabeth (Lizzie) was the daughter of David and Mary Goodwin, one of a family of eight, living in the St. David's District.

When St. David's Church was built in 1893 Elizabeth Smith provided meals for the carpenters. Meat pie was a favourite as it would stay hot when taken to the building site.

In a few years, N.W. 26-10-24 was purchased from a Schuyler Teneych, a mile north east. Here in 1904 a large brick home was built, the pinkish bricks produced in the Virden locality. Three of their family were born in the first home, the fourth, Clara, in the new home in 1905.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith were members of the Ryerson Methodist Church three and a half miles east, driving to Church in a democrat, with a team of mules. In those days T.J. was a leader of the choir in this Church. Lizzie could take any part, with her beautiful voice.

T.J. served as councillor in the Woodworth Municipality and as trustee on the Hagyard School Board. He was President of the Royal Templars Society for a time. Elocution contests were held, the winners going on to a final, when medals were awarded, gold, silver, and bronze. Needless to say numbers recited were an education on the benefits of Temperance.

T.J. and Lizzie had a family of four, a boy and three girls. **Wilfred Goodwin**, the eldest, took over the farm in 1919.

**Maisie Neville Smith** married Melville C. Young in 1917 and moved to Dawson Creek. Their family — a daughter and two sons.

**Ethel Irene Smith** married Clarence Kennedy and farmed in the Ryerson district.

**Clara Edith**, taught school in Saskatchewan, then in 1929, married Lorne E. Paynter at the bride's home in Oak Lake. Lorne's father, a Beulah, Manitoba pioneer of 1880, Edward Paynter, helped to build Ryerson school. They lived in Vancouver. Lorne passed away in 1980. They have two sons and two daughters, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

After moving to Oak Lake in 1919, T.J. and Lizzie remodelled the home which now belongs to Dr. and Mrs. Scherz.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith were members of the Oak Lake United Church, and Mrs. Smith of the Women's Missionary Society. They died at home, Lizzie, March 15, 1941 and T.J. with a heart attack, Christmas Eve, 1949.

### Wilfred Goodwin Smith

Wilfred Goodwin Smith the only son of Thomas Johnstone and Elizabeth Mason Smith, was born June 5, 1893, on 22-10-24, the land homesteaded by his father south of St. David's Church. In 1904, he with two sisters, Maisie and Ethel, moved to the



Wilfred and Lillian Smith.

brick home on 26-10-24, where a third sister, Clara, was born in 1905. Wilfred received his education at Hagyard School and later attended Agricultural College in Winnipeg.

On June 5, 1919, Wilfred G. Smith and Lillian May Tolton were married at the home of the bride's parents, the Henry Toltons. The Smiths and Toltons were close friends from Pioneer Days. Lillian received her education at Verity and Kenton Schools, with a year in Home Economics at the University of Manitoba.

Wilfred and Lillian had the advantage of growing up in a wonderful community, St. David's. A literary club was organized by Rev. Cormie. Debates, when all ages participated, public speaking contests and plays followed in succession. Mrs. Jack Johnston, formerly Eileen Hall from Ireland, proved an excellent play director. The Royal Templars Society with its elocution contests, was a training in Temperance. On Sunday evenings, Christian Endeavor would find the young people at St. David's Church, when each one was required to take a part. Hymn Singing was a favorite.

The 1930's were hard years with lots of dust and a shortage of pennies. The young folk became a hardy lot. The diet was limited but there was always plenty. Somehow the hardships drew the community together, there was no travelling afar for entertainments. Socials were arranged in the homes. The home built by Wilfred's father was well suited for space, with its huge living and dining room.

All of the Wilfred Smith family received their Elementary education in Hagyard School, their High School in Oakwood School, Oak Lake.

Through the years a keen interest was taken in Church, school and community. Wilfred as an elder in St. David's, Lillian as Sunday School teacher and member of the Women's Missionary Group. Wilfred was among the first who organized the Manitoba Co-op Elevator in Oak Lake and Kenton. He served on both boards as Director, on Oak Lake's as Chairman.

Wilfred and Lillian moved to Oak Lake in 1946, when Douglas and Shirley took over the farm. They carried on their close relations with the Church, Oak Lake United, Wilfred singing in the choir there for thirty years, following forty years in St. David's. He was Central Treasurer of the three charges, Oak Lake, Griswold and St. David's, for a number of years and Secretary-Treasurer for the Red Cross for twenty-five years.

They have been happy years, celebrating their 50th and 60th Wedding Anniversaries with their four children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They now reside at Oakwood Place in Oak Lake.

**Bessie** — took Normal in Brandon and taught six

years. She married Edgar McAuley. They still farm successfully in 1981, at McAuley. Their family are Terry, Ross, Brian and Beverley (Poole). They have ten grandchildren.

**Douglas** — after his Secondary education, joined the Air Force becoming a pilot. He and Shirley took over the family farm in 1946.

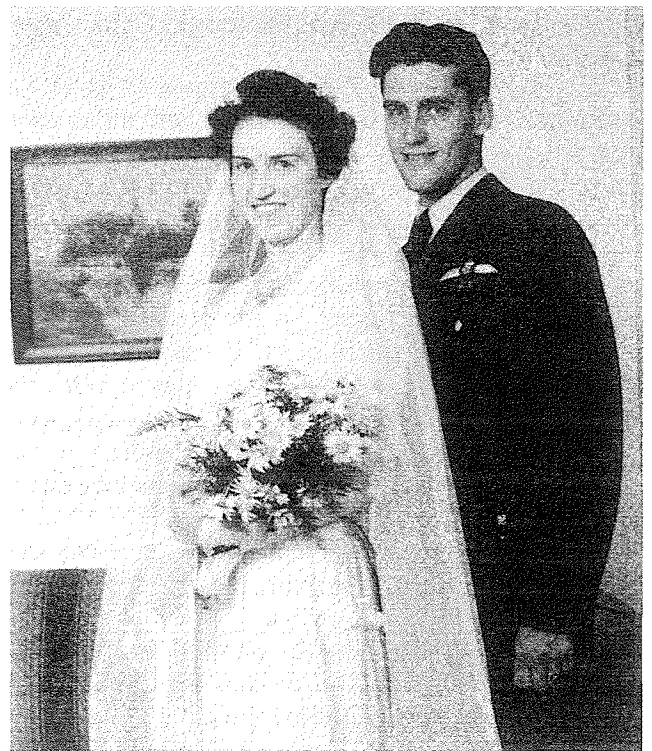
**Dorothy** — was employed by the Hudson's Bay Company in Winnipeg. She married Carl Pontifex of Cypress River, an electrical engineer for 31 years. They reside in Winnipeg where their family live, Donald, Joy (Wilton), Sandra (Tacchi) and Heather.

**Maurice** — has been employed by the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company for 32 years. He married Barbara Sisler of Winnipeg. Maurice is Chief Analyst and Barbara a Secretary for the Company. They have a family of four, Susan, Donna, Douglas and Nancy.

### **Douglas A. Smith**

**submitted by Douglas Smith**

I was born in the brick house, by St. David's Church in 1922, the fourth generation on our family tree of Manitobans — educated at Hagyard and Oakwood High. During a stint in the R.C.A.F. was fortunate in meeting Shirley Thompson, who since 1945 has shared her life with me. We tried to take an active part in the Church, School and district activities. Specializing in Yorkshire Swine and Seed Grain.



Doug and Shirley Smith.

We have four children, **Gerald** — a graduate in Agriculture from Saskatoon University who has recently taken over the family farm, married Lynn Bailey of Hamiota. They in turn have three boys, Leigh, Ryan and Jason, the sixth generation in St. David's Community. Gerald continues to raise Hereford Cattle with cross breeding for Commercial Market. A few good Yorkshire hogs and specializing in select and foundation seed production.

Both good and bad farming practices are probably inherited on family farms. Each generation has to let go, and make way for change.

**Janice** — a Home Ec. graduate, married Len Slobodian, a teacher at Erickson Collegiate, and is now a full time home maker and mother of two girls, Natasha and Sarah-Jo.

**Jo-Anne** — an R.N., married Merv Schappert, a Construction Manager, they live in Calgary where Jo-Anne is still nursing.

**Sally** — living at home with Dad and Mom in Oak Lake, and taking her Grade XII at Virden Collegiate.

Privileged to grow up with two grandfathers and also great-uncles, who took part in the great land rush of '81-82. From the tales of yester year it is not hard to let one's mind slip back in time.

Today, I stood on a knoll, beside a slough, an old cellar with bits of crockery and bricks lying around. I see miles of prairie grass. Not too many trees on account of the many prairie fires and the hills off to the right. There's a little man with a beard, spade and a few stakes in his hand. Prospector? Yes, but only interested in top soil and sub soil. After a lot of deliberation he finally drives a stake right where I stand. William Smith has chosen the south west of 24 as his homestead.

There are many such spots in our district, an old cellar or sign of habitation on nine out of ten quarter sections. One ponders what manner of man? Opportunist? Adventurer? All men with a dream, no doubt. Some that lady luck failed to smile upon and others that went on to help form our districts. On two of the spots I mentioned, I know that a family Andy Shaw (a blacksmith) once lived directly east of St. David's Church maybe 150 yards away. Also a brother Alex Shaw once lived on the quarter north of the Stuart Walton farm.

I'm amazed at the progress these settlers made. From shanty to brick mansion and huge barns in twenty years. A few years later, evidence of hot and cold running water in the home, discarded gas lamps (central lighting with carbide) in favour of Delco plants, all before 1920.

Agriculture has given way to a more sophisticated system today.

Farms are generally larger, mechanized fully, fertilizers, new grain varieties, chemical weed and pest control, nutritionally balanced livestock feed. Probably more productive at great cost and to what advantage.

I salute those early settlers and thank them for the pattern they set in the district, a good code of ethics to live by.



After the Hunt.

### The Edward Snelson Family

Mr. Edward Snelson came from England in 1880 and worked at High Bluff until 1882 when he came west and took a homestead. Times were hard and money scarce and he worked for the C.P.R., when they laid the line from Winnipeg to Oak Lake, to earn money to start farming.

He used oxen for ploughing and had some difficult years getting started as there was frost and drought to contend with.

The first home was a small log house which was burned down, after which he built a small frame house which is still standing.

In 1887 he married Elizabeth Fry. They had 5 children, 2 girls and 3 boys. Two are still living, **May** and **Arthur**, who reside in Virden.

### Evan John Sparks

Evan John Sparks was born January 30, 1921 on N.E. 5-9-24, the son of John Langdon and Gertrude Emily (Eve) Sparks.

Evan went to Sandhurst and Oakwood schools then on to graduate from Ontario Agricultural College and University of Toronto. His career was the Canadian Armed Forces. He retired in 1968 and is presently employed with Simpson-Sears.

They attended St. Alban's Anglican Church while in Oak Lake.

## Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Spence

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Spence came to Canada from Lincolnshire, England in May of 1926. With their two sons, Bob and Jack (John) they settled on a farm at Fairlight, Saskatchewan. There they built up their farm with cattle, poultry, pigs and sheep. Their family increased in size by six daughters; Mary, Margaret, Dorothy, Eileen, Nancy and Eva.

From the farm the family moved to Elgin around 1950 because of the poor health of Bob and his dad. The family ran a restaurant business there for two or three years.

Mr. and Mrs. Spence and Eva moved to Brandon in 1953.

In 1956 Bill and Annie Spence moved to Oak Lake, taking up residence in the former Helten house.

In 1965, Bill and Annie Spence were fortunate to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. All the family but Mary, were able to be home. The next three and a half years saw a great decline in Bill's health. Along with the care of Bill, Mrs. Spence managed to keep up her activities in St. Alban's Anglican Church as well as her garden and home.

Bill Spence died in 1969. February 14, 1972 Annie Spence also passed away.



Bob and Eileen Spence's Wedding. Back Row — Annie Spence, Les Norman, Bill Spence and Edith Norman.

## The Bob Spence Family

Bob, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. William Spence, was born in Lincolnshire, England. He came to Canada in 1926.

In 1953, Bob took an advanced welding course in Winnipeg. He bought Ed Emond's Oak Lake blacksmith shop in 1954 on the lot where the Allan Gordons now reside. Bob started his own welding and repair shop. In 1959 he purchased from Walter Bain

the fieldstone shop built in 1897. As business increased he added to the stone building and employs three men, on the average. The past 4 or 5 years Spence's has been the site of the manufacturing of sprayers for Specialized Soils. Each year sees the business growing.

In the fall of 1956 Bob met Eileen Norman, who worked as a receptionist for Dr. Mathewson. They were married in St. Ignatius Church in Winnipeg, March 1957. They bought and settled in the Reuben Kennedy house in Oak Lake.

Bob and Eileen have four children: Norma, Anna, Patricia and Craig.

**Norma** — married Michael Reese of Boissevain in Oak Lake St. Athanasius Church November 10, 1979. The couple resided for awhile in Grande Prairie, then moved back to Portage la Prairie, where Michael is assistant manager at Smitty's Pancake House in the Portage Mall.

**Anna** — following her Grade XII, moved to Brandon and started work at Brandon Bearing.

**Pat** — completed her Grade XII and worked the summer months at home, then moved to Brandon to take a course in Business Administration and accounting while working part time at Smitty's in the Mall.

**Craig** — attends Oak Lake Junior High and is also in the School Band.

## The Steen Family

submitted by Winnfred (Steen) Hatch

Ernest Poiner Steen was the youngest of eleven children born to James and Matilda Jane (Poiner) Steen, immigrants from County Armagh, Ireland. He received his early education in St. Amedee, Quebec, the small village of his birth. Graduating from Lachute Academy and Ottawa Business College, he entered the employ of Rinaldo McConnell, president of the Black Donald Mines in Northern Ontario. He served as municipal clerk in the County of Glengarry before his marriage to Mary Isabel McLean of Rideau Ferry, Ontario. Coming west in 1914 he located near Findlay, Manitoba and in partnership with his brother, Alex, operated the "Steen Ranch". Here, cattle from surrounding areas were pastured during the summer. A few years later the partnership was dissolved when Ernest moved his family along with two motherless nephews, Lloyd and Wm. Calder, to Lansdowne District. He settled on a farm owned by Wm. Atchison of Findlay. Here, the house was a tiny two-roomed dwelling beside which, a yawning hole filled with debris and rubble, was mute evidence of the fire which had destroyed the fine house, previously the John Hatch home.

Since the land was not especially suited to grain



E. P. Steen's Hay — pressing Gang.

farming, Ernest began the venture which made him "Hay King" of the South. During the summer he rented hay land in the marsh area and here built endless stacks of hay. In winter the hay was pressed into bales using the horse-powered hay press. The bales were then hauled to Deleau or Algar near Oak Lake and loaded into box cars for shipment, usually eastward. To carry on his operation E.P. (as Ernest was known to many) needed quite a number of hired hands. Consequently the small house was enlarged by the addition of one room and a "summer kitchen". Single-handedly Bell (Mrs. Steen) raised a family, kept house, baked, fed and washed for her family as well as for four to six employees.

In winter, since daylight hours were short for the pressing and hauling of the hay, the men left the farm by six A.M., their full-course breakfast of porridge, meat, potatoes, pancakes or biscuits and syrup and mountains of bread on toast being over by 5:30. Dinner and lunch had to be packed and sent along to be eaten half frozen beside the hay stack being baled.

Arriving home long after dark the men had to do chores, tend to the horses and repair any breaks in equipment before having supper which was seldom over before 10 o'clock. Life was indeed hard and cruel at times when an infant daughter died of pneumonia because of the bitter cold and the poor housing.

A few years later the Steen family moved closer to Oak Lake to the farm known as "the Henderson Place". Again, in summer cattle were brought in for summer pasturing as far north as Kenton. It was the daily chore of my sister, Gladys, and I to make sure that the cattle were counted, the windmill running so that there was a good supply of water, and that no fences were broken.

At this time Ernest was interested in road construction. Since he owned many teams of horses, he hired drivers who hand-operated the fresnoes which were being used in construction work. In 1923 the family moved to Oak Lake and Ernest continued road

building in many parts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Mrs. Steen accompanied her husband as cook on many of the construction sites.

In 1930 Ernest retired to live in Oak Lake where he built and operated a small livery stable. He had many friends and enjoyed visting with them. His health failed and in 1941 he died, a victim of diabetes. A member of the Baptist Church, he prided himself on good workmanship and lived by the creed that "a man is only as good as his word".

Mrs. Steen, an accomplished musician until she suffered two strokes in 1942, was a member of the United Church. Her greatest sorrow, when she partially recovered was that she could no longer play the piano or sing. She enjoyed the last years of her life, however, because she was a patient understanding person who had many friends. She died in 1959 having made her home with her daughters following Mr. Steen's death. Her greatest joy was her family and her grandchildren.

Of the four children born to Ernest and Bell Steen two survive:

Winnifred (Mrs. Harry Hatch) of Brandon.

Gladys (Mrs. M. A. Cameron) Calgary. Their family are, Shari (Berridge), Michel (Todd), Craig and Brady, all of Calgary.

Ernest Rinaldo (Mickey) was killed in a truck accident in 1948.

Marion — died in infancy.

### **Ernest Rinaldo Steen** written by Geraldine Steen

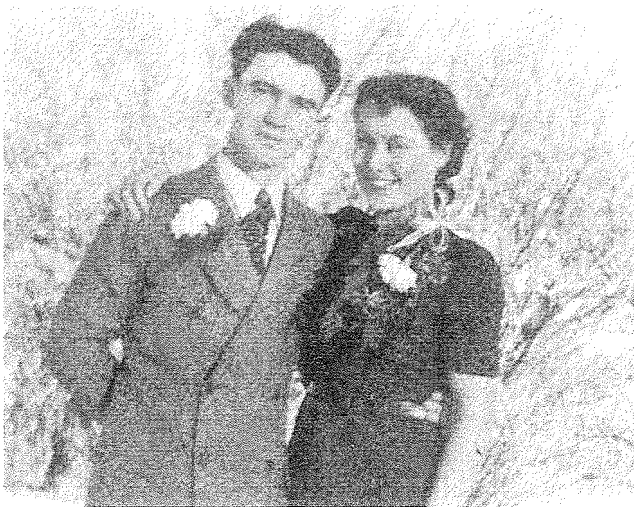
Ernest Rinaldo Steen better known as "Mickey" was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Steen of Oak Lake. Mickey was born May 13th, 1920 and received his education at Lansdowne and Oakwood Schools. In 1941 Mickey married Geraldine Doupe of Crandall. Mickey and I lived about four miles south and east of Oak Lake on a hay farm owned by Dave Henderson. In 1943 Mickey joined the active army, enlisting January 7th with the R.C.A.C. — he transferred almost immediately to the P.P.C.L.I. We then lived in Oak Lake.

I worked awhile at Portage but returned prior to the birth of our daughter Marjorie Isabelle (Mardie) born April 6th, 1944. A son, Ernest Gordon Mickey Steen, was born May 14th, 1945.

Mickey Sr. after completing a Physical Training Course at Nanaimo, British Columbia qualified as Lance Corporal and later was promoted to rank of Sergeant. As. P.T. Instructor Mickey was stationed at Fort Garry, Winnipeg and later at Currie Barracks, Calgary, until his discharge in January 1946.

Mickey went west to Calgary purchasing a truck and was employed with Burns and Jones Con-





Mickey and Geraldine Steen 1941.

struction. In 1948 at the age of 28, Mickey was injured in a truck accident and passed away Monday July 26th. Interment was in the Soldiers Plot in Oak Lake Cemetery.

I tried working in a Cafe in Oak Lake but with two very small children found it very difficult so returned to Crandall. After trying many jobs was fortunate in finding a household job at the farm of Dunc and Ken Smith, where I remained for 30 years.

Ken Smith due to health reasons was forced to give up farming and built a new home in Hamiota where we moved in August 1980, and where I continue to keep house.

Daughter **Mardie** an L.P.N. married Donald Lee of Crandall. She works part time in the Hamiota Hospital. They have two sons Gordie and Brian.

**Mickey** finished school in 1963 and held various positions in different locations. He is presently employed with Ackland Industries in Winnipeg.

### James Stephens

James Stephens came to Oak Lake from White-wood, Saskatchewan in 1900, his family joining him the following year.

James was pump man for the C.P.R. and also ran the first pool room.

They had a family of four, Pearl, Smith, Hazel and William, all going to school in Oak Lake.

Hazel worked as telephone operator in the first phone office, located above Addie Stewart's shop, both before and after her marriage to Ed Williams, who worked with the C.P.R.'s "B & B" gang. Later the phone office was moved downstairs to a building beside the old Municipal Office.

Hazel and Ed had three children, Smith, Marguerite and Bernard, who also all went to Oakwood School.

### Russell F. Stevens and Family

Russell Ferguson Stevens was born November 14, 1885 at Neepawa, Manitoba.

Agnes Emily Munro was born February 12, 1890 at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

They were married March 17, 1909, at Rapid City, Manitoba.

The Stevens family moved to Oak Lake from Fleming, Saskatchewan in August 1919. Three children were born at Fleming, Ernest in May 1910, Gwendoline in March 1912 and William in December 1918. A son Fredrick was born at Oak Lake in May 1926. All four graduated from Oakwood School.

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens were active in community activities. During his 26 years as C.P. Rail agent in Oak Lake Mr. Stevens served as a School Trustee for approximately 12 years, of which he was chairman of the Board for 10 years, was a Past Master of Oak Lake Masonic Lodge No. 44 and was secretary of the Lodge for about 10 years, received his Masonic 50 year Medal in Brandon, March 8, 1972.

In his early Oak Lake years Mr. Stevens raised prize poultry exhibiting them at many Fairs. Mr. Stevens formed the Oak Lake "Night Hawks" Orchestra in the 1920's. The orchestra was active for several years, very popular and had a large following, playing for dances in the pavilion at the Lake and in surrounding towns and villages. Mr. Stevens joined the Oak Lake Citizen's Band in 1919 taking over as the director around 1930 and continued until he moved to Brandon in 1945.

Mr. Stevens was an avid gardener, took great pride in the appearance of the home grounds. The home was situated on Assiniboine Street almost directly across from the United Church Manse.

Mrs. Stevens took an active part in the United Church and its organizations. She was active in the Rebekah Lodge, being a Past Grand. She devoted much of her time to her family.

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens moved to Brandon August 1945. They celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary March 17, 1969.

Mrs. Stevens passed away July 24, 1973.

Mr. Stevens passed away December 26, 1979. Children:

**Ernest Stevens** — married the former Marion Higginbotham of Oak Lake and now resides winter months in Stuttgart, Arkansas, U.S.A., summer months in Clear Lake, Manitoba. They have one daughter, Mrs. Joe Williams (Marilyn) of Stuttgart, Arkansas, one son, Gordon Stevens of Calgary. There are five grandchildren.

**Gwendoline** — married the late Fred Sanford of Virden where she now resides, has one daughter, Georgina living in Winnipeg.

**William** — married Marion Duncan of Carman, Manitoba. Now retired from C.P. Rail at Carman. They have two sons, Kenneth of Carman and Donald of Brandon.

**Fredrick** — married Fern Tolton of Oak Lake, now resides at Glenboro, Manitoba. They have two sons, one daughter, Randy of Brandon, Darien of Hanna, Alberta and Jody-Jill of Winnipeg. There are two grandchildren.



Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Stevenson.

## **F. W. Stevenson**

**submitted by Roma Stevenson**

Mr. F. W. Stevenson came west from Mt. Forest, Ontario, in the fall of 1882, the year of the great real estate boom in Winnipeg and Manitoba. He bought Sec 7-11-23 and 9-11-23, north of Oak Lake, from the C.P.R. at \$2.50 per acre.

He was born in London, England in February 1824 and came to Canada when eight years of age with his family. The crossing over the Atlantic was made in the "Navarino" a trip of six weeks and three days. After landing in Quebec they travelled to Montreal in the large steamboat "John Molson". From here the family travelled up the river in open boats taking seventeen days to arrive at Prescott. Along the shores of the river were many immigrant encampments. It was the year of the cholera plague and many people were perishing. The family settled in Grey County. In 1854 he married Elizabeth Wallace of Peterborough, Ontario. They resided in Egremont for thirty years where twelve children were born to them. Mr. Stevenson was active in community and political affairs.

In the spring of 1883, he took with him his five eldest sons: W.V. (Billy), S.H. (Harry), R.G. (Bob) and Horace and headed west.

On April 30th at 4 p.m. they arrived by train at Griswold, Manitoba, and that first night "camped out against a haystack". They had brought with them two teams of horses, two cows and material to build a small house, also a large tent to live in, in the meantime. More horses, a yoke of oxen and three one furrow walking plows worth twenty-six dollars each, were purchased, and four hundred acres of land were broken. This land had to be backset later in the season. The first Christmas they were invited to Mr. T. R. Todd's for dinner and they received "ten pairs of mitts from Home"! It was not until 1885 that Mr. Stevenson returned to Mt. Forest and brought out his wife and two daughters, Sophia and Cynthia and youngest son Sidney.

The Indian trail from Griswold to Birtle passed through their yard.

After a few years, Walter and Harry moved on to Balcarres, Saskatchewan, to farm; **W.V.** went into the Lumber and Hardware business in Harding; **Bob** took a degree in Arts and Divinity, then in Medicine and practiced in Vancouver; **Sid** began the S. S. Stevenson real estate in Winnipeg, a business still in operation today. One daughter, **Cynthia**, remained in the Shiloh district as the wife of Chas. Chadbourne. **Sophia** married Mr. John Woodman of Winnipeg.

**Horace** — married Eva Armstrong of the Sandhurst district in January, 1903, having met her at St. Alban's Anglican Church which they both attended in Oak Lake. They carried on the farm on 9-11-23. The senior Stevensons remained there for many years and lived to celebrate their sixty-second wedding anniversary. Mr. Stevenson reached the ripe old age of 104 years. He was a staunch Liberal, active in church and school affairs and with his son Horace kept the Hillview Post Office in their home from 1894-1929. The provincial weather records were also kept there. They were supplied with a thermometer, a rain gauge and an anemometer.

**The Horace Stevenson** family consisted of James, Josie, Kathleen, Douglas, Victor and Horace (Hudge). **Josie** and **Kathleen** became registered nurses, married, and now live at the west coast. **Jim** married Kathleen Adcock of Harding. They had one daughter, Joyce. They farmed a short while in the Shiloh district and after several years of buying grain in Saskatchewan, moved to Vancouver. Jim passed away in March, 1980.

**Douglas** married Gladys Walton from the St. David's district. They farmed for twenty-five years in the Shiloh area, before retiring to Virden and then to Victoria, British Columbia where Douglas died in February, 1979.

**Victor** farmed the home farm for many years. He has now retired to Kamsack, Saskatchewan.

**Hudge** served overseas in World War II. In 1946 he married Roma Tolton of the Verity district and they moved on to 4-11-23. Hudge was a registered seed grower and also kept a herd of purebred Yorkshire "Ridgemoor" Swine for over thirty years. He took many prizes with these swine over the years including top awards at the Toronto Royal. Their family consists of three daughters and two sons. **Pat** and **Maureen** reside in Winnipeg and each have two sons. **Susan**, married to Dale McKinnon of Oakner, is at present in Deloraine, Manitoba. **Robert** and **Richard** are continuing to farm since their father's death in September, 1979. They are the fourth generation to be farming the original land on 9-11-23, making this farm in the year 1982 — a century farm.

### The Adam Stewart Family

In 1892, Adam Stewart Sr., his wife Margaret and family of eight daughters and one son came to Manitoba from Belwood, Ontario, settling in Oak Lake.

The families were: Mary (Mrs. Geo. Ellice), Isabelle (Mrs. R. J. Grey), Anne (Mrs. Harry Peever), Katherine (Mrs. Jas. Bell), Clara (Mrs. Archie Taylor), Jeanette (Mrs. Dave Kydd), Elizabeth (Mrs. N. McLean), Bertha (Mrs. W. V. Wilson). Adam Strachan (A.S.) Stewart married the former Grace Chapman in 1919 and were life time residents in Oak Lake.

Mr. Stewart was a farm equipment and automobile dealer for 42 years retiring in 1952. He was a member of session of the Oak Lake United Church, a member of the town council for 12 years and mayor for 12 years.

Mrs. Stewart (nee Grace Chapman) was born at Ancaster, Ontario, coming west with her family in 1905, settling in Oak Lake. Prior to her marriage Mrs. Stewart was a stenographer at the Leitch Flour Mills. She was a long time member of the Oak Lake United Church and the U.C.W., the Women's Curling Club and actively involved in Red Cross work during the war years.

Mrs. Jas. Bell was also a life time resident of Oak Lake while the rest of her sisters took up residence at various points in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Grey, in the late 1930's, returned to Oak Lake and for a number of years operated a retail store in the former Bank of Montreal building until their retirement to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

### The Duncan Stewart Family submitted by, Edward (Ted) Stewart and Glen Wheatley

Duncan Stewart was born in Glentilt, Blairathol, Perthshire, Scotland in 1863. He was one of a family

of eight children of John Stewart, an Athol Highlander and gamekeeper for the Duke of Athol.

Duncan followed in his father's footsteps becoming a noted piper and soldiered in Scotland.

He married Annie Joss, and they were blessed with eight children, six born in Scotland and two later in Canada.

They immigrated to Canada in 1911 lured by the opportunity of owning land of their own. He arrived in Halifax and proceeded by train across Canada, making a stop at Winnipeg, where he booked into a hotel, and as was the custom in Scotland, left his brogues outside to be shined. Alas! When he went to get them in the morning, they were gone. The family settled on the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of 28-8-24, six miles south and two miles west of Oak Lake, Manitoba. The house was of log construction; in later years was clad with bricks and remained the farm residence until the farm was sold in the late 1940's.

The early days saw an abundance of wildlife and the Stewart table was graced with ducks, geese or venison a good portion of the time. Trapping was also very popular and the trapline aided greatly to the family's income.



Ted Stewart with Muskrat Pelts 1928.

It was a hard struggle on the farm in the years that followed. If we had a good crop, the price was poor. If we had a good crop of pigs and cattle the price was down.

1915 was a good crop year but the snow came before we got it all threshed. We had to dig the oat sheaves out of the snow to feed the horses. The years that followed were a mixture of good and bad.

However, one memorable occasion of the Stewart family was when the Duke of Athol and his party were touring Canada by railway, and his coach was side-tracked at Oak Lake. He and his party visited the farm for a hunt and refreshments.

One of the Stewart's hunting pieces was a 4 gauge shotgun that no doubt set many a "game" hunter on his backside.

The Stewart children all attended Lansdowne School south of Oak Lake.

Duncan Stewart died in 1927, and Annie Stewart lived on at the farm until a sale was arranged, following Jock's death. She lived with Charlie for a time and then went to live with Betty, where she died in 1954. She was buried beside her husband in Oak Lake Cemetery.

The family:

**Charles** — 80 years old, is retired with his wife Alice at Stuart, Florida.

**Ted** — now 73 years old and retired with wife in British Columbia. Ted worked for some years logging before joining the Navy.

**Betty** — became a school teacher and later married Charlie Wheatley who had a barber shop and a pool room at Semans, Saskatchewan. Deceased 1956.

**Nan** — (Mrs. A. Bremmer) Deceased, 1970, Highland Park, Illinois.

**Jock** — deceased 1945, car-train accident at Oak Lake.

**George** — deceased 1945, in German prisoner-of-war Camp.

**Athol** — deceased 1959, wife Nan (Torrance) lives at Virden, Manitoba.

**Donald** — deceased 1974, in Alberta.

Children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of Duncan and Annie Stewart are now spread across Canada and the U.S.A. It is our wish that Oak Lake and rural municipality have a Happy and Successful 100th Birthday!

### Henry Stinton Family

My father, Henry Stinton, came to Oak Lake in 1904, and got work with Mr. Jim McFarlane, on a farm west of the town. The following year my Mother came bringing the five children.

Arriving in Oak Lake by train in the early hours of Sunday morning, they found no one there to meet them! Mr. Stinton hadn't expected them till the next day. The people in the station allowed them to stay there, and fortified with a good breakfast, were ready for the ride in a wagon — something new and strange to them — out to the McFarlane farm. After a year apart it was a joyful reunion.

Later on Mr. Stinton worked for Mr. Cameron, one half mile west of Oak Lake. Here a new house had been built for them and they had the special care of a large number of Shetland ponies.

Three of the children went to school at Oakwood. They also attended the Methodist church, where the youngest, a baby sister was christened by Rev. Ambrose.

In 1908 "Harry" Stinton decided to move to

Ninette, buying a farm there. Later they retired to town and have both passed away.

Daughter Clara, Mrs. Scott, of Ninette, recalls her fondness for Oak Lake and its people, the Sunday School picnics, which were "lots of fun" and the newness and difference of the life for this English family.

### The Story Family

John Lee Story was born in 1867 at Carlisle in the County of Cumberland, England. He immigrated to Canada and first settled at Brandon in 1888 where he worked in a saw-mill. While in Brandon, he met Elizabeth Bell and married her in 1894. Their two oldest children, Blanche and Lorne, were born while residing in Brandon. In 1900, the family moved to Griswold where John Lee opened a machine shop across from the location of the bank. Because cars were coming into use and mechanics were needed, he became a garage man. A growing garage business and a machinery repair shop at the Oak Lake Flour Mill offered more opportunity so in 1910, the family, with the addition of two more children, Fred and Irene, moved to Oak Lake. In 1919, an expanding business promoted the construction of a new garage on the North side of the railway tracks on the property formerly owned by Henry Stevens who operated a lumber yard. A few years later in 1926, after a brief illness, John Lee passed away leaving Lorne and Fred to take over the family business. Because enough land was left vacant after the purchase of the lot, a new family home was constructed in 1928 next to the garage. Mrs. Story enjoyed living in the new home until she passed away in 1941.

**Blanche** — a school teacher, taught at Lockwood, Saskatchewan, where she became the bride of Milton Phillips in 1920. She returned to Oak Lake after the passing of her husband in 1929, with her son John, an infant. Blanche joined the Oakwood School teaching staff in 1929, retiring in 1965. She was organist in the Oak Lake United Church, also choir leader, working with Mrs. Ruth Story and Mrs. Higginbotham.

Son **John** and his wife, Joan, with their two daughters, Darcy and Dixie, live in Waterloo, Ontario, where John is employed at the University of Waterloo in the administrative department.

**Irene** — married Gordon Conley from the Beresford area and they had one daughter, Elaine. Gordon contracted sleeping sickness and passed away. After Gordon's death, Irene took Nurses' Training and a number of years later became remarried to Jim Cruickshank. Irene passed away in 1968.

**Lorne** — when seventeen, joined the British army, motor corps, and saw service in Belgium and

France. He was seriously wounded and spent five months in hospital.

Following the war Lorne went into the garage business with his father and brother, Fred.

Lorne played in the trombone section of the band, was a sports enthusiast and won many curling trophies as well as pitching for the baseball club.

Lorne married Mildred Kennedy in 1935. They have three children: Lorna (Mrs. Keith Stairs) of Kleinburg, Ontario; Dianne (Mrs. Jerry Dirk) of Lethbridge, Alberta; and Michael, a resident of Oak Lake.

**Fred** — married Grace Lemaire in 1945. They have five children: Zelda (Mrs. Alan Forshaw) of Mississauga, Ontario; Trevlyn of Port Moody, British Columbia; Calvin of Fraser Lake, British Columbia; Candice (Mrs. Evans Cross) of Brandon; and Derys Dee, resident of Oak Lake. Fred passed away in 1980.

### **The William Story Family submitted by Arleen McLean**

Born at Carlisle, Cumberland County, England on November 16, 1882. William (Bill) Story came to Canada at the age of five with his father and other members of the family. They located at Brandon. Bill moved to Griswold in 1900 where he married Mary Ellen (Nellie) English on November 18, 1908.

Nellie English was born at Ripon, Yorkshire, England on March 10, 1886 and came to Canada in 1905 settling at Griswold.

Bill and Nellie moved to Oak Lake in 1920 where they resided until their deaths. Bill — August 8, 1940 and Nellie — July 10, 1960.

Bill Story was a machinist and steam engineer by trade and worked on the Hall estate (Hall's Bridge). He was the engineer of the steam engine used for harvesting that went through Hall's Bridge in either 1909 or 1910. Upon moving to Oak Lake, Bill operated Banister's steam outfit in the fall and was involved with digging many of the wells in the Oak Lake district. He also worked in Leitch's flour mill and later as caretaker of the Oak Lake curling and skating rink. He was a member of the Anglican Church and a very keen sportsman, particularly fond of curling and running.

Upon arriving in Canada, Nellie worked as a domestic for the Hill family in Griswold. Later she assisted as a mid-wife, Dr. Purdie of Griswold and later Dr. Fife and Dr. Gibb of Oak Lake. Nellie was a member of the Anglican Church and Hearts of Oak Rebekah Lodge.

There were six children born to Bill and Nellie, four at Griswold and two at Oak Lake. All children received their education at Oakwood High School.

**Clara** — Griswold 1910-1976 married Glen Parrott of Neepawa. Was widowed in 1948. Married Elmer Edey 1959. Two children, Arleen McLean of Brandon and Dr. James Parrott of Winnipeg, two grandchildren Crawford and Marshall Parrott of Winnipeg.

**Thomas** — Griswold — 1912 married Ruth Parsons of Oak Lake. Three children, Clarke of Brandon, David of Vernon, British Columbia and Brian 1943-1944. Five grandchildren — Audra, Geraldine and Jason of Brandon, Mary Ellen and Heath of Vernon, British Columbia.

**Walter** — Griswold — 1916-1976 married Phyllis McCutcheon of Collingwood, Ontario. Two children, Gayle and Kenneth of Collingwood, Ontario. Three grandchildren Jeffery, Michael, Gerrie Hop-ping.

**Keith** — Griswold — 1918 married Marjorie Canning of Souris. One child, Noreen Minary of Brandon and one grandchild Taanjia Mae Minary.

**Ferne** — Oak Lake — 1922 married George Bain of Brandon. Eleven children, Jo-Ann, Patricia, Robert, William, Leonard, Judy, Donald, David, Lesley, Lawrence and Mary. There are twelve grandchildren.

**John Lee** (Sullivan) — Oak Lake 1931-1953 drowned while swimming in a dug out located on the farm of Chris Bothe.

### **The Strong Family**

Frederick William Strong and his wife, Ida Jane, were born in Ontario. Their parents were of United Empire Loyalist stock. Frederick and his wife came to Manitoba and farmed for several years in the North Brandon area. It was there that their children, Clifford, Winnie, Alex and Walter, were born. Later they moved to Oak Lake and farmed before Mr. Strong began his work as a carpenter. He was also agent for the Massey Harris Co. for a time.

Their son, Frederick Milton, was born after they came to Oak Lake.

#### **Clifford Strong**

Clifford Strong worked as a clerk in Steen and Lind's General Store and later for Mr. William Wallace when he bought the store. In later years Cliff was employed as an interior decorator. He enjoyed sports and played baseball with the Oak Lake Club.

He married Elizabeth McDonald who was from Scotland. She was well known as an excellent seamstress.

They are both deceased.

#### **Winnie Strong**

Winnie Strong worked for a number of years as a

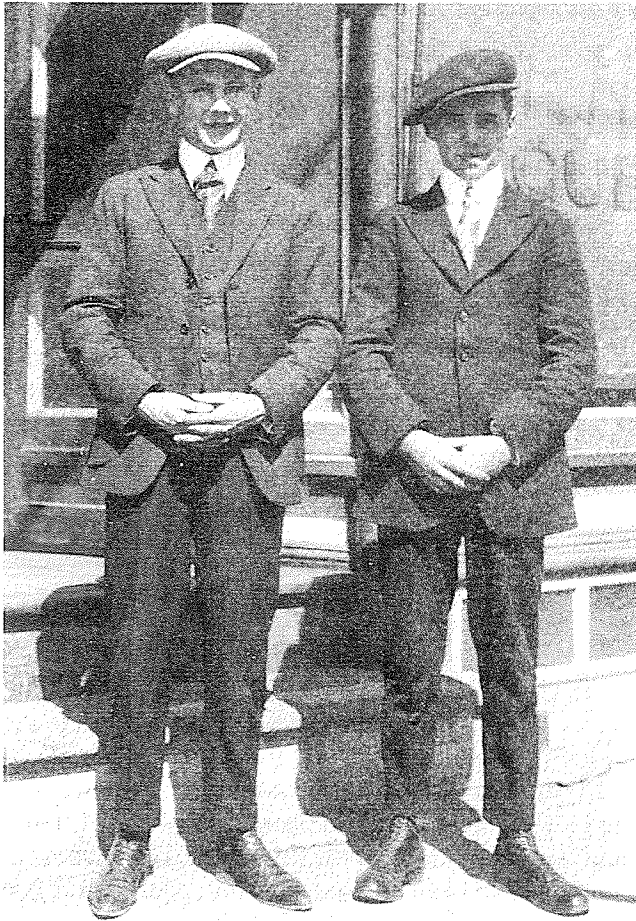


telephone operator in Oak Lake. She retired to live in Vancouver and it was there that her death occurred.

### Alex Strong

Alex Strong was employed as a clerk in McCubbin's Hardware Store, before he took over the operation of Strong and Gordon's Hardware, in partnership with Allan Gordon.

He married Olive Coulter, in 1941, of Grandview, Manitoba.



Alec Strong and Stewart Bell.

After retirement Alex and Olive moved to Vancouver. Alex died several years ago. Olive continues to make her home in Vancouver.

**Blythe Strong** (daughter of Walter Strong) attended Oakwood School, when she lived with her grandmother in Oak Lake. Blythe presently lives in Vancouver.

### Frederick Milton Strong

Fred attended school in Oak Lake. He worked sometime in the C.P.R. station here. He married Mary Fife, daughter of an Oak Lake medical Doctor. Mary is now deceased. Fred was with the Royal Canadian Air Force for some years.

There are four children — Maurice, Frank, Shirley and Joyce.

Fred remarried and he and his wife, Margaret, make their home in Victoria.

**Maurice** — Since leaving Oak Lake, Maurice Strong's career has been very much involved with energy and the environment. He has sometimes attributed part of his success to the fact that in early youth he was employed by the Hudson Bay at a trading post in the Canadian Arctic, where he did a great deal of reading, which proved very valuable to him, for by 1947 he was a Jr. officer with United Nations.

At present he is chairman of International Energy Development Corporation of Geneva, Switzerland, and A.Z.L. Resources Inc. of Phoenix, Arizona.

From 1970-72 he served as Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and was subsequently Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program in Nairobi, Kenya. He was chairman and President of Petro Canada.

Maurice holds numerous honorary degrees, won several awards including the Order of Canada. He is Chairman of I.U.C.N. and a Vice President and member of the Executive Council of the World Wild Life Fund International.

Maurice, at home anywhere in the world, still keeps a special place in his heart for the town of his boyhood.

Maurice and his former wife, Pauline, had four children, Fred, Maureen, Mary Anne, and Ken. He is re-married to Hanne Marstrand and "home" is now London, England.

### Frank Strong by Frank Strong

I took all my schooling, grades 1-12, at Oakwood, and have pleasant memories of living in several locations: the Clark house, one block south of the railway — a little house by the golf and tennis court — double house beside Mr. T. J. Smith, with Bill Story and family as neighbours — the Furtney house along the highway, near the rink across from Todds — in Mrs. Harrison's house a block north of the meat market, across from Buster Kilborn.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Goodwin were kind to me when I was a baby and cared for me when Mother was hospitalized. Years later their son, Jim, gave me my first bicycle.

During school years I worked at the meat market and later at Anderson's store as delivery boy. My children still can't believe our Saturday hours — 8:30 a.m. to midnight!

Hockey, and skiing in the sandhills south east of town was our main winter pastime. In summer we played baseball, fished and swam in the lake and Assiniboine river. These, and many other pleasures of small town life, as a boy growing up, makes me abundantly aware of my privileged youth.

Over the years I have worked at several different jobs, as surveyor, would be pilot in the R.C.A.F., real estate and now in the oil and gas exploration field.

In 1955 Lois Muri and I were married at Swift Current, Saskatchewan, and now have six children: Kathleen, Nancy, Jeffrey, Jill, Molly and Jim. We have spent most of our married life in and around the Calgary area.

My Oak Lake days bring to mind a happy childhood, raised amongst so many good people who all contributed to the Community and to our formative years. Memories trigger different emotions and for me Oak Lake is a happy feeling.

I, **Shirley Strong**, was born at Oak Lake at Mrs. Furtney's and spent my first sixteen years there, completing grade eleven. During high school I worked in the "Tearoom", first with Mrs. Cosgrove, the Ross's and then Gwen Dean.

Fond memories include Sunday School under Mrs. Bert Fuller, Christmas concerts at the United Church, C.G.I.T. and Sundays going to the lake in the back of Bert Fuller's truck. A second home was with the Furtneys.

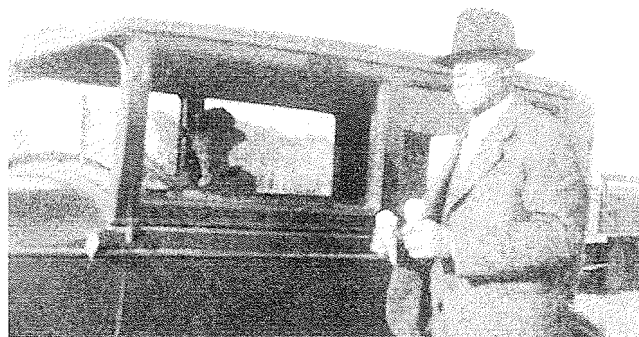
I married Stan Newman with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Virden and we had two children, Dawn Marie (Hobson) of Hedley, British Columbia and Brad of Winnipeg.

Presently I reside in Winnipeg and am a realtor for Block Bros.

**Joyce** — youngest child of Frederick and Mary took elementary school in Oak Lake, and high school in Winnipeg. Like her sister she helped out in the "Tearoom". Joyce has five children, Richard, Shannon, Kathy, David and Mary Lou. Joyce is a legal secretary. She and her husband, Dr. Roy le Riche live in Edmonton.

### **The Fred Taylor Family submitted by Anne Smith**

Fred Taylor was a husky young Irishman who came from Palgrave, Ontario, which is about eight miles from Toronto. He used to tell about arriving in Winnipeg in 1881 when the weather was 30° below zero, wearing a light coat and gloves. Sometime later he made his way to Brandon by working on the railway, and finally arrived at Flat Creek. He travelled west and north and could see from a hilltop the



Mr. and Mrs. Fred Taylor Sr.

Assiniboine Valley. It stretched before him more than a mile wide and was covered with wild grass and many sloughs where geese and ducks abounded. The river banks were covered with ash, elm and oak trees. The hills and valleys must have reminded him of Ontario for he lost no time staking out a claim for his homestead.

At that early time there were few women on the prairies, but Fred had met and admired Annie Milne, a girl who had come from Perth, Scotland, to stay with her brother, David. Although she had promised her parents to return within the year, by 1886 she married Fredrick George Taylor. They were married at the Oak River Reserve at the Anglican Mission, there being no other minister available at that time. It must have seemed a lonely wild country to the girl from Scotland as they made their way down the steep hill through the trees and bush on the rough road, the horses leaning back in their harness to keep the buggy from running against their heels.

There was little in the way of accommodation, but by 1902 the valley had been partly drained, more land had been added to the homestead, many tons of good hay had been pressed and sold, a large barn had been built, and there were eight children — six boys and two girls.

In 1910 a new home with a foundation of stone, which was hauled across the river on sleighs or wagons, was built. As one looks at the size of the stones, it seems amazing that men could have moved them without the help of machinery. A dam was built above the house where there were natural springs. Pipes were laid to pipe the water to the house and barn. The pipes were laid six feet underground for more than a quarter of a mile. This was done by men with picks and shovels. Some of the men who worked at this were from the Hollier and Fowell Families. This water system has had repairs but is still in use.

Lightning struck the barn in 1917 completely destroying it and its contents, which included six

tons of hay, a threshing machine, several hundred bushels of grain, binders, and other implements. Fortunately no stock was destroyed. The barn was replaced by an even larger one, but was not finished until 1924.

In 1922 another disaster struck. The river had flooded several times before, but was never known to come in with such force. A diary of Robert Taylor's reads — "The water came rushing down, covering the valley and made a terrible noise. We ran the horses to the field to get the seeders out ahead of the water. Two hundred acres of grain was up, but was soon under water, one mile wide and as far as we could see for several miles. The water stayed on for two weeks."

**Mary Jane** — was the eldest of the family and was one of the first girls born in the district. She married Robert Aitken and they had three girls and one boy: Annie in Halifax, Janet in Edmonton, John in Victoria, and Freda in Victoria. There are nine grandchildren.

**Millar Taylor** — was a veterinary surgeon and married Marjory McFarlane, a well known primary teacher from Oak Lake. They lived in Carberry and later in Yorkton and Saskatoon, where Millar was a Veterinary Inspector. Their two boys, Bill and Bob, went overseas in World War II, where Bill, who had been attending Medical School, was shot down in a Mosquito Bomber. His father died suddenly at the same time.

**Robert and Allan Taylor** — were victims of the "Spanish Flu" of 1918 from which they never fully recovered. Robert died at the age of 36, and Allan in 1948.

**Anne** — was the youngest of the family and attended Pleasant Plains and Oakwood Schools. After five years of teaching in Manitoba and Saskatchewan schools, she married Walter Smith of Harvey District, where they lived on the R. K. Smith farm until 1973. They now live in Peterborough, Ontario, where their only son, Dr. Carlyle Smith, is a Psychology Professor at Trent University. He married Mary Jane Smith of Orillia, Ontario, and they have two little girls, Danielle and Valerie.

**George** — worked in the Banks of Montreal in Carberry and Portage but when War was declared in 1914 he enlisted in the Lord Strathcona Horse regiment. In overseas service he was awarded the D.C.M. (Distinguished Conduct Medal). When he returned he married Ella McEwen of Carberry, Manitoba.

They took over the home farm along with David, but subsequently purchased the Wright farm, SE ¼ 1-11-24. Mrs. Taylor led the St. David's choir for several years and George served as a Councillor. In

1943 they moved to Brandon where George was engaged by the Veterans' Land Act until he retired. He died in 1958.

Their only son, **Garth**, graduated from Brandon College after attending Hagyard school and Oakwood Collegiate. After two years in the armed services he worked on newspapers in Kingston, Ontario and Winnipeg.

He joined the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as a farm commentator on CBC Radio in 1965. Later he wrote, directed and produced television programs, mainly about agriculture, and hosted various programs.

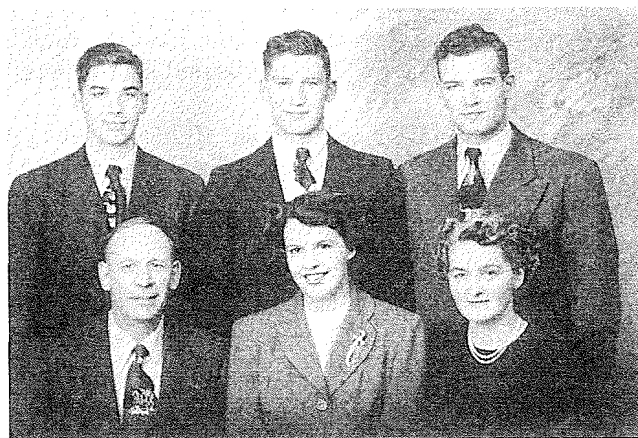
Garth is married to the former Doris Wright of Westbrook, Ontario. They have two children, Brian of Winnipeg and Mrs. Lynn Butler of Vancouver, and two grandchildren.

### **Herbert Taylor**

Herb Taylor — son of Fred and Annie Taylor, was born at Oak Lake and farmed in the area all his life.

He joined the Lord Strathcona Horse in 1914 and served until the end of the first war. He then farmed south of the C.P.R., west of Oak Lake, and in the summer he worked on road construction.

Herb married Jean McCaw of Griswold January 31, 1925. Two weeks later their home was destroyed by fire, and all their possessions, including wedding gifts, were lost.



Taylor Family — Herb, Margaret, Jean, Fred, Bud, Stuart.

They had a family of four — Margaret, Stuart, Cameron and Fred H. All attended Oakwood School.

In the summer of 1937 they moved to the Taylor homestead, in the Assiniboine Valley. The barn which was built in 1917 is still in very good condition and was featured in "Manitoba Barns" in October/81 Manitoba Co-operator. Five floods in seven consecutive years, as well as other odd years, created problems.

Herb served on the Rural Municipality of Sifton Council, was president of the Oak Lake Agricultural Society, a member of the Aberdeen Angus Association and served on the board of Stewards at the Oak Lake United Church. He was interested in all sports and was an avid curler.

Jean, a former school teacher, recalls having taught our Conservative member of Parliament in the Federal Government, the Honorable Walter Dinsdale, in Grade III. She is active in community and church affairs, a member of the Ladies Auxiliary to the Legion as well as the Oakview Senior Citizens Club.

In 1960 they built a new house in Oak Lake on Aspen Street, west, and enjoyed it for five years until Herb's sudden death in 1965. Jean still resides in town.

**Margaret** — only daughter of Herb and Jean Taylor, was raised on the home farm and received her schooling at Oakwood. She taught school at Blair, Verity and Brandon. Margaret was employed for one year with the British London County Council. Along with Betty McLeish and Dilys Davies, she enjoyed the 1952 Coronation Celebrations in Britain and toured Europe.

After their first year of married life, Margaret and Floyd Hastings moved to Rivers, Manitoba. The Hastings embarked on a new venture — a General Motors business on Second Avenue. Margaret still resides in Rivers, Floyd is now deceased.

Margaret and Floyd raised two daughters. Helen came to Rivers with her parents and is now married to Keith Cassan, a farmer. Dianne married Blaine Peterson.

**Robert Stuart Taylor**, second child of Herb and Jean Taylor, was born September 16, 1928 at Griswold. He attended Oakwood school, and was actively involved in baseball, hockey and the calf club.

After his schooling he worked with road construction and freighted one winter for Hy Johnson, north of 53.

He began farming at Oak Lake in 1951 and that August married Margaret Merle Heapy, second daughter of Curly and Clara Heapy. Margaret was born at McAuley, Manitoba on August 3, 1929. She attended Oakwood school, taught a year on permit, then attended Normal School in Winnipeg, teaching at Reston two years.

In April 1952 Stuart and Margaret purchased a farm at Miniota, where they have since resided. Their farming enterprise consists of grain, cattle and P.M.U.

They have six daughters, Joan Elaine, Patricia Anne, Beth Irene, Geraldine Ellen, Katherine Ina and Dorothy Rae.

**David Cameron (Bud) Taylor**, third child of Jean and Herbert Taylor, born at Brandon General Hospital, first lived on 20-9-24. At seven years of age, he moved with his family to the Frederick Taylor homestead on 4-10-24 in Woodworth Municipality, where he farmed with his Father. He raised Angus cattle and showed with the 4-H club, taking first prize for his club calf at Brandon summer fair.

In the summer of 1955, land was cleared on 20-9-24 and a cottage built. On October 25, 1955, Bud married Jessie Marie Rice of Binscarth, Manitoba and they moved to their new home.

In their first few years of cattle farming, Bud also worked for Henry Henuset on the pipeline in Virden and Alberta, while Jessie kept on Nursing at Virden Hospital.

In 1960 the United Church Barn, Oak Lake, was purchased and moved out to the farm, where it is still in use. In 1973, they built a 42 single stall horse barn 38' x 100' necessary for the P.M.U. contract they had just obtained. At this time, their old barn, which had been part of the flour mill in Oak Lake, was demolished.

In 1974, additions were made to the house. Machine and cattle sheds were also erected for their growing operation. Bud and Jessie are still farming and participating in Church and community life.

They have two daughters, Heather Marie and Cheryl, who both went to Oakwood and Virden Collegiate, participating in sports and student council affairs. The girls were accomplished pianists, and made use of their talent at concerts, in the choir and as organists for a number of years of the United Church.

**Marie** — liked to show her horses at the Oak Lake fair. After graduating from Virden Collegiate, she worked as a secretary in Calgary, and is now attending Mount Royal College taking the Social Work Diploma Program.

**Cheryl** — following her graduation enrolled in the Registered Nurses Course at Brandon General Hospital School of Nursing, where she is completing her final year.

**Frederick Herbert Taylor** resides on the family farm. He and his father, Herb, farmed together successfully in their grain and cattle operation up until the time of Herb's death. With the help of modern farm machinery, Fred continues mixed farming.

The house built in 1910 by Fred G. Taylor has been modernized and provides spacious comfortable living. The barn is also still in use having had minor repairs. The evergreen trees planted in 1915 by Fred G. Taylor stand 40 to 50 feet tall on the front lawn.

Fred married the former Frances Wilson of Virden. They have two children: **Carla**, enrolled at the



University of Manitoba, and Stanley, attending Virden Collegiate.

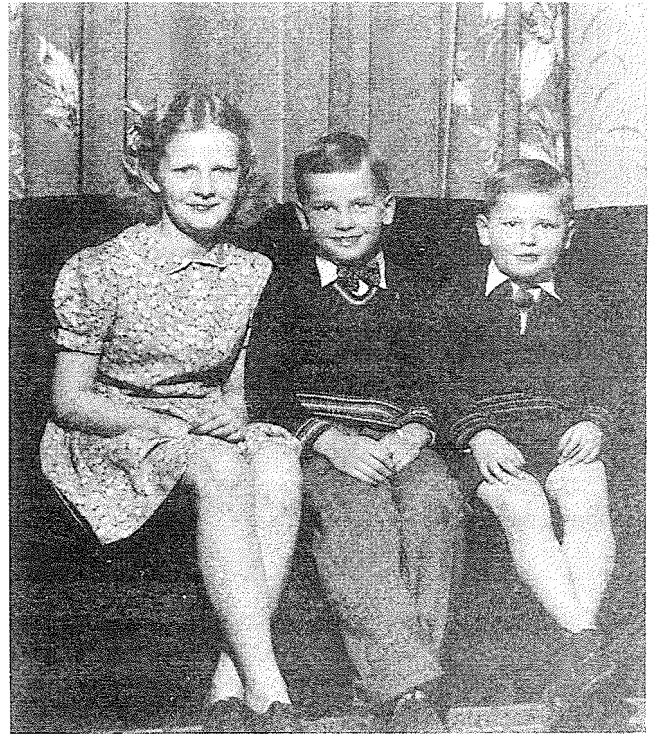


D. A. Taylor, as a 5 year old in 1902.

### D. A. Taylor Family

David A. Taylor — youngest son of Fred and Annie Taylor bought the former John J. Arsenault farm from Frank Parsons in 1929. Dave had previously been a road contractor. He did road construction when horse power and fresnos were used and built many miles of road in various Manitoba communities. Dave, a successful farmer, married Lena Gompf in 1934. They had a daughter, Corinne and two sons Kelly and Ted. In 1942 Dave and his family bought Ed Alder's brick cottage on Assiniboine Avenue (presently owned by Marvin Wiens) to give their children access to school. In 1947 they moved into the McCubbon home on Aspen Street (presently owned by Steve Medwedew) and lived there until the fall of 1966 when they moved to Brandon to retire. Their son Kelly took over the farm in 1960. Dave enjoyed all sports and was an active player with the Oak Lake Baseball team, Oak Lake Curling Club, and since retiring is a member of the Brandon Senior Curling Club.

The Taylor family are members of the Oak Lake



Corinne, Kelly, Edward.

United Church and all their children were educated in Oakwood School.

**Corinne I.** Armbruster, nee Taylor — eldest child of Dave and Lena was educated in Oakwood School. Corinne graduated as an X-Ray Technician and is presently employed at the Union Hospital in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. She married Alvin L. Armbruster of Brandon in 1960. He is district Manager of Marketing & Sales for C.P. Rail. They have two children David and Leslie.

### Kelly Taylor and Family

Kelly Taylor, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. D. A. Taylor received his education in Oak Lake Public and High Schools. He furthered his education in Winnipeg, where he graduated from the two-year Agricultural Course at the University of Manitoba. While attending University, Kelly received several awards for various competitions such as seed grain judging and animal husbandry. He then returned to farm with his Dad in Oak Lake.

In October, 1959, he married Audrey Hoffman of Virden, Manitoba. They have four children: one daughter and three sons. **Shelley** graduated from Grade twelve and went on to Red River College in Winnipeg where she graduated as a dental assistant and extended chairside assistant. She is now married and lives at Brookdale, Manitoba with her husband, Ray Drysdale, on a mixed farm operation. **Robin**, eldest son, completed his grade twelve and went to



Assiniboine College in Brandon, Manitoba where he graduated from a heavy-duty mechanics course and is presently working with Virden Implements completing his apprenticeship program. **Joe**, age fourteen, is completing his grade nine in Oak Lake. He has received the awards of excellence and general proficiency through grades seven and eight. **Michael**, age five and youngest son, is attending kindergarten in Oak Lake. He will begin playing hockey this year as his two older brothers have done.

Kelly operates a grain and cattle farm where he raises Charolais purebred and crossbred cattle.

He is president of the Oak Lake and District Arena and was instrumental in the construction of the new skating rink which opened in 1972. His "curling days" have given way to being a "hockey father" which involves three or more nights at the hockey rink.

Kelly and Audrey are actively involved in the United Church, having served on various boards and other positions.

Audrey is very active in various United Church groups, sings with the community choir and is first, not last, a mother and homemaker.

### **Edward W. (Ted) Taylor**

Edward W. (Ted) Taylor, youngest son of Dave and Lena, born February 25, 1942, was educated in Oakwood School. Ted played minor hockey in Oak Lake and was chosen by the Brandon Wheat Kings of the Junior Hockey League when he was 17 to play three years with them. Following this he had a successful sixteen year professional hockey career that took him all over Canada and the United States.

Ted married Sharon Werschler of Virden, Manitoba in 1964 and they have two children, **Jason** and **Cara**. Ted retired from hockey in 1978 and settled on his farm (formerly owned by Joe Parks) 2 miles north of Oak Lake on the edge of the Assiniboine valley where he raises grain and cattle. He still is involved with hockey — coaching minor in Oak Lake and playing old Timer with Brandon Pioneers. He is a member of the Oak Lake Lions Club and an elder of the Oak Lake United Church.

### **George Thiessen**

George and Agatha Thiessen and son George came to Canada from Russia in October 1924. They settled on a farm near Rosenfeld, Manitoba. It was here that Agnes and Abe were born. In 1929 they moved to Oak Lake and rented a house, one mile north of town. The house belonged to Mr. R. Ronberg. There a daughter, Anne, was born. The first winter dad cut firewood to support his family. The first two summers he worked on the International

farm owned by Mr. Schlosser. This farm now belongs to R. W. and G. W. Heath. The next summer he worked for Mr. George Smith. In 1932 the family moved to the farm owned by Mr. Charles Burns, who at that time had an elevator in Oak Lake. It was here that twin boys, Henry and Jake, were born. Here the family spent 10 years. In 1942 they purchased a farm formerly owned by Mr. A. Gillespie. Dad farmed this land until 1965 at which time he retired and sold to his youngest son, Jake, and family who are still farming.

Dad passed away in July, 1974. Mother is residing at the Westman Nursing Home, Virden, the past four years.

**George** — and wife, Mary, reside in Virden, and he is employed at John Deere Implements.

**Agnes** — and husband, John Thiessen, farm north of Alexander.

**Abe** — and wife, Katie, reside in Winnipeg and he is employed with Community Chev. Olds.

**Anne** — and husband, George Wiens, live at Winnipeg Beach where George operates a motel and Anne teaches.

**Henry** — and wife, Lena, reside in Brandon where he is employed with Co-op Implements.

### **Edmond Thiry Family**

Ed, Mildred and infant son, Gene, 13 days old, first came to the Landsdowne District in the summer of 1950, from Kennedy, Saskatchewan.

They settled on the Ernest Dufily farm where they lived until the spring of 1952. During this time, their first daughter, Donna, was born.

The next four years, they farmed in the Runnymede District. This also saw the arrival of three more children, Merlin, Shirley and Grant.

In December, 1956 the family returned to the Lansdowne District, purchasing the Gaston Deleau farm and carried on mixed farming.

A farm accident in the fall of 1973 resulted in Ed losing his left leg. Gene was employed with Manitoba Hydro in Brandon until he and his wife, Gayleen (Stewart) and family purchased the farm in 1976, with Ed and Mildred retiring to Oak Lake after farming there for twenty years. Ed sought employment in Brandon and has been working with the Behlen-Wickes Co. since 1977.

Only Gene and Donna attended school in the district before it closed. All five children attended elementary and Junior High school in Oak Lake and completed Grade 12 at Virden Collegiate.

**Gene** — and Gayleen, married since 1972, have three daughters, Krista, Nadine and Kendra.

**Donna** — makes her home in Calgary, Alberta

where she is employed as a secretary with Petro Canada.

**Merlin** — is a store manager with Continental Emsco and presently resides in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

**Shirley** — married Ken Webber of Crandall, Manitoba in 1975. Ken is a store manager for Sears and Shirley works for the Royal Bank, they currently live in Lloydminster, Alberta and have a son, Denis.

**Grant** — married Dorothy Lake of Stoughton, Saskatchewan in 1978 and is presently living in Inuvik, North West Territories, where he is an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer and is employed with the R.C.M.P. Grant and Dorothy have an infant son, Jason Scott.

### Dave Thomas

Dave Thomas was a Welsh man from West Wales who arrived in this country in 1927. He worked on farms in the summer in British Columbia, then going to the bush in winter.



Dave Thomas 1944.

Dave enlisted and saw four years of active service before he returned in 1945. On October 19 of the same year, he married Bernie Olivier and they came back to the old Olivier farm in Lansdowne district. They farmed here for ten years before having to retire to Oak Lake because of Dave's health.

He was in partnership with Jack Dean in the Massey Ferguson dealership for a time. Dave served on both Lansdowne and Oakwood school boards as well as the Council and hospital board.

He coached hockey for a number of years. His 14 and under team (Bantam BB) won the Provincial Championship. Members of Dave's ex-hockey team often call and have a chat with their old coach.

Dave and Bernie have returned to his former Welsh homeland several times in the last few years, where he owns a trailer home which sports the sign, "O.K. Corral".

### Mr. and Mrs. John Thomson

Mr. and Mrs. John Thomson came from Aberdeenshire, Scotland to Oaklake in 1910. The family lived in town for a few years and Mr. Thomson was employed at Leitch Flour Mill. Later they moved to the farm owned by Charlie Burns, presently owned and operated by Bryce Buckley. In 1926 the family moved to Rocanville, Saskatchewan, where they carried on farming operations.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomson lived to a good age and both are interred in the family plot at the Rocanville Cemetery.

**Agnes** — eldest married George Whitbread. George deceased.

**John** — married Aleatha Haycock of Griswold, both deceased.

**James** — married Jessie Yule of Moosomin, both are retired and make their home in town.

**Edith** — married Whitfield Lloyd, both deceased.

**Bessie** — married Steven Sejack. Bessie deceased.

**Lilian** — married Norman Baillie of Oak Lake.

**Harry** — married Norleen Perry, they live in Calgary.

**Victor** — married Connie Buchan. Vic deceased, his widow lives in Victoria.

**George** — married Ann Kirluk, George deceased.

**Douglas** — married Sylvia Katsburg, they are retired but live on their farm.

**Iona** — married Mike Bulai, latter deceased. Iona lives in Toronto.

**Walter** — married Helen Acton of Rocanville, they reside on the home farm.

Harry, Victor and Walter served in the armed forces.

### Thompsons

William Thompson Sr., from Listowel, Ontario, met and married Hanna Long, from Stroud, Ontario, in Moosomin, Saskatchewan in 1889.

They came to Oak Lake about 1890 and opened the towns' first hotel.

A son **William** (Billie) was born there in 1891 and a daughter **Norma** in 1898.

Tragedy first struck the family when their hotel burned down resulting in their opening a grocery store.

Again tragedy struck the family in 1905 when William Sr. died. His daughter Norma also died eight days later.

After the death of William, Hanna bought a boarding house, from Mollie Miller, and converted it



Thompson Family — Bill and Lillian, Norma and Shirley.

into a restaurant and ice cream parlour which she operated until her death in 1928.

The son William operated the first silent movie theatre (Star Theatre) above the restaurant in 1916 until 1932. William is probably best remembered for his skating ability and vivid imagination at winter carnival time.

In April 1929, William married Lillian Fowell. They had three children **Norma**, **Shirley** and **Douglas**, all born in Oak Lake.

### **Andrew James Todd** submitted by Isabel Todd Nelson

To begin with concerning the Todd family, Thomas Todd was born in Londonderry, Ireland, in 1798 and emigrated to what was then Upper Canada in 1832.

**Thomas Todd** had a number of children born in Ireland and after his first wife passed away in Ireland, it appears, he remarried and Andrew James was born in 1839 at Lundy's Lane, near Niagara Falls, Ontario. With his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Todd, he moved to Bruce County in 1852 where they homesteaded. Andrew James married Jane Porteous in February, 1864. In 1872 they moved to Walkerton until 1878 when they moved to Parry Sound.



Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Todd.

In 1882, **Andrew James** was on his way to Manitoba, travelling via steamboat during the flood of that year. He arrived in Winnipeg on May 1 and found no vacancies anywhere for sleeping so he had to sleep on the floor of the Immigration shed for a week.

He spent the summer in Brandon which was a village of tents, then he went to Oak Lake and found a homestead seven miles north of the present townsite of Oak Lake. The family in Parry Sound joined him in 1885. In 1904 he moved to Oak Lake.

In 1906, Mrs. Jane (Porteous) Todd passed away and in 1910 Andrew James married Miss Minnie Currie of Picton, Ontario. She passed away in 1931. Andrew James passed away on June 3, 1932, age 93 years.

During the family's residence in the country, in Woodworth Municipality, Mr. Todd was trustee and secretary of Ryerson school. Being a member of the Presbyterian church he also held offices as Manager, Elder and Secretary of St. David's Church. He also attended the Presbyterian Assemblies held in Winnipeg in 1896 and in Halifax in 1910. He was also one of the first councillors in Woodworth Municipality.

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. had a large family: Ida Cecilia, Ann Elizabeth, Florence Isabella (Mrs. Jack

Cairns), Jessie Henrietta who later married Wm. Edwards, Edith Ellen Wilson (Mrs. A. P. McNab), Frances Lockerby, and Robert Ernest. Earl Spencer was like a brother and brought up by the Todds' as his mother, Ann Spencer, died in childbirth, leaving a baby son behind.

**Jessie** — and her husband, Billy Edwards, had a family of four boys. The Edwards had a store and post office in Traynor, Saskatchewan for many years.

**Edith** — married Archie McNab and they lived at Rosthern and later moved to Saskatoon. It was there that A. P. McNab became a member of the provincial government, later becoming Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

**Ernest Todd** — went homesteading in Alberta, in the Czar-Metiskow area. Before homesteading tho' he had gone to medical school for a few years but was unable to finish his doctor's course so went to British Columbia where he and Mary Stewart of Gladstone, Manitoba, were married and their oldest daughter, Isabel, was born.

Then back to Oak Lake for a while where their son, James Robert, was born. In 1912 the family joined Ernest Todd at Czar. Later Florence Jean arrived, then Francis Ernest, and last Ronald Stewart arrived, sharing his grandfather's birthday, March 31.

**Francis Lockerby** married Ida Walton and they had a large family of boys and one girl.

Mr. and Mrs. Todd are buried in Oak Lake Cemetery, as well as two daughters, Ann Spencer and Florence Cairns.

Ernest Todd passed away February 13, 1953, almost 73 years old. His family of five are all living.

Edith (Todd) McNab was born in 1871 and passed away at the age of 96 years. The McNabs had Eddie, Verna Spencer, Edith, Ernest and Jack.

**Florence (Todd) Cairns** passed away at the age of 50 leaving behind her husband Jack Cairns and three young children: Jim, Jean, and John.

## **Frank Todd**

**submitted by E. G. Todd**

Although too young to remember much about rural farm life in the Oak Lake district, my father did farm north of Oak Lake on 24-10-24 and raised a family of nine boys and one girl, Howard, Elvin, Alrid, Lyle, Orval, Glenn, Robert, Earle and Frances. We attended St. David's Church in the area, Mother played the organ and my Dad was the Choir Leader — and some of the family attended Ryerson school, also in the area, before Father gave up the farm and moved to a small house in the west end of Oak Lake, some time in the early 1930's.

My Mother was a Walton, Ida May, born April



Edith Todd McNab, Frank and Ida Todd.

18, 1876 in Ontario. She married my father, Frank Lockerby, born June 8, 1876, in Ontario, on July 25, 1899.

Records indicate my Grandfather was a United Empire Loyalist entering Canada via Niagara Falls, Ontario from the United States and settling in Bruce County in Northern Ontario, cutting cord wood before migrating to Manitoba.

He farmed north of Oak Lake and after he retired to Oak Lake, my father took up the challenge on the same farm. But alas, bringing up nine kids on a poor farm was too much and the Todd family dispersed through out Canada except for the four youngest, Frances, Robert, Glenn and Earle. We all attended the Oakwood school.

Of the nine Todds, six are still living and all retired, four living in Ontario, one in British Columbia, and a sister in Montana.

My greatest memory of Oak Lake is July 1st when, as a teenager, my father coached me in getting tuned up for the mile run, which I did manage to win on a couple of occasions.

## **George Toews**

George Toews, youngest son of the Reverend and Mrs. Henry Toews, was raised with his family in the Arnaud district. He spent three years overseas with the R.C.A.F.

In 1948 he married Eira (Gwladys Eira Taylor) of the Miniota district. They have a son, Kenneth James, and a daughter, Gwladys Katherine who is now married (Mrs. Bruce Blakely) of Brandon where she lives with her husband and son, Derek.

In 1971 they settled on a farm north of Oak Lake where they resided until 1978 when they moved to live in the town of Oak Lake.

Mr. Toews is an employee of the Behlen-Wickes

Co., Brandon, where he has been working for the last four years.

### **The Clayton Tolton Family**

Clayton and Edna Tolton and their family came to Oak Lake from Otterburne in 1953. They purchased the W½ of 9-10-23 known as the "Milne Place" from Dave Beckert who had acquired it from George Milne one year earlier.

During her life at Oak Lake, Edna worked with the 4-H Clubs and the Agricultural Society. In 1970 she obtained part time employment in Oak Lake Post Office. She was appointed postmistress in 1976 and held this position until she passed away on February 18, 1979.

Clayton has worked with the Oak Lake Agricultural Society and for several years on the board of the local Pool Elevator Association, also as trustee of Oak Lake Consolidated School Division. At present he serves as councillor for Ward 1 in the R.M. of Woodworth.

Although for many years livestock was an important part of the farm operation, since being alone on the farm Clayton has disposed of the stock and in his own words "is trying to live on grain and the Old Age Pension".

The children took elementary schooling at Harvey School until its closing in 1958. They attended Oakwood School, which later became Oak Lake Consolidated. During this time they participated in 4-H activities including the Oak Lake Beef Calf Club and Home Ec. Club.

**Wesley Albert** — the oldest son was born at Winnipeg on August 9th, 1940. After leaving school he remained on the farm and in 1963 purchased the E ½ of 9-10-23 from Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Kennedy. Wes resides here with his wife, the former Helen Penner of Oak Lake, whom he married on June 20th, 1964. They have two daughters Leah Marie, age 16 and Darlene Faye, age 13.

Wes served several years as leader of Oak Lake Beef Calf Club and on the local Manitoba Pool Elevator Board. He is presently a director of Valleyview Co-op and for the last five years has been president of Oak Lake Agricultural Society.

**Edna Ruth** — the oldest daughter was born at Winnipeg on April 20, 1942. On leaving school she was employed by the Bank of Montreal in Winnipeg. On December 7, 1963 Ruth married Allen Gellatly of Starbuck, Manitoba, where they now reside with their two children Kerry Allen, age 17 and Kimberley Dawn, age 14.

**Kenneth Roy** — second son was born at Winnipeg December 23, 1943. After school he was employed by Federated Co-operatives Ltd., in Win-

nipeg for several years. He passed away in Calgary November 30, 1969.

**Marianne** — second daughter was born at Winnipeg, May 5th, 1957. Following school she was employed as receptionist by Benson-Law in Brandon. On February 15, 1975 she married Delmar Firomski of Sturgis, Saskatchewan. They now operate their optical business known as "The Monacle", in Brandon.

**Barbara Jean** — the youngest was born at Brandon, September 30th, 1963. On December 27th, 1980 she married Victor Davis, a mechanic, at C.F.B. Shilo, Manitoba. They now live there with their daughter Jennifer Corrine, aged two months.

### **John Ernest Tolton 1871-1950**

John Ernest Tolton was born on a farm near Walkerton, Ontario, the third son in a family of eight. Approximately 1897 he came to Oak Lake to visit and help his brother, Henry. He was captivated by the country so was soon owner of the north half of 1-11-24, cornering the land owned by Henry. Later Ernest bought the west half of 12-11-24, which was sold to John Daniel in 1919.

A house and stable were erected. In 1900 Ernest returned to Ontario where in March 1901, he and Isabel Campbell were married in Teeswater.

In the following years a large brick home was built, to be followed by a barn, with its barn raising.

Trees were planted to the north and west of the home site. The beautiful evergreens on the lawn today are a tribute to Ernest Tolton.

Mr. and Mrs. Tolton were members of the then Presbyterian St. David's Church. Ernest served on the Church Board, taught the Bible Class, and for a time was president of the St. David's Literary Club. Belle belonged to the Women's Missionary Society, taking a turn as President.

Mr. Tolton sold his farm to Mr. Andrew Johnston in 1919. Ernest, Belle and family moved to Walkerton, Ontario, later to Toronto, where Mr. Tolton died in 1950, Mrs. Tolton in 1956.

They had a family of seven daughters, two dying in infancy. Moving with them to Ontario were Jean, Grace, Joy, Ernestine and Marjorie, still in Ontario except Jean, who lives in White Rock, British Columbia.

### **Henry Rowland Tolton 1867-1966**

**submitted by Lillian Tolton Smith**

Two of the early pioneers of the Oak Lake District were Henry and Annie Tolton.

Henry, known as H. R., was born near Walkerton, the County of Bruce, Ontario. He was the oldest of six boys in his family. He came to Manitoba in



1891, harvesting with a Walkerton friend, T. R. Todd and neighbours, R. H. Smith and the Graingers.

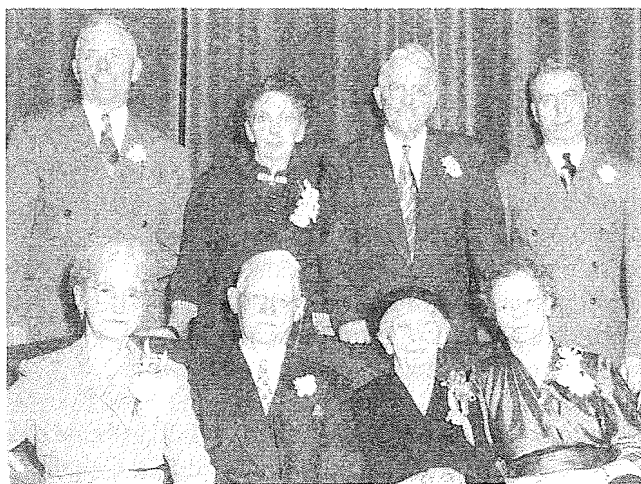
Liking what he saw of Manitoba, he bought E½ 11-11-24, School Land. In March 1892, having spent the winter in Ontario, he returned West by C.P.R. with a carload of settlers' effects; two purebred Shorthorn cows, three horses and lumber including maple flooring for a house. Freight was \$148.80.

A busy summer followed with the building of the home, etc., breaking and backsetting the land. Approximately 80 acres were broken with the three horses and walking plow, three acres a day. At times mosquitoes covered the horses. That first year he sold 145 bushels of wheat at 48¢ a bushel.

Returning to Ontario, Henry and Elizabeth Ann Stevens were married February 8th, 1893 in the Disciple Church, Walkerton.

As Henry travelled to Manitoba with equipment for their home, Annie made the train journey alone. She needed a stout heart upon arriving, as the house was unfinished, one big room, with bags of grain in three corners, a cellar but no steps.

Work on the land went on apace. From Henry's carefully kept Account Book, 1,055 bushels of wheat and 360 bushels of oats were threshed in 1893. Wheat averaged 40¢ a bushel. By 1906, the yield was 5,418 bushels of wheat and 2,865 of oats. Wheat averaged 65¢ a bushel.



Mr. and Mrs. Henry Tolton's 60th Wedding Anniversary. Back Row — Harvey, Ella, Gordon, Norman. Front Row — Lillian, Henry, Annie, Lavinia.

More land was acquired through the years. In 1904 the home site was moved to higher ground, with a marvelous view to the east resulting in the name, "Fairview Farm". A substantial brick home was built and a large barn in 1905. Barn raisings went with new barns in those days. Great preparations for the feast followed. That barn collapsed with a cyclone in July

27, 1917, leaving the barn foundation covered with some fifty loads of hay. In 1918 a new barn was built.

The harvesting of the crop was then as now, the highlight of the year. No tractors in those days. Binders throwing out bound sheaves, were pulled around the field by four faithful horses. Stokers, putting six to eight sheaves together followed, aiming to keep up to the binders. If a good grade and colour was needed, or the threshing machine late in coming, the sheaves were stacked.

Nothing in the threshing line has equalled the excitement and charm of the steam engine and separator pulling in to your own field. The smiling engineer, the straw burning furnace, the whistle, particularly exciting at mealtime, created a great expectancy. In the house, extra dishes were brought from the attic, (threshing dishes), long tables set up to feed 20-22 hungry men. Tapioca pudding was a favourite at the Henry Tolton farm. The grain was all handled by hand.

As the volume of grains increased and a C.P. Railway seven miles north came in to being, carloads, chiefly wheat, were shipped from Kenton. It was a sight to see some six to eight sleighs with drivers and their teams of horses heading north in the early morning, the horses steady breathing like clouds of smoke in the extremely frosty air. Two trips were made in the day to have the car filled in the allotted time.

Verity School was open for the summer months in the late 1800's, full time in 1900 and on. It was a trying time for the oldest daughter, Vinnie, walking alone that mile and three quarters. Fear of Indians and dogs often took her in to the fields.

Serving the Church, School and Community were major objectives of Henry and Annie Tolton. Together with others they made possible the building of the Kenton Baptist Church some two miles north of their home. It was a small Church on the Prairie served by Baptist Students from the then, Brandon College. The names of Sneyd, Smalley, Robinson and Pound stand out. Native Son Gordon Tolton with Blanche, his wife, ministered for one summer.

Henry was Secretary-treasurer of Verity School for many years and took his turn as President of the Oak Lake Agricultural Society. He had imported Shorthorn cattle from England. His remark "I was brought up in a Shorthorn stall" was followed by his performance. Cattle were driven on foot to the Oak Lake Fair.

Henry served as councillor on the Woodworth Council, and as Reeve prior to his departure to Winnipeg in 1919.

All through these years Annie was busy caring for a family of six, hired help and many visitors. In

the neighbourhood many a baby received its first bath from her hands. She was an accomplished dress-maker and needlewoman. Five of her granddaughters proudly display the full sized crocheted bedspreads of her making. Both parents left a spiritual legacy beyond price to their family.

The groves of trees still flourish that Henry planted around the home sites.

The spruce and pine to the west of the former Verity School grounds are a tribute to Henry and brother, Ernest Tolton.

They had three sons, **Harvey** took over the home farm in 1919. **Gordon** was a United Church Minister, now retired, married Blanche Frewing, a most successful piano teacher. **Norman**, the pianist, married Nan Monk of Winnipeg. Norman was a business administrator in Penticton, British Columbia. He died there in 1979.

**Vinnie**, a sewer like her mother, played the organ for the little church on the prairie and for her husband, Rev. E. D. Pound, in his churches in Swan River and Bowsman.

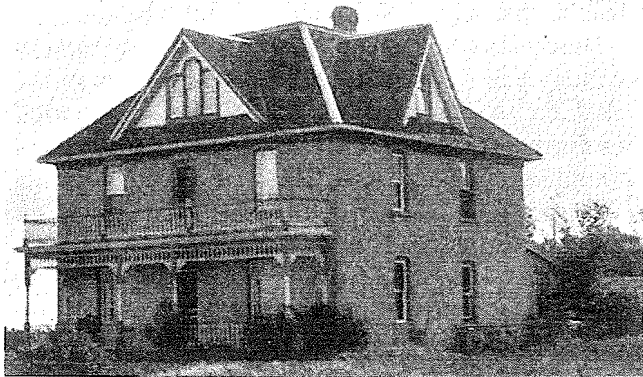
**Lillian** married the neighbour's son, Wilfred Smith, living nearby.

**Ella**, fond of horses, hitched and drove a four horse team in the fields in the war years, 1914-18, in her early teens. She married Jack Hill, a successful stockman.

Mr. and Mrs. Tolton moved to Winnipeg in 1919, where they had many happy years. They enjoyed their 50th and 60th Wedding Anniversaries with their six children, their grandchildren and their great grandchildren. Annie died December 1st, 1960 and Henry, September 7, 1966.

### Harvey Tolton

J. H. (Harvey) Tolton took over his father's farm in 1919, later that year he married Eleanor Titmus, a teacher. Likewise he became well known in agriculture circles and community events, serving on school boards, church boards, Municipal Council, etc. He



Home of Master Farmer B.S.A. J. Harvey Tolton.

was also president of the Oak Lake Agriculture Society for several years. As a purebred breeder of livestock (Shorthorn cattle and Yorkshire swine) and particularly as a grower of registered seed grain, Harvey received many prizes and awards. Twice he won The World Championship for Seed Oats at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. He also won Championship for pedigreed seed over all other kinds and varieties in 1974 and 1979, and Reserve several times — 1980 being most recent.

He was a recipient of the Manitoba Golden Boy Award and received an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Brandon.

Following the second World War Harvey Tolton and his wife moved to Brandon where he has a small seed farm and keeps active in Kiwanis and church.

Harvey and Eleanor had five children, who all attended Verity School.

**Roland** — took over the home farm in 1948.

**Roma** — was a stenographer. She married Hudge Stevenson of Oak Lake.

**Phyllis** — was a school teacher, is married to Max Hatch, a former Oak Laker, and they live in Winnipeg.

**Ferne** — also a teacher, married Fred Stevens. He is the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Stevens, former Oak Lakers.

**Beverly** — a stenographer, married Bob Harris of Brandon and they now live in Winnipeg.

### A. R. (Roland) Tolton

A. R. Tolton took over the family farm in 1948. He had married Isabelle Brown of Vancouver in 1942. Like his father Roland raised and bred purebred cattle, Yorkshire hogs and grew registered seed grain. He was also active in community events, school boards, church, municipal affairs, etc.

He served as president of the Oak Lake Agriculture Society, making three generations of one family to fill that office.

He and his wife, Isabelle, presently live in Calgary. Roland is director of Field Services for the Canadian Council of Meat Packers, while Isabelle has been a stenographer ever since moving to Calgary.

They had five children, Lawrence, Reginald, Claude, Gregory and Deborah.

**Claude** and **Gregory** operate the same farm that their Great-Grandfather, H. R. Tolton, broke in 1892. This makes the fourth generation to operate the same land.

**Gregory** is on the "home" farm and has two boys and one girl. **Claude**, who has three girls, lives on the North ½ of 1-11-24, a farm that was originally settled and resided on until 1919 by H. R. Tolton's brother, J. E. Tolton. He then returned to Ontario. For

several years it was owned by Andrew and Henry Johnston. Following Mr. Henry Johnston's retirement to Virden in the early 1970's it was purchased by Claude and Gregory Tolton.

Both Claude and Gregory are engaged in mixed farming, raising purebred livestock (cattle) and growing registered seed grain. They are active in community events, with Claude presently (1981) Chairman of the Birdtail River School Division.

**Lawrence** — is a director of Computer Services and civil engineer at Surrey, British Columbia.

**Reginald** — Barrister in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**Deborah** — is a teacher at Didsbury, Alberta.

### Thomlinson

Robert Thomlinson was born at Listowel, Ontario, in the late 1850's. In 1878 he left Listowel and travelled west, by boat and train and wagon, to Manitoba, and settled north of Oak Lake, on the west half of 6-11-23. He married Margaret Bond, and they had three children: Earle, born in 1884, followed by Eva and Margaret. Mrs. Thomlinson died when Margaret (Reba) was born, and the children were raised by their father. Robert farmed, and helped to develop the community in which he lived. He always had a good driving team and good work horses. A substantial brick house and a strong barn were built, as the farm prospered. These buildings still stand, 1981, with the house still occupied.

Earle and his sisters grew up and were educated at Verity school and Oak Lake. **Earle** spent some time at Portage Collegiate. In 1912 he married a school teacher, Clara Langton, and they took over the farm, as Robert had passed away in that year.

Earle and Clara had one son, **Graeme**, who also attended school at Verity, and for one term in Kenton. Earl was active in the St. David's church, and served on the Verity school board, as well as the municipal Council. He was one of the first group of canvassers for the Manitoba Pool Elevator Association, and was interested in politics, supporting the old Farmer's Party.

In 1929, the Thomlinsons decided to move to Alberta, settling on bush homestead land west of Spirit River, in the Peace River country. There the family weathered the Great Depression, and worked at clearing their new homestead. Earle continued his involvement in community affairs, and enjoyed working on the farm until shortly before his death in 1962. Clara had passed away just a year earlier. Graeme was married in 1947, to Marion Graham, and they still live on and farm, the original homestead, now a section of land. They have two sons, Brian and Neil. Graeme has been a Registered Seed Grower since 1939, and has been active in many

community organizations, co-operatives, and political organizations.

**Eva** — married Jack Lewis, who was a paper-hanger, and then became a minister. They moved to Saskatchewan, where Jack occupied pulpits in several towns, and was a member of Parliament for a term.

**Reba** — married Will Uptigrove a photographer, and they moved to Arizona.

### Thomas Topps

I was born in Sheffield, England in 1906, the fourth child of Thomas and Elizabeth Topps. We came to Canada when I was eight years old. It took 14 days to come by ship to Halifax, then we came to Souris by train and Dad met us with a team and wagon. My Dad had come to Canada two years before us in 1912. He worked for George Saunders, six miles south of Griswold. Then he took a homestead ten miles south-east of Oak Lake, where he built a house. I went to school at Maffan School, and then at Hesslewood until Grade 4 when I quit to work at home. I worked on several farms during the next few years, three winters for Jack McDonald for \$5.00 a month. I shovelled manure from 75 head of cattle for \$5.00 a month. I also worked for Mason Goodwin, and it was while I was there that the phone fell off the wall one night when we were listening on it.

I spent alot of time at the Doyle farm and chummed with both Jim and Norman Doyle.

On April 2, 1929 I started to work for the Canadian Pacific Railway at Oak Lake as a sectionman. I was laid off during the winter and worked out at the Lake cutting ice for the Shooting Lodge. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jiggins ran the place and I worked for them. The ice was packed in sawdust, 300 blocks, for summer use.

In 1938 I married Hazel Scott, of Hamiota. We were married 13 months before anyone knew as Hazel worked in the telephone office in Virden, and married women were not allowed to work.

The year we were married I only worked 9 days, so I went back to cutting ice. It was during this winter that I became caught in the tractor wheel-lugs — no rubber tires — while Jim Jiggins and I were trying to cross the ice. I was wedged in so tight that it broke the rivets out of the fender. Jim was very upset and said, "How the h--- am I going to get you out of there, Tom?" I replied "the same way you got me in here — back up slowly." I was unable to work during the next year due to phlebitis in my leg. I worked for the C.P.R. in Oak Lake for 13 years and then moved to Kelloe, Man. Hazel remained in Oak Lake. Our first daughter, Thelma Gayle, was born Feb. 5, 1941. Later another daughter, Doreen Ann, arrived in 1946.

We were involved in a series of moves with the railroad, and saw service in several towns. I finally retired in Virден after 40 years with the C.P.R.

### Townson Family

Mr. T. P. Townson came from England in 1910 followed by his family in 1911. A carpenter by trade, he found times were hard as there was no carpenter work to be had in the winter months. After working in Elkhorn and Virден he homesteaded in Routledge



Townson Family — Mrs. Townson, Fred, Alfred, Edith, Gladys, Mr. Townson and Percy.

about 1915, where the children went to school. He worked on many buildings for farmers in the district and also in Virден. After giving up the carpenter trade, for health reasons, he worked as a section man on the C.P.R.

After moving to Virден in 1919 he returned to Routledge in 1922 where they kept the Post Office for 22 years, and also a small store for a short time.

They had five children. **Fred and Alf** — reside on the old farm in Routledge. **Percy** — married Myrtle Wardle in 1930 and resides in Victoria. **Edith** — married Walter Snelson. **Gladys** — married Howard Stewart and they also live in Victoria. There are five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

### The Vachon Family

submitted by J. A. Vachon

It took so long to go to church with the oxen and cart that great grandmother would bring her knitting to occupy her busy fingers.

Amédée Vachon, ancestor of the Vachon family in Oak Lake travelled by train to Oak Lake in 1887. Among the settlers who arrived in the district between the years 1885-1887 are the Masson, Donais, Painchaud, Marcotte, Martelle and Leblanc. The four latter made a very short stay before moving on to Saskatchewan where they established their home. Amédée Vachon came to Oak Lake with his mother,



Clara, Antoinette, Elodie, Mrs. Vachon, Charles, Mr. Amédée Vachon and Albert.

his two brothers, Napoléon and Philius, and his maternal grandfather, Joseph Nadeau. This he did after working twelve years in a cotton manufacture in Maine, U.S.A. when he became orphan at the tender age of nine.

Philius died shortly thereafter and was buried in Oak Lake cemetery while Napoléon moved to Aida, Saskatchewan with his mother. After many years (in the thirties) of farming he died and was buried in Cantal, Saskatchewan.

Coming to an untamed piece of land in southern Manitoba, from Saint Frédéric de Beauce, Province of Quebec, with no personal belongings in 1887 meant a life of countless hardships and struggle for survival. Amédée Vachon helped his grandfather grub the land, using very rudimentary equipment and the reliable assistance of oxen. Meanwhile he seconded another settler for a modest salary of 25¢ a day. After a few months of hard labor he decided to take the homestead ten miles south of Oak Lake on section 21-8-23. The soil was sandy and dry, but the drinking water was very good and abundant.

The courageous settler built a sod barn and a log house and in 1896 married Delmina Masson who came from Saint Ambroise de Kildaire, Joliette, Québec in 1885. Of this marriage six children were born, five of whom survived.

**Antoinette** married Jean Brière on February 12, 1923 and raised a family of eight girls in Billimum, Saskatchewan. **Clara** united her destiny to Philibert Hamel also on February 23, 1923 and raised a family of three girls and seven boys in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan. The third oldest girl, **Elodie**, joined the Order of the Grey Nuns in Saint-Boniface and later, as a Nun, consecrated most of her life to teaching and caring for the elderly. The youngest boy, **Charles**, studied for the priesthood and was ordained a priest on June 24, 1935 in the Roman Catholic Church of





Ordination of Chas. Vachon at Oak Lake 1935.

Oak Lake. The oldest son, **Albert**, took up farming with his father. All five children attended the rural school of Hesselwood before completing their secondary education; the girls at Saint Norbert Collegiate, and the boys at Saint-Boniface College.

Amédée Vachon remained on the farm until 1936 at which time he and his aging wife moved to Abbéville, Manitoba to live with their son, Charles. Mr. Vachon died suddenly two years later, May 30, 1938 and was buried in Oak Lake cemetery. Mrs. Vachon who then moved to live with her daughter in Billimung died January 14, 1940. She was also buried in Oak Lake cemetery.

Upon the retirement of his father in 1936, Albert Vachon took over the farm and raised a second generation of Vachons. He espoused Miss Bernadette Labelle June 19, 1928 and raised a family of thirteen children, twelve of whom are still living. The oldest son, Denis, died in Saint-Boniface, July 5, 1965.

The twelve living children are **Alice**, Mrs. E. Alarie, Ste-Agathe, Manitoba with three children; **Thérèse** has joined the Order of the Grey Nuns and has been mostly involved in education; **Jeanne**, Mrs. C. Fillion, Charleswood, with five children; **Irène**, Mrs. A. Boulet, Saint Norbert, a mother of four; **Annette**, Mrs. R. Blais, Inglis, with one child; **Cécile**, Mrs. G. Desrochers, Saint Norbert, with

four children; **Jean**, espoused Anita Desrochers, and has four sons; **Eugene**, espoused Dolores Archambault, Duck Lake, Saskatchewan, proud parents of four children; **Marie-Ange**, Mrs. L. Ricard, Mariapolis, with three children; **Gérard**, espoused Marie Grise, New Liskeard, Ontario, one daughter; **Marcel**, espoused Aline Grise, Aylmer, Quebec, parents of a son; **Helene**, Mrs. J. Ross, Saint Norbert with one daughter. All thirteen children took their elementary education in the rural school of Hesselwood before completing their secondary, college and/or university education in various localities.

Albert Vachon had only twenty three years of a very happy married life before losing his wife who died of cancer on August 21, 1951 leaving eleven children at home. A very generous and courageous Christian as he was, Albert Vachon decided to remain single and to raise his family with the loving and devoted collaboration of his children. This he did until 1966 when he contracted a second marriage with Berthe Lemieux and moved to Montreal where he lived for fourteen years. In May 1981, he returned to his home province and settled in Saint-Boniface.

Meanwhile, in 1962, Jean (**John**) Vachon, his oldest living son, espoused Anita Desrochers and raised a happy family of four sons namely, Louis, Paul, Guy and Daniel. The same year Jean bought the



farm from his father and became the third owner of the small sandy farm. By now Jean (John) has greatly increased both the size and the value of the farm. If you were to visit the farm today you could see that the sod barn and the log house have been replaced and that the tractors of all sizes have also replaced the oxen of 1887.

This farm is now an heritage of which we are proud and which we hope to see remain the property of many more generations of Vachons.

### Mr. and Mrs. William G. Vallender

William Vallender came to Oak Lake on June 13th, 1913, from Gloucester, England and went to work for Mrs. William Dixon, north of Oak Lake. After working on various farms in the north, Mr. Vallender enlisted in February, 1916, in the 107th Battalion (The Timber Wolves) going overseas in August 1916. He served in France until the end of the war, going on to Germany and returning to England in 1919.



Mr. and Mrs. Vallender — Off to a Holiday in England 1958.

He was married in Horsley Church, Gloucester, on September 12th, 1918, (on leave) to Edith Stoodley of North Petherton, Somerset.

Mr. Vallender returned to Canada with Mrs. Vallender in July, 1919, arriving in Oak Lake on July 19th. He worked on John Knevitts farm and various

other farms until 1928, when he went to work for Adam Stewart in Oak Lake for five years as a mechanic. Then Mr. Vallender became custodian of Oakwood School, which position he held for 21 years until 1955.

He was a member of Oak Lake Citizen's Band, a member of the C.O.F. for 40 years and a Charter member of the Royal Canadian Legion #79.

Mrs. Vallender is a Life member of the Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion #79, and a Charter member of the same. She is a Life Member of the United Church Women's group and was a dedicated worker for the Red Cross in W.W.II. For many years, Mrs. Vallender was a Prize Winner at Oak Lake Fair in baking, fancywork and other classes.

### The Valley Family

submitted by Vivian (Valley) Gordon

Edward and Maude Valley and infant son, August, arrived in the Oak Lake District from Hawick, Minnesota, U.S.A. in 1912. They were accompanied by Edward's parents, Mr. and Mrs. August Valley, and two of their daughters, Lenora (Mrs. Joseph LaFournaise) and Albina (Mrs. Orpha Emond). They travelled by train bringing with them a few head of cattle, horses and some farm machinery.

The family farm was located one mile north of the lake. Mr. Valley was an avid hunter, fisherman and sportsman. He was on the R.M. of Sifton Council and the Sandhurst School Board and farmed for 58 years.

Mrs. Valley, as well as being a busy housewife and mother, took particular interest in her garden and poultry raising. She had many skills in handicraft and was once a member of the Oak Lake Fair Board.

August and his wife, the former Barbara Withers, also lived on the family farm. Barbara was well known to the Oak Lake people having worked in the Valleyview Co-op store for over 20 years. She passed away in 1969.

In 1971 the family farm was sold to Bill Henderson and the Valleys retired to the town of Oak Lake. Edward died in 1975.

August, in his latter years, was employed by Inter-Provincial Pipe lines. He was on the R.M. of Sifton Council at one time and also a member of the Valleyview Co-op Board. His keen interest in people and local affairs made him well known in Oak Lake and surrounding districts. He died in 1977.

There were two daughters, **Gladys** who married Les Coates, a former bank employee at Oak Lake. They reside on a farm at Newton Siding, Manitoba. **Vivian**, married Lloyd Gordon, a member of the R.C.M.P., formerly of Wapella, Saskatchewan. They now reside in Winnipeg. The Coates farmed at

Newton Siding and in later years Les was employed by the Department of Highways. They have a son, Brian, and a daughter, Marlene. Gladys and Les also have two adopted children, Bob and Cindy.

Mrs. Valley sold her home in Oak Lake in 1978 and is now residing with Vivian and Lloyd Gordon in Winnipeg.

### **Vanderschaeghe Family** submitted by members of the Vanderschaeghe family

August Vanderschaeghe was born at Rudderwoorde, Belgium, in 1892. He came to Canada at the age of 17 and worked for Cancade's and Gonty's.

He married Adelina Gilliard in June 1918 and farmed in the Pipestone Municipality till 1924. They



Mr. and Mrs. August Vanderschaeghe, Henry, Bertha, Madeline.

had a son, Henry, born in 1919 and a daughter, Madeleine, in 1921.

After doing chores one evening they realized their little son and daughter were missing, also the dog, upon investigating they found the children had hitched the dog to the little wagon and had wandered off to visit the neighbours. Their dog "Bijou" was like one of the family.

The year 1924 they moved near Cherry Point on 36-8-25. Henry started school at Sandhurst in 1924 and Madeleine in 1926. They remember all too well one morning being late for school when they decided to take a short cut through the pasture but were chased by neighbour's horses and were later than ever getting there. Luckily for them they just managed to crawl under the fence as the horses were right behind them consequently they had to walk all the way around by the road after all.

In 1927 the family moved to 15-9-25, three miles

south of Routledge and the children went to Routledge School.

Hard times for everyone those days made farming very difficult using horses for all jobs, while a horse and buggy was their means of transportation. In 1933 they were blessed with another daughter, Bertha.

In 1940 Henry was called for a month training in the army, stationed in Brandon. It wasn't all that pleasant, contracting the measles and knowing all the work his parents were left with, however the month slipped by and he was home again tending to the chores.

In 1944 (June), **Henry** married Antoinette Gilliard of Prud'Homme, Saskatchewan. They farmed on 16-9-25. They had a son, Lawrence, in 1945. They moved one mile south of Oak Lake on 14-9-24 in 1951 where they delivered bottled milk and cream from house to house until 1957.

In 1953 they were blessed with another son, **Maurice**; in 1955, a daughter, **Emily**; and in '56 another girl, **Irene**.

In 1964, **Lawrence** went into training at Brandon Mental Health Centre and is presently working as a Community Mental Worker at Hamiota. He is married and lives at Minnedosa.

In 1966 Henry and Antoinette purchased a home in Oak Lake and a school bus. Henry has driven the same route since then for the Fort la Bosse School Division.

In 1975, **Maurice** married and farmed until 1979 when they moved to Regina. He is presently working for Ipsco.

**Emily** graduated from V.C.I. and in April, 1973 married Thomas Wardman. They farmed in the Oak Lake area until moving to Brandon in 1977. They had two daughters, Jacqueline Lee and Shannon Gale. Emily is now married to Gary Poppel of Miniota, where Jacqueline and Shannon attend Elementary School.

**Irene** graduated as a Psychiatric Nurse in 1976, is married and living in Brandon.

Henry and Antoinette sold their farm in 1979 but Henry being a farmer at heart is still helping others. They have eight grandchildren.

In 1940, **Madeleine** and Roy Read were married. They were blessed with two children, Rita and Lloyd.

Roy and Madeleine have now retired.

In 1952, **Bertha** married Paul Kernel and farmed on 15-9-25, south of Routledge. They had a daughter, Suzanne, in 1957. They sold their farm and moved to Virden in 1974. Suzanne graduated as LPN in 1976 and is now married and living in Brandon.

August and Adelina are the proud great grandparents of eleven.

## Ed and Hazel Wadham

We moved to Oak Lake in August of 1961 from Binscarth, Manitoba to operate and manage the garage and cafe owned by Clarence Helten on the north side of No. 1. We ran the cafe for a year, then rented it out and Ed worked for British American Oil in the garage till May 1963.

During our years in Oak Lake we and our family of four, **Gilbert, Noreen, Ken, and Glen**, lived in the "little pink house" of Gus Fullers on the eastern edge of town. Ed was on the Cub Group Committee and I a 4-H leader. The family was active in the Anglican Church and Sunday School. Gilbert took part in Boy Scouts and was on the Oak Lake Hockey team, although he went to school in Virden. Noreen, in Grade Five, was in 4-H and active in sports activities. Ken, in Grade Two and Glen started Grade One here in 1962.

We left Oak Lake in 1963 and moved to Miniota, where Ed worked in a garage for fifteen years, and is now with Twin Valley Co-op. Our family are now grown, and in homes of their own.

## John Wahl

John Wahl was born in 1921 in Langham, Saskatchewan. His Dad, Abram Wahl, was born within the walls of the old "Fort Garry" in Manitoba. His Mother was from Nebraska and died when John was four years old. John went to school at St. Claude and Goodlands, Manitoba.

In 1940 he married Edna Mary Reimer from Sperling. After working for Carman Municipality for three years the family moved to Oak Lake about 1948, where John ran the grader and snowplow for nine years. "Johnny" was a very proficient operator and was noted for the amount of snow he managed to clear to make roads passable, also for his early morning starts, resulting at times in being able to have breakfast, with some of his snow bound clients.

The children went to Oakwood School and the whole family were active in the United Church.

The Wahls moved to British Columbia following an eighteen month stint on the Dew Line and live at Moberly Lake. They have four children:

**Judith Ann** — born 1941, married Robert Hanke and they live in Clearbrook, British Columbia. They have three children, Kerri, Tammi and Shane.

**Ronald John** — born 1942, spent eleven years in the army. He and wife Lynn have three children, Darren, Brent and Bradley.

**Kenneth Wayne** — born 1944, is married to Gloria Johnston. They live in Prince George, British Columbia, where Ken works for "Finning Tracto". Kimberly and Troy are their children.

**Linda Gail** — born 1947, has two children,

Cindy and Clint, from a first marriage. She is now part owner of Russ Larson Ins. Co.

## Waite

Two brothers, Jack and Robert Waite, homesteaded on E½ 19-10-23. John moved to Brandon but Robert remained on the farm and married. They had a son, Jim who became a medical doctor and practised in Neepawa, and a daughter, Jennie who married John Inglis of Kenton. The Waites made a home for two English lads after World War I, Ernie Tape and John Crosby.

According to minutes in a Ryerson School register, Jim Waite was paid \$2.00 for cutting two cords of wood and \$5.00 for lighting the fires, during the winter of 1899-1900.

The Waite farm was sold to R. C. Smith and at the present time, Lyman and Jean Smith reside there.

## George Wallace submitted by Ada Fall

Mr. George Wallace was born in Gifford, Scotland, he came to Winnipeg in 1882. He was a stone mason by trade, where he assisted in building the Holy Trinity Church and the old Post Office.



Mr. and Mrs. George Wallace.

In 1883 he came to Griswold and farmed south of town for several years. He met and married Ada Banister, at this point they moved to farm south of Oak Lake. He was a trustee of Runnymede School for years. He helped to draw the stones for the foundation of the Anglican Church.

Mrs. Wallace played the organ for several years and was the first organist to play the organ in St. Margaret Church in Griswold. She also played for all the community dances. That was when we had good old house parties and families all got together.

George planted all the trees around the original homestead, 18-9-23. In these years the farming was done completely with horses. In the dirty thirties the boys would go out to seed, and the dust was so bad they could not see each other in the fields. Each day at noon the boys and girls always had a game of tennis, while the horses rested. At night they used to wash the horses' eyes as they would be full of dust. Grandma Banister stayed with us quite often and we kids always had to play croquet with her.

Mr. Wallace had a threshing machine and we threshed for the neighbours because there were only a few machines in the area. We had to haul the grain to Algar and load it into train cars. The team of horses had to be hitched on to the car and spot it ourselves (which meant to secure the car on the track). One day the team of horses got frightened and started to run away with the car, Dad had to get up and put the brakes on the car, it was a very exciting moment for us.

George and Ada had seven children, Nell, Will, Percy, Gordon, Alison, Ada and Nelson.

Mr. Wallace died in 1938. Mrs. Wallace died in 1940.

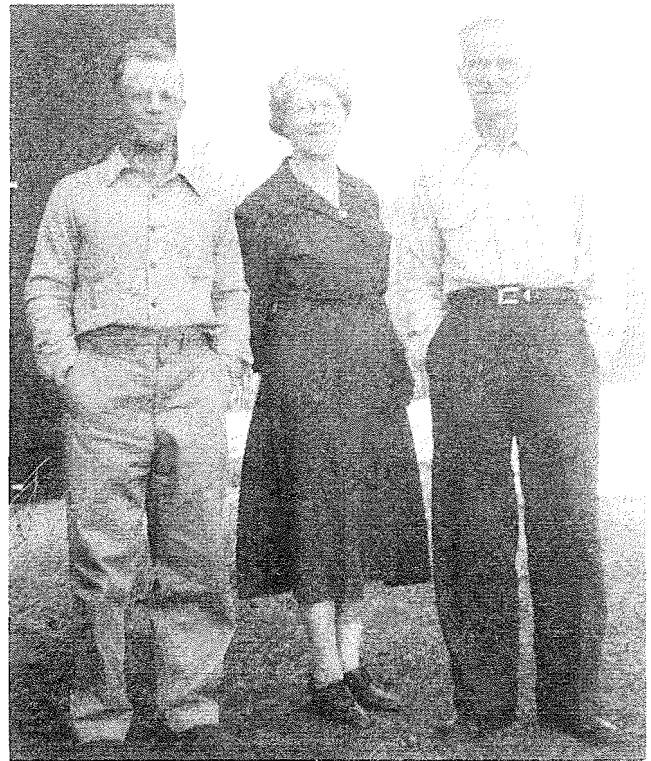
### **William (Will) George Wallace**

William was the eldest son of George Wallace. He got part of his education at Hillsdale and the rest at Runnymede School.

On October 29, 1913 he married Alison Watt Dickson who had come to Canada in 1911. Alison was born in 1891 at Gifford, Scotland — near Edinburgh. She found employment with Mr. and Mrs. Alex Cameron, and her special care was the children, Robert, Beatrice and Helen.

They farmed the Wallace farm, 17-9-23, where two children, Margaret and George, were born. Will raised Shorthorn cattle but his special pride was kept for the Percheron horses he loved. A good vegetable garden, poultry and milk cows augmented their income.

Will was very active in drama clubs for many years. Both he and "Doll" loved to dance and Will was an excellent teacher of Scottish and old time



George, Mr. and Mrs. Will Wallace 1956.

dances. Will and brother, Percy, played violin for many wedding dances.

Will and Doll were faithful members of St. Alban's Anglican church. Will was on the Vestry and Doll a lifetime member of the W.A.

In 1954 they sold their farm and retired to a small farm a mile south of Oak Lake. Will continued to keep busy, first as tractor man on the Lloyd Hatch farm, then for many years he looked after the cemetery and the golf course.

Doll likewise helped wherever needed. She died very suddenly in 1975. Will lived with his son, George, until his death in 1979.

**George** — farmed south of Oak Lake, raising mostly pigs. He retired to a small acreage closer to town after his Mother's death, where he still lives. George helped out on many farms in the area.

**Margaret** — Following her schooling at Runnymede worked on the family farm until 1952 when she married Cyril Topps, and they farmed on 20-8-22. In 1980 they retired and moved into Souris.

### **Percy and Tessa Wallace**

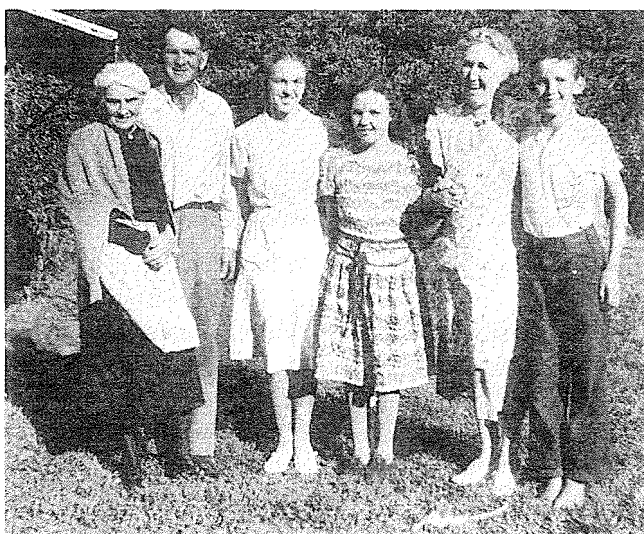
**by Elsie Wallace**

Married life for our parents, Percy and Tessa Wallace, began in the 1920's on a farm south and east of Oak Lake originally owned by a bachelor, Jack Owens. The house sat in the middle of a plowed field. I can remember Mother telling us how desolate it was

that first winter. Soon though Dad and Mother had planted trees all around the yard, also seeded a lawn. Mother was a town girl but adapted readily to farm life and loved it.

In a few years time we came along not too far apart, Kathleen, Elsie and John, and Dad added on to the house a bedroom and verandah.

Although not well off in material things, we were physically, mentally and spiritually. We had plenty to eat, clothes to wear, books to read and our parents played all kinds of games with us. We had a tennis court on our front lawn. Mother was our Sunday school teacher as we weren't always able to get to church. It was alright in the winter-time as we had a sleigh but we had no car until the late 1940's.



Granny Wallace, Percy, Kathleen, Elsie, Tessa and John.

There was plenty of music too. Dad was a very good fiddler, could also if persuaded, play classical music. Mother played the piano and sang and taught us as well as many others. When we were older she resumed her teaching on week-ends. In the summer-time she walked across the fields to town three and a half miles.

In the thirties we had not much money, and health problems too. Kathleen almost died of a ruptured appendix, then John and I contracted polio. Dad was ill all one spring with stomach ulcers and Mother had two cancer operations; despite all this I can never remember our parents ever being devastated by it all.

The Wallace family which included our three uncles and Aunt Ada Fall were the greatest people for house parties. In the winter time, almost every week there was one, except during Lent. They would play cards first, then dance until the wee small hours. They provided their own music. As we got older we participated too.

**Kathleen** — on completion of her high school, trained at the Winnipeg General Hospital as an R.N. After graduation she worked in Hamiota, then in Moosomin, Saskatchewan, then back to Hamiota where she met and married "Pick" Caldwell. They had two sons, Richard and Robert. After her husband's death in a car accident in 1960, Kathleen went back to nursing in Hamiota.

**I** — after my schooling, remained at home with my parents and practised and studied music, taking the exams through the Royal Conservatory of Toronto. I took over Mother's class in 1955 due to her illness. I had some students of my own. Last year I celebrated 25 years of teaching, and am still in the profession. In 1974 a community choir was formed with representatives from all of the churches. This choir is my pride and joy. I also am a keen gardener. I still have a pink rose bush by my kitchen steps given to me by Grannie Wallace, when I was in my teens, it blooms profusely every year.

**John** — after graduating from high school, taught, after the war, with a teacher's permit at Oak Point. If he had any illusions of making teaching his career they were shattered that first year. He took up mink farming for awhile, also was a salesman at Caldwell Motors, Hamiota and for the Wear-ever Company. In 1954 he became an employee of CKX and rose to the position of News Director, where he remained until 1965 when he accepted a position with Canadian Press (C.P.) in Edmonton. He is married to Freda Bullion (Brandon) and they have two children Catherine (married) and Murray.

Our parents were members of St. Alban's Anglican Church. Dad served on the Vestry and Mother played the organ and directed the choir for many years. We three all took our turn in the choir, Dad also. I am of the third generation playing the church organ.

Owing to Dad's health (he had sleeping sickness, as a result of an outbreak of equine encephalitis), we moved to town, into the house formerly owned by John Wallace. Dad did a lot of renovating, and enjoyed making a garden at the back. He gradually declined in health and died in Deer Lodge Hospital in 1967. Mother died in Hamiota Hospital in 1980.

## **Gordon Wallace Family**

**by P. M. Pickford**

My sister, Eileen, and I, daughters of Gordon and Blanche Wallace, were born in a small cottage across the garden from Grandma and Grandpa (George A.) Wallace. Larry Wallace now lives where Grandfather lived. As children, we had great times with our grandparents, Uncle Nelson and Aunt Allison (still at home) and our cousins — the Percy and Will Wallace



families were all within walking distance. Family gatherings were frequent and lawn tennis or softball took place during week nights but Sunday night there was singing around the piano. Dad, and later Eileen and I sang in St. Alban's choir.

When I was six and Eileen three, we moved to a farm two miles north-west of Oak Lake. It was time for me to enter Oakwood School. When we were too small to drive ourselves we were picked up by neighbour children (Clarks), but later we had our own horse and buggy and drove the two miles or maybe walked if the pony was needed for farm work. We carried our lunch and ate at Aunt Ada's (Mrs. S. P. Fall). Some of the winter trips were very cold. Crops were poor on the farm but Dad stayed there until Eileen had completed Grade eleven and I Grade twelve. We still had our family gatherings — sometimes with the Wallaces and sometimes with Mother's family, the Boys or Olives.

Christmas at Grandma Wallace's will never be forgotten. We made our own fun by preparing skits, recitations and songs to follow the huge Christmas dinners, to which as many as thirty or more would sit down. It was fun to see the men don aprons and grab tea towels to clean up the tables so our programmes could begin.

In the fall of 1941 I entered Brandon Normal School and Eileen began training at Brandon General Hospital in February 1942. Meanwhile, Dad and Mother had moved to the McGregor Farm at Griswold. We were there for only one year and the farm was sold. It was a good year for Dad and we were happy there.

In 1942, I began teaching at Millan School, Terrance, a country school where I remained two years. Our parents moved to the I.H.C. Farm and back into the Oak Lake district.

In 1945, Eileen married H. R. Henry then in the Airforce and in 1946, I became Mrs. Alan Pickford — a farmer's wife in the Moorepark area. Eileen's son James was born in 1949.

In 1952 we lost both our parents within three months to cancer and our trips to, and connections with Oak Lake seemed to become fewer and farther apart.

**Eileen** — in 1970, married Keith Patton. They live in Cassiar, British Columbia where Keith drives a truck at the mine and Eileen is Hospital Administrator.

I continued to teach until our daughter, Leah, was born in 1953. David was born in 1959. When our children were in school, I returned to teaching for about seventeen years. Now we are semi-retired.

## **David Nelson Wallace** submitted by Nelson Wallace

Nelson, youngest of the George Wallace family, was born on the family farm in 1906. He spent all his life on the farm until retiring to Oak Lake in 1975. Nelson received his education at Runnymede school, later attending Oak Lake High. He was a member of the Boys and Girls Club (now 4-H), winning a gold watch for judging in the Live Stock Judging competition in Brandon Fair in 1925. He played the cornet in the Oak Lake Band and in the Wallace Orchestra. He is a member of St. Alban's Church and served on the Vestry for a number of years. He belonged to several organizations, Agricultural Society, Runnymede School Board, Manitoba Pool, and the Men's Curling Club. He was an enthusiastic curler.

He married Elizabeth (Betty) Balfour, Manitou in 1933. She was a school teacher and taught at Runnymede school for two years.

These were the depression years, with drought, grasshoppers, gophers, unemployment and poor prices. Farming was all done with horses. There was a great community spirit during these years. Neighbours helped neighbours with threshing, wood sawing, and wherever help was needed.

Many good times were had at the country school: Christmas concerts, dances, card parties, picnics, and ball games. Saturday night was the highlight of the week. Most of the country folk gathered in the "old town" to shop and visit. Sunday was a day of rest and the attending of a church service. However these times passed. The rains came and crops were good and prices improved. War broke out in 1939 and that seemed to end unemployment.

Hydro came to the Runnymede district in 1949 and that made living conditions much easier.

Nelson and Betty have two children, Larry and Barbara. **Barbara** was employed with the Manitoba Telephone System in Winnipeg. She married Douglas Hanslip in 1971. They have two sons, Darren and Allan. They reside in Winnipeg.

**Larry** was employed with CKX Television for two years and then with Manitoba Hydro for thirteen years. He married Sandra MacKay, Alexander in 1967. They have two sons, Travis and Tod.

Larry and Sandra terminated their jobs in 1975 to take up farming on the family farm, when Larry's parents retired. They are the third generation to farm the land homesteaded by their great uncles in 1888.

## **The Waltons** **The Waltons**

Our dad, Herb Walton, was born at Parry Sound in 1875 and came west from southern Ontario to St. David's district in 1892 with his brother, Bert, sister,



Mr. and Mrs. Herb Walton.

Ida, his mother, Isobel Wisner, and step-father, William Wisner, and his father. Grandma's maiden name was Head and she had three brothers, William, Peter and Henry, and two sisters, Mary Vowels and Sarah Grant. All lived in the Oak Lake area for a time as did their mother, Mrs. Berney.

In 1898 Dad married Martha Skuce who had come from the Ottawa area and who had a sister, Mrs. Robert Haney, living in the district. They were married in Brandon and settled in the St. David's district on N.W. ¼ 27-10-24, where Dad's uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Vowels had been living. The Vowels left for Mirror, Alberta, as did the Bert Waltons with their five children after farming in the district. Dad's sister Ida married Frank Todd at our home and they farmed in the Ryerson district before moving to Oak Lake. Dad took over the S½ of 34-10-24 owned by his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Shaw, after the death of Mr. Shaw. Mrs. Shaw, her daughter, Hattie, and husband, Ed Waddell, sons Arthur and Charlie moved to Calgary. Our parents left the district for a time and homesteaded at Stoughton, Saskatchewan. When they returned to their farm at Oak Lake a good frame house was built in 1905. The carpenter was Mother's brother-in-law Charles Watson and the plasterer was Mr. John Baillie. Dad was fond of horses and when Mr. Alex Cameron of Oak Lake brought some registered stock over from Scotland, he purchased a team of mares, Lady Crofter and Lady Hallmark.

There were eight of us in the family, Verna,

Mervin, Eldon, Gladys, Allen, Stuart and Evelyn and an infant daughter who died in 1902.

**Verna** married James Moreland and after farming in the area they moved to Brandon. There are seven children.

**Mervin** — took over the farm vacated by the Harry Wisners when they left the district and batched there for a number of years. He bought several good horses at the Wisner sale and had the misfortune of having them killed when the barn burned down soon after. We never forgot the generosity of Mr. Nelson Banister of Oak Lake at that time as he gave Mervin a fine horse.

In July 1933 Mervin married Mary Matthews, a school teacher from Reston, Manitoba and they had two children, Glenn and Jean. Eventually they bought the north half of Sec. 34-10-24 from Jim and Norma Goodwin. The family attended St. David's church and Hagyard was their school. After farming for several years they moved to Oak Lake where the children finished their schooling. Mervin was in poor health for a number of years and died in September 1963.

Mary taught school for many years in Virden before moving there, where she still resides. **Glenn** married Glenda Gordon of Oak Lake and took over his parents' farm. They had two children, Geoffrey and Gayle. Glenn died suddenly in 1965 at 29 years of age, when the children were quite small. Geoff. and Gayle now live in Kamloops, British Columbia, with their mother and step-father, Glenda and Paul Bourque and half-sister, Bonnie. **Jean** married Ron Rennie from Pierson, Manitoba and they have two children, Robert and Sharon. They both taught school at Pinawa before moving to Winnipeg. Ron and Jean are both now employed as librarians in Winnipeg schools. The Walton farm was sold to Mr. Laurence Rampton.

**Eldon** — worked for several neighbours before moving west. He joined the army during World War II at Vancouver. Eldon and his wife, Violet, live at Enderby, British Columbia and he has three step-children.

**Gladys** — married Douglas Stevenson and they farmed south of Harding in the Education Point district for many years before retiring to Virden. From there they moved to Victoria, British Columbia, where Douglas died in 1979 following a lengthy illness. Gladys still lives there.

**Allen** — worked at home for many years before leaving for British Columbia where he married Muriel Tate, a war widow who had two little girls. They were in the dairy business near Penticton for several years and Allen hauled fruit from the orchards to a packing house for fifteen years. They live

at Summerland, British Columbia. Son George Walton and wife Lucy live at Penticton, British Columbia.

**Stuart** — stayed on the home farm and in 1953 he married Dorothy Freeman of Winnipeg, Manitoba. They have a daughter, Peggy, who in 1976 married Gordon Percival of Deloraine, Manitoba. Gord and Peggy live in Baldur, Manitoba where they are the proprietors of the Baldur Meat Market. Stuart and Dorothy for many years, as a hobby, raised and showed purebred Golden Retrievers under the kennel name of "Prairie Dawn". They farmed until 1975 when they retired and now live in Oak Lake.

**Evelyn** — married George Gompf of the Harvey district, north east of Oak Lake, in 1939 and they have four children; Marlene, Garnet, Karl and Larry.

The Waltons lived within walking distance of Hagyard school and a hill in front of the school provided a natural playground summer and winter.

The school children were very conscious of a funeral in the district as the procession would usually pass the school, Johnston cemetery being just a mile south. The day of the funeral the flag would fly at half mast.

We attended St. David's church as did most of our neighbours. Family picnics, church picnics plus other church activities, and fishing trips are remembered with pleasure. Our Dad came from a musical family so music played a large part in our lives.

A humorous incident occurred when a hired man from overseas purchased a suit of long underwear to keep out the Manitoba cold. This was a new garment to him so when he came for breakfast one morning he had it on upside down. His arms were in the legs of the suit and his head out where it buttons at the back.

Dad died in 1942 after many years of ill health and Mother in 1961.

### **Emile M. Wanlin 1879-1965**

submitted by **M. Rourke**

Emile Wanlin was born February 7th, 1879 in Villiers, France, son of Louis and Julia Wanlin. The family came to Canada before the turn of the century and settled in the area of Deloraine.

He married Beatrice Delarue in Deloraine January 7th, 1913. They settled on a homestead in the Oakview area and farmed, moving to Routledge area in 1925 farming until retirement in 1946.

During this interval, Mr. Wanlin served as a councillor in Sifton Municipality for twenty years and was a school trustee in the Routledge district. He was a member of St. Athanasius Church in Oak Lake.

It is of interest that both Mr. and Mrs. Wanlin are interred in Oak Lake cemetery as well as their par-



Mr. and Mrs. Emile Wanlin, Grandpa Delarue and Mrs. Camille Wanlin.

ents, also a son who died in infancy. There are two daughters, Alice Ellis of Mooe Jaw and Marguerite Rourke of Brandon.

### **Wardman Family**

In 1971 the Jack Wardman family took up residence on the H. Robinson farm, (12-8-24). They formerly lived in the Virden area. Jack and Orys had four children.

**Tom Wardman** lives in Virden and is employed by Chevron. **Bob** is currently attending college in Saskatchewan. **Peggy** is Mrs. A. Foy of Griswold. **Nancy** is Postmistress in Oak Lake.

### **Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Watson**

It was around 1904 that Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Watson came to Manitoba from south east of Ottawa with their two daughters, Bertha and Bessie. They made their first home on the south west quarter of Sec. 4-11-24 in the St. David's district and became neighbours of Mrs. Watson's sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Haney. Later they moved to the "Shaw Place" as it was known, on the north side of

the road, just east of the hill near the Hagyard School site. Some maple trees still mark the place where the buildings were located. From the "Shaw Place" they moved to the Johnston School District, to the home formerly occupied by the George Johnstons.

Mr. Watson was a carpenter. He built several homes in the St. David's District including the Wm. Johnston home. Members of their family born in Manitoba were Harold, Gordon, Millie and Ethel.

**Harold** — has many happy memories of the years he lived in this rural district. He recalls the house dances and social times enjoyed in the "Big House" as it was known, of the Wm. Johnston's.

During the time he attended Johnston School, a teacher by the name of Mr. Lightbody stands out in his memory. Possibly one of the reasons is the fact that at one time the students were asked to bring some small willow switches from a ravine close by the school and when they were used to enforce discipline Harold remembers how they could sting!

The Watsons left the St. David's District in 1911 to reside in Brandon.

## **The Whitcombs**

### **submitted by Edna Whitcomb**

Edna and Bill Whitcomb and six month old son, Alvin, arrived in Oak Lake from Winnipeg June 1, 1940.

Mr. Whitcomb, a graduate pharmacist from the University of Manitoba, took over the Oak Lake Pharmacy. The family moved into the west side of the former M. Leitch home.

We were impressed with the lovely big trees down the streets. Life in town was quite different from the city. Horses and buggies, wagons or sleighs, depending on the weather, were tied to both sides of the business street. There were two C.P.R. passenger trains each afternoon and two in the night, besides the daily locals. The station platform would be crowded with people coming, going or just watching. The paper boys waited for their bundles and Mr. Cochrane transported the mail to and from the Post Office in a wheelbarrow. The station grounds were lovely with their trimmed trees, nice lawns and flower beds and rows of lilacs.

In winter we even tried dog racing down the main street. There was always a dog or two that would rather go home — and tried — adding to the fun. Some more excitement that first year, was when the Ogilvie elevator exploded, blowing out one bin and partially tipping over. It had to be emptied and taken down.

The street lights were dim but the night watchman's dog was huge.

Bill Whitcomb was born in Sioux Falls, South

Dakota, U.S.A. and Edna (Burch) was born in Neepawa. They were married in Winnipeg November 1937 and have two sons, Alvin and Edward. The family were members of the United Church with Bill serving awhile on the board and Edna holding offices in the Young Women's Club, U.C.W. and for a few years sang in the Choir. She was a member of the Rebekah and Eastern Star Lodges. She also worked for several years in the Drug Store. Edna and Bill later became members of the Bahai Faith.

Bill served on the town council and was a member of the Odd Fellows and Masonic Lodges. He was the pharmacist in Oak Lake for twenty two years, until the store burned down one afternoon in March 1962. After recovering from that shock he worked as a relief pharmacist in several towns until his health gave out.

Bill passed away in Brandon, July 1973, after a lengthy illness, and donated his body to science through the University of Brandon.

Our two sons, Alvin and Edward, were born in 1939 and 1942 respectively. Both attended Oak Lake schools, graduating with their grade XII. They went to United Church Sunday School, enjoyed camp outs in the hills, took piano lessons, skated and curled. Both had a paper route to keep them occupied.

**Alvin** — worked several summers for the Oak Lake Apiary. After high school he received his Geological Engineering degree and his Masters in Business Management, with high honours and scholarships. He has been active building hydro dams in northern Manitoba. Alvin married Marilyn Hamstad of North Battleford, Saskatchewan, September 1965. They have a son, Leigh and daughter, Malie.

**Edward** — had the Kool Kats orchestra while in grades XI and XII. He got his B.A. and M.A. in Manitoba and his Ph.D. in history, from University of London, England. He too won many scholarships, two medals and the Honor Society Award. He has served in the Diplomatic Service and has one book published.

Ed. taught in eastern Universities for five years before accepting a position with the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa. He married Alana Anderson of Brandon in June 1965.

## **Richard and Christina Whyte**

Christina married Richard (Dick) Whyte in 1929. They farmed the S.E. of section 14-11-24 in the Verity district for ten years. Both were active in community affairs and their home was always open to the Baptist young people's group for meetings and fun filled social evenings. Also it was the home of the Baptist student ministers for eight summers. Dick

was the family barber when he still lived at home and continued barbering after marriage for family and neighbours for twelve years. All was for free in those years. One Sunday in the thirties his customers numbered thirteen. He loved music having played violin, saxophone, and the accordion.

In the spring of 1939 they moved to the St. David's district with their children, Marlyne and Donald, where they farmed the E½ 26-10-24 for thirty years. They were supporters of the community during those years. Dick was fond of golfing and curling and Christina was an active member of St. David's U.C.W., Rebekah Lodge, Oak Lake and Kenton curling clubs respectively and secretary treasurer of Hagyard school district for nine years.

Due to illness Dick was forced to retire from farming in 1969 and in 1971 they moved to White Rock, British Columbia, a more favourable climate for his health. The farm was sold to Gerald Smith in 1973. After a lengthy illness Dick passed away in May 1976. Christina has since remarried to George Pedley of White Rock, British Columbia.

Their children —

**Marlyne (Hargreaves)** — attended Oakwood High School. Following Teachers College (1951), she taught for five years. In 1957 she married Laurence Hargreaves of Neepawa. They have three children, Lori, Darron and Janine.

**Donald** — son of Richard and Christina Whyte, attended school at Hagyard and high school at Oakwood School.

He graduated from University of Manitoba in 1959 with Bachelor Science (Honors in Agricultural Economics). In 1961 he received his Master of Science from Cornell University and Doctor of Philosophy (Sociology) in 1963. He is presently Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University, Ottawa.

He has one son, Dion Martin, born August 3, 1977.

### **Manno and Helen Wiens** **submitted by Helen Wiens**

Manno and Helen Wiens came to Oak Lake in 1963, to operate the B.A. Service Station. Manno's parents were Issac and Helena Wiens, who were of Russian ancestry, farmed in the Winkler area, where Manno was born.

Helen's parents lived at Beaver Flat, Saskatchewan. It was there that Helen was born. Helen's father, George Rempel, whose ancestors were from Holland, was born at Corn, Oklahoma, and came to Canada at age eleven. Her mother, Margaret Rempel, was born in Canada. She was of Russian ancestry.

Manno began working with John Deere in Bran-

don as a young man. He married Helen Rempel in 1953. They resided in Brandon for several years. They moved to Miniota in 1956 and operated the John Deere business in partnership with a brother (John). They came to Oak Lake in 1963 and operated the service station until 1977, when Gulf Oil closed down. In 1978 they purchased the Gulf building and renovated it into a repair shop and beauty shop.

Manno was on the first Committee to bring Volunteer Ambulance Service to Oak Lake in 1975, and is still active as a member. He has been our Fire Chief since 1967 and a member of the Oak Lake Rodeo Association.

Helen operates the hairdressing shop with the help of her daughter, Audrey, since 1976. She has been an active member of the U.C.W. since 1960 and the United Church Activity Group since 1978 when it was organized, as well as Volunteer Ambulance attendant since 1977. Helen and Audrey were instrumental in starting Senior Citizen Activities in Oak Lake.

Manno, Helen and their children are all United Church members.

**Audrey** — married Donald Williams in 1972. They reside in Oak Lake.

**Carie** — married Keith Montgomery in 1975 and is residing in Oak Lake.

**Kathy** — now living in Brandon.

**Lee Anna** — attending A.C.C. in Brandon.

**Bradley** — attends school in Oak Lake.

There are five grandchildren: Terry and Kimmy Williams, Holly and Derek Montgomery and Michael Wiens.

### **Harry Wiens**

Harry Ephraim Wiens was born in Winkler, Manitoba, the second son of Issac and Helena Wiens. He served in the Canadian Infantry for two years during and after the war. He later worked at Brandon Motors and Brandon Co-op, hauling fuel. In 1949 Harry began working for Geophysical Service International as a surveyor.

In 1951 Harry married May Taggart in Gadsby, Alberta. They spent the next seven years working in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

In the fall of 1965, the family moved to Oak Lake from Bowden, Alberta. Harry worked for his brother, Manno, for the first winter. In the spring, they bought the George Merrick farm north of town and bought a small herd of milk cows.

Harry passed away in January of 1972. May continued to milk cows until January of 1981. She rented her cultivated land to Wes Tolton and then Dennis Griffith.

They had two children, Marvin and Denise.



**Marvin** — graduated from Virden Collegiate in 1970. He moved to Calgary where he was employed at Burns Packers. In 1972 he moved home and began working for Manno at the garage.

**Denise** — graduated from Virden Collegiate in 1971. She stayed and helped on the farm until May of 1973 when she started working for Manno. In 1976 Denise married Dennis Griffith. On September 7, 1981 they had a daughter, Tracy. They reside on the Roy Griffith farm north of town.

## **Enoch Price Williams**

**submitted by Maurice Williams**

Enoch Price Williams, born near Linwood, Garafraxa, Ontario, January 27th, 1857. He came west to the Oak Lake district in 1880. At that time the railroad had just reached Flat Creek. He then took up a homestead S.W.¼ 10-10-24, now owned by Greg Williams (great grandson). He lived there until he bought the N.W.¼ 2-10-24, now owned by Everett Williams (grandson).

On January 20, 1886 he married Maria Doherty of Griswold, in Virden. They had six children — Annie Mabel — who died at the age of two years; Francis John — who died at the age of 19; Charles Ernest, Thomas Victor, and Alfred Guy — who all farmed at Oak Lake until their retirement. The youngest boy, Edward George — was employed by the Ford Motor Co. in Windsor, Ontario until his death.

Enoch then obtained more land. This land is now owned by his great grandson, Kenny Williams, and grandson, Ralph Williams. At that time there was no bridge across the Assiniboine River, so he operated the Ferry below his buildings until the first bridge was built — which was east of the present bridge, coming out on to the land now owned by Roy Griffith.

In the early days he sold woolen goods, manufactured by the Listowel Woolen Mills, Ontario, and delivered them with a team of horses and democrat.

He spoke the Sioux language fluently, and had a lot of dealings with the Indians in horses and machinery. His wit and cheerful disposition made him one of the highly esteemed residents of the Oak Lake district.

In 1919 they retired and moved to Oak Lake and first lived in the house now owned by Reuben Denbow, until their new home was built, which is now owned by Mrs. Charles E. Williams.

When he moved to Oak Lake, he had a milk cow, some chickens, and his favorite black team (Pete and Darkey). As a young boy, I can remember how in the Spring, my Grandfather would bring another horse

from the farm and plow all the gardens for other residents in Oak Lake.

Mrs. Williams (Maria) was an ardent member of St. Alban's Church for over 40 years and took an active interest in the Women's Auxiliary and the Parish Guild. As a loving Mother, and devoted wife, her kindly disposition won her a host of friends.

Mr. Williams served on the council in Oak Lake for several years and other community efforts until his death in 1935.

## **The John Samuel Williams Family by Earl K. Williams**

My grandfather, Williams, named William Whalley, after his father's good friend Judge Whalley, was born in 1829 at Redrun, Ireland. He married Sarah Jane Price who was born in 1841. My grandparents came from Ireland in a sailing vessel which took six weeks to cross the Ocean. They settled in Ontario first and then came West to Oak Lake, Manitoba, sometime in the mid-nineteen eighties. They had eleven children. My grandfather died in 1889 and was buried at Sandhurst cemetery and my grandmother died in 1899 and was buried in the Oak Lake Cemetery.

My grandfather Bonner, named Joseph Bonner, was born at Wigtonshire, Scotland, about the late 1840's. He was a stonemason by trade and he died in Ontario in 1895. My grandmother, Matilda Bratton Bonner, was born in Scotland in 1851. She also came to Ontario, Canada. When her husband died in 1895 my grandmother came to Manitoba shortly thereafter with her four children. They settled in Oak Lake and my grandmother was employed by the Oakland Hotel. She remarried to Samuel D. Taylor of Miniota in 1899, and they moved to Miniota where they operated a rooming house.

In 1909 they moved back to Oak Lake out at the lake NW¼ 2-9-25 where they lived and kept house for Mr. Harry Foote, who was a patient in a wheel chair at the time. In 1918 they moved back to Miniota and lived there until he died in 1935 and she died in May 1942.

My father, John Samuel Williams, was born November 15, 1871 at Linwood County, Ontario. He was the tenth child of William Whalley Williams. He left Ontario and came west to Oak Lake, Manitoba, arriving by C.P.R., April 1, 1889. He first took up a homestead north of Oak Lake near the Assiniboine Valley. Apparently he did not like this location and left to settle 10 miles south-west of Oak Lake town, west of the lake on the N½ 35-8-25. This was in the Sandhurst School District.

My mother, Maggie Amelia Bonner, was born on December 22, 1876 at County of Arthur, Ontario,



Mr. and Mrs. J. S. William's — Sunday Inspection of the Herd.

and came to Oak Lake with her mother, two brothers and a sister shortly after 1895. On October 12, 1898, she married my father at Oak Lake. They raised ten children.

As the years went by my parents bought more land, E $\frac{1}{2}$  34-8-25. My father was now able to take in cattle for the summer months to pasture from other farmers within a radius of about 30 miles. This, of course, brought in a fair source of income for my parents. In 1907 he bought the E $\frac{1}{2}$  11-9-25 by public auction in Virden, Manitoba. This was Crown land and it became our home half section. This same year the C.N.R. came through from Brandon to Regina.

By this time there were five children and my parents bought more land. These included Secs. 14-9-25, NW $\frac{1}{4}$  8-9-25, NW $\frac{1}{4}$  2-9-25, SE $\frac{1}{4}$  13-9-25 and the E $\frac{1}{2}$  2-10-25. This gave them more hayland, pasture land and land to cultivate for grain and forage. They ran about one hundred head of cattle and about three hundred head of sheep and poultry besides. From the early 1900's to 1928 my father had a portable steam engine first and then a Garr and Scott traction steam engine and separator threshing outfit. He did custom threshing for grain farmers as well as his own harvesting.

From about 1916 to 1928 he had a road construction outfit consisting of about 45 horses and equipment, including a cook car, dining car and

caboose for sleeping. These cars were made of wood frame construction and were on steel wheels; also feed wagons for the horses to feed. He built mostly Municipal roads at Kirkella, Hamiota, Oak River and also some of the road into the "Island" Oak Lake Beach.

I, **Earl** Kitchener Williams, was born on August 6, 1916, at Oak Lake (on the farm E $\frac{1}{2}$  11-9-25). I had three sisters and six brothers. From the oldest to the youngest they are — Pearl M. born July 1899; William W. (Bill) 1900; John Bonner 1903; Anne



Williams Family — Earle, Gordon, Joseph, Wallace, Charlie, Bonnar, William, May, Pearl, Edith 1963.

May, 1905; Charles Geo. (Charlie), 1907; Wallace B. 1909; Joseph A., 1911; Gordon H. 1913; myself; and Edith C., 1918. We all got our education at Sandhurst School District and Oakwood School, Oak Lake, except Edith and me.

My older brothers and sisters drove to Oakwood school, with a horse and buggy or sometimes with a team and democrat. In 1929 I learned to drive the car (Model T Ford) and "490" Chev. In the fall of 1931 my brother, Gordon, sister, Edith, and I drove to Oakwood School with the Model T car until freeze up. We boarded in town during the winter months and drove again after Easter till June holidays. The fall of 1932 to 1935 I drove myself to school in Oak Lake in summer and boarded with my landlady, Mrs. Higgs, through the winter months.

Concerning work on the farm, there was haying, land to cultivate for grain and feed, and herding. All ten of us had the chore of herding cattle and sheep which was a tedious job to say the least. During the dry thirties, there was not much hay or grain grown. By the fall of 1940 the lake was almost dry.

As World War II had by now broken out and after the fall work October 1941, I went to Winnipeg to join up. I enlisted in the Airforce in January, 1942 to October, 1945. After the war and in 1949 I started farming on my own in the Sandhurst School District on a crop share basis with my father. In the 1950's and 1960's I purchased another section of land. This gave me a section and three-quarters. All of Sec. 11-9-25; N½ 5-9-25 and SE¼ 13-9-25, and I leased other land for feed. I discontinued farming in the fall of 1978.

In 1950 or 1951 oil was discovered at Virden. There was much activity going on drilling for oil. Many oil fields opened up surrounding the Virden and Cromer area. About 1960 the West Routledge field started. In the month of October, 1963, Samedom Oil of Canada Ltd. obtained a lease from me to drill on Wellsite 7-11-9-25 W1, and struck a good supply of light grade Crude. Between then and April 1964 nine more wells were drilled and produced. By 1969 there were a total of 14 wells out of a possible 16 wells for the section of land.

As Section 11-9-25 was Crown Land I was just paid for surface rights at the rate of \$75.00 an acre for a total of about forty-one acres for the fourteen wells each year.

A few years before I quit farming I met Emily Whitford of Virden, Manitoba, who worked at the Virden District Hospital. We carried on a friendship for some years and we finally decided to get married on September 2nd, 1978. We now reside in Virden.

My parents were members of St. Alban's Anglican Church in Oak Lake.

My Mother died in 1947. My father later remar-

ried to Sarah Robbins of Oak River, moved to Oak Lake in 1949 and resided there until his death in 1953.

## **Guy Williams**

**submitted by Lenora Williams**

Guy Williams, third son of Enoch Williams and Maria Doherty, married Lenora Cole, daughter of Johnny and Ethel Cole, on December 25, 1920 and farmed on 9-10-24 until 1952 when they moved to Oak Lake. Their son, Ralph, married Joyce Stevenson in 1952 and worked the farm north of Oak Lake in the river valley. They lived in Oak Lake until 1978 before moving to Brandon.

Ralph and Joyce have three children, Ken, Frances and Deb. Ken married Karen Butler in 1979 and is farming on the homestead. They have one daughter, Kaylen Dawn, born February 8, 1981. Deb married Garry Morcombe in 1976 and they are presently living in Oak Lake. Garry is employed with Lewis Cattle Oilers. Garry and Deb have two sons, Corey Roy born November 14, 1979 and Darcey Ralph born April 10, 1981. Frances works at Brandon General Hospital in Employee Services Department.

## **Maurice Williams Family**

**submitted by Verle Williams**

Maurice Williams, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Williams, was born in 1922. He spent his young life at home working on his father's farm.

He married Veryle Johnston of Bradwardine in 1944. Their first daughter, **Esther Arlene** — born in 1947, is now married to Wally Masters of Calgary who is self employed as a plumber. Esther is also employed at the Government of Canada Post Office in Calgary.

**Gregory Charles** — born in 1949, married Elaine White of Choiceland, Saskatchewan. They have one little girl — "Charity" Raye. Greg is employed at United Western Utilities in Edmonton as a High Pressure Welder. Elaine is an accounting clerk for International Harvester.

Their third child, **Shirley Anne** — born in 1952, married Don Dodge of Saskatoon in 1979. Don is employed at Shaw G.M.C. as Sales Representative. Shirley is also a sales rep. for Willson Business Environment in Calgary.

Their fourth child, **Sandra Lee** — born in 1958. She took Business Administration at Community College in Brandon, she is employed in Calgary working as a clerk with Dome Petroleum.

Their fifth child, **Laurie Merne** — was born in 1959. She attended University in Winnipeg taking a Physical Education course for one year. Then she moved to Calgary and is presently working as a Land Assistant for Golden Eagle Oil and Gas of Calgary.

## **Bernard Williams**

Bernard Williams, son of Thomas Edward and Hazel Emma Williams was born in Oak Lake on December 29th, 1923. His father was born in Ontario. His mother, the former Hazel Stephens was from Killarney, Manitoba.

Bernard attended school in Oak Lake. He played hockey with the local boys and belonged to the Church Boys League, when he attended St. Alban's Anglican Church.

He served with the Air Force from March 1942 until November 1945, returning to Oak Lake in 1945. He moved to Saskatoon in 1946. In 1948 he married Kathleen Stephens. He is employed as a real estate salesman. Recently Bernard received recognition for twenty years of service in the work of the Boy Scouts in Saskatoon.

Bernard and Kathleen have four children — Edward, Randy, Ryan and a daughter Rennie.

## **Smith Williams**

Bernard's brother Smith Williams attended school in Oak Lake. He enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force and while serving, gave his life. His widow Dorothy Williams lives in Dundee, Scotland.

Sister Marguerite married Cecil Furtney. She resides in Toronto.

Thomas Edward Williams died many years ago. His widow Hazel remarried. She is Mrs. Waring and resides at Marsden, Saskatchewan.

## **Winmill**

Clarence (Red) Winmill originates from Floral, Saskatchewan. He is the son of Walter Winmill and Jeanette Pringle. Red married the former Betty Reeves, who is the daughter of John and Faith Reeves. Betty was born and raised in Oak Lake.

Red joined the RCAF during World War II and stayed on in the Regular Force, serving a total of 30 years. Red and Betty took up residence in Oak Lake in 1971.

Red caretakes the Oak Lake Junior High and Oak Lake Post Office.

There are three children —

**Gwen** — married Wayne Penhall of Petersfield.

**Greg** — married to Diane Dufily of Oak Lake.

**Wade** — of Oak Lake.

Greg and Wade both attended school in Oak Lake and Virden.

There are also 3 grandchildren — Colleen, Julie and Leah Penhall.

## **Winters, Lowell and J. L. (Dick)**

**submitted by Eileen and Dorothy Winters**

In the spring of 1962, the Winters' brothers,

Lowell and J. L. (Dick) decided to forsake the grain growing district of Sanford in the Red River valley to move to the sandy soil and cattle raising area south of the town of Oak Lake.

**Lowell and Eileen Winters** purchased the farm owned by Allan and Margaret Cox. Their home quarter is SE 25-8-24. They raised six children who all attended school in both Oak Lake and Virden.

**Jill** — an x-ray technician, married Brad Perkins, in 1978, and lives in Winnipeg. They have one daughter, Kelly.

**Judy** — a registered nurse, took her training in Brandon. After a brief stint at Foothills Hospital in Calgary, Judy again lives and works in Brandon.

**Maureen** — is married to a local dairy farmer, Bryce Buckley. They milk the top R.O.P. Jersey herd in Manitoba. They have one daughter, Allison. Maureen and Bryce were married in 1976. Maureen graduated with honours from Virden Collegiate and also won the Governor-General's medal.

**Wade** is at home working the farm with his father. **Chris** is at present working for a custom combine operator in the United States. **Michael** is working on a local farm. All three boys have been involved in minor hockey in Oak Lake, this past season with the Oak Lake Senior Bruins.

**Dick and Dorothy Winters** bought the James Fraser farm. NW 36-8-24 is the home quarter. The family attends the Oak Lake Mennonite Church. They have five children.

**Leah** is attending school in Calgary and Olds studying to become a veterinary assistant.

**Della** is taking high school in Virden. **Rory** and **Jennifer** are attending Oak Lake Junior High while **Daniel** is enrolled at the elementary school.

Both families have been involved in many community activities from square dancing to 4-H. Oak Lake is a great place to live!

## **Wisners**

**submitted by the family**

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Wisner and their four children moved to the St. David's district in 1892 from Kettleby, Ontario. Their children were Harry, Ettie, Lloyd and Leslie.

**Harry** and his wife, Mabel (Everand of Brandon), took over the family farm when his parents took up residence in Oak Lake to run a boarding house. They had four children — Kathleen (deceased), Helen (deceased), Kenneth and Shirley. Harry and family moved to Brandon where Harry worked as a Railroad Engineer until retirement to British Columbia.

Helen's son, Dale McCrindle and family came to Kenton from Vancouver as an Ordained Minister a few years ago. He was surprised he was so close to



his mother's birthplace as she was born in the St. David's area.

**Lloyd** was a fire fighter in Oak Lake until World War I when he joined the Army and was killed on active duty overseas.

**Ettie** married John McGhie and moved to Alberta.

**Leslie** took up farming in the St. David's area. In 1909 he married Lily (Buswell) who had come to the district from Kettering, England in 1905. Leslie passed away in 1966 and Lily took up residence in the Parkland Home in Hamiota until her death in 1978.

Leslie and Lily had a family of eight — Ella, Arthur, Irene and Lloyd. Four children were deceased in the years between 1912 and 1921. Irene passed away in 1935 in her 18th year.

Leslie was an ardent worker for the St. David's Church which he joined in 1904. He served many years on the Board of Management and later on the Board of Stewards. In 1924-25 he was Choir Leader. He held numerous offices within the church, making a great contribution to St. David's Church.

Lily was also an active church member. She held most of the W.M.S. offices and in later years was made a Life Member. She also enjoyed entering baking in the Oak Lake Fair where she captured many a first prize.

Leslie took part in plowing Matches and received a number of first prizes.

Daughter **Ella** married Harvey Anderson in 1931.

They farmed for several years in surrounding districts and later moved to Kitchener, Ontario. They had three sons — Garth, Vern and Murray. Harvey passed away in 1963 and Ella now lives in Elmira, Ontario.

**Art** worked for Canada Packers until retirement. He had two sons, Gary and Brian.

**Lloyd** took over the home place when he married Phyllis (Oakley) in 1945. They have two daughters, Donna (Gordon) of Carievale, Saskatchewan and Hilma (Sinkinson) of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta.

## Withers

### submitted by Marion (Withers) Lundy

My Dad, Sidney Charles Withers, was born March 15, 1883 at Milton End Farm Arlingham, Gloucestershire, England. He grew up to be an adventuresome young lad.

At this time in England there was much advertising and many colourful posters depicting the wonderful life to be had in the new land of Canada. It was this advertising and Dad's spirit of adventure which prompted him to come to Canada.

There was no money for boat passage so he and two school day friends, Morris and Tom Merrit (brothers) worked their way over on a cattle boat and then travelled by train to Kenora and Keewatin, Ontario. Here they found employment in the Flour Mill.

Dad celebrated his 21st birthday in Keewatin.



Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Withers.



Everything was going very well until Tom became ill with Typhoid Fever and died. His brother, Morris, was so upset that he could not go on and returned to England.

Dad moved on to Headingley, Manitoba and worked for a farmer by the name of Taylor, before coming by train to Oak Lake, about 1906.

He went to the Ryerson district north of town and worked on the farm of Mrs. E. Cairns and later for her son, Mr. Andy Cairns.

It was here that Dad received his basic training in Canadian farming. He loved his work.

In 1911 he returned to England, again by cattle boat, in time for Christmas.

On February 20, 1912 he married his former school master's daughter, Gwynneth Cooper of Arlingham.

They came to Canada in April 1912 (not on a cattle boat this time). They were to sail on the Titanic but due to a mix up in booking passage, they had to sail a week or so later.

For a short time they lived in a house in the Andy Cairns yard.

This was indeed a new life for my mother. She said everyone was so kind to her and made her feel very welcome but she missed her parents and only sister in England.

Under the capable instruction of Mrs. Andy Cairns she learned to bake bread, churn butter and to cook for a large threshing gang. When they started farming on their own, she took pride in her large flocks of turkeys. It was not long before she was playing the organ for the Church of England (now called Anglican) services which were held in Ryerson church.

Some time later they started farming on the E-½ 24-10-24 and in 1917 moved to the west half originally owned by Mr. William Smith.

The house was made of brick from the Virden brick yard. Only one register upstairs was used to heat five rooms. A glass of water, kept by your bed at night, would be frozen by morning in the -40° temperatures in winter.

Dad went in for mixed farming, horses, cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry.

When the sheep were clipped in early summer, the wool was often made into blankets. Some of these blankets are still in use today.

My Dad helped build roads in Woodworth Municipality and was pathmaster for a number of years.

Three daughters were born: Stella who died in 1927 at age fourteen, Marion who married Willard Lundy and Barbara who married August Valley.

**Barbara** was employed by Anderson's General Store from 1944 to 1960 at which time the store

changed hands and became Oak Lake Co-op. She continued to work on until her resignation in 1968.

She was active in many community affairs, church choir, Rebekah Lodge, Brownies, St. Alban's Drama Club, winning the best actress award at the Virden Drama Festival in 1958.

In 1960 she married August Valley and they farmed in the Sandhurst district. Barbara died in 1969.

We had a good life in the Ryerson district. Our father's trip to Canada on a cattle boat proved to be worthwhile. In spite of the depression years and hail storms he managed to buy and pay for his farm.

In the mid fifties, they bought a house in town, now owned by Lionel Weatherald.

After World War II, Dad turned to grain farming until his death in 1959. Mother died in 1969.

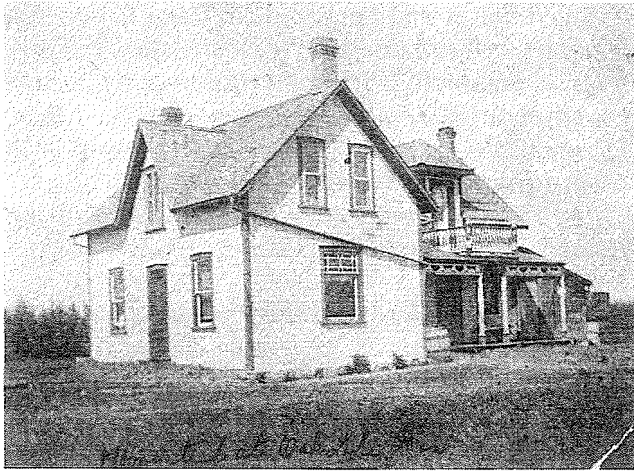
### **Mr. and Mrs. John Wohlgemuth**

John and Libby Wohlgemuth, originally from the Steinbach area, moved to Sexsmith, Alberta, in November of 1968. In February of 1974, they, with their children, Keith and Jayne, moved to the Pete Klippenstine farm, sometimes better known as the George Smith farm, on 7-10-23, where they operate a dairy and grain farm.

### **Early History of the Wright Family by Howard Wright**

Our family originally came from England. My Grandfather Richard Wright, was born in 1831. He immigrated to Canada in the early 1850's. He settled in Ontario and lived for many years in Bruce County, Ontario, where he became a successful agriculturist and served a number of years on the Local Council. I remember my Grandfather talking about his trip on a sailing vessel from England across the Atlantic to this country. Because of the vagaries of the winds it took seven weeks to make the trip. The ship was half way across when sudden gale winds drove it back almost to the shores of Ireland. He became a close friend of the Captain and was invited to sit at the Captain's table.

I used to hear him talk about his early days in Ontario and what a task it was to carve out a farm among the sugar maples and other hardwoods that grew there. Fifty acres was considered a good sized farm. However, these hardwood timbers when used in a barn frame, were good for a hundred years. He told of the apple and pear orchard and other fruits they had planted and all the joys and excitement of collecting maple syrup and of the milder winters. I sometimes wondered why they would want to leave that all behind and come to Manitoba. But they did leave it all and came to Manitoba in 1891 settling on a



Original Home of Richard Wright Sr.

320 acre farm about 9 miles north of Oak Lake S½ 1-11-24.

The family consisted of my Grandfather and Grandmother, Mary and three sons, John, Herbert and Richard and five daughters, Elizabeth, Ruth, Agnes, Mary and Beatrice. My Grandfather was in his sixtieth year at the time, but he had lots of get up and go and became quite successful in his new venture and also in getting his sons set up as well.

About 1903 he gave up active farming and bought a house in the village of Oak Lake where he and his wife Mary made their home for their remaining years.

I remember my Grandmother Wright only vaguely as I was 4 years old when she died in 1910. When they went to view the body the evening before the funeral my father lifted me up so I could look into the casket which was covered with a glass viewing panel — something you don't see anymore.

Grandmother Wright, whose maiden name was Mary Jane Carswell, was born in Dublin, Ireland but spent most of her early life in England. Her passing away at age 75, December 24th, 1910 did not make for a joyful Christmas that year, as Beatrice the youngest of the children and the only one still living at home had also died earlier that year. This resulted in Grandfather spending a great deal of his time in the homes of his children, much of which was spent with his son Herbert (my father). I got to know my Grandfather quite well. He was with us the year I started to school (1913) at Hagyard. He took me to and from school with a horse and buggy that first term. He was not one to sit around eating idle bread but kept himself busy doing odd chores and making trips to town for repairs and supplies during the busy season. I remember him spending days working with and pruning the many shade and fruit trees that he and my

father had planted. Years later when I visited the old farm it had become a veritable forest.

My Grandfather was a staunch Anglican for the greater part of his life. In later years he joined the Catholic Church as did his wife Mary, and daughter Beatrice. My Grandfather would get up very early Sunday morning and without breakfast, he would drive the nine miles to Oak Lake to attend early morning Mass. During the winter of 1917 he came down with a cold that turned into pneumonia and he passed away February 18th, 1917 at his home in Oak Lake. He and wife Mary and daughter Beatrice are interred in the Catholic section of the Oak Lake Cemetery.

**Elizabeth** the oldest in the family married Hedley Young a prominent farmer in the Griswold district. **Ruth** married Robert Douglas a farmer in the Crandall district. **Agnes** married E. Stubbs, a school teacher and they later moved to Stoughton, Saskatchewan. **Mary** married P. J. Head a music Professor who was also a piano tuner.

### **William John Wright** by Howard Wright

William John (Uncle Jack) was the oldest son of Richard and Mary Wright. We were both mechanically inclined, loved machinery and had inventive minds. John had a farm of his own. It was situated about 2½ miles west of the home farm. A considerable portion of the section was not under cultivation because it contained a small lake almost circular in shape and close to half a mile across. We called it little Salt Lake because the water had a salty taste. It was excellent to swim in and during the warm summer days many in the surrounding area would come there to do so. John's house and farm buildings were situated on the north side of the lake and it was to this setting that John brought his new bride from Scotland. In due time they were blessed with a son, Orville, and a daughter Elizabeth.

About then a very tragic thing happened. Annie came down with milk fever, which raging through her system, destroyed her mentally. She never recovered and was confined for quite a number of years in the Brandon Mental Institution before passing on. This turn of events greatly disrupted and changed the course of John's life. Now he had a young son and infant daughter needing to be cared for immediately. The infant daughter being his most pressing problem. Eventually Mr. and Mrs. Tom Douglas of Crandall took the infant into their home where she was brought up until she was on her own. John kept his son Orville with him as much as he could but there were times when he was in the care of his various Aunts and Uncles.

Eventually he let the farm go and pursued other ways of making a living. He was good at blacksmithing and machine repair work, an excellent carpenter and painter. Putting his mind to work inventing things was a challenge and a driving force in his life. He was a self taught draftsman and could do a reasonably good job setting his ideas down on paper. Among some of his ideas were plans and drawings of an automatic stoker to be attached to a grain binder. He had plans for a self loading manure spreader, for a self propelled fencing machine that could both sharpen and drive fence posts and plans for a mechanism to open driveway gates without getting out of your vehicle. One of his inventions that had a real chance of success was his stook loader for loading bundle racks. He built the first machine and it was tried out on my father's farm. He built this first machine in the town of Oak Lake so he would be handy to the machine shop. The machine attracted a fair amount of attention and certain scouts were around sizing up the machine. It was John's intention to put his stook loader on the market but another outfit beat him to it. They formed a company called the Stewart Sheaf Loader Co. and put a machine on the market under that name. John almost succeeded in getting his loader produced when World War I broke out and the plant was turned into a munitions factory.

Later John and son Orville obtained land in the Peace River country. It was there that John's death occurred. Orville also is now deceased.

Elizabeth (Betty) resides in Calgary.

### **Herbert Carswell Wright and Family by Howard Wright**

Herbert Carswell Wright better known as Herb Wright was born in Bruce County, Ontario in 1879 and came, when twelve, with his parents Richard and Mary Wright to Manitoba in 1891. They settled north of Oak Lake. His father by thrifty management made a success of farming and in getting his sons started.

Herbert and brother Richard took over operating the farm. John the oldest brother already had a farm of his own. Eventually Richard got a farm of his own and Herbert took over the home farm. None of the brothers were married as yet so they continued operating as a unit helping one another. John owned a large steam threshing outfit.

Herbert, who became my father was the first to get married. He married Evalena Gwinn in 1904, daughter of Joseph Gwinn.

Herbert and Evalena raised a large family. The first was a girl Ethel May who died in infancy.

Then in 1906, I, Howard Herbert came along. Then followed Gerald, Frank, Clarence, Nelson,



Herbert and Evelina Wright.

Erma, Dorothy, Margery, Harold and then another girl Thelma Beatrice who was taken away at four months of age by the Spanish Influenza Epidemic. The last born here in the Oak Lake district was a boy Wilbur Alexander. Four more girls, Gladys, Ella, Edna and Alma were born after the family moved away from the Oak Lake district in 1922.

Counting myself, four sons and five daughters of the Herbert Wright family are still living.

In early spring of 1922 my father had an Auction Sale to dispose of surplus stock and goods, and we moved to Dugald, Manitoba.

Herbert and Evalena Wright continued farming in this area until their retirement in 1948. They bought a home in Winnipeg and spent their remaining years there.

Herbert Wright passed away at age 75, July 10, 1952. Evalena Wright passed away June 13, 1969, age 84. Both are buried in Brookside Cemetery. Rev. Gordon Tolton a product of the Oak Lake district officiated at Evalena's funeral service.

I have had a busy life since leaving Oak Lake at age fifteen. I farmed with my father for eight years. Then I went farming on my own. I got married and have one son and three daughters. I retired in 1973. We live in our country home where I find more to occupy my time.

**Richard (Dick) P. Wright**  
by Howard Wright

Richard P. Wright, better known as Dick Wright, was born in Bruce County, Ontario in 1874. He came to Oak Lake in 1891 with his parents, Richard and Mary Wright and family. He farmed with his father until his parents retired around 1903 to live in Oak Lake. Dick and his brother Herb operated the home farm until he got a farm of his own, the former Gwinn farm.

Around 1907 Dick married Margaret Fulton, just out from Scotland. They resided on Dick's farm. They had six children — Gordon, twins Cecil and Preston, Norman, Douglas and Eunice.

Our two families were very close to each other in those early days. More like one big family. It was welcome news on either side when our parents would say to us. "We are going to Uncle Dicks or we are going to Uncle Herbs". We loved to get together to play. I remember my Uncle Dick as an easy going, fun loving person who loved a good joke. He wore a smile most of the time except when he ran out of smoking tobacco then his sunny disposition would fade a bit until he got some more. He had a slight limp, the result of a log falling on his leg when a boy.

The Richard Wright family left Oak Lake in the spring of 1922 as did the Herbert Wright family. Dugald, Manitoba was their destination, where the family took up farming. Richard and wife Margaret retired in 1947 and moved into Transcona. Richard passed away May 27th, 1952 at age 79. Margaret passed away March 12, 1955, age 74.

All Richard's family married and had families.

**Gordon** became supervisor of Public Works first at Transcona, then Selkirk before retiring to live in Winnipeg.

**Cecil** was employed with the C.N.R. Shops in Transcona. Deceased 1968.

**Preston** went to Sudbury, Ontario and worked in the nickel mine. He still lives in Sudbury.

**Norman** and **Douglas** remained on the farm but in addition to farming had employment in Transcona. Norman with the C.N.R. Shops, Douglas with "Griffin Wheel" for 18 years. Norman, deceased 1981. Douglas still lives on his farm.

**Eunice** when she married made her home in Transcona and still lives there.

**Melville Carswell Young**  
submitted by Maisie (Smith) Young

Melville was born at Oak Lake, Manitoba, Au-

gust 18, 1893. He was the only son of Hedley V. Young and his wife, Elizabeth (Wright). Their family of five children — Edith, Bertha, Melville, Emily and Myrtle, were all born in the Harvey School District. They went to school at Harvey and attended the Ryerson Church. Oak Lake and Griswold were their shopping centers. Myrtle (Burnett) and Emily live in Selkirk, Manitoba. Melville, Edith and Bertha have passed away.

**Melville** married Maisie, the eldest daughter of Thomas Johnstone Smith and wife, Elizabeth (Goodwin), of the St. David's District where she spent her early years.

**Maisie** has fond memories of her early life in that district and the happy times spent at St. David's Church anniversary suppers each year, where people came from miles around to meet their friends. Also of the Young People's Christian Endeavor on Sunday evenings, where the girls took turns playing the organ, leading the meetings and so on. Some of the older folk in the district called it a 'sparking school'. What better place to meet one's mate than at such a gathering?

There was a club some of the older members of the district attended called the Royal Temperance which sponsored elocution contests. Maisie won one of these contests. The prizes were silver medals and in later years nice books were given.

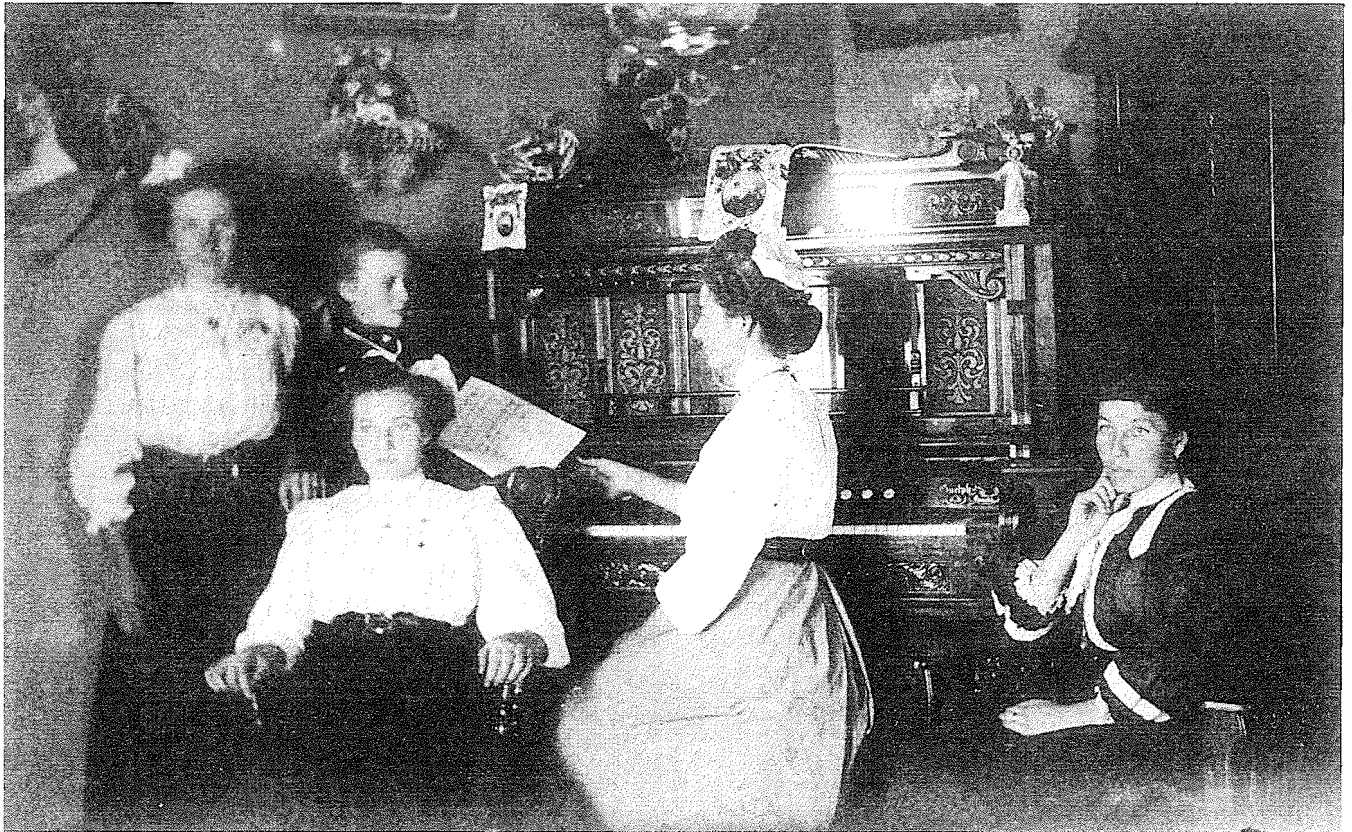
There was a lovely spot called 'The Salt Lake' where many family or district picnics were held. The Goodwins and Smiths often gathered there when relatives were visiting. Many surely have fond memories of Uncle Alex Goodwin getting the fire ready for the 'billy can' for tea. One of the visiting aunts lost her ring while bathing in the lake. The spot was marked with a stick and when the water had settled next day, the ring was sighted near the stick.

While living in Manitoba, two children, Beth and Gordon, were born, and in 1928 when Beth was 10 years old and Gordon 18 months, the Youngs decided to go homesteading. A second son, Bob, was born in 1935 at Dawson Creek, British Columbia.

It was late in October when Melville and his family left Oak Lake along with Melville's cousin, Orville Wright, both men driving Model T. Fords, for the Peace River country, homesteading in Sunset Prairie.

The Youngs led a busy and interesting life. Melville passed away in 1973 and Maisie now lives in the Rotary Manor home, Dawson Creek, British Columbia.

# Memories



Fond Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me.  
— Thomas Moore



## **My Grandfathers**

**by Maisie (Kennedy) Larson**

T. J. Smith was proud to say he was born the same year as Canada. One of my fond memories of him was his piano playing, with a heavy hand, made the whole house shake. Played for his own amusement mostly. He was never late for anything, always arrived at least a half hour early and was a demon for proper grammar. Loved music and get togethers always included sing songs. T. J. was a member of the Odd Fellows and wore his pin proudly. At one time he played drum in the local band.

James Reuben Kennedy was an Irishman, that just about explains him, he loved his family, the farming profession (though I don't think he was a trend setter). His favorite speech was "I ain't arguing", but to my knowledge he never stopped. His one passion was his Model "T" car with a Ruxol Axel, he never got tired of telling about it. Being an Irishman and an Orangeman he was decidedly narrow minded, had the greatest pleasure in teasing Betty who trained at the Grey Nuns in Regina, always asked when she came home, "And how's the Holy Father?"

Looking back on the growing up years, both Grandfathers played most important parts in all our lives, as they disciplined as they saw fit and loved equally. Both held a switch with a velvet glove, both used the expression "I'll give you a tin ear", which they usually proceeded to do.

Talking to Cheryl Fuller not long ago she remarked that the main thing she remembered about growing up was that she had to be careful who she talked about because the Kennedys were related to everyone in town. (Well, just about or so it seemed!)

## **Recollections**

**by Alberta Palmer**

1899 — In the early days, the wolves were both plentiful and daring. At night they would come up around the house and howl. Our dog had a good warm bed under the old back kitchen. The wolves would chase him and if he had not started for it soon enough, you would hear him hit his head going in. Dad would have to get up and dress, take a big tin dish pan and metal spoon, and pound that tin to scare them away. The wolves seldom returned.

1901 — A strip of virgin soil lay between the road on the east side of the farm and the trees and slough. One hot day Dad decided to break this land. In the afternoon Mother called Dad when he was turning at the edge of the house yard and sent me out with a cold drink for him. I was four years old and the freshly turned soil felt good on little bare feet, so I coaxed to

go with him. Dad knew I would tire and have to be carried, but away we went.

Halfway down the strip the plow turned up a whole den of snakes — snakes all over the ground, ploughed and unploughed — up the horses legs and the horses prancing. The furrow was full, the ground a moving carpet of snakes, and in the thick of it all, one small girl screaming.

Dad grabbed me up under one arm. The hired man working in the next field saw there was trouble, tied his horses and came on the run. He got the poor horses away from the moving mass, and Dad got his screaming daughter away to the house.

That strip of land was eventually worked — but not that day. In all my life I never went barefoot again, and all my life I have been scared stiff of snakes.

1914 — While curling in the local bonspiel on Friday evening I was in misery with bad pains in my side, but managed to walk home. The Doctor was called over on Saturday. By Sunday my parents knew it was an emergency and asked to call another Doctor. Dr. J. S. Matheson came on the evening train bringing a nurse with him.

My room was stripped to the bare essentials. The front storm door was carried upstairs and placed on my bed to serve as an operating table. With a gasoline lamp for lighting, an emergency appendectomy was performed. Dr. Matheson said it would have ruptured in a very few hours.

The Doctors and my Dad lunched and visited until 3:30 A.M., then Dr. Matheson caught a freight train home to Brandon.

## **Gophers**

**by Tena Penner**

Who doesn't remember the 30's when one went to the pasture to get the cows, gophers would scamper or stand up on their hind legs to observe what was new. There was little rain in the dirty thirties and large patches of grain as well as pasture were eaten by these little destructive rodents. For us kids gophers meant a little pocket money; especially early in the spring when the price was as high as 3½ cents a tail. The more plentiful they became, the less the tails were worth. So the early bird got the worm.

There was also wealth in crows eggs. The boys would sometimes let the eggs hatch, because eggs were worth 5¢ and a pair of legs 10¢ at the Municipal Office.

The girl there didn't much like counting the gopher tails. She would dump them on the counter and use a ruler to count. We would never spend our money on treats. Once when I had 65¢ I bought a nice brown and beige straw hat and was right in style.

## **More Musings** by Grace H. Watson

The Annual was always a great event and incentive to be up and at it. One recalls a year when some wag offered a prize for the BEST LOOKING LADY DRIVER! As a lark two teenagers, buggy bulging with bundles of loose hay, a crate of squawking chickens . . . a completely disreputable turn-out drove into the Show Ring to the obvious mixed reactions of other entrants and spectators alike. But a special prize was volunteered on the spot and the two characters, Ethel Sandell and Betty McLeish were the recipients.

Social life during our growing up years centered chiefly on church and school activities. The Lake was the summer drawing card for all ages. Thanks to the ingenuity of Miss Mary Hockin the teenage group of our period of St. Alban's, for several years obtained the use of a cottage for the cleaning up thereof. Armed with the facilities a group would precede the day of occupation and scouring began. Next day a friend with team and wagon would transfer all effects . . . bedding, clothing. Food . . . crocks of it, homemade . . . by our mothers. Then for the duration, usually two weeks, it was Paradise. A holiday most of us would never have been able to afford otherwise.

## **I Remember When . . .** by Lillian Brownlie

We listened on frosty evenings for the jingle of sleigh bells and harness, anxiously awaiting the return of someone from town.

In stormy weather, a worried wife or mother, whose loved one had not returned, alerted the neighbours. This call for help would often end in a search.

Snowstorms left banks high enough that we could look into our upstairs windows.

Most yards contained a horseshoe pitch where men could test their skills against their neighbour's. All the family tossed a few shoes to try for a ringer as they passed.

Sunday on the prairie, meant Church in the morning, softball in the afternoon, homemade ice cream and friends in the evening.

School finished with a family picnic at Oak Lake resort picnic grounds. On one occasion a hailstorm forced all of us into the hayloft of Alex Henderson's barn to finish the party — to the delight of the children.

When noon lunch was cooked by the teacher or

older pupils on a potbellied stove; potatoes were roasted on the sides or in the ashes, and delicious hot chocolate was made from rich milk heated on top of the stove.

About 1919 the family had an evening skating party on a slough not far from the house. Torches were made and burned on five foot posts placed around the pond making a spectacular sight. The young folk put on their skates by the pond. Following the skating, they trudged merrily back to the house for a hot lunch.

Summer fun was school field days, softball and baseball games, dancing in an open air hall at Oak Lake Beach or to big bands at Henuset's Barn, Nichol's Barn, or Kenton Dance Gardens. Winter fun was skating, card parties or community dances.

With little persuasion, Mother would prepare the ice cream for you if you brought the bucket, dug out a block of ice from the ice pit and you and your friends cranked the handle until the ice cream was done.

We drove seven miles to school with a horse and buggy, transporting the neighbours' cans of cream and crates of eggs from their lanes to the C.P.R. station in Oak Lake. On our return empty cans, mail, and perhaps groceries were left at the respective gates.

During the depression years, young people waited at the end of their lanes to hitch a ride with the first carload going to the dance.

In time of trouble, neighbours listened on the party line. Help and moral support arrived promptly!

Our brothers and their friends rode horseback to Oak Lake Island beach and the horses were forced to swim where the water was deepest. In about 1938 this trail became dry enough for wheels. Today this is #254 highway, running east and west, leading to the old boat dock at Oak Lake Beach.

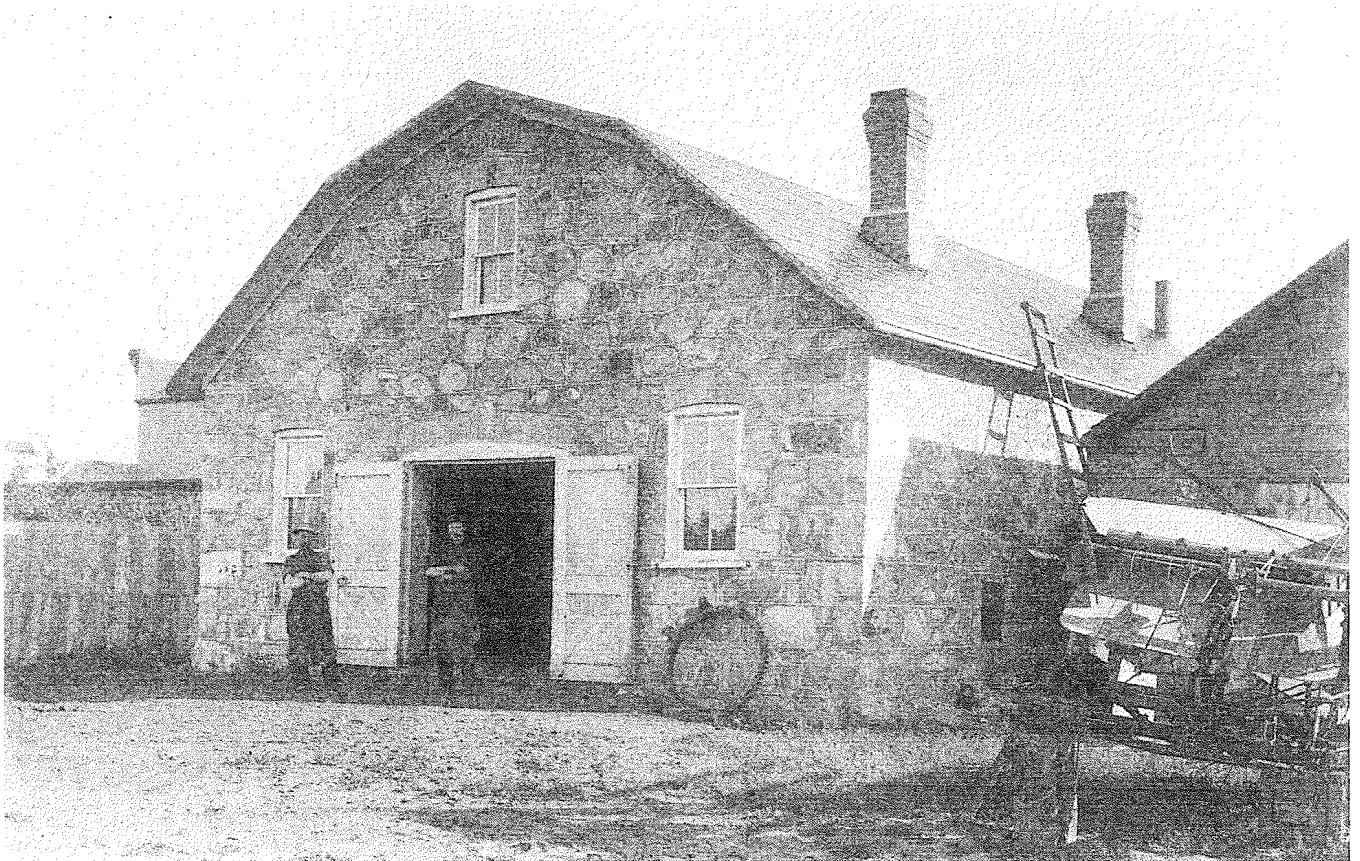
Aren't memories grand?

## **Do You Remember** by Phillis Cairns

- the 25¢ bill known as a shin plaster?
- the twitch (and it wasn't a dance)?
- when barrels of winter apples from Ontario arrived by rail car, 230 barrels per load?
- doing your lessons on a slate?
- shoeing horses in preparation for the rutted, frozen roads of early spring?
- hunting for turkey eggs on blustery, raw March days?
- when the butter "wouldn't come"?



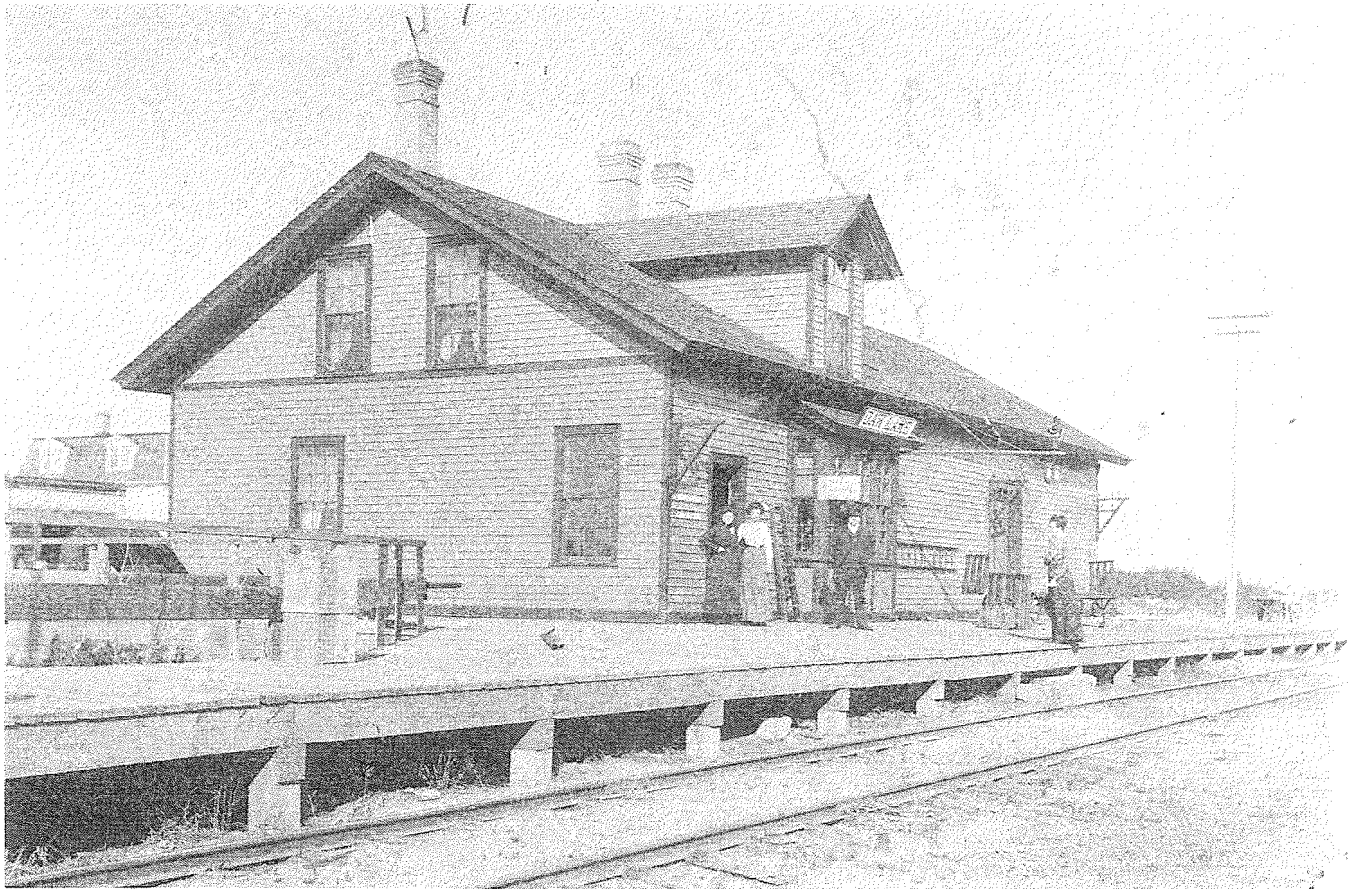
Leland Hotel.



Old Stone Blacksmith Shop built in 1897.

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The old Oak Lake C.P.R. Station.



The Banister Home.