Dominion City

Facts Fiction and Hyperbole

JAMES McKERCHER WADDELL

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FACTS, FICTION AND HYPERBOLE

Published December, 1970

Acknowledgements

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The Editor

Sketch of Author's Life

James McKercher Waddell was born in Dominion City on March 14th, 1889, and resided here until his death in January of 1970. He was the only son of Isabella McKercher, whose father was the first pioneer to homestead on our present townsite, Section 20, and Alexander Waddell, who also settled on Section 20 later in the same year 1874.

He was a great reader and knew the history of Dominion City and the surrounding areas almost from its beginning, and this book is his recollection of the people he has known and of incidents that have taken place in the Roseau River District.

Mr. Waddell's style of writing is characteristic of his own personality; straightforward, practical and at times somewhat "tongue-in-cheek." He loved to hear amusing anecdotes and would retell them often. His book contains many of the stories he enjoyed most.

The author enjoyed the nature of things; watching a bird he hadn't seen before and checking out its species, living habits, etc., or a small rodent, deer, moose, wild geese, ducks or Hungarian partridge. He lived for these things from day to day. He spent years hunting deer in the Piney area where he was to become a familiar sight setting up camp and sleeping in a tent every hunting season, even in November of 1969. A band master since 1912, he taught a great many youngsters and adults to play musical instruments and to enjoy band concerts. He loved to watch things grow and always prided himself in being the first man in his garden, sometimes even before all the snow was cleared away in the spring. The neighbours often woke up at dawn to see him puttering away in his garden which always grew prize-winning vegetables for the Agricultural Society of which he was a life-time member.

He received his elementary and high school education in Dominion City and studied Civil Engineering at the University of Manitoba. Upon returning to his home, he operated the Farmer's Elevator for a number of years and later purchased the Queen's Hotel which he operated from 1928 until 1957, when he decided to take up farming on his land about five miles west of town.

He was well known in many organizations and especially the Liberal Party of Manitoba, where he served as poll captain in Provencher since 1935, succeeding his father who passed away that year. He was weather observer for many years which included reporting for the Provincial Weather Office. It could easily be said that half or maybe more of the town property in Dominion City was at sometime or another, donated to the community by Mr. Waddell, the site of the new United Church, the former fair grounds, the skating rink property, the former bank building and drug store premises, and the park which bears his family name, as well as several other places.

The author delighted in his home and his family and he is survived by: his beloved wife, Annie; one son, Mark; four daughters, Mrs. Wally Wiebe (Shelagh), Mrs John Friesen (Shannon), Mfs. Gary Kenner (Sandra) and Mrs. Paul Clemens (Pamela); six grandchildren; also one niece, Mrs L. (Isabella) Mousseau and one Nephew, James Kippan.

"Dominion City-Facts, Fiction and Hyperbole," is the book which kept Mr. Waddell busy writing during his later years. It has been compiled by his daughter Shannon, from his many notes and photographs.

"A picture is worth a thousand words."

I have tried to get as many old time pictures as possible for this book.

James McKercher Waddell

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Foreword

Dominion City is a small town in southeastern Manitoba, not unlike countless other little communities, but at the same time a bit unique if you have ever lived there. It has been said, "That once you have lived in Dominion City, you will never be truly content living anywhere else." Perhaps this is stretching the truth to some degree, nonetheless, the townfolk have always taken a great pride in their measure of accomplishment. The picturesque Roseau River winds peacefully through the town taking an east-west route and her well-treed path provides a striking contrast to the surrounding flat prairie countryside. The winters are crisp and cold, the summers can be dry and hot. Situated within the famed Red River Valley, much glorified by song and verse, allows one and all to acclaim their heritage and assess their fine locale.

Many of you who read this book will probably have some connection with Dominion City or the Roseau Valley. You may have lived here at one time or another, or you may have passed through or even stopped to visit a friend or relative. Whichever the case may be, it is to be hoped that you will enjoy these stories as much as the author, my Dad, enjoyed writing them for you.

Fathers are all special, mine was no exception, and editing his notes was not a pleasant task after his untimely death. As I read through his papers, however, it became very evident that a personality can live forever. In fact, most of the characters that he chose to write about were soon transformed into very real, intimate and timeless mortals. Dad sincerely believed that there was no place in the entire world more suitable to live than Dominion City, no water finer than that of the Roseau River, and no land richer than the soil of the Red River Valley. This absolute and positive outlook enriched his entire life in uncountable ways. He welcomed one and all to our home whether it was a dear friend or a total stranger. He constantly avowed that history books were much too dull to be even remotely interesting, let alone factual, although he would read with vigor almost every single text that came his way. And now, as you read his stories, my only wish is that you will be able to capture some of his warmth, genuine humility, and complete awareness, respect, and love for your fellow mankind.

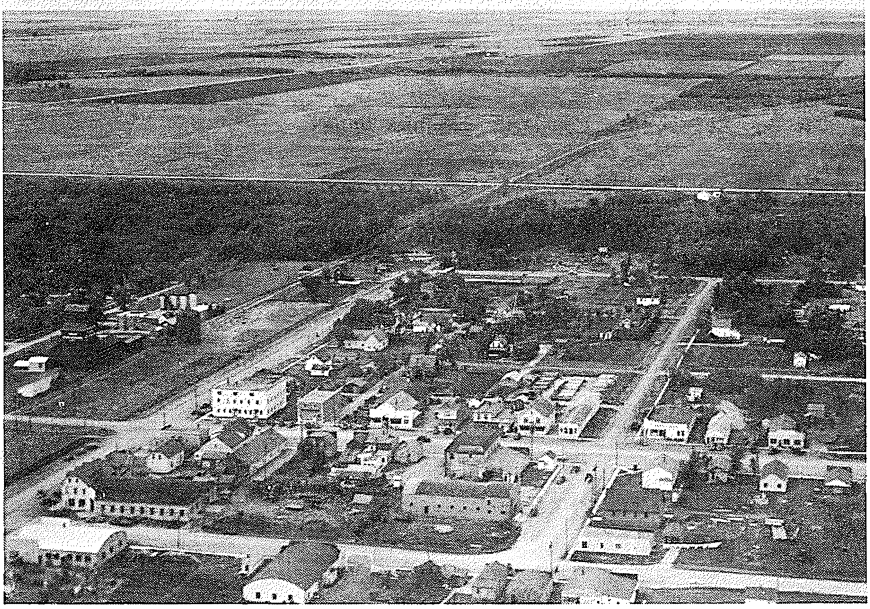
Shannon Waddell Friesen

No Murders

1874 - 1970

Our town has never had a murder, though around election times there have been some very close calls. We have had, however, about all other types of felonies: holdups, bank robberies, safe crackings, store breakins and incendiary fires for insurance, also blackmail, scandal, assault, divorce cases and shotgun weddings.

"What more would you want?"



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yesterday, today and tomorrow

There are two days in every week about which it is useless to worry.

One is yesterday with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders.

The other is tomorrow. It too, is beyond our control. Tomorrow's sun will rise either in splendour or behind a mask of clouds — but it will rise.

That leaves today and usually our present trials are easier to bear than remorse for what happened yesterday, or dread of what tomorrow may bring. Let us, therefore, journey but one day at a time.

Anon.

First White Man on the Roseau

La Jemeraye 1732

Who was the first white man to paddle a canoe down the Roseau River?

Well, my guess would be Christophe Dufrost La Jemeraye in the year 1732. The only other man, who may have preceeded La Jemeraye, would have been Pierre Esprit Radisson on his venturesome trips to the Hudson Bay from 1650 to 1660, as he sought out the riches of the West.

The Roseau River was the original route to the Red River and the West to be travelled by the early French explorers and fur traders. This route was used almost exclusively by them from 1732 until 1739. In 1740, when the first Fort Maurepas was moved from the Red River, north of what is now Selkirk, to the Winnipeg River, then the Winnipeg River became the more popular route because it led more directly to Lake Winnipeg and the North West Fur country surrounding the Hudson Bay.

The Roseau route, however, was much shorter and by far the quickest way to get to the Red River, Fort Maurepas, Fort Rouge, Fort La Reine and points south and west. River portages were a cruel hazard the early travellers faced, and one main advantage of the Roseau route was the fact that there was only one portage, Savanne, which was a three-mile portage from the Reed Creek to the Roseau River, or to the Warroad River and the Hay Creek, which is a branch of the Roseau. On the other hand, the Winnipeg route had some thirty portages and was much more perilous with its treacherous rapids and swift flowing water. It has even been said that sometimes the Indians and Coureurs de bois refused to travel the Winnipeg River route fearing the dangers to life and limb.

La Jemeraye selected the site of Fort St. Charles, on Lake of the Woods, in 1732, because it was about mid-way between the two known routes to the west. La Jemeraye, however, seemed to prefer the less foreboding Roseau route and in the winter of 1732-33, he and Jean Baptiste La Verendrye (eldest son of Pierre La Verendrye, whom I shall call the Explorer so as not to be confused with Jean) journeyed down the Roseau and built a small fort at its mouth, where it joins her sister river, the Red. This post was used, in turn, as a half-way stopping place between Fort St. Charles and Fort Maurepas.

Christophe Dufrost La Jemeraye died at Fort Roseau some three years later on May 10, 1736. He was buried near his favorite fort and two of the Explorer's maps show the grave and the fort as being located due west and across the Red River from the mouth of the Roseau. To date (1970) neither this fort site or the grave of La Jemeraye have been found, but I hope that some day, and soon, both locations will be discovered. La Jemeraye does not seem to have received the credit he earned and deserved. He had a natural talent for getting along with people extremely well. He was both liked and respected by the Indians and he spoke their language fluently. His judgment and

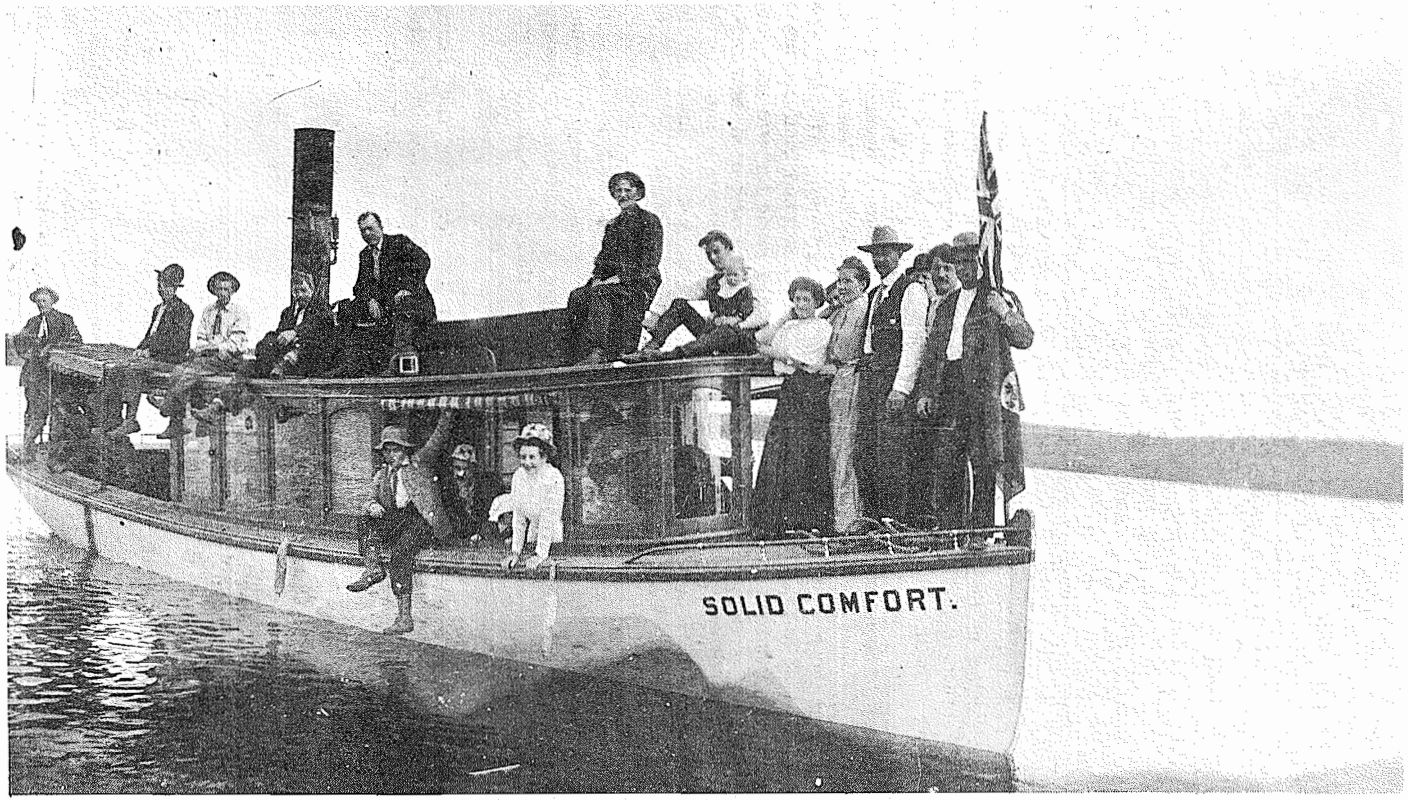
keen sense of reasoning were excellent; he was a born leader of men and a tireless worker. Dufrost, as he was usually called, seemed to have hit it off pretty well with Jean La Verendrye. Both of these men were years and hundreds of miles ahead of the famed Explorer, who like a great general kept well in the rear. Dufrost and Jean came down the Roseau and Red rivers in 1732 and 33, probably going as far as the Assiniboine River and the future site of Fort Maurepas, on the Red.

Fort Roseau was the first fort to be built on the Prairies and the Explorer's third one in his line of march to the West. All early fort sites were selected by Dufrost and Jean, upon the advice of their Indian friends, and it was not until five years later that the elder La Verendrye, the Explorer, reached the Prairies and his two forts on the Red River.

In February of 1737, the Explorer, Pierre La Verendrye, decided he had better get going in his search for the Western Sea and the Mandan Indians and on February 8, 1737, he left Fort St. Charles, on snowshoes. He followed the Roseau, a natural roadway during the winter, through to the Red River. He stopped at Fort Roseau, where he tried to find Dufrost's grave, but although the grave had been well-marked the previous year with a wooden cross, it now could not be found owing to the deep snow. From Fort Roseau the party treked down the Red River to the mouth of the Assiniboine where they looked over the site of the future Fort Rouge, and they continued their journey via the Red River and on to Fort Maurepas. They had made the trip in eighteen days and during bitterly cold weather. The Explorer reported hundreds of kindly Indians living along the rivers. Big game was plentiful and they shot several moose and deer which provided them with a good supply of fresh meat. The Explorer and his party stayed at Fort Maurepas for about three months and then headed back to Fort St. Charles. By this time, however, the snow and ice had melted and they now were able to travel by canoe, back-tracking their first journey, along the same route. Stopping again at Fort Roseau, this time they had no trouble finding the grave of La Jemeraye. A priest, who accompanied the Explorer, blessed the grave and they were all able to pay their homage and last respects to a truly great man.

Here lies a coincidence of history: Dufrost La Jemeraye and Jean La Verendrye, his closest friend, both died the same year, 1736, and only 26 days apart; Dufrost died from pneumonia and Jean was brutally murdered by the Sioux, only a hundred miles away, at Massacre Island in Lake of the Woods; both were young men at the height of their careers; and both were only 28 years old. This was a terrible and a tragic blow to the Explorer. The sorrowful loss of his two very best men, at nearly the same time, left him almost alone. I can never help but wonder if he wasn't very tempted to forfeit his many hopes and dreams and return to the relative security of his home in Quebec.

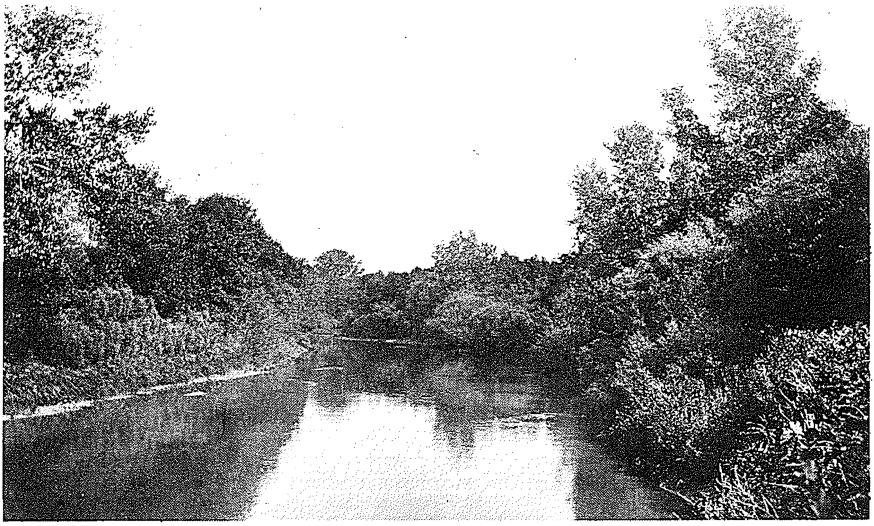
As to why most modern writers of history and our school text books state that the Winnipeg River was the first waterway to the Red River and the West, to be used by the early explorers, I don't know, but I sure would like to. This point can be argued in favor of the Roseau River, by "sheer logic" alone. The Winnipeg River, granted, is a big, wide, beautiful and fast-flowing river, but nonetheless, our Roseau was the first route to the West.



The 'Solid Comfort' (most suitably named) as you can see provided many a pleasant outing on the Red River for fun-seekers who felt they needed a day off and who could pay the $1.50 fare for a jaunt from anywhere to nowhere.

In 1878, at the request of Archbishop Tache of the Roman Catholic church, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company named a new townsite, fifteen miles north of Dominion City, "Dufrost", in honor of Christophe Dufrost La Jemeraye. Undoubtedly one of Canada's greatest explorers, La Jemeraye was a friend to the Indians and Whitemen, alike, and he was the first whiteman to have died and been buried in western Canada.

On July 26, 1936, a memorial cairn was unveiled which had been erected to the memory of La Jemeraye. The stone for the cairn was brought from Ridgeville, and the cairn was built at Letellier, on the east side of Main Street. A suitable memorial reads, "May the memory of this young hero, who lies here, in our midst, serve as an inspiration to our own young people of Canada. May his example of courage in adversity be an incitement for us all, to carry on the work of Christian civilization brought here some two hundred years ago when these valiant men stepped on our prairies".



A lovely view of the beautiful Roseau.

The Saulteaux Indians

The Saulteaux Indians (pronounced So-Toe) who live on the Roseau Rapids Reserve near Greenridge, and the Roseau River Reserve five miles west of Dominion City, came here over a hundred and fifty years ago. They are brush country Indians and not prairie Indians like the Sioux. Prior to coming here, the Roseau Band lived on the north side of the Joe Creek where it enters into the east side of the Red River, about one and one half-miles north of Emerson.

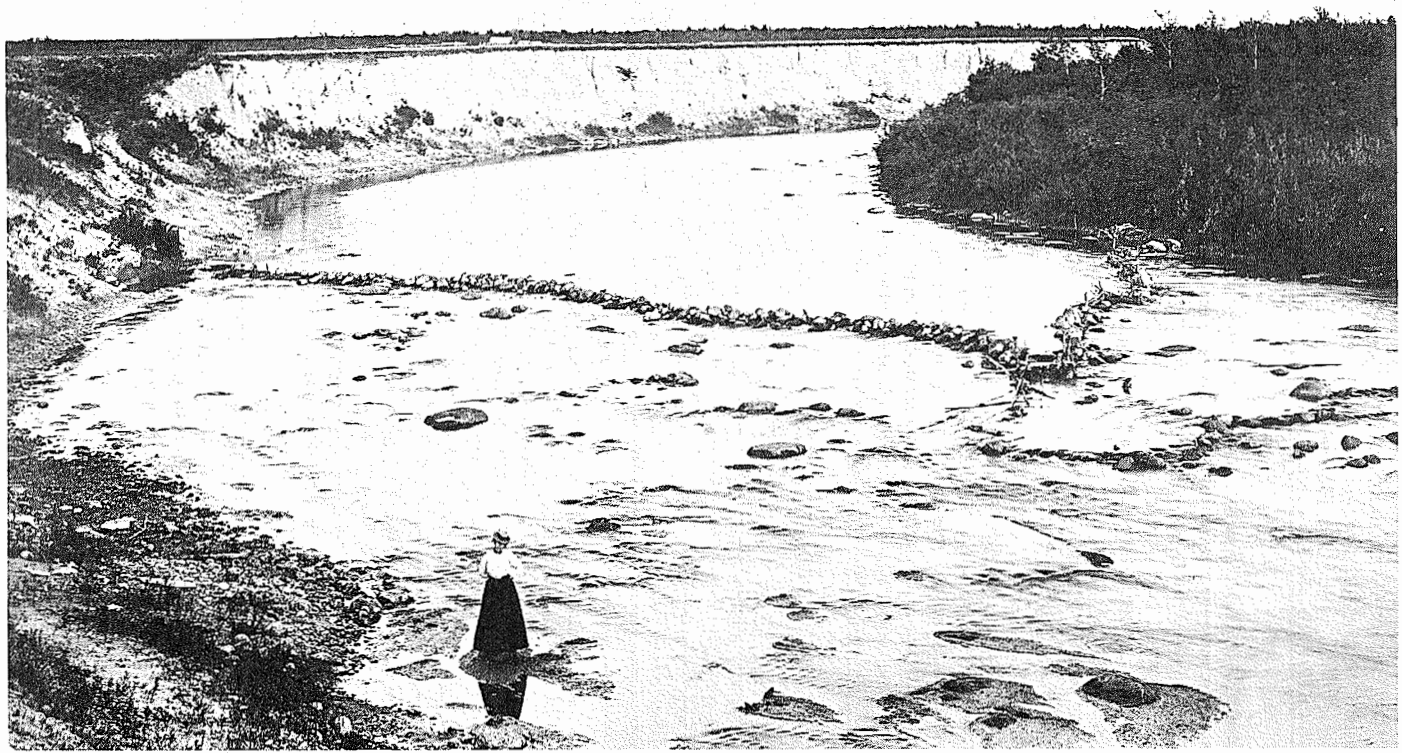
Their decision to migrate to the Roseau Valley was made because there was more game and fur here and these two mainstays were a very real necessity for the well-being of a tribe. The trek to the River of Willows began about the time the first Selkirk Settlers arrived in 1812 and the establishment of Fort Pembina meant that game was becoming more scarce all the time. The Saulteaux were wise to move and they made an excellent choice of new surroundings for at that time the valley was a hunter's paradise.

Most of the tribe settled at the Rapids or See-Boss-Qui-Tan, but the odd family lived on the south side of the Jordan, close to where it empties into the Roseau. This campsite was sort of a half-way stop between the Rapids Reserve and the Roseau Reserve, where the rest of the tribe settled. The smaller creeks and coulees running into both the Red and Roseau Rivers provided excellent fishing for the Saulteaux as well, for most years these streams were high and the abundance of clean, fresh, water resulted in these waterways teeming with fish.

Until the immigration of the Shagnosh (Whiteman) the Indians lived well, they were strong and healthy. Hunting was superb for there were all varieties of game including Wappiti or moose, deer, and all kinds of wild birds. The bush was full of Wah-Boose or rabbits which were very easily trapped or shot. There was the odd grizzly bear in the vicinity and no doubt this always posed a formidable threat to the Saulteaux. On a trip up the Roseau in the early fur trading days, Alexander Henry, the Explorer, reported shooting a big grizzly bear at a shallow crossing on the old Jim Lovering farm, now owned by Arnold Schewe. The bear was sighted as their canoes rounded a bend in the river. Catching fish and throwing them on the bank, as bears do, it made a fine target for the famous explorer.

The Saulteaux chose a beautiful site when they settled at the Rapids. This is by far, the most scenic and picturesque spot along the Roseau. The high banks and the swift, clear, water running over the well-polished stones are well-worth seeing and made a delightful highlight to a Sunday afternoon drive.

The Rapids is rich in history as well, and here can be found the remains of an ancient Indian stone fish dam, well over a thousand years old. This dam has been used by many tribes including the Stone Hut of Bank Indians, races long ago extinct. Prior to 1903 when the locks were built at Lockport on the



The remains of this ancient Indian fish trap may still be seen on the Roseau River today. Here hundreds of Indians from as far west as Bismark congregated every spring to catch and smoke jacks, sturgeon and catfish. This was an annual event every spring, after the fish started coming down stream again after spawning. Six young bucks, stripped to the waist, were posted at the narrow neck of the 'V' made by the dam. They clubbed the fish and kept clear the baskets situated there. The squaws gutted the fish and then smoked them on miles of poles. (Photo taken 1900.)

Red River, this was probably the greatest place in all of Canada, if not the world, to catch fresh-water sturgeon. The old Indians claimed that when the sturgeon ran in June you could almost walk across the river on their backs. The sturgeon liked the clear water in which to spawn and the Roseau was a natural favorite for them.

The Saulteaux loved the Roseau Valley and even though the big herds of buffalo were gone, other varieties of game were plentiful. Wild fruit and berry trees thrived along the river, and there was no shortage of senneca snakeroot which was their sacred and medicinal plant. The odd buffalo strayed this way but the nearest large herds were to be found only at Devil's Lake and Minot country in North Dakota, and this was risky business because that area was Sioux territory, which always meant trouble for the Saulteaux. These two tribes were life-long enemies and fought on sight.

The Saulteaux were, generally speaking, a peaceful race and according to noted historians their only known enemy was the Sioux, with whom they were constantly squabbling. It is interesting to note, however, that when the immortal Sioux chieftain, Sitting Bull, defeated General George Armstrong Custer and his 261 soldiers at the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876, the surviving Sioux warriors headed straight north, to Saulteaux territory, hoping to find refuge.

I might mention too, that only a couple of days after this historic battle, the Saulteaux, who had always been on friendly terms with the early settlers, brought word to my mother and father that there had been a bloody fight and that the Sioux had won. They had received this message by smoke signals and their account was confirmed days later when the fugitive Sioux passed through here. According to the Sioux, Custer brought about his own end by his selfish ambitions and greed for the Black Hills' gold and that he did not die fighting heroically, as portrayed by most historians. These Sioux, many of whom hac fought in the actual battle, claimed that Custer shot himself, with his own pistol, about the middle of the battle when the realization struck him that "all was lost". Custer had two bullet wounds in his body, one through his temple and the other in his side. The Sioux insisted that the fatal wound in the temple was self-inflicted, and that the other one was made by the young braves as they galloped over the battlefield after the fight, shooting into the dead bodies from their ponies. Personally, I would have to go along with the statements of the Sioux, because Indian superstition forbids the scalping of a suicide victim, and even American military reports of the event state that Custer had been killed by bullet wounds rather than scalping, as many of the soldiers had been. The betrayal and the treachery, which he had sought to inflict upon the Sioux, all in all, received its just reward.

The episode at the Little Big Horn resulted in the Saulteaux and the Sioux patching up a few of their differences for the time-being, but these two tribes simply could not get along together for any length of time, and as soon as the "heat was off" in the Dakotas, the Sioux were happy to return home.

Often, when I am wandering around the Rapids Reserve searching for arrowheads or what-ever-I-may-find, and I see the two rifle pits dug by the Saulteaux to turn back a Sioux raiding party, I cannot help but ponder over the ironic ways of life. These two pits were built as a defence against the Sioux,

but in all probability, the Sioux were darn glad to have them when they were hiding out and on the run. These pits remain in fine condition today, considering their age, one can be seen close to the old St. Paul Trail on the lower crossing on the south side of the river, and the other is on the high banks east of the St. Paul upper crossing on the north side of the river.

When this country was surveyed in 1871, and the two reserves alloted to the Saulteaux, there should have been a small reserve left for them at the Jordan Crossing, as well. As a boy, I often passed over this campsite, which was a favorite of theirs, and the Indians would always be camped there. Their teepees dotted the horizon and they even built the odd log house. Apparently somebody in power slipped up and for many years the Saulteaux claimed, "The Whiteman broke his promise".

Our family has always gotten along very well with our neighbours, the Saulteaux. When my father homesteaded here, they were excellent company, for there were so few white settlers at that time. I particularily like the Rapids. To me, it has always been the most beautiful spot in our district. It is to be hoped that in the near future, the beauty and the history of the Rapids will be appreciated by all, maintained and preserved, as a permanent monument to the Saulteaux and to our future generations.

MIGHTY INDIAN HUNTER

This is Big Charlie, hunter among the Indians of that day. Here he is at his campfire, as recorded by the camera of George Barraclough.

The wife of the last medicine man in the Roseau Indian Reserve lived to the ripe old age of 109 years.

Chapter Three

The Settling of Dominion City

Dominion City dates back to 1874 for it was during this year that our first white settlers began to arrive. It had been known as Roseau Crossing because of an excellent ford over the Roseau River. This ford was very important to those who travelled via the old St. Mary's Road which ran along the east side of the Red River from Selkirk, St. Boniface to St. Vincent and Fort Pembina. Most of the freighting was done by Red River ox carts on the route popularly known as the St. Paul Trail which ran north from St. Paul, Minnesota, hitting the eastern shore of the Red River and then following this famous valley northward to Winnipeg. Many stretches of this old trail can still be seen today with the original ruts of the old cartwheels still remaining some six or seven inches deep.

Most of the early settlers in this area came from Ontario. They were of Anglo Saxon backgrounds, and these hardy pioneers settled half of North Dakota and most of Manitoba. From Ontario they came by rail to Duluth or Moorehead and then down the Red River by flatboat or river steamer. Transportation on the waterways was considerably faster and much more comfortable than the tedious journeys by oxcart, and gradually the boat traffic replaced the oxcarts. The boats had almost a straight run north to Winnipeg, Selkirk and Lake Winnipeg. Others of course, still chose to travel over the Dawson Trail, as did La Verendrye and his predecessors who came down our Roseau River (clean through Dominion City).

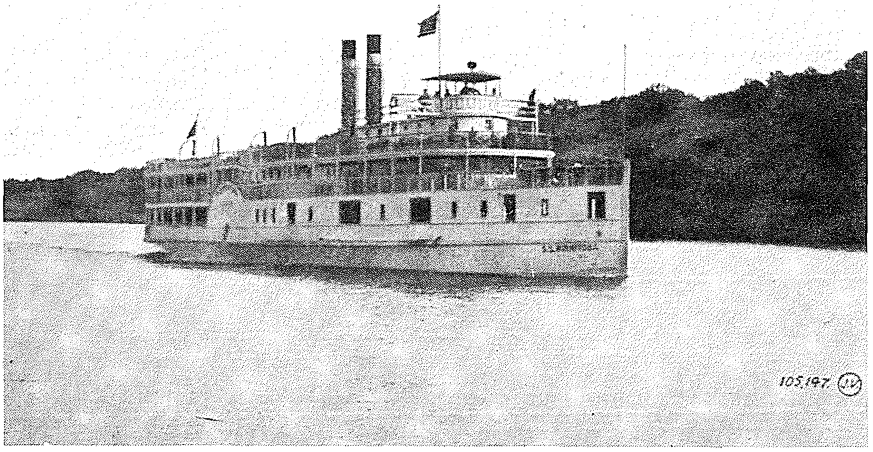
The steamboat trip down the Red River was a beautiful and scenic voyage. It is no wonder the poet Whittier when approaching St. Boniface, was inspired to write his famous poem, "The Red River Voyageur," which I remember so well:

"The bells of the Roman Mission that call from their turrets twain, to the boatsman on the river, and the hunter on the plain."

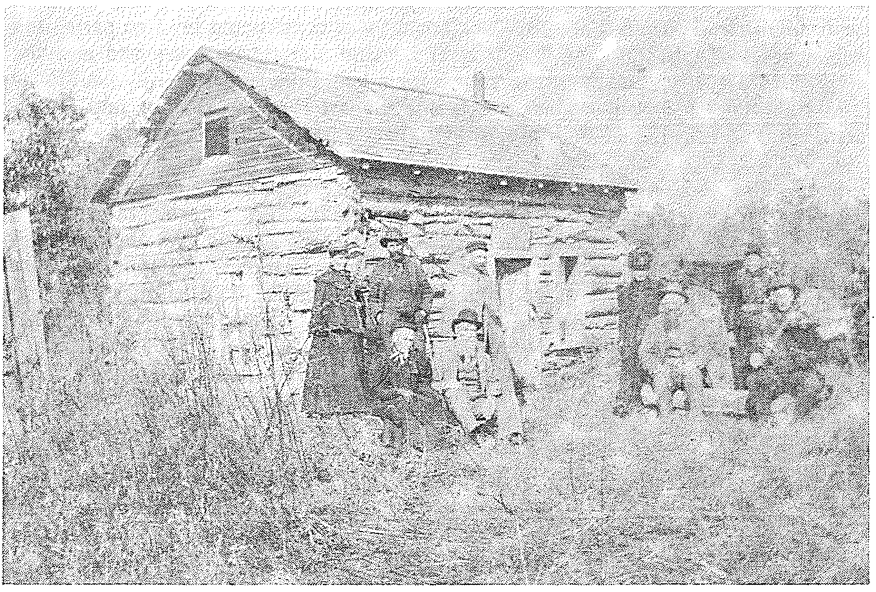
During the next few years, as the railways gradually took over from the river boats and the oxcarts, undoubtedly transportation soon became much faster, but no cheaper, and certainly much less picturesque.

On June 12th, 1874, the McKercher family became the first white settlers to arrive in Roseau Crossing. They came from Reach Township in Ontario, where Duncan McKercher had been the postmaster, grain buyer and lumberman. Debarking the riverboat at Emerson, they camped out overnight near the town and left the next day to overlook the unclaimed homesteads. They did not hesitate to choose the Roseau Crossing and they assumed the tasks of settling in with a genuine determination and love of the land. In the family were Duncan and his wife Mary, and their three children, Dan, Johnny and Bella (my mother). Next to arrive and also homestead on Section 20-2-3E were H. W. Wynne and his two nephews, Sam and Willie Sullivan. Alexander (Sandy) Waddell also settled here that same year and the Thomas Coulter family arrived early in the following year, 1875.

Mr. Wynne and his nephews constructed the first house in Roseau Crossing, a small log house on the site of the present home of Ed Murray. This house endured



Steamer "Winnitoba" on Red River (1880)



First house built in Dominion City by Mr. Wynne and his nephews, Sam and Willie Sullivan in 1874.

until the early 1900's, when it was demolished. The second house, started in the same year (1874), was the McKercher home. This was a large and fine home built from white jack pine logs which were cut near Caribou, Minnesota and then floated down the river in a log drive to Roseau Crossing. These logs were then sawn by

The McKercher house, built in 1876, where a lot of the early church services were held. It was also the first post office. It is the present home of Bill Taylor.

a portable horse power saw mill. The house was constructed in two parts, and not completed until 1876. At that time it became a stopover house and also the very first Post Office for the area. Known for a long time as the McKercher House it is still standing on its original site beside the old Roseau Crossing, and coincidently, it is now the home of our present post master, Bill Taylor.

From 1874 and on, Roseau Crossing grew fast. There was a steady influx of settlers and land claims were filed in all directions. Other developments were also going on in the area which affected the growth. That same year the Canadian Pacific Railway started construction on the Pembina Branch which would become the first railway system to enter western Canada. The St. Paul railroad was also being extended to Fort Pembina on the Red River and began operating efficiently four years later in 1879. Then a railroad survey, started in the 1879's, was run from St. Vincent to St. Boniface and crossed the Roseau River beside the old ford. All indications made it apparent that there would be a town here but, in all probability never a city.

To the south Messrs. Carney and Fairbanks had started the town of Emerson. They had made a deal with the powers-that-be to colonize some 80,000 acres of prime land on the east side of the Red River and to the north of the United States border. Their "rake-off" resulted from their stipulation that before one could file for a homestead at Roseau Crossing, one must first buy a hundred dollar lot in Emerson townsite.

While our townsite was growing, the population was also beginning to show promise. In 1876, the first white child was born in Roseau Crossing. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Coulter became the proud parents of a bouncing baby girl called Gertie. She received her schooling here and later married M. D. Irvine, the local druggist. In that same year

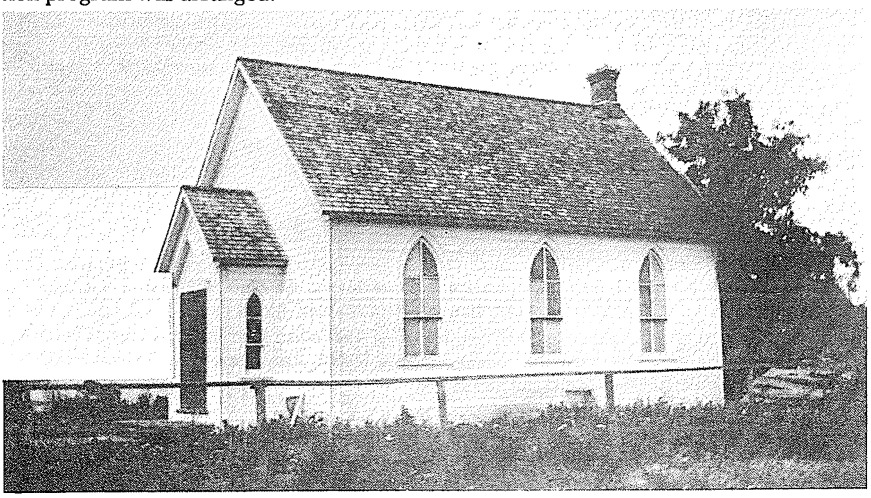
Alexander Waddell and Isabella McKercher became the first white couple to be married in town. The nuptial was conducted by the Reverend John Scott, who was also the first Presbyterian Minister in this area.

At the mention of Reverend Scott, I recall he was affectionately called "Daddy Scott." He settled in this area and was largely responsible for the construction of the first Presbyterian Church in 1880. He was a truly historical character, and a fine and wonderful man about whom a book could be written. He lies buried at Walhalla, North Dakota.

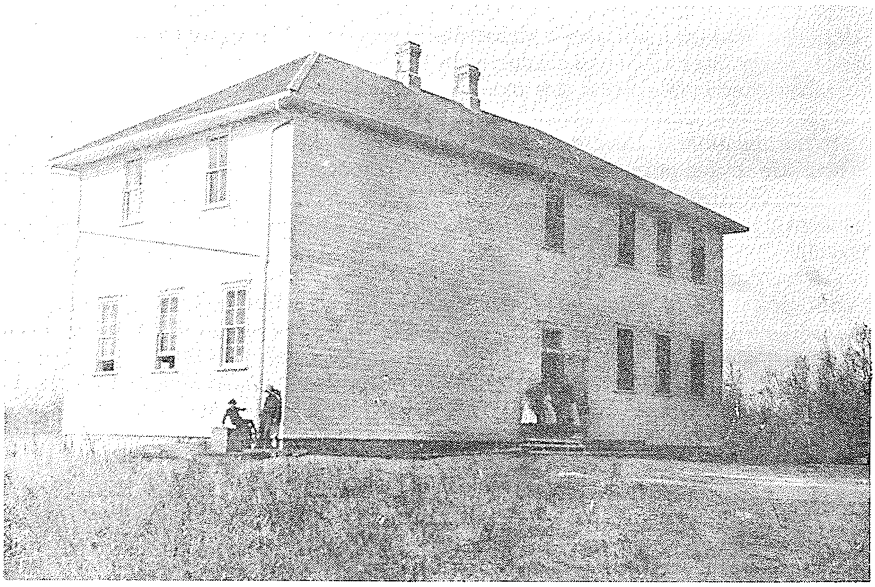
But despite the stipulations of Carney and Fairbanks, Roseau Crossing was attracting settlers. In 1875, John Smith (real name) built a store on the south side of town where the Roseau Trail crossed the Coulter Ravine. The next year Mr. Grey opened up another store on the west side of town nearby the present home of Mrs. Annie Timlick. Also in that same year, 1876, McKercher started up a lumber and building supplies business across from his post office where the new United Church now stands.

Perhaps one of the attractions of settlers to the Red River and Roseau River Valleys was the soil. It is regarded as among the richest in the world and of great depth, measuring some ninety feet. Some of the old Manitoba school geography books state that our soil was equalled only by the Nile Valley soil in Egypt. This is not unreasonable, as our area is the remains of the bottom of the ancient Lake Agassiz and until some thousands of years ago it was just a duck marsh. Close by what we call Greenridge and Ridgeville were the banks of this great lake and the gravel and sand to be found there are indicative of lake shores. This same ridge extends as far north as what is now known as Bird's Hill.

Families of good old-fashioned sizes were now being raised and others were steadily moving into Roseau Crossing. Thus it soon became very apparent to the town fathers that the children would benefit from, and need, a sound academic education if they were to truly succeed in this new land. And ere long a practical, if makeshift, education program was arranged.



First Presbyterian Church erected in 1880.



This is the second school built at Dominion City around 1901, it was torn down in 1916.

Here is an early Dominion City school class taken around 1900. They are, left to right back row: Harry Barber, Melville Oakley, Dora Farayon, Gertie Coulter (who, incidentally was the first child born in Dominion City), Maisle Simpson, Anne Moffat, May Tailor, Eva Howarth, Nina Waddell, Garnet Coulter (once mayor of Winnipeg), Herbie Graham, Charlie Gallenger. Middle row: Edna Ginn, Eva Collins, Ethel Brad, Lila Lavergn, Anne Acres, Ethel Lavergn, Lillie Parker, Lena Waddell. Sitting: Emerson Moffat, Ray Empey, Henry Lawson, Heck Miller, Jim Waddell, Renard Empey, Bert Barber and Fred Esterly.

The first school teacher to hold classes and teach in Dominion City was Miss Maggie Smith, who travelled around the countryside by horse and buckboard. She held classes in private homes and had previously taught in Paisley, Scotland.

In 1879, Sam Sullivan and John Robinson made a trip to Winnipeg and arranged with the Department of Education to start a public school here and soon one was set up in the lean-to of Wynn's house, where Mrs. Peter Toffan's house now stands. The first teacher to teach in the public school was Miss Ross. Later in the same year the school was moved to the New Episcopalian Methodist church.

In 1880, the first public school was built to the southwest of our present school and the first teacher was Miss Charlotte Ramsey who later married Edgar Froom. In 1896 an addition was added to the north side for high school classes. The first teacher for the higher grades was George Thompson, the primary teacher was Miss McPhail who later married George Green. This school was used until late 1916 when it was finally demolished and a brand new school, of white brick, considered the finest in Manitoba, was constructed. An elementary school was built in 1956 and used along with the 1916 structure which was torn down in 1966. The present elementary school remains in good condition and is now servicing the town. Plans for a new and much larger combined high school and elementary complex are now on the drawing board.

With the influx of settlers a pattern for future development of a town site was being laid out which was completed in 1878. While today it may have little significance, at that time settlers were very proud of the fact that it was being used as a model for other town sites. It was probably aided by the fact that the railway passes through in a north-south direction. Nevertheless, when new townsites were being surveyed in Manitoba, Dominion City was often used as a model plan, and many towns were being patterned after it. Markers were often lost, and it is not unusual that as time went on that property lines became a little confused.

In 1879 the Canadian Pacific Railway built spur tracks from Roseau Crossing to what is known as Greenridge to mine the gravel. The spur track on the south side of town ran through Ted Gruenke's farm and to the big gravel pit on the farm of Stuart Froom. Many of the early settlers worked here to make a little extra cash. A camp of a thousand men were stationed at the south side of town and trains of flat cars carrying gravel ran the eight and one-half mile jaunt every half hour. The track operated until 1882 when it was pulled up and after that most commercial gravel was obtained from Bird's Hill.

The Railway also constructed another track on the north side of the Roseau. It ran through what is now Jim Lamont's farm making a loop around the present duck pond. This spur serviced the brickyard operated by a Nova Scotian firm and the McKercher-Waddell feed and flour mills. When the brickyard folded up and the mills burnt down in 1884, the need for this spur was gone. This resulted in the tracks being pulled up. The mills were rebuilt, but at a different location. The brickyard, however, was never re-opened to the regret of most of the area. Even though our soil was not suitable for heavy brick structures in the immediate area, there was a considerable demand for good bricks from not-too-distant communities.

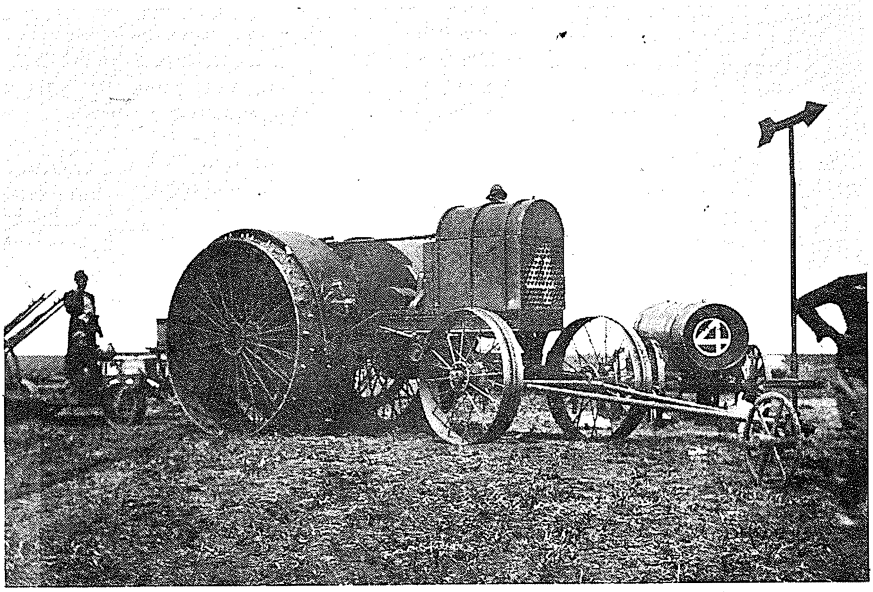
About 1910 a group of Americans, mostly from Keewanee, Illinois, came in and bought up a lot of the wild farm land west of Arnaud and north of Dominion City. With high hopes of becoming real estate giants they built several ranches for their headquarters and broke up the prairie and scrub land with Big "4" gas tractors. They harvested their first bumper crop in 1912 and cleared all expenses. After farming the land for a number of years they gradually got out of it and went back to the States with their profits. Later on in the 1940's and 50's they sold the land to local farmers who are now working these farms. Some of the bigger names from

the states who financed the project were: Lyman, Gunthrie, Saunders, Young and Fisher.

Prior to the settlement of these glorified carpet baggers,this area had been used for the Manitoba Field Trials. It was ideal country for this sport, and there was lots of prairie chickens and pheasants for the dogs to work on. The terrain was ideally suited for riding over and, being prairie, it was easy to watch the dogs.

All during the summer months the locals played host to dog-trainers, mostly from the southern states, with their prize canines. Mind you these Americans were good spenders and the local businessmen looked forward to their annual treks north. Most of these fellows took lodgings in Arnaud or Dominion City, while they trained their dogs for hunting. Livery men and their stables especially had a real heyday. Horses and democrats were in great demand and for our American visitors, the best was none too good. Many locals enjoyed the hounds as well and this area was a favorite coyote hunting spot for the Saddlebag Surgeon, Doc O'Brien. The Doc loved nothing better than a good hunt with the boys after a hard days work.

People came and went, Dominion City was growing slowly and steadily.



Big 4 gas tractors were commonplace after 1910 on the American-owned ranches between here and Arnaud. The entire countryside visited the ranches, with some regularity, just to get a glimpse of these unbelievable (in those days) and giant machines. They were too expensive for the average homesteader, but most of the bigger ranchers had one. Most of us merely looked on with awe and tried to remember, "Thou shalt not covet."

Dogs and Checkers

Father always maintained that his homesteading days were the happiest days he spent in this country. Wild game abounded and the rivers and streams teemed with fish. The buffalo were gone, however, the last one shot in his area was in 1871, at the Horseshoe Lake, three miles south of St. Jean. This was a stray that had managed to escape the slaughter sponsored by the United States government to subdue the Indians with a severe case of starvation.

Checkers and poker were the two most popular games, among the settlers, during the long winter nights. The district boasted many fine checker players, including Joe and Sam Sullivan, Dan Harlow, and Father, who never failed to enter the Manitoba Championship Tournaments held annually in Winnipeg. Games helped pass the time and Joe Sullivan often recalled the following yarn.

There was no such thing as "hired help" in the 1870's and most pioneers owned a good dog for herding their cattle. Dad had a very intelligent collie, in fact it was so smart, it could do almost everything but talk. The cold winter evenings could become very tiresome and Dad decided to teach the collie to play checkers and hoped it would help to ease the boredom. Joe lived less than a mile and a half away and one night decided he would come over and visit Dad. Much to his surprise, he found Dad and the dog enjoying a game of checkers. The checker board was on the table between them, Dad sat in one chair and the dog in another, Dad would make a move and then the dog would move. Joe was fascinated, he stood and watched for some time, then finally said, "My God, Sandy, that's one smart dog you have there!"

Dad nodded his head, took a chew of tobacco and replied, "Oh, he's not so damm smart, I've beat him two games already."

Joe said he was in no hurry and that he would like to play against the dog, and with that, it was decided that they hold a three-way tournament. They cut a deck of cards, the Dog won the bye, and Dad and Joe played off. Joe won then he played against the dog and the dog finally emerged as the winner.

They had to quit playing with the dog though. Seemed he was a poor loser, and whenever he lost too badly, he'd take his spite out on the cattle next day.

Chapter Five

Log Drives Down the Roseau

In 1876 McKercher and Campbell ran the first log drive down the Roseau River.

Duncan McKercher, a burly lumberman originally from Ontario, wanted white pine or cedar logs to build an addition onto his home in town; and Mr Campbell, a shrewd foreman with the C.P.R., in charge of bridge construction on the Pembina Branch, had been scouting around for sturdy bridge piles. They enquired hereabouts and soon learned from the Indians that the nearest available supply of white Norway pine and cedar was in the vicinity of Caribou, Minnesota. The ideal method of getting the timber to Dominion City was obvious, and these two venturesome men made haste in joining forces and agreed to tackle a log drive down the Roseau. They made arrangements to have their logs cut during the winter by the local woodsmen at Caribou and in early July, 1876, the drive became a reality and the first logs were floated into the Roseau.

All went well, surprisingly enough; There was just the right amount of water in the river for such a drive, and they encountered little or no trouble until they neared the Rapids Indian reservation and the ancient Indian fish dam.

Most of the country along the Roseau, aside from the occasional white family of settlers, was inhabited by the Saulteaux Indians. Although they had silently stood by and watched the drive progress, when it neared the Rapids, it suddenly became very clear that an ill wind was blowing. The Indians, it seemed, feared that the drive would wreck their fish dam and because they had not even been consulted about the whole affair, they were quite indignant, and justly so. Some three hundred Saulteaux had assembled on the high banks, armed to the hilt with tomahawks, spears and rifles. They ordered McKercher and Campbell to stop the drive immediately and it looked as if the Indians could certainly back up this demand. Realizing the onesidedness of the situation McKercher and Campbell were quick to bargain for their lives. The Indians agreed to open their fish dam and allow the drive to pass through in exchange for a high toll of dry goods and knick-knacks. Actually, the trading and bargaining went off so well that all concerned almost forgot that there had even been a skirmish.

Needless to say the first log drive was a rip-roaring success and others were encouraged to try. Before long the drives on the Roseau were an annual event. The Saulteaux wasted no time in becoming very business-like and each year they were only too pleased to open up their fish dam for a profitable fare. The Indians and the settlers had preserved their friendship and continued to remain on the best of terms. Even when their blood kin were fighting at Batoche and Cut Knife Creek, during the Northwest Rebellion in 1884, the Saulteaux kept their friendship with the homesteaders of the Roseau Valley.

In the early 1890's, Daniel Sprague (founder of the town Sprague, in southeastern Manitoba) started running log drives down the Roseau every year. From Sprague, in Lake of the Woods country, the logs were rolled into Mud Creek, then floated into the Roseau. They came down river to the Red and finally moved on to Winnipeg, where they were eventually processed.

Dan's drives were huge, for a river the size of the Roseau, and often his logs would take two or three days to pass through Dominion City. Once his first logs started to arrive here, one and all would watch for his Wanigon. The Wanigon was a good-sized boat measuring some thirty feet in length by some twelve feet in width, with a big long oar in the stern for steering. Yes, it was quite a sight to see the Wanigon riding majestically down the middle of the river, well in the fore of the drive. She would be flying two flags, one Canadian and one American, for part of the drive came through Minnesota. Blue smoke would curl upwards from the huge stove on board, used to heat her and to cook on. Earlier drives had gotten along with a make-shift raft affair, but Sprague liked to do things up in grand style and his Wanigon was equaled by none.

Dan Sprague hired only expert loggers and many were of Scottish or Irish backgrounds. It was always said that only those who could dance the Highland Fling or the Irish Jig, over the logs, were good enough to roll timber for Dan, and no doubt early training in the Isles would have been a real help. It was a genuine thrill to watch his men dance or jig over those logs. Even though it could be very dangerous work at times, the loggers showed nary a trace of fear.

The Wanigon would tie up at Dominion City for a couple of days and give all the townsfolk a chance to see it. If you were lucky, you might even get invited on board for a cup of coffee and pie. Dominion City was the first town the loggers hit because it was the half-way mark between Sprague and Winnipeg and also the hardest part of the drive would then be over.

The loggers worked hard, no doubt that, but when they reached Dominion City,

The first log house in Emerson. Also served as the first Custom House and local jail. The pigeons on the roof seem to have thought it was most suitable.

The McLaren - Bagshaw log drive in 1906 encountered some difficulty at the Rapids (notice the high banks in the background) however the log jam was soon cleared and the logs kept right on rolling along.

they would be gosh-awful dry. Although the Roseau is reknowned for its excellent water and makes darned good tea and coffee, the men seemed to get tired of drinking it and found rye, gin, or even beer a welcome change. So, with the drive here for a couple of days the loggers would proceed to celebrate.

The loggers were good spenders and liked to drink. Of course, there would be the odd fight, but on the whole, there was very little trouble. The peak of the drive brought lots of on-lookers out to watch the various goings on. The spectators would watch from the traffic and railway bridges, and with a good audience, the loggers would put on a fine display of their various talents. Most were darned good log rollers, all carried pike poles, and some could vault over the logs like the daring young man on the flying trapeze. The crowd would hold its breath and cheer lustily, claiming it was just as good as any circus.

On log drives down the Roseau, luck played a big hand. With just the right flow of water, one could make good time. With the water too high, logs floated away and into the bushes, making them hard to recover, and then losses would be heavy. If the river, on the other hand, was too low, then the logs would get stuck in the mud and the sand. This would also make a lot of extra work for the loggers and could slow up the drive.

Sprague lost quite a few logs on his last drive, most of them at the Rapids. Some of his logs are still in the river, and many still sound and in good shape. They can be easily recognized with the letter "S" still showing, stamped on each end of the log.

On all but one of Dan's drives the logs were floated to Winnipeg to be processed. One time, however, the logs were floated into the Duck Pond, here, and sawed up before they were shipped by rail to Winnipeg.

Bagshaw and McLaren ran a drive down the Roseau in 1906. They had cut their logs near the U.S. boundary, around Point DeLorn, west of Caribou. They also floated them into the Duck Pond, where they were sawn up for lumber.

Driving logs down the Roseau was a dangerous job and many a ducking the loggers got. Fortunately, no lives were ever lost, but there were many near-misses. Even big Pete McLaren had a close call when he went down under the logs for about twenty feet. He was lucky though and was able to find an open space where he was able to get out.

Sprague always boomed his logs at Dominion City. They would pile up ten feet high, causing the water to dam up behind and create pressure. When the laggards (slow floating) and the deadheads (partly submerged) caught up with the main drive, the boom would be cut. The logs and the water would go out with a tremendous roar that could be heard all over town and for miles around. Plum-scared the hell out of everyone.

In every drive there were logs lost and some stolen. One time I found a big boom log in the river and managed to float it to our watering place where Dad hauled it out and sold it to the Council for a bridge pile. These logs would be about thirty feet long and with a hole in the end for chains. My Dad gave me the money he got for the log, three dollars, I think. Seems to me I shot most of it in on black licorice chewing candy that had just come out.

Looking back, one of the big thrills of my life was a ride on Dan Sprague's Wanigon, from the old mill east of town to Dominion City, a three mile ride by river, right out in front of a log drive.

Chapter Six

The Driving of the Last Spike

1878

A lot has been told and written about the driving of the last spike on the Pembina Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which was the first railway to enter Manitoba and the great northwest.

This is the story, as told to me by my father and mother, who were both there. My father helped to drive the spike but my mother was too shy to get up in front of such a hugh gathering, so she held back and watched the others tackle it. Most of the stories of this historical event are taken from the account which appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press, and a reporter had been sent along on the special train to cover the ceremony for that paper.

The Pembina Branch was a 67 mile stretch of track that ran north, along the east side of the Red River, from St. Vincent, Minnesota to St. Boniface. It was an extension of Jim Hill's St. Paul - Pacific line completed the same year, 1878.

The last spike driving ceremony was planned by the C.P.R. who had built the Pembina Branch, and they arranged and paid for all the frills. Two special trains attended the big event, one from the north, and one from the south.

About 9:00 a.m. the north train pulled out of St. Boniface and headed south. This train, besides an engine, consisted of a caboose with a stove in it for the ladies to keep warm and three flat or ballast cars. Specially fitted up for the occasion, it was pulled by the Countess of Dufferin, which had been shipped down the Red River on a flatboat the year before. This train carried the government officials, top ranking C.P.R. men, and a various assortment of V.I.P.'s from Winnipeg and St. Boniface. This train also carried a shipment of goods consigned to Crawford's Store, Penza, Manitoba, which made history as being the first shipment of goods, to be shipped by rail in western Canada.

The morning was cool with a light north-west wind blowing. Winter was setting in and although there was a little snow, there was not too much frost in the ground. All the way from St. Boniface the train kept up a speed of twenty-five miles an hour on the new road bed, which was darn good time, and about noon it pulled into town.

Dominion City had been chosen as the site where the last spike would be driven. In those days of early railroading, rivers were a big obstacle, and the pride and joy of the Pembina Branch was the new trestle bridge, barely completed, over the Roseau River, here, in town. And so the special train now crossed over the new bridge to be greeted by the train from the south, which had arrived earlier in the morning. The American train carried various railway officials and V.I.P.'s from Moorhead, Ft. Pembina, St. Vincent and even Emerson.

There still remained, however, a short stretch of track to be laid between the site of the present C.P.R. depot and the bridge. Two gangs of men were at

work laying the track from both ends, and both working at top speed to see who would get to the finishing spot first, that is, the point where the last spike was to be driven. To connect the rails, the last two lengths of rail had to be cut to the correct size and new holes bored in one end. This was soon done though, as the light, 40 pound rails were not too hard to work with. (The present tracks are 110 pound steel) Quickly the rails were bolted together and the track was now ready for the last spike. It was now around 1:00 p.m. and the grand occasion was about to commence.

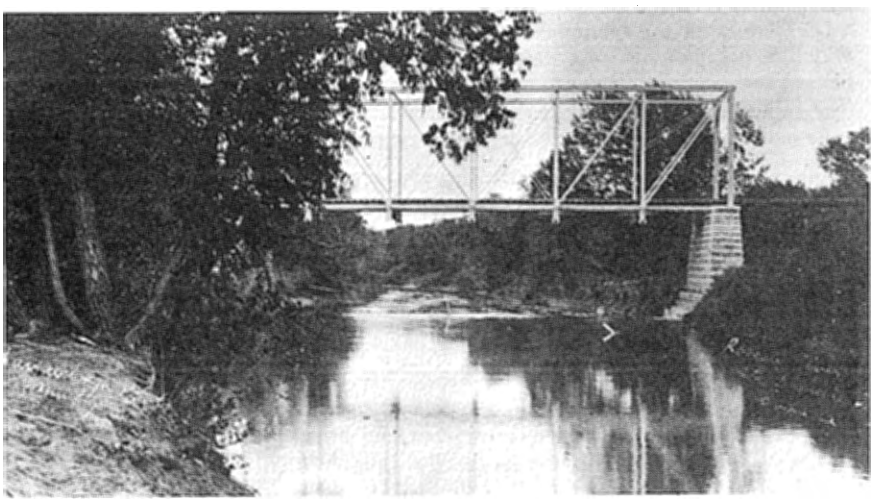
Although the plans for the last spike ceremony had been made well in advance, seemingly they could not decide upon who would have the honour of driving the last spike. So, to avoid any ill will or hard feelings, it was decided that everybody present, who so desired, could have a whack at it. This idea went over big with the crowd.

The iron spike selected was painted white to distinguish it from all the others, and the pine tie into which the spike was to be driven was replaced by one made from white burr oak. Although the pine ties are light and nice to work with, they just can't compare with oak, which will last a lifetime.

Mr. Sullivan, the local section boss, was put in charge of the last spike driving. You might call him the referee. It had been decided that all present could have a whack at the spike, but one swing apiece, only, hit or miss. Also nobody was to hit too hard because everyone was to have a chance.

Sullivan started the ceremony with a few light taps on the spike shortly after 1:00 p.m.

Speeches were made and toasts drank to the first railway to enter our part of



The new trestle bridge, the pride of the Pembina Branch of the C.P.R. (seen looking west from east of the bridge) This was quite a feat in early engineering, built in 1878, few bridges in this part of the country could compare with its construction.

the country. About half a dozen dignitaries spoke and were cheered lustily by the crowd, especially when the toasts were proposed. The toasts were more popular than the speeches, because the liquor poured out for the toasts also acted as a bracer and insulator against the weather and cold wind. Both trains had come well supplied with liquor and they were quite generous in handing it out.

Everyone was happy and excited to see that the first railway to enter the west It meant a great deal to the settlers and everyone. People could hardly believe it! The days of the ox carts and flatboats were over; modern transportation was here at last! Undoubtedly it was the biggest event ever held in Dominion City, or ever will be.

With the speeches over the spike driving got underway again. Sullivan made a good job of refereeing. He made all the ones, who wanted a crack at the spike, line up and as each one stepped up and took a swing, hit or miss, he stepped back and handed the hammer to the next man in line.

The spike went down slowly. Each swing was loudly cheered by the huge gathering. Especially in favor with the crowd were those who lost their balance and staggered or missed altogether. This was quite excusable, as well as being highly entertaining.

The spike driver is an eight pound, two-sided hammer with a head or face on either side and about an inch and a half in diameter. To see a section hand drive a spike, one would think there was nothing to it but for anyone who has never tried it before, it is not an easy feat.

The swing would throw some off balance, and a couple of swingers fell down. This caused the Chief from the Roseau Reserve, who along with about twenty other Indians were watching the fun, to say, "Augh! Too much skitawaboo."

One fellow let the hammer slip out of his hands and it sailed through the air with the greatest ease. Fortunately it did not hit anyone, but referee, Sullivan, bawled the man out telling him he could have killed someone. It is said that history repeats itself which is true, as you still see ball-players letting the bat slip from their hands. 'Course maybe they are trying to kill someone.

From now on Sullivan warned everyone to grip the handle tightly.

With an inch or more of the spike still to be driven, and because most of those who had wanted to take a crack at the spike, had already done so, Sullivan now called upon the ladies, some 20 or 30 in number to help the men out. Until that time they had been standing back in a group by themselves unnoticed (except the good-looking ones.) They especially enjoyed the fun as their husbands came up to swing.

One fellow who had staggered and missed the spike but got a good laugh anyway, felt the men were slipping up. Looking around he noticed the ladies and among them his wife who was laughing at him. A bright idea struck him and he shouted out, "How about letting the ladies finish the job!"

The crowd hollered, "Sure. Sure. Let them finish driving it."

And so, with some persuasion and coaxing, about a dozen came forward and took a very gentle and ladylike tap at the spike, but alas, the spike did not move.

The driving was getting harder all the time. Oak ties are tough wood. Though the ladies were loudly cheered and given lots of encouragement the spike failed to budge. Pioneer women were supposed to be tough, sturdy, and hard-hearted, but not these ones. They seemed to feel sorry for that poor spike after all the beating they had seen it take. So instead of knocking the stuffing out of it, as the crowd had told them to do, all they gave the spike were a few love-taps. One thing about the ladies, though, they did not stagger around like some of the men had. In those good old days, women did not drink; at least not in public like nowadays.

Standing among the group of ladies who had been too shy and modest to come forward and take a tap at the spike was a stalwart looking young girl, Mary Sullivan. She was the daughter of the section boss Sullivan, the referee. She was eighteen years old and had been closely watching and enjoying the last spike driving. Like some of the other ladies, however, including my mother, she had been too shy to come forward before the huge gathering and take a whack at the spike. She loved section work and used to help her dad pump the hand car, drive spikes, tamp ties, and do any track work she could.

The spike had still over an inch more to go and the ladies were about ready to give up and let the men finish the job when Charlie Lynne, who had worked on the section and knowing Mary quite well, also knew of her ability at railway work, noticed her among the ladies and shouted out, "Hey Mary, come on over and show them how to drive a spike."

Mary, blushing from head to toe, quickly ran over. Her dad very proudly handed her the spike hammer and the crowd roared approvingly. She stepped back the proper distance, spit on her hands (like her dad always did) and with a mighty over hand swing drove the spike home and right down to the rail. At her mighty feat, the crowd set up a tremendous roar! The trains blew their whistles making a din that was heard for miles around. Mary, of course, had stolen the show!

The drinks were passed around again, but this time the toast was to Mary Sullivan, "The Hero of the Day." The crowd ignored the bigshots and everyone huddled around to congratulate Mary and shake her hand.

A movie of Mary driving that last spike would have been worth a million. Mary's powerful blow proved out the old adage, "Never underestimate the power of a woman."

With the sudden finish of the ceremony and due to the fact that the day was now getting on, the C.P.R. officials generously invited all who wished to climb on the northbound special to do so. The train headed to the big railway camp, two miles north of Arnaud, where the Mosquito Creek crosses the railway. Here, they had a good hot meal awaiting all. Toasts were again drank to Mary and to the new railway and after a couple of hours the trains pulled out, one heading back north and the other south.

It had been a wonderful day and one that would always be remembered. Most of the folks had never seen a train or an engine before, and most had also been able to enjoy their very first trainride.

In those days rumors grew easy, and spread fast. Before the day was over, the

Mary Sullivan, 18 year old daughter of the C.P.R. section boss, whose mighty blow drove the last spike on the Pembina Branch— "Hero of the Day".

story had gotten around that Mary Sullivan was closely related to John L. Sullivan, who struck the hardest blow of any pugilist that ever lived. Mind you, this was easy to believe and especially by those who had seen Mary wield that hammer for even the ground shook when she hit that spike.

The spike was repainted white the next day and also, a white circle was painted around it on the rail and tie with a marker set up near it. The spike and marker were well-tended as long as Sullivan was here, but along about the late nineties an extra gang came along to work on the track and the last spike and tie were pulled up, never to be replaced.

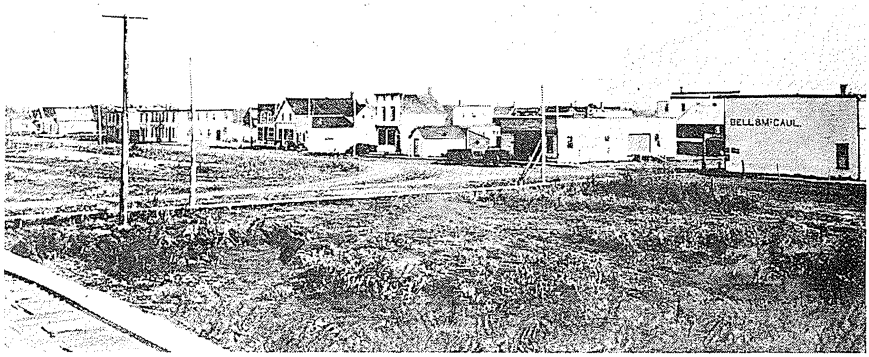
The spot where the last spike was driven is east of the present Texaco oil storage tanks, on the east, and just north of where the first water tank stood. As a boy I remember seeing it with the white circle painted around it and someday, I would like to see a cairn erected to mark this very historical site.

Although Jim Hill the American Railroad Tycoon did not get to the historic driving of the last spike at Roseau Crossing, he was able to make up for it a short time later, when his special train raced over the new roadbed, from St. Vincent to St. Boniface, at the unheard of speed for those days, of a mile a minute or 60 m.p.h.

Jim was on a tour of inspection and the roadbed was frozen and in fair shape. He gave orders to clear the track and with the engine bell a-clanging and the whistle a-blowing, he made the run in just a few minutes over an hour; scaring hell out of everyone along the way. Horses bolted, dogs started to howl and head for the bush, and cats climbed the trees and housetops. P. S. Barnum, of circus fame, never put on a greater show than did Jim Hill on his first run over the Pembina Branch. Many swore that it was Casey Jones, himself, at the throttle.

This roadbed has been improved a great deal since Jim made his famous run. The steel rails then were 40 pounds to the foot and now they are 110 pounds. First called the Pembina Branch, it is now known as the Soo Line. However, it still remains as one of the best and the smoothest roadbeds in Canada.

The Pembina Branch prided itself on this excellent and smooth road bed which is still one of the best in the province. Some of the trees have been cut down since this picture was taken just north of town in 1922, but I think the area is still familiar.



Although the general appearance of the town has not changed much, this picture of Dominion City was taken when men were men, liquor was sold across the counter, and remittance men paid for their transgressions with Baine wagons, in the boom days of the 1880's

Chapter Seven

From Roseau Crossing
— To Penza — To Dominion City 1874 - 1880

In the early days this town had more names than the Canada Jay. Originally it was called Fort Roseau after the old Fort built by La Verendrye in 1732, five miles west of the present site where the Roseau River empties into the Red. There was a good trail along the east side of the Red River known as the St. Mary's Road which was used mostly by ox carts travelling north and south along the river. Here was a good low water crossing on the Roseau without having to travel twelve miles east to the St. Paul trail crossing.

The name of Roseau Crossing was first officially used by the Dominion Land Surveyors who mapped out the country in the early 1870's. Their camp was five miles west of here on the old fort site. They improved the crossing and used it in surveying out the country north of the river around what is now known as Arnaud and Ste. Elizabeth. On their maps the site was shown as Roseau Crossing. Later when the railway ran its survey line through here, they also called it Roseau Crossing.

The first white settler to arrive with his family and settle on section 20 was Duncan McKercher on June 12, 1874. He came from Ontario where he had been a postmaster and it would seem that he kept right on at it acting as postmaster for Roseau Crossing and most of the Roseau Valley, even sending up mail by river over the border into Minnesota. After acting as postmaster for two years for free, McKercher received his official appointment in this capacity in 1876. His house and post office were built beside the crossing.

By 1877 Duncan Mc Kercher just got plain fed up with the various names the place was being called. Anything with the name "Roseau" on it came here - Roseau Crossing, Fort Roseau, Roseau River, Roseau Valley and so on. Along with

these names, there was the name of Ahgomaqua used by the Indians. Most of McKercher's problem, however, came about the U.S. mail being sent to the Roseau Valley over in Minnesota. Much of it seemed to come here and he, in turn would have to re-route it up the river, by boat to the country around what is now known as Roseau, Minnesota. In those days there was a steady traffic of boats up and down the Roseau River for it was a popular route from Fort St. Charles to Winnipeg. McKercher then wrote to the postal authorities and suggested a new name for Roseau Crossing. The postal department wrote back and told him to go ahead and call it anything he liked. After raking his brain for a new name he finally got his encyclopedia and found the name "Penza". (Penza means running water and is a city in Russia, south-west of Moscow where the Penza River runs into the Sura, and is situated in a good farming area.)

McKercher figured Penza was a short name, easy to write and pronounce, and since nobody had ever heard of it before, he felt darn sure it would not be duplicated. So he called it "Penza."

However, the public did not take to the new name, nor did it solve his problems with the mail. In fact, it just added to the confusion - one more name for the mail to come under. Some letters, to make sure of their destination, were addressed with more than one name. The majority of citizens continued to call it Roseau Crossing and the Indians referred to it as still being Ahgomaqua, which means "over the bush."

Bella McKercher who looked after the post office remembered a couple of letters that came addressed to Louis Riel, with both Roseau Crossing and Penza on the envelope. They lay in the post office about a week when one night about midnight in walks Louis Riel and another Metis, both dripping wet. They had swum up the river with their horses and this is how they got wet. Riel picked up his mail and was away before daylight next morning. Mr. McKercher knew Riel personally and he liked him. Actually the first vote he cast in Manitoba was for Riel who ran in the federal district of Provencher and was elected in 1874.

About this time Penza was really booming. The railway spur track to the south ridge and gravel pit was completed and trains with flat cars were hauling gravel, running the eight miles every half hour day and night. A railway camp with over a thousand men was stationed here and including the local population the town numbered about fourteen hundred.

Although McKercher was my grandfather and despite blood being thicker than water, I think he made a mistake in trying to do away with the name Roseau Crossing. I always figured that of all the names our town has been known by, Roseau Crossing was by far the most appropriate. Perhaps I am like the Indians, but I, like they, prefer a place called by what it means. No doubt my grandfather thought he had selected the most suitable name since Penza means "running water" and his home and post office were beside the river which was usually full of running water. Then too, in 1950 the whole town had a lot more running water during the flood. Appropriate or not, the name of Penza is preserved for in 1911 a Masonic Lodge was formed in Dominion City under the name, a befitting happening to one of the town's first names.

The dissatisfaction continued with regard to the name of Penza until it was

finally agreed upon to call a public hearing and see about getting a solitary name for the town - once and for all. And so, on a fine May morning in 1880 a meeting was called for 10 o'clock and about forty of the town's most prominent citizens gathered together in the C.P.R. station house which had a good-sized waiting room that was used for all the dances and local gatherings. The meeting, chaired by Jim Scott, did not get off to a very good start. Natt "Buckshot" Bagshaw, who traded a lot with the Indians and who was very popular with the squaws, started right off by arguing that the Indians should have a say in naming the town. He maintained that there were over 600 of them living along the river and that they had been there long before the white man came. It was early and the crowd was still agreeable so Buckshot went to the reservation and soon returned with three Indians, the Chief, his brother Big Jim from the Rapids Reserve, and Louis Sennie from the mouth of the river.

The meeting was called to order again and the debate was on, and long discussions followed. The bulletin board used for trains contained the six names commonly used; Fort Roseau, Roseau Crossing, Penza, Roseau City, Roseau, and Ahgom-oh-qua, the choice of the Indians. Several new ones were also suggested and written on the board. Buckshot and the Indians held out for the Indian name. More talk, and more arguments followed but by noon no name had been decided upon.

The crowd was now both thirsty and hungry from all that talking, so it was decided upon to adjourn the meeting until the forenoon. Roads for those living outside of town and who had quite a ways to go home to dinner, were not very good. Also it was a lot of work to harness up the horses or oxen and it was feared that once they left they would not come back. Then Bill Markel came up with the bright idea that we get some refreshments and all stay right there. About half of them stayed. The hat was passed around to raise funds for food and refreshments and before too long sufficient was raised. In short order George Brad, owner of the Queen's Hotel was over with a wheelbarrow loaded with cheese, crackers, bologna and a keg of beer which he wasted no time in tapping. The first glass he handed to Sandy Waddell who was regarded as a connoisseur of beer, gin and home brew. Sandy pronounced it tops and remarked, "George the motto for your hotel should be "In Publico" (reserve the public) which you sure do." No one questioned his Latin - the refreshments were on and so was a name for the town.

Although harsh words had been spoken in the morning session, the beer and the lunch seemed to make everybody a little more amiable as well as more talkative — as a matter of fact they all wanted to talk at once. By two o'clock most of the citizens who had left had returned, and so the meeting was again recalled to order and open discussion followed. But "no dice" McKercher and Bob Taylor held out for Penza, Sandy Waddell, Sam Sullivan and John Ginn held out for Roseau Crossing, the Gooselaws insisted upon Fort Roseau, and so on. After another two hours of arguing the Indians decided to compromise and give up the name of Ahgomaqua if the whites would just send over another keg of "skittawbo" as they called it. Robert Hempton and Elijay Boyles, two strong temperance men spoke up saying, "No, definitely not, you've had enough skittawbo already, another keg and you'll be wanting to dance a pow-wow."

The meeting simply could not agree on the names and finally it was decided to have a vote on the six names up on the board; drop the lowest four names on the first ballot and have a final vote on the remaining two names. The voting

took place and the two names remaining for the final vote were Roseau Crossing and Roseau City.

Just before the vote was to take place and Jim Scott, who was Chairman could arrange for another ballot, a voice boomed from the back of the room, "Why not call it Dominion City?"

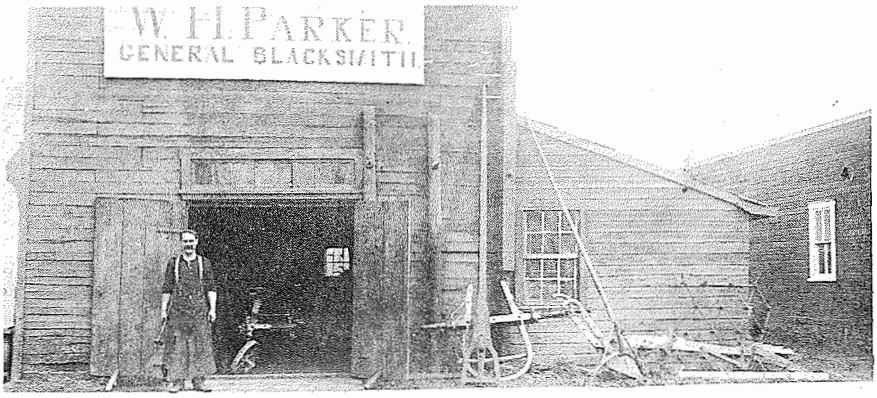
This new name hit the meeting like wild fire for about this time there seemed to be a craze on to add city to the new towns starting up, such as Rapid City, Crystal City and Birtle City. Every small town thought it would soon be a city and all at the meeting had the same idea. Most of the citizens present were getting tired of arguing in any case and all were quite agreeable to call the town "Dominion City."

The Indians wasted no time in producing a peace pipe filled with a mixture of kinni kinic and tobacco and insisted on everyone smoking it as a gesture of goodwill and friendship. The pipe was passed around and most of the folks took a puff or two with the exception of some of the "drys" who swore the pipe smelled and tasted of beer and liquor, which it probably did. The meeting was over, everyone shook the next fellow's hand, and all were pleased with the new high-sounding name.

As to the identity of the gentleman who sprang the name on the meeting, your guess is as good as mine. It was always told that he was a railway worker, for he left town shortly afterwards and was never heard from again. He may have feared any repercussions for he never divulged his name either.

That same evening the town decided to throw a party to honor its new name. A large white canvas banner was prepared with haste and bore the proud inscription, "Our Town Is Now Dominion City." "Long May It Live and Prosper." The newly formed town band led by Johnny Hart wasted no time in getting a parade together to march around and tell all the new name. After the people got tired of marching around the town, Sam and Joe Sullivan tuned up their violins and the dance was on, held in the same waiting room of the new station house. Where the station house had been painted with the sign "Penza," however, it was draped with black crepe to signify that Penza was no more.

The celebration lasted well into the night; our town had a new name - Dominion City!



Bill Parker's blacksmith shop: Mr Parker retired to the west coast where he lives today.

Early street scene. Note the horse drawn wagons at the left. The two centre establishments are still in good repair today, being the businesses of Mabel and Louis Solnes' cafe, and Nick Woronchuk's plumbing and heating.

Dickie Scott's Store (one of the best business enterprizes Dominion City ever boasted)

Here Bill Young poses in front of the Ideal Restaurant, best remembered as Bill Turner's pool room and barbershop. Destroyed by fire in 1966.

Here is Dominion City's first drug store. Standing in front of the store are Ernie Campbell and others. The lady is Miss Nina Waddell, one of the first female druggists in the province, to graduate in Pharmacy from the University of Manitoba.

Chapter Eight

Weather

Oldtimers kept close tabs on the weather. Modern weather ballons and orbiting satellites were unheard of and Indian superstition was usually the most reliable source of forecast. It was always a good idea to keep two thermometers, however, when you couldn't believe one, if two showed the same reading, then you could trust your eyes. Over the years most of us have come to expect certain types of weather at certains times of the year. Unfortunately, but in any case, the weather is like a lot of people - completely changeable and going from one extreme to the other. Some of these extremes follow:

OPEN WINTER
1877-1878

The mild winter of 1877 and 1878 is the only open winter ever recorded in the Red River Valley. No snow fell, whatsoever, and the ground never froze up either. To celebrate this astonishingly fine winter, a plowing match was held on Christmas Day at the Harlow Bros. farm, later owned by the Mayes Bros., the Huffs, and now by the Glenway Hutterite Colony.

Our little jack rabbits and snowshoe rabbits met with a difficult struggle for survival that winter. Because they turn white in the late fall for protection from predators, they became an excellent target when there was no snow on the ground. The Roseau River remained open and froze only slightly. Many of our game bird, ducks, and geese stayed here all winter. Those birds that did go south were hopping mad about it too, for they had made that long migratory flight for no just reason, since they would have been almost as warm right here.

COLDEST WINTER
1879-1880

The coldest day on record here was on December 24, 1879, when the temperature registered sixty degrees below zero. The United States government had a weather station at Fort Pembina and it recorded sixty degrees below as well; Winnipeg registered fifty-four degrees below. Three days in a row were really cold, here, December 23, 1879, fifty-four degrees below, December 24, 1879, sixty below, and December 25, 1879, fifty-four below, and the coldest Christmas on record.

At this writing, 1970, twelve days during the winter of 1879-1880, still hold the records for registered cold temperatures. It was always claimed that it was so cold the cows gave ice cream instead of milk.

MOST SNOW
1906-1907

The coldest winter and the deepest snow I ever saw was during the winter

of 1906 and 1907. Between here and Ridgeville, the Flats, the snow was from four to six feet deep. Many of the barns were completely drifted over, and steps had to be cut in the snow in order to get the stock out.

Although Manitoba was bad, Saskatchewan was worse, where they referred to it as, "The winter the cattle died on the trees'.

In the spring, people living along the Roseau and Red rivers prepared for a flood, but fortunately spring came early and the river broke up and the water got away.

HEAVIEST RAINFALL
1926

The highest recorded single rainfall for this part of the country occurred on August 31, 1926, when 8.6 inches of rain fell on Dominion City. Up until then it had been an early and a nice harvest season. Some farmers had in about a weeks threshing, most of the grain was cut and in stook, and it had been a helluvah good crop. On the last day of August, it started to rain. The Jordan Creek which runs through Greenridge and Woodmore turned into a raging river. Stooks of grain from flooded grain fields were swept down into the turbulent waters that carried away fences and everything in their path. As the waters madly rushed into the Roseau, into the Red, and into Lake Winnipeg the debris or flotsam and jetsam almost plugged the locks at Lockport.

Jim Neeves, a canny Scot, who lived at Lockport fished out a lot of damm good grain sheaves going through the locks (not coming through the rye as the song denotes). He was able to dry the stooks and thresh out a lot of good grain. He then decided he might as well kill two birds with one stone and so with a fishing spear in one hand and a grain fork in the other took position. When a sheaf of grain came along, he used the fork, if a big fish came swimming by, he would use the spear. Yes, Jim made a good days work pay off and ended up with a load of sheaves and a load of fresh fish.

WETTEST YEAR
1927

The wettest year we ever had was in 1927. It rained all summer and in June, every day. Farmers had a hard time getting their crops in. What they did manage to seed hardly grew for it was so wet and cold. The average rainfall for our area from May until August is 10.3 inches, in 1927 the recorded rainfall from May until August was a record 22.9 inches.

DRY YEAR, 1934

1934 was the driest year most of us ever experienced. This was the year that our Roseau River went dry and stopped running for a spell. Her neighbour, the Red River, was mighty low too, becoming a strip about six or eight feet wide and filled with duck soup, as they called the muddy mixture.

The water was not fit for man or beast, a person couldn't drink it, nor could

the fish survive. Frogs and mud puppies were about the only marine life able to adapt to the muck.

The fall was also the driest, ever, even worse than in 1916 when they closed down the bars and called it prohibition. Grasshoppers were real bad and did a lot of damage to what there was in the line of crops and gardens.

Many of the wells and dugout ponds went dry. It was necessary to haul water for miles in most cases, as there was only the odd pond of good water around. Only 4.46 inches of rainfall were reported from May until the end of August as compared with the normal 10.3 inch average for that time.

Yes, 1934 was a real dry year. Archie Post at Roseau River always swore that everytime a school of fish swam up the river, they raised a cloud of dust.

WORST BLIZZARD, 1941

Quite often our worst snow storms occur during the month of March. It seems as if they can come up almost instantaneously and are almost unpredictable.

The big blizzard of March 15, 1941, started gathering strength about 7:00 p.m. after an exceptionally nice day. Lasting a day and a half, the temperature dropped to 15 degrees below zero and the winds raged at sixty and seventy miles per hour. A total of seventy-two lives were lost in this terrible tempest, 65 in the Dakotas and Minnesota, five lives lost in Manitoba and two in Saskatchewan.

This is by far the worst blizzard on record to occur in our area.

HOTTEST SUMMER, 1936

The hottest summer on record was in 1936. On July 11, it was 110 degrees in Dominion City. Winnipeg registered 108.5 degrees.

Bill Smart and myself, having read of how they fry eggs on the sidewalks in Mexico, decided to try it here. We borrowed a steel plow share from Bill Parker and placed it on the south side of the old Queen's Hotel and let the steel heat up, (mind you, it was pretty hot already). We succeeded in frying three eggs on it, they were nicely done, but it took about an hour. Bill, Hjelti Anderson the post-master, and myself each had one, along with cold beer and crackers.

Yes, 1936 was hot! Our cows gave sour milk and the hens laid hard-boiled eggs.

Meditation

It is not the number of books you read,
Nor the variety of sermons you hear,
Nor the amount of religious conversation in which you mix,
But it is the earnestness with which you meditate on those things
Till the truth in them becomes your own and part of your being,
That ensures your growth.

—F. W. Robertson

Chapter Nine

General Nuisances
Grasshoppers, Mosquitoes and Frogs and Snakes

GRASSHOPPERS, 1875

In 1874 when Section 20 (present townsite) was homesteaded the settlers found the country very dry. The following year it was even worse, and 1875 was to become the "Year of the Grasshopper Invasion".

The hoppers hitch-hiked in on a strong south-west wind from Montanna Territory and for three days you could not see the sun for they darkened the sky. Watching this living and moving mass in the heavens, the Indians became very excited and when asked what was going to happen they said, "Nothing. As long as the wind keeps up they will keep flying north-east, until they reach the Hudson Bay, where they will either drown or freeze to death; but if the wind goes down, then look out! They will land and eat up everything in sight".

On the third day the wind did go down and so did the hoppers. As the Indians predicted, the hoppers nibbled up all vegetation in sight; grass, crops, gardens, and even the leaves off the trees. The country was left black and baren, almost as if a fire had ravaged it. All water supplies were polluted with these insects. The water in the wells, the rivers and streams, and even home rain barrels were alive with the grasshoppers. The fish, it is said refused to eat them and the banks of the rivers soon stank from dead starved fish. They seeped into the houses and barns. Everywhere you went you would trod on these bugs, squashing thousands as you walked along.

Settlers used to water their horses and oxen at the river but the water soon became so polluted that even the livestock couldn't drink it. Although they were called grasshoppers, they were really locusts, a greyish-brown in color and larger than our native hoppers.

They flew in about the middle of July and lasted well into August. In the gardens, they gobbled up everything except the potatoes because they were underground and the hoppers did not have shovels to dig them out. By that time (July) the potatoes were about half-grown and fortunately so, as this was to be all the settlers would have in the line of vegetables that year. The crops and gardens, like the surrounding countryside, were stripped of all green. This was the worst year, by far, that the early homesteaders faced. The following year, to ease their plight, the government shipped in seed grain on flatboats and distributed it among them.

The Metis, Indians, and some whites ate the grasshoppers. They were cooked in a frying pan with a little grease or butter.....and it was a good idea to keep a tight lid on the pan or they would jump out. When cooked, they had a sweet taste and were fair eating. Birds and many small animals, seemed to like the hoppers and grew quite fat on them. One day in Winnipeg, while browsing around

in a supermarket, I was very surprised to see grasshoppers for sale. They were in a pint-sized jar, pre-cooked, and pickled. I did not buy any, however, figured I might have gotten pickled too.

MOSQUITOES AND FIREFLIES

According to our settlers, in the early days, the mosquitoes were another very real menace. They seemed bigger, they could bite harder and deeper, and they could fly faster than they do nowadays. When they swarmed their hum was like the continuous drone of a rusty buzz-saw.

In the good old summertime outdoor picnics were very popular and the saying was, "bring your lunch and a smudge along". Mosquitoes liked a good bite but not smoke and in those days a smudge was about the only thing that could ward them off.

When the mosquitoes were real bad, smudges were often kept going all night for the comfort and as a courtesy to our livestock. Unless one was careful, however, fires could easily start from a smudge and sometimes burn down barns and feed stacks.

Mosquitoes always seemed worse at night and especially during damp and rainy spells. They hatched about the 24th of May and hung around until the middle of July, when the black flies and bulldogs took over. No wonder a settler would bemoan, "Life is just one dam thing after another".

At first all that the settlers had for light during the long evenings were homemade candles. But during the summer they would catch fireflies, which were quite plentiful, and put them in clear glass sealers to make a marvellous, as well as a practical, lamp for their homes. Supposedly these bugs were more of a pet than a pest.

FROGS AND SNAKES

The three wet years from 1926 to 1928 brought along with them literally thousands and thousands of frogs. Although we had our fair share of these pesky animals hopping around us, they were even more numerous in the country just east of here. Evening would bring them out in full force and they would start to croak. Through the long night it was like a continuous roar or the anvil chorus from Il Travatore.

Before long an Illinois company set up a buying station and a processing plant here. They hired about half a dozen or so employees locally, and were soon shipping the canned frogs all over the states. Since there were so many frogs around, the supply was both plentiful and profitable. Buyers were also at Stuartburn, Tolstoi, Gardenton, and Vita. They would buy most of the frogs from farmers and truck them to Dominion City. Quite a few farmers never bothered seeding that year they just chased around the countryside catching frogs.

Although I've always heard that frog legs are considered quite a delicacy, I could never bring myself to try them. I suppose the promoters made a darn good

profit on the frogs. Did hear though, that the garter snakes were pretty hungry during the wet spell as their diet consists mostly of frogs and they were as numerous as were the frogs.

Frogs and snakes always bring to mind one of the greatest old time goldeye fishermen hereabouts, Hugh Smith, who worked for Dickey Scott. His favorite place to fish was Smith's Point, situated on the Roseau River, behind the present home of Jim Lamont, and named to honor Hugh. Anyway, one day after he had caught all the goldeye he wanted, he decided he would try for a big catfish. He had been using grasshoppers as bait, but for cats, a frog is much better so he took a walk along the river bank to look for a frog. He had only gone a short distance when he came across a snake swallowing a frog. Quickly he put his poor snake was without a dinner, but Hugh was glad to get the frog which he put on the hook in short order, and cast into the water. Hardly had the bait touched the water when a big twelve pound cat was on the line. The catfish put up a sincere effort but Hugh finally managed to land it.

Now Hugh was mighty proud of his catch and he decided that this occasion called for a drink. (He always toted a flask of brandy along.) After a couple of slugs he thought of the snake. Hugh was a softie at heart. His good luck had meant that the poor snake had to forfeit its dinner. Going back to where he had left the snake, he found it still lying on the ground just a-gasping for breath. Hugh wasted no time in giving the wretched creature a few drops of his brandy, which it seemed to enjoy. And licking its mouth, having made a remarkable recovery, the snake wiggled away.

Hugh went back to fish feeling much better about the entire affair but had only fished a short while when he felt something rubbing against his leg, he looked down and there was the snake, back again, with another frog in its mouth. That snake was nobody's fool, like many of us, he too, preferred booze to frogs.

The C.P.R. dam (behind the present home of W. A. Taylor) ensured the railway of a good water supply for the old steam engines. Also, it was hoped that the lower water level to the left of the picture would steady the bridge piles and prevent them from shifting.

Chapter Ten

The Queen's Hotel, Wine and Homebrew

Dominion City has always been very fortunate in having at her doorstep an abundant supply of sparkling, clear, and excellent tasting drinking water, namely the water of the Roseau River which flows through the town. For those of us who preferred another beverage, fortune smiled on the town and the Messrs. Martin and Balfour built the first licensed hotel here in Dominion City in 1879. Until then most of the liquor had been purchased from the Hudson's Bay Post at Emerson. Their liquor was of fair quality and cheap. A quart of their best liquor only cost sixty cents and a 42 oz. square bottle of gin only seventy five cents. The government didn't get around to watering the booze down then like they do now.

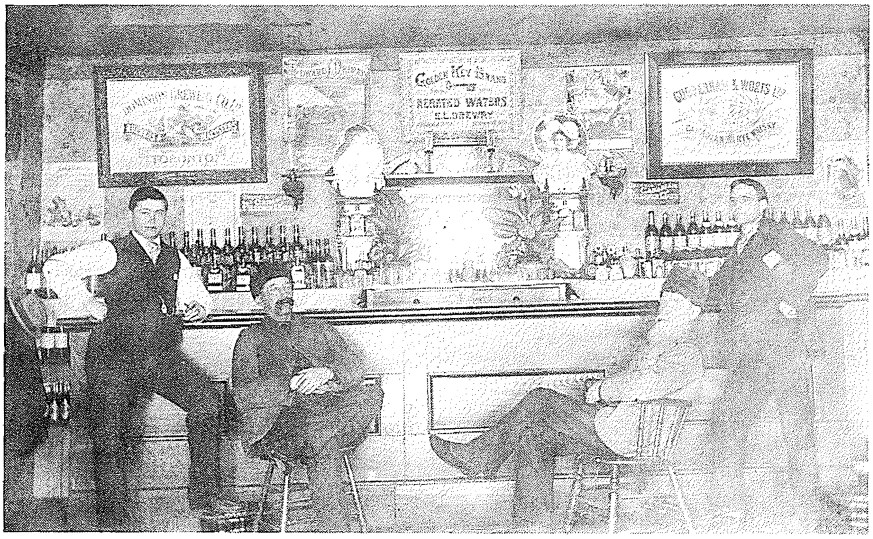
From 1894 until 1897, the Hotel lost its license bringing about a period of mourning for the "Wets" and rejoicing by the "Drys". But boy oh boy! did the Wets ever celebrate when the Hotel got its licence back. They did enough drinking during the first week to make up for the three year drought.

In 1916 the Bars were voted out, "Prohibition", however, this never bothered the folks too much. Liquor was ordered from outside the province or you made your own at home. This period was a bonanza for the railways because they were not shut down. Their express cars were loaded down with liquor and any employee, who got a little hankering on the job, could always snitch a bottle off the train and quench his thirst.

Before long, Jack Kenny, who had managed the Queens Hotel from 1904 to 1906, speculated and opened a wholesale liquor house at Maryfield, a few miles over the Saskatchewan border, and soon he was doing a booming business "mail-order style" with his former customers from Dominion City.

In 1918, the Inter-Provincial trading laws clamped down Jack's business (guess they figured Al Capone could take over here too) and there was nothing left for folks to do but go to work and make their own homebrew and wine. Actually it was a simple matter to go out into the bush and run off a batch of homebrew. Usually it was bottled in quart sealers and then buried in the ground, in case the snooping Drys or the revenue men decided to have their fun.

Every once in a while a still would blow up, usually in the middle of the night, the ground would shake and people would think there had been an earthquake. The old 10-gallon butter churns made dandy wine vats. Although most drinkers seemed to think the choke cherries made the best wine my dad always preferred the rhubarb varieties. Dad had a big patch of rhubarb and being a thrifty Scotsman he always used what was at hand for his concoctions. Any time it wasn't strong enough, it was a simple matter for one of the family to dump a gallon of 'real' homebrew into the mixture and give it an extra kick. Let me tell you, it wasn't too darn long before "Waddell's Rhubarb Wine" became famous. Those of the early settlers who wanted to be discreet usually drank wine because you could always tell a homebrew drinker from the red line across the bridge of



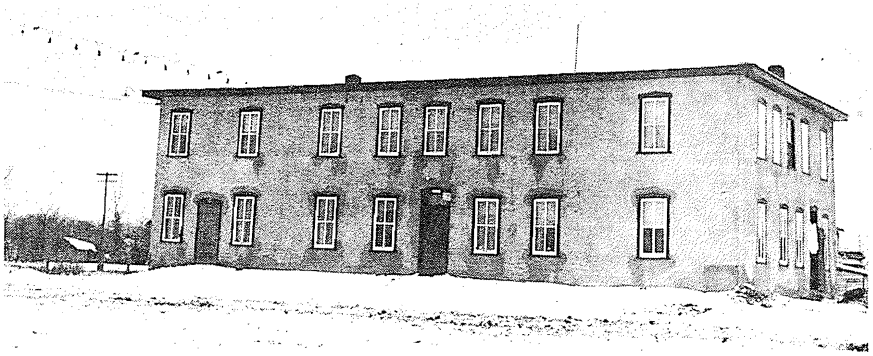
The Queen's Hotel has been a fixture of Dominion City for almost a hundred years. The picture above of the original bar makes a person wonder if times have really changed so much. Left to Right: Mark Forrester, Owner; F.S. Simpson; Mr Wynn; and an anonymous travelling salesman.

Opening Day at the new Queen's Hotel (1948) L to R - Bert Witty, Earl Simpson, Harry Flagel, Moose Erie, Louis Schuminak, Jack Murchison, Min Namba, Rudolph Bultz, Sewere Solnes.

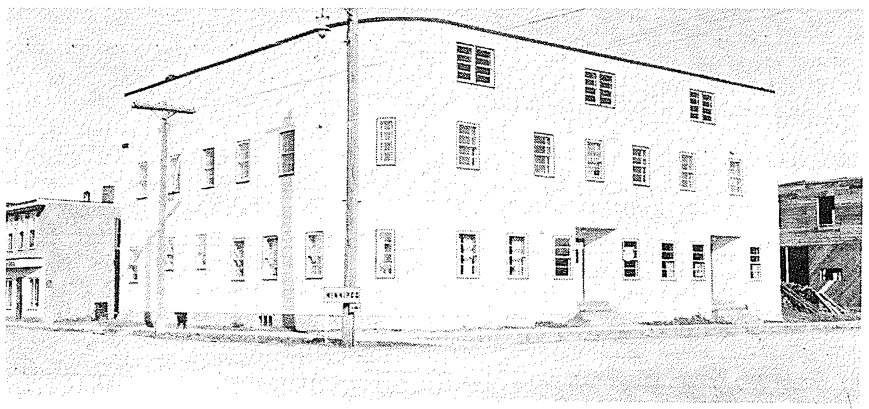
his nose, the result of drinking out of a quart sealer. I always figured that the making of homebrew and wine was harmless enough and feel bad to think that it is becoming a lost art, especially when I get to remembering all the fun and good times that can be attributed to home-made booze.

In the fall of 1927, I purchased the old Queen's Hotel from Mrs. George Brad. Some twenty years later that old familiar landmark had to be torn down to make way for the new. And when I built and opened the new Queen's Hotel in 1948, although the site remained the same, soon only memories were left. At that time, it was probably the oldest hotel operating in Manitoba. It had served the town and district well for over seventy years. Many notables were hosted here in their day, including the famed Indian poet, Pauline Johnson, and David Lloyd George on his first tour of Canada in the 1880's. The well-known actor, Raymond Massy, who was appearing with a travelling show at the old Maynes Bros. Hall, became another interesting personality to sign the guest register.

It's really too bad that buildings can't talk for I know darned well that the old hotel could have written a much better history than I, and certainly far more interesting.



The old Queen's Hotel. Built of all concrete construction by the Messrs. Martin and Balfour in 1879. For over 70 years it was the busy spot of town.



When opened in 1948, the new Queen's Hotel could boast of being the most modern of its kind between Winnipeg and Grand Forks. Note the old Bagshaw Building to the left and the former Bank of Commerce building under construction at the right.

Chapter Eleven

Franklin Municipality

The Municipality of Franklin dates back to 1880, when it was called "Emerson" in honor of the writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson. The council meetings were held in Dominion City as it was the central point within the municipality and easily accessible for all. The first council was elected and sworn into office on May 3, 1880. Justice Mark Whitely of Emerson, administered the "Oath of Office". Comprising this first council were: Reeve, George Allen; Clerk, John Stewart; Treasurer, Alex Waddell; Councillors were: D. Knight, Alex McLean, A. Hepburn, Bob Taylor, John Ginn and D. O'Donald. The municipality maintained the name "Emerson" until 1883 when the town of Emerson was incorporated, it was then renamed "Franklin" after Sir John Franklin, the Arctic explorer who had lost his life in his search for the North-West Passage.

Until 1883, the Council held their meetings all over town, wherever and whenever a place was handy or available. This was a little less than satisfactory, however, and it was decided to construct a municipal hall. A large, two storey, building was soon erected to the south-east of the present Anglican Church. The main floor was used as a town hall and the upstairs as the council chambers. Being the most impressive building of that size for miles around, it was used for all the local gatherings: Christmas concerts, dances, political meetings, minstrel shows, etc., and on at least one occasion it was used as a school.

The location of the new hall was soon found to be too far away from the center of town and it was moved to the site of the present municipal office. The original hall served until 1945, when a new office was built on the same location. The old hall was raised up and moved to the next lot south and served the town as a community hall until the newly built hall was opened in 1950. Then it was purchased by the St. Paul's Lutheran Church and it is still in fine shape today.

The Municipality of Franklin was one of the first municipalities formed in Manitoba. It has not had too many Reeves, but has been very fortunate in having mostly good ones. The first Reeve was George Allan, followed by James Lang, John Mc Cartney, Ham Stewart, Jim Hunter, Tom Collins, William Johnston, Lloyd Baskerville and John Hunter, who is our present reeve.

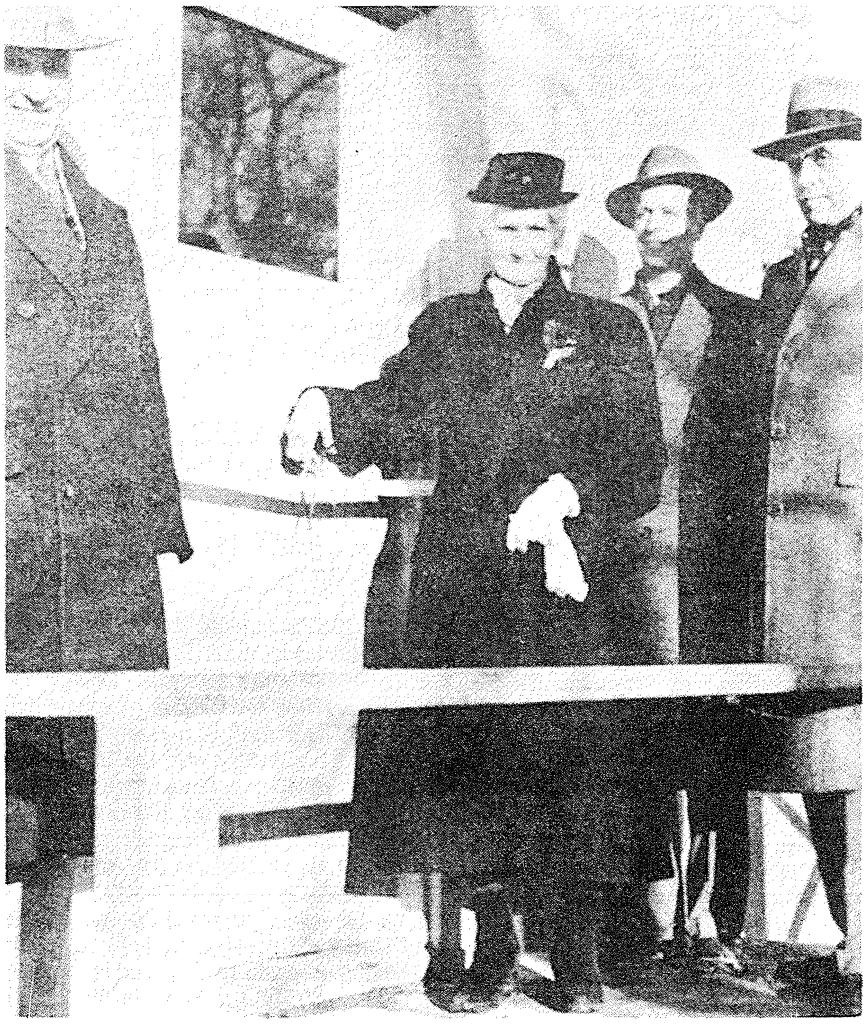
Over the long term of years our municipality has been in existence, the major problem has been drainage. We are situated in what used to be a lake bottom, The Red River Walley. In Franklin, this valley accomodates the Roseau River, the Joe River, the Mosquito Creek, the Rat River and numerous other small coulees and streams. These waterways, in turn, are our main source of drainage and accommodate all our run-off water and melting snow. Drainage here is a "headache" and always will be. The surveyor, who originally laid out this area, recommended that the sections and the road allowances be laid out to run north-west and south-east. This was the natural flow of the water and would have been very advantageous, as far as easing much of our drainage problem. However, the government did not go along with his suggestion; that is to run the section lines, road allowances, ditches, etc., cornerways. I guess they figured it wouldn't look too hot on one of their fancy maps.

The history of our municipality would not be complete without shelling out deserved recognition to the "Witty Family" who contributed two fine secretary-treasurers to our public service. John R. Witty served in this capacity from 1912 until 1939, and his son Bert helped him along from 1934 until 1939, when he was able to succeed Witty Senior and assume the position, on his own, from 1940 to 1965. It's a real pity that one of Bert's sons didn't decide to settle down here and carry on. It took most of us quite a while getting used to the fact that a Witty was no longer working at the municipal office. I still walk in and expect to see John R. or Jack, as he was called, or even Bert, trot up to the front counter and ask if they could help you.

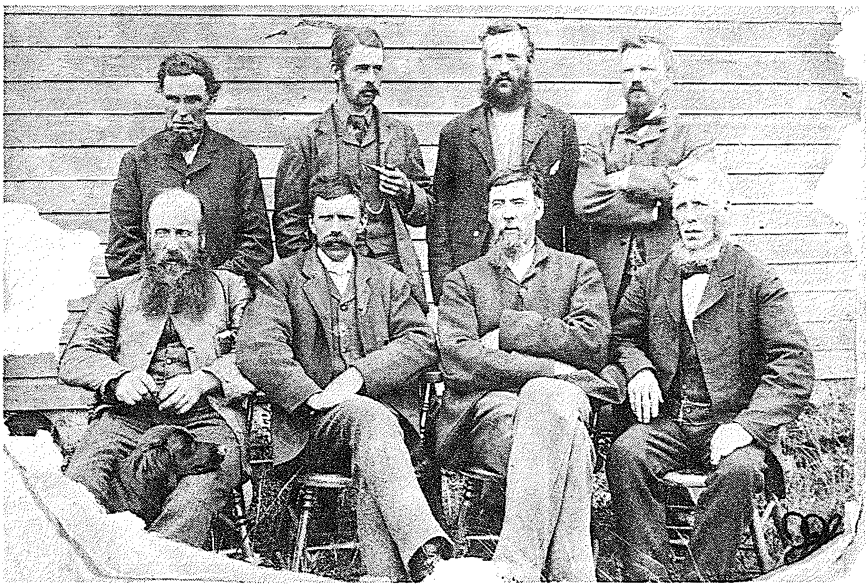
Franklin Manor built 1967.

New RM of Franklin office - built in 1945.

Most of the old timers recall when Jack Witty moved from the east side of town over to their new home on the west side (now owned by Bert Simpson). Anyway, Jack had a monstrous grandfathers clock which he thought a lot of. The clock was a family heirloom and Jack would not trust the local dray man to move it with the rest of the household. He decided, therefore, that he would carry it over himself. Made of solid black walnut, it was pretty heavy for Jack. (He was not quite as young as Alex Jones was the night he got a little tight and carried a 250 pound anvil around Arnaud.) Jack would proudly carry the clock for a piece; set it down very carefully; step back and take a good look at it; and then rest a spell. By and by, August Johnson



Sarah Brad, affectionately known by all as "Gramma Brad" cutting the ribbon at the filter plant opening in Dominion City in 1954. Reeve L. Baskerville of the R.M. of Franklin is at the far right. The Hon. Edmund Prefontaine, MLA at left.



Here is a rare old photograph showing the council of the R.M. of Franklin in 1890. Left to right they are: back row, Mr. McBain, Harry Preston, Joe Sullivan, James Lang, Reeve; front: Jimmy Duncan, Bill Lindsay, Tom Coulter, Joe Bullis.

came strolling home from over town. He watched old Jack for a few minutes, then walked over to him and enquired, "Jack, if you want to know the time so bad, why don't you throw that damm big clock away and get yourself a wristwatch?"

All kidding aside - we, in the Municipality of Franklin, owe a great deal to the Wittys. "Thank you, Jack and Bert, for a job well-done".

Highlights of the long history of our municipality have been the building of the first hall by James Duncan in 1880, and also the bridge built for traffic over the Roseau River at Dominion City in the same year; the Langside Bridge constructed in 1895; the ferry across the Red River (five miles west of town) built jointly with the R.M. of Montcalm in 1900, and later in 1957 a new steel bridge to connect the two municipalities (when opened this bridge was the longest and highest bridge above flood level in Manitoba). Another commendable task was the drainage of the Flats (the area east of Dominioy City) and the big ditch excavated in 1926. This project was a god send to the farmers living between Ridgeville and Dominion City. The first gravel road to go through the municipality was the Morden Sprague Highway in 1936 and today there is hardly a road in the municipality which is not gravelled. A big event in Franklin was the installation of the Manitoba Hydro and the Manitoba Telephone System. And today the entire area is well serviced by these two commodities. In 1967 a grand and modern senior citizens' residence was dedicated in Dominion City, the Franklin Manor. This year a new Fire Hall was built to serve the people.

In the early 1920's the C.P.R. offered free carloads of cinders to towns close to Winnipeg that would look after the unloading. Dominion City got many a car-

load and the cinders were soon spread over the main streets. This made a great improvement. Almost all of the unloading and labour had been done "gratis" by local volunteers, however, towards the end of the summer both wagons and volunteers became mighty scarce, and the Council was kind enough to pick up the tab. The Council has generously built a new office, a machine shop and a firehall, here in Dominion City. We can say with sincere appreciation that the R.M. of Franklin has always tried to help our people and our community in every way.

The Morden-Sprague highway became the first gravel road to cross the R.M. of Franklin. It is shown here under construction in 1936.

Chapter Twelve

Newspapers

The Dominion City Advertiser, our first newspaper, rolled its first issue off the press in 1882. Editor and publisher was Mr Dave Phillips, who was actually at that time the tinsmith for the district. Mr Phillips was indeed the old type of fearless editor who generally believed in keeping everyone in his place. The Advertiser feared none and knocked all. Although the Advertiser was published only when time and inspiration allowed, Mr Phillips later started the Dominion City Echo, which continued publication under various owners until the 1930's when it was purchased from outside the district and the equipment was moved away. The Echo was then incorporated with the Emerson Journal.

Many stories are told about the colorful Mr. Phillips, including one about old age creeping up on him. His doctor warned him to take life easy and told him that his circulation was getting poor, but Mr. Phillips soon let him know.

"What do you mean, my circulation is poor? It's one of the best in the province and all paid up too!"

The following is a reproduction from the Advertiser and a fine example of Mr. Phillips genius with a pen. He was or could be a little hard on some of the folk, but all in all, the Advertiser was accepted in good spirit by everyone concerned.

DOMINION CITY

ADVERTISING BULLETIN.

PUBLISHED BY JOHNNY, THE PROPHET.

September 13, 1884

DEARLY BELOVED SINNERS:

It appears that Johnny's Prayer has done much good by the amount of ivory that is on exhibition in our little city. We can hear the church bells with their beautiful locomotive chimes sending forth the glad tidings that the lost sheep has returned to the fold. The marriage feast is partaken of and the wolf will lie down with the lamb, as well as the old sheep, and lambs will multiply ten fold.

Dearly beloved, you have read of Elijah the Prophet and Daniel the Prophet in the Good Book. And have we not Prophets of this day? I say "Yes." We have weather Prophets and false Prophets and small profits, and as little Johnny has been looking into the future and been studying human nature, he proposes a great many changes in the coming year of 1885, as follows:

Commencing at Mount Etna, Mr. Oatway will give up farming and go into the circus business on a large scale, composed of the surrounding home talent. He will lasso Casson, Hunter, Stuart and Jack Kelly, and have them put in a large cage, made by Dady Walker, and exhibited as Northwest Gorillas. They will be

in charge of Monroe, who will show them up by poking them with a stick so as to make them show their teeth and growl. Baskerville will be the organ grinder and pass around a cup after the Monkeys, the O.M. and Vareys will be bare-back riders, under the tuition of Jack Stuart and brother. The Ginns will furnish the Mules and be traveling agents as bill posters. Harlow and McKillop will be exhibited as 18 month Fat Babies. They will be in charge of a careful wet nurse, imported from the Rapids, Mrs Cosh-she-she-bog-a-mug. She is pronounced healthy and sane by Doc Bedford, Veterinary Surgeon. Dan McKercher will furnish the Band. Jack will play the same horn till he gets another mouth piece. Charley and James R. will run the Alabama Blacks as a side show. In connection with the museum Old Boyle will exhibit a pair of Mud Cats as Roseau River Alligators. The old Council will go as Big Indian Scalpers. They will be under the management of Napolean and Baptiste Haden and exhibited as chiefs of the Roseau tribe of Indians. The Warden will act as Sitting Bull; Bob Taylor, Squating Bear; Sullivan as Cunning Fox; Lindsey as Eaglewing; Linklater the Medicine Man; Fouldes will be put through a drying process and washed out with a quart of Patterson's dead shot and stuffed for the museum. He will contain a copy of the "International", a copy of the Herd Law, Mileage Fees and all the unpaid accounts, a photo of the Pile-driver, the Casson Bridge, a deguerotype of Big William and a plastercast of McBain, the Surveyor Wynne will do the stuffing. The Hadens will take the chiefs into training at once and set them digging snakeroot facing the sun so as to harden their color and let their hair grow. After they are properly tanned they will be brought before the Old Chief for inspection, and measured for moccasins and leggings. Sitting Bull will be decorated with war paint and feathers. He will then be initiated to the tribe by kissing all the squaws and pappooses. Squating Bear will wear a breech cloth of Badger skins decorated with brass bells to lead the pow wow. Linklater, Medicine Man or Yelping Dog, will wear a red petticoat of the kilt fashion tucked up behind and decorated with bear claws. Cunning Fox will drum on the tom-tom, and inspect the poultry yard and scent the chickens. Slap-him-on-the-back will be painted all over with fire proof for the hot climates. He will pass round the skit-a-wa-boo after the pow-wow. Eaglewing will have the honour of spokesman and carry Tommahawk and Scalping knife; he will introduce the band before His Excellency the Governor and Lady at Ottawa, and exhibit the scalps taken of the palefaces of Franklin Municipality. Webster will exhibit Davis as the Missing Link, the man with a tail and a collection of home made dogs. After the circus returns to winter quarters they will be questioned till they pass an examination by Doc Bedford. W. G. will get circumcised and become a Jew, and Jew the whole Municipality and he will have to repent as Nebuchadnezzar did, which you will find in the Fourth Chapter of Daniel, 32nd and 33rd verses, "and he was driven before men and did eat grass as oxen, and so forth." G.A. will buy out the Queen's and run a temperance house with a little on the sly taken outwardly. James Ramsey will take advantage of the Scott Act and run a distillery across the line. Little Geordie will take agency and keep the boys from getting too dry. Brad will freeze on to a pair of number elevens with Irish understandings, to make butter on his ranch. She will be well posted in eucher but her favorite game will be draw poker. McKercher will visit Minneapolis Mills to learn the art of cabbaging. Waddell will get the receipt and run the mill on it; the present miller will be discharged for honesty. Bill Hossick will start a stock ranch. Evil Eye Bill will go to Montana and run off Yellowstone squaws for the ranch. Nat Bagshaw will have a leather muzzle put on stuck full of sharp pointed nails and let loose in the ranch. He will employ a first-class liar to look after his business in his absence. G. Allen will buy out the Patterson House and turn it into an Orphans Home for children that don't

know who their fathers are. The rooms will be lit up with red heads. The C.P.R. House will be turned into a hospital for loose bed bugs the Lorne House condemned by the Board of Health. A. Scott will get a carload of big drums for the next twelfth of July, so as each man can have a drum of his own. A. Collins will get a car of sticks to massacre the heads with. Bob Scott will have a steeple with the mark of cane and collect the dynamite for fire works for the next twelfth of July. C.M. Church will be put on wheels and go around and collect the congregation. James A. will be conductor. We will have a new Council. They will stick like leeches and carry off all that they stick to. The tax collector will be the worst leech. He and the Warden will go snooks and skip out. The treasurer will keep mum.

The following business establishments were proud to sponsor this issue:

PATTERSON HOUSE
Dominion City
Geo. Patterson, Proprietor
Good Accommodation for man and
beast. Bar supplied with choice Cigars
and Liquors. The "Farmer's Home."

W. A. MORKILL
Proprietor of
Dominion City Livery Stable
Next Queen's Hotel
Good rigs and wagons at reasonable
prices. Good Saddling

ROBERT TAYLOR
Dealer in
LUMBER AND ALL KINDS OF BUILDING
MATERIAL. Offices in Post Office,
Dominion City.

MOFFATT BROS.
Contractors and Builders
Dominion City

QUEEN'S HOTEL
Dominion City
Geo. Brad, Proprietor
Good Accomodation for man and beast.
Bar supplied with choice Cigars and Liquors.

NATT BAGSHAW
Dealer in
AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS
Dominion City

DOMINION CITY GRIST MILL
McKercher and Waddell, Prop.
Gristing done. Flour for Sale.
Highest market price paid for
wheat.

Yes, when I was a boy, newspapers were regarded with both honour and awe. It was commonplace to read the Advertiser, the Dominion City Echo or Star, from cover to cover, including all advertisements, death notices, birth announcements, and even wedding write-ups, etc. The early wedding write-ups were often very comical, especially after Mr. Phillips put on "that finishing touch" and one of his classics, as reported in the Dominion City Weekly Echo, July 1911 edition, was always a favorite of mine and believe it or not this grand and splashy society wedding took place right here in town. The offical transcript is as follows:

"NELSON - TAILFORD (special)

The chit chat of the hour says that a peculiar. a brilliant and what some call a fashionable wedding took place on Saturday, last, at the residence of one of our prominent and hospitable citizens on Victoria Street.

There is no need of saying that the bride was the happiest upon whom the sun ever shone, because that was plainly evident, and besides it was not the last birthday in her "teens" and she was not honored by the youth, the beauty, and wealth and the intelligence of the place. The day or rather the evening was one of our serene and fascinating Indian Summer ones. The scene was altogether brilliant and dazzling. The bride was attired in maltese guipune and planen lace, with a beautiful underskirt of white huzzard, which showed daintily under her dress behind whenever her fairy feet moved on the grass. All corresponded becomingly with her jackass laughter. The bridegroom arrived several hours previous, accompanied by Sir David Smithfield, who being a very dear friend of the bride, "Gave her away." The ceremony was choral and was performed by the Rev. D. W. Tailorford, uncle of the bride. The presents were numerous, valuable and unique; among them were: An X-ray from Prof. Brindle; a camera obscura, from Sir Wm. Tomkins; a ring set with a valuable nugget from the Klondyke, from the Right Rev. John Greesham; a beautiful golden pumpkin, by the H.R.H. Prince Bestram and Company. The loving couple will spend their honeymoon at Dominion City until Christmas when they intend to visit Winnipeg."

I've had two sisters and four daughters make "that" journey down the aisle and the local papers have always managed to come across with a reasonable account of the event, but never, no never, have they ever managed to match the style, nor the prose, of this particular writeup. No doubt about it - Mr. Phillips had a genuine flair.

Chapter Thirteen

The Bagshaw Building

An interesting story lies behind one of Dominion City's first business establishments, namely the Bagshaw Building. Built in the early 1880's this proud, two-storey, structure was originally used by a local farmers' group who called themselves the Patrons of Industry.

A couple of years later, Nat "Buckshot" Bagshaw took over the building and ran a trading store and a farm machinery agency. About the turn of the century, M.D. Irvine opened up our second drug store and when he left the north portion of the building was used as a grocery store and run by Roy Whiteman from Emerson.

In 1904, Bagshaw built a 20-foot, two storey, addition on the south side of the building, next door to the Queen's Hotel. The upstairs was partitioned into rooms that were furnished and rented to the hotel when bookings were heavy. An open foot-bridge was built to connect the hotel and the Bagshaw Building, for the convenience of the customers, at the second storey level. After a few drunks had fallen off it, however, and came out with nary a scratch, it was decided that if a sober person ever fell off the bridge, they could easily break an arm or a leg. And so, the passageway was enclosed and promptly named the "Tunnel of Love" obviously it made an ideal spot to rendezvous.

The building was used as a cafe by Mrs. Sam Graydon; as a grocery store, barber shop and pool room by Alex Little; and then as a butcher shop and dry goods store by the Anderson Bros.; Chas. Stimpson; J. Kohut; and J . Mushalak, in that order. At one time, the north part of the upstairs was also used as an Oddfellow's Lodge Hall.

About 1938, Jack White, a pharmacist who had moved here from Dauphin, opened up the second drug store in town and occupied the south part of the building. After White died, the drug store was taken over and run by John Baldwin, who later moved to different quarters, thus bringing to an end the long list of business establishments to operate in the Bagshaw Building.

Years ago the upstairs rooms had been turned into family living quarters rather than single rooms. This conversion was almost a necessity since some of our most prominent, as well as narrow-minded citizens figured that the "Tunnel of Love" had become a disgrace to the town and should be done away with. Mind you, not everyone felt that way, and many a tear was shed when the old foot-bridge was dismantled. Anyway, quite a few different families later rented these upstairs quarters which brings to mind an amusing incident that happened to Jack White during his stay.

Jack was a nice looking fellow, well liked by all and the most eligible bachelor in town. Jack was, however, one of the"Wets" and one time a customer from out east, whom he had obliged by getting up in the middle of the night to mix a prescription, brought him a bottle of well-aged homebrew in return for the favor. Jack thanked him and hid the bottle outside. (He always tried not to

drink during business hours.) Later on he slipped out side for a drink and found his bottle right where he had hid it, along side of the store. Now there was a family living upstairs at the time, and just as Jack was enjoying his first sip they knocked a flower pot out of a window directly above him. The darn pot hit him right smack on the head and knocked him out cold. He came to about an hour later, still holding the bottle in his hands. He looked at the bottle and said,"Well, I've drank some powerful stuff in my days, but never anything with a kick in it like that."

The birch bark canoes provided a practical method of transportation for the Saulteaux. The sandy country east of here, linked by numerous waterways, provided the necessary birch trees in abundance.

Doctors

Before the now famous Dr. M.C. O'Brien arrived in the district, the town and surrounding area were served by doctors from Emerson and Fort Pembina. Of the early Emerson doctors, one name stands out, Doctor Bedford who was one of the best of our early doctors. Doctor Elkin of Emerson and Doctor Harrison of Fort Pembina also did much of the medical work in the district. When the Canadian Pacific Railway operated their large camp here between 1879 and 1881 they employed their own doctor to tend the medical needs of the thousand-man camp which loaded and hauled most of the gravel used by the railway at that time. The C.P.R. doctor also looked after the townsfolk on the side.

In 1897 Dominion City was fortunate enough to obtain its first resident doctor, M.C. O'Brien who years later was to become known as the famous Saddlebag Surgeon. Fresh out of medical school, Doc O'Brien set up his first practice in the back of a Chinese laundry run by Hoo-Flung Dung. Located on the west side of the railway track where the home of Mrs A. Timlick now stands this had been one of Roseau Crossing's first stores (Crawford's) and had made history in that vein by receiving the first shipment of goods to be shipped by rail in western Canada in 1878.

Doctor O'Brien was the first surgeon in these parts and he performed operations never heard of before by most of the residents. As adept with a scalpel as modern doctors are with pills his services were eagerly sought by all for miles around.

He loved to tell about one of his famous cases that made medical history in his career which I shall try and relate now as closely as possible to the version he was so proud of.

During the long cold winter of 1906, a trapper back on the Rat River had a lot of trouble with 'water on the knee' and as the winter kept getting colder and colder, it wasn't long before his knee froze up altogether. Doc O'Brien, of Dominion City, was the nearest surgeon around and with a great deal of difficulty the trapper managed to hook up his dog team and make the long, forty mile trip to seek the services of this kindly man. Now, Doc's reputation was also staked on his clear thinking and his ability to use his head, he soon diagnosed the case and promptly thawed out the leg. He drained the water off the knee, filled it up with alcohol and sent the trapper back to his trapline. The trapper was ever grateful, and inspite of the severe winter he was able to cover his trapline for the rest of the winter without any more trouble.

A fine doctor and a humane man, Doc O'Brien served the town and district from 1897 until 1911. He loved coyote hunting, dogs and horses. He played an active role in the community and was a great sportsman. He built the first hospital in the district and this fine and stately building still stands, overlooking the Roseau River; it is the present home of Mrs Lydia Japs.

OATH OF OFFICE.

I, Murrough Charles O'Brien

of Dominion City Manitoba

do solemnly swear that I will duly, faithfully and to the best of my knowledge and ability perform and fulfil the duties and requirements of the office of

Coroner

to which I have been appointed, and so long as I shall continue to hold said office without fear or favor.

So help me God.

Taken, subscribed and sworn before me at Dominion City this 13th day of Nov A.D. 1899

Murrough Charles O'Brien

Alex Haddell
Commissioner in B.R.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

I, Murrough Charles O'Brien of Dominion City Man. do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria as lawful Sovereign of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of this Province dependent on and belonging to the said Kingdom, and that I will defend Her to the utmost of my power against all traitorous conspiracies or attempts whatever, which may be made against Her Person, Crown and Dignity, and that I will do my utmost endeavor to disclose and make known to Her Majesty, Her Heirs or Successors, all treason or traitorous conspiracies and attempts which I may know to be against Her or any of them. And all this I do swear without any equivocation, mental evasion, or secret reservation.—So help me God.

Taken and subscribed before me at Dominion City this 13th day of Nov A.D. 1899

Murrough Charles O'Brien

Alex Haddell
Commissioner in B.R.

Above is a copy of the original Oath of Office as sworn by Dr Murrough Charles O'Brien, the legendary "Saddlebag Surgeon", to serve as coroner for the district, dated November 13, 1899.

Dr. Murrough O'Brien's big new mansion, built in 1903 at the unheard of sum of $20,000. It served the district as our very first hospital too. Alterations have been made over the years but with its richness of history and memories, it could still be called the most splendid house in town. Today this very lovely old home, overlooking the Roseau, is the residence of Mrs. Lydia Japs.

Doc O'Brien was an enthusiastic competitor in the Manitoba Field Trials held annually on the suitable prairie terrain between here and Arnaud from about 1890 until 1910. He is shown here with four of his favorite and prize-winning canines.

Chapter Fifteen

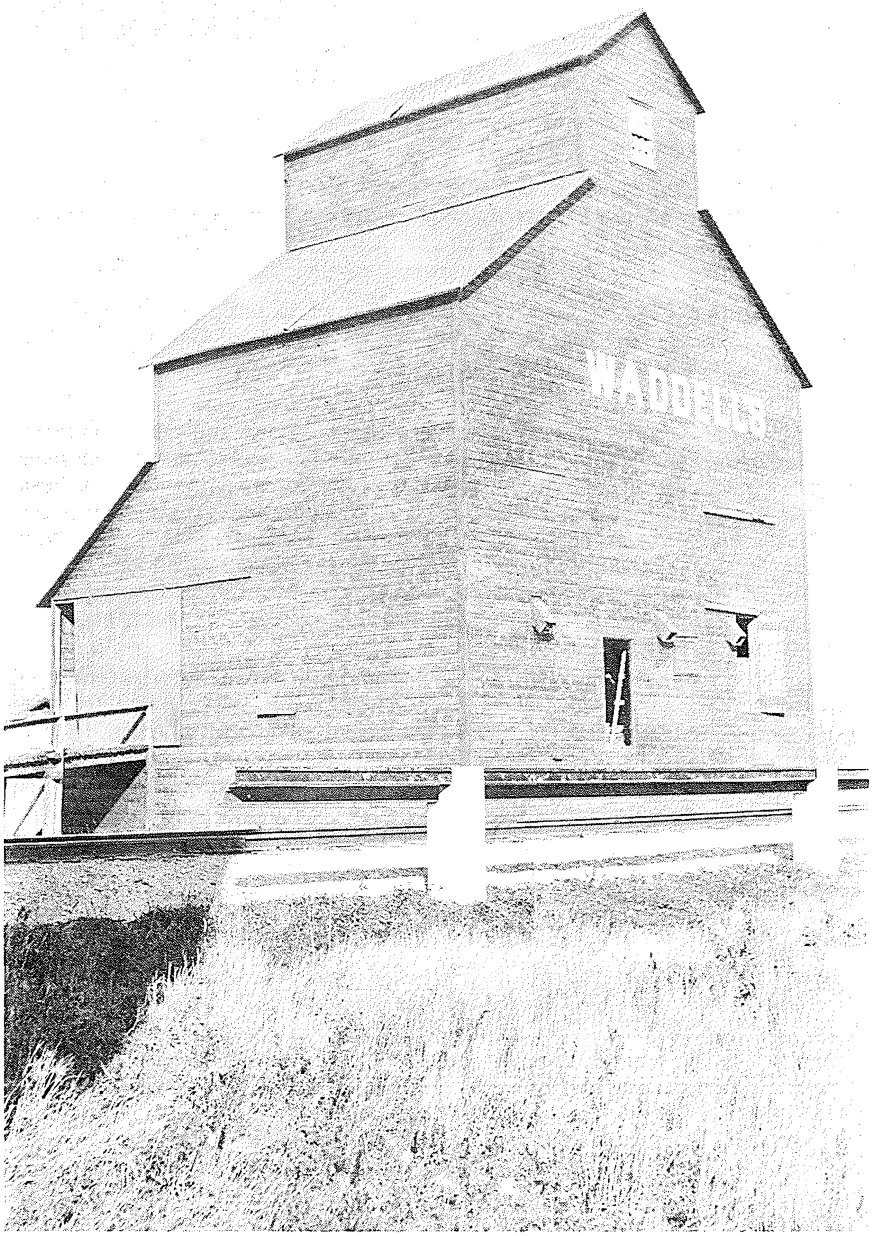
Fires

Without doubt, the most heartbreaking of all perils which the early settlers had to face would be 'a bad fire', for in those bygone days without anything to remotely resemble modern fire-fighting knowhow or equipment, dreams, hopes and hard work could perish very quickly from an unfeeling blaze. One such fire, the first bad fire which I can recall, dealt a severe blow to my family and the town as well.

About 11:00 p.m., Monday night, April 26, 1900, the customary quietness of our village was rudely disturbed by the dreaded cry of "fire". The Northern Elevator owned by Sandy Waddell, and operated by the Winnipeg Elevator Company, was a mass of flame, and within an hour the structure was a heap of smouldering ruin. The fire had gained such headway before being discovered that it was utterly impossible to do anything towards extinguishing it. In silence the large crowd watched the seething, roaring, flames devour one of the buildings which had become a main feature of the town.

The building contained at the time 20,000 bushels of wheat covered by insurance and owned by the Winnipeg Elevator Company, together with about 300 bushels of wheat belonging to W. A. Morkill, without insurance. The building and machinery valued at about $5,000.00 was partially insured. Five C.P.R. boxcars, which had been sitting beside the elevator were only saved from destruction by the prompt action of agent Lawson and the company's section men at this point. All were run to a safe distance and suffered only minor damage. The company's water tank also had a close shave but survived the ordeal with only a few paint blisters.

Nearby residences seemed to be doomed at one stage, early in the fire, however, the energetic work of the bucket brigade and the miraculous fall of a sudden April rain shower prevented the fire from assuming much larger proportions. A bad fire was a very real tragedy for a small town, this one was no exception. A fire knows no master and plays no favorites.



Waddell's Elevator - burned to the ground April 26, 1900. Only the miraculous fall of a sudden shower prevented this fire from assuming much larger proportions and perhaps destroying the entire village.

Chapter Sixteen

Hotel Galicia

1902

Although most of us know that the Queen's Hotel has been a landmark in Dominion City for some time, there was once another hotel as well, Hotel Galicia, built in 1902.

When the first Ukrainians arrived in our district to settle and homestead in the country east of here, one of the first groups were from Galicia, a province in Russia. It was in honor of Galicia, that the hotel was so named.

The early Ukrainians were hardy, healthy, hard-working and frugal. They had been brought to our country by Clifford Sifton, to settle and to develop the mixed farming region east of Stuartburn. Their task has been done with vigor and done well. At that time, the nearest railway point and supply center was Dominion City. The mixed trains (freight and passenger) ran twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays, arriving here at 11:00 a.m. Usually several cars of freight would be unloaded, destined for this eastern country, and often up to thirty teams of horses and yokes of oxen would be at the station waiting to load up and hit the trail for the long haul home.

In those days the thirty-five mile trek to Stuartburn was a good long trip. Quite often the settlers and their wagons would arrive the night before the train was due. They would then look for a place to stay. The Queen's Hotel was usually filled up and it did cost money. Extra dollars were scarce in those days and harder to come by than they are now. Before long the good citizens in town began to feel sorry for their Ukrainian friends. Something had to be done about their plight. They were bringing in a considerable amount of trade and business to the town so the task was not difficult. Soon the necessary funds were collected from the businessmen and the townsfolk. Those who were not able to donate cash came across with materials or volunteered their services and in short order a stopover house was built.

Hotel Galicia, as the building was named, was a warm and sound building some sixteen feet in width by twenty-four feet in length. Bunks for sleeping were installed and two stoves set up, one inside for heating purposes during chilly weather and one outside for cooking during the hot weather. Wood and water were supplied by the town. The building was very much appreciated and put to good use for several years. With the opening of the Ridgeville branch of the Canadian National Railway, however, this long haul by wagon was soon eliminated and the need for a stopover house became obsolete.

In later years, the Hotel Galicia was used as a dwelling house, as a printing shop for the local newspaper run by D. and L. Maynes, as a beer agency, as a machine shop and today the remains of the Hotel Galicia are used by the Rhineland Co-op to store their lumber supplies.

The Biggest Fish Ever Caught in Manitoba Waters

This is the story of the biggest fish ever caught in any river in Manitoba, or ever likely to be caught. Although the incident happened over sixty years ago, is still forms the subject of the occasional article in newspapers and particularly in magazines dedicated to fishing and hunting. Here's the story of how it happened and it's one fish story that can be verified, in every detail, by eye-witness reports.

One sunny afternoon in October, 1903, my father, Sandy Waddell, who operated a mill in Dominion City, set out by horse and democrat to collect fees owing him by farmers for gristing he had done earlier in the year. My cousin Dave, who was visiting us from Oregon, and myself had gone along to keep him company and our route lay to the east of Dominion City and along the Roseau River. We had several stops along the way where collections had to be made.

On towards the late afternoon, we decided to stop beside the Roseau River and make a cup of coffee and have a bite to eat. We had all the necessary gear in the democrat for in those days, when both the weather and the roads could be completely unpredictable, it was a good idea to be prepared to camp out at all times. Dad sent me down to the river to fetch a bucket of water for the coffee and no sooner had I dipped the bucket into the water when I noticed one helluvah commotion in the middle of the deep pool from which I had been dipping. It had been a dry summer, the water had ceased to flow swiftly, and in many places it merely trickled over the stones on the river bed. However, there were a few deep pools, here and there, like the one I had dipped the bucket into.

I wasted no time and ran to tell Dad what I had seen. I was so excited, in fact I must have been almost hysterical, because my dad grabbed his axe off the democrat and tore down to the pool. Doubts and fears were soon forgotten when we realized that we were staring at a giant sturgeon and our enthusiasm soared as we set out to land "a big one."

Dad sent us around to the opposite side of the pool from where he was standing and we waded into the pool and scared the "unco beastie" over to his position and with only one well-placed blow, Dad killed the fish with his axe. The sturgeon, it would seem, had spent most of its strength trying to escape its prison in the pool where sustenance and water were becoming more scarce each day, for it must have been entrapped since early summer.

In record time, Dad had the team of horses swamp the big fish up the bank of the river and we loaded it onto the democrat. It was quite a struggle but our high spirits overshadowed the task. We were a very proud threesome, and justly so, for we had caught the largest and finest speciman of sturgeon anyone had ever seen! The whole town turned out to see our "prize". With its head up against the dashboard and the tail dragging along behind, it measured fifteen feet in

"The biggest fish ever caught in Manitoba waters", 15 feet long and weighing over 400 pounds, fresh water sturgeon. Left to right, back row: Bill Morkill, Carl Quance, Dave Waddell, Jim Waddell, Sandy Waddell, Henry Lawson; front row: Roy Ginn, Heck Miller, Harry Simpson, Bill Barber, Bill Campbell.

length and when weighed at Dominion City, tipped the scales at a smidgen over four hundred pounds. Its age was estimated at one hundred and fifty years and because sturgeon return to the river of their birth each year, this mighty fish must have made many trips from Lake Winnipeg up the Red River, and then into the clear waters of the Roseau. Perhaps it was even born or hatched here. It has always seemed just a little sad, at least to me, that this titan fish had made its last journey. Mr Barraclough, the Winnipeg photographer was called down and he took the accompanying picture. Most of the big Canadian papers, the London Strand and even the sedate Chicago Blaze published front page stories and pictures about the colossal catch in Dominion City.

As long as there are fishermen, there will be yarns about the big ones, but it is not too likely that there will ever be another true fish story in Manitoba as big as this one.

Chapter Eighteen

Trees

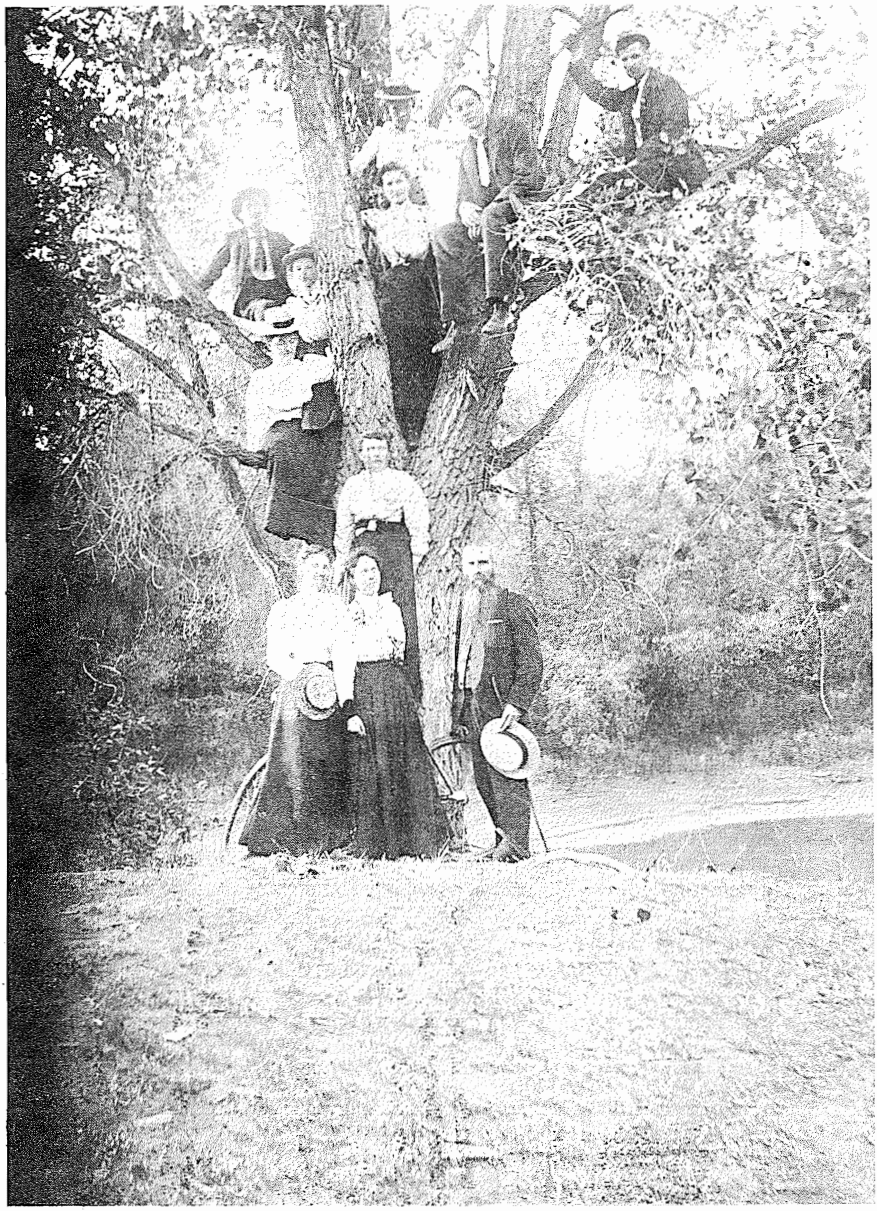
The recorded past relates that in 1871, Mrs. Murphy's cow kicked over a lantern, (not jumped over the moon) and started "The Chicago Fire" burning out the heart of that thriving metropolis. By no means, however, was Chicago the only area to feel the torrid wrath of combustion. 1871 was an extremely dry year and the entire countryside, between here and Illinois, perished in the heat of fires that continued on and off throughout the summer. Forests, brush regions, and the grassy prairies were burnt over to the waters edge.

The cottonwood, so named because of a white, cotton-like seed it discharges each spring, was about the only tree able to survive the terrible fires of 1871. Growing peacefully along the banks of the Roseau River, the cottonwoods are the tallest, largest and oldest trees we have in Manitoba. They often reach heights of 70 or 80 feet and many are well over two hundred years old. Oddly enough, they require a lot of water and they flourish in low-lying areas. They are hardy enough, as well, to live right in the water for a few months each year when the rivers make their annual rise.

In all likelihood, and with due respect, the biggest and the oldest tree, still growing in Manitoba, is located on the old Lang farm. This farm borders the Roseau River, some eight miles east of Dominion City, and is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. William King. This giant cottonwood tree, is eleven feet in diameter and some twenty-eight feet around the base. Its age is estimated at well over 300 years, and it remains a very stately landmark, well worth noting. In its serene location, one simply cannot help but gasp with "awe" at its very immensity as you stare upwards to its crown.

Another tree, also commonplace in our valley, is the Manitoba white burr oak. This variety of oak, is, by far, the strongest and the best-keeping wood native to our part of the country. An axe or a hammer handle, or almost anything made from this sturdy wood is practically unbreakable and its extremely long-lasting qualities make it ideal for fence posts or surveyor's stakes. Many of these stakes or posts that were driven into the ground almost a hundred years ago are still in use and remain in sound condition. Although it made excellent fuel, because it burns well and throws a lot of heat, it is a heavy wood, and the early settlers found it very tough cutting.

Homesteaders relied on the trees, of the Red River Valley, for in those by-gone days, a good supply of wood, close at hand was an absolute necessity. Ready-cut lumber or firewood was an unknown luxury and the success or failure of many a pioneer could depend upon the availability of a good source of timber.



A medium sized cottonwood tree makes an ideal picture setting for eleven adults, taken at the turn of the century. The tree is only a baby when compared to the Manitoba's oldest and largest tree, situated at the William King farm.

Chapter Nineteen

Our Fine Feathered Friends

Passenger Pigeons

In the 1870's there were great flights of the Passenger Pigeons, each spring and fall, as they followed their instincts to migrate. These vast flocks darkened the sky, similar to an eclipse, while the migration was on. The settlers were able to dine royally during the flights for the pigeons were excellent tasting fowl. It was an easy task to step out your front door with the old muzzle-loader, close your eyes, and bang into the darkened sky; and you would have a main course for two or three meals. The birds were about half as big again as our Mourning Dove and were quite meaty. A good-sized flight lasted, as a general rule, about three days. The last big migration was seen in the district in 1892 by Dick Craig, at the south ridge which is south west of Dominion City. Passenger Pigeons are now extinct, killed off by ruthless market hunters.

About 1936, the Winnipeg Free Press asked for information on the Passenger Pigeons, and my father wrote the following letter:

March 1936,
Dominion City, Man.

Bird Editor,
Winnipeg Free Press,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Sir:

The cause of the disappearance of the Passenger or Wild Pigeon from our area is one problem which may never be solved. But I have noted that both in Ontario and here in Manitoba, that as the railroad came in and made its presence, the Passenger Pigeon made its absence.

When I was a boy in the country of Durham, Ontario, in the late 1840's, Passenger Pigeons were all over and everywhere. This was before the event of the Grand Trunk Railroad. One flight I well remember, it was on a Sunday and took more than three hours to pass over. It covered our township of Clark, so would have been well over ten miles in length and of such a depth as to darken the sun, the lower birds having to fly in darkness. But no more big flights when the Grand Trunk Railroad got running well.

I came to Roseau River, Manitoba, in 1874, and there was then a goodly number of the pigeons. The Roseau had a suitable home for them in the heavy dark woods and they stayed. Apparently quite satisfied until 1878, when the Pembina Branch of the St. Paul Minnesota and the Manitoba Railroad came in. With the appearance of the noisy railway, there were no more pigeons. The traffic was noisy, very heavy and continuous on both these railways when they first opened.

Yours respectfully,

Alexander Waddell, Esq.

My Dad wrote this letter when he was some 93 years old, an ardent bird watcher all his life, he seemed to think that when the railways came in the pigeons went out. He could be right, but the general opinion is that they were just killed off by man, like the do-do and the buffalo.

Owls

Owls and hawks can be a darn nuisance and the owls can be even more of a bother because they stay here year round, whereas, the hawks fly south for the winter.

My uncle, Dunc McKercher, was having a bad time with the owls one year and he decided to do something about it. They had already nabbed several of his chickens and one night he bedded down in the chicken coop hoping to get a chance to knock off one or two. His hunch paid off and ere long, he shot a big one and he figured his troubles were over for a while.

A couple of days later he was out hunting in the bush and he came across an owl's nest. Much to his surprise, in the nest were three baby owls, and figuratively speaking, crying their eyes out. Uncle Dunc was an old "softie" and seeing no parent owls around, he realized he must have shot one that night in the chicken coop. To ease his conscience, he decided to tote them home and raise them himself. He nursed them along, fed them meat and table scraps, and they soon became great pets. Most of the time they even stayed in the house with him and they were one big, happy family.

Now, there has been a chinese cook, named Hoo Flung Dung, on the flatboat that brought the McKercher's to Manitoba. Dunc knew he had three pretty smart owls and because he was getting tired of their monotonous hooting, day in and day out, he hit upon a real brain-wave. He patiently taught the owls to sit on a perch and in a row and in a loud voice he called the first owl "Who", the second one "Flung", and the third one "Dung." He kept this little trick going until at last he managed to get his owls to repeat their own names in that order, "Who" "Flung" "Dung."

This was an unbelievable feat and the owls' fame spread fast. Soon afterwards a circus was playing over at Fort Pembina and the manager got wind of the owls. He was quick to head for Dominion City and offer Uncle Dunc $50.00 for the trio. McKercher pondered the idea of selling his owls for a minute then pocketed the cash. He knew his owls just loved to show-off their little trick, and he figured they would be in their glory, trapsing around the countryside with a circus.

August Johnson and the Meadow Larks

One of the most vivid and well remembered section foreman that ever pumped a handcar on the Pembina Branch was August Johnson. August was a lover of

birds and his favorites were the meadow larks. He was the first to tell us in the spring that the meadow larks were back and he would say with tears in his eyes "God, how I loves dem little birds." He was right! They are about the nicest birds we have. They seem to love people and the minute they see you they will hop on a fence post and start singing, as if to welcome you to their home. They are harmless and the farmers' best friend.

Bill Smart, who ran the Lake of the Woods elevator was so inspired by August's love of these little birds that he wrote a poem about August and the meadow larks which I quote as near as I can from memory. It might be a little off from Bill's original version, but I hope not too far.

"God how I loves dem little birds, dat hops on de posts and sing!
To me dey are best of all, because I know its spring.
Dey sees me coming down the track and sings out, "Auggie, we's is back."
Gone are the mighty buffalo herds but still we have those darling birds.
To me dey are the best of all, dey're with us summer, spring and fall.
When I pump the handcar down the track, they seem to sing, "don't break your back."
I've had my fun in this old world, played poker, drank an'curled,
And when I die don't bury me deep, I wanna here dem larks go peep, peep, peep."

Horned Larks and Crows

Just what are the first signs of spring?

The whiteman says, "The horned larks." They come any time after the 10th of February. Since they are ground feeders, all they look for is black ground to feed upon, just as the ducks and the geese look for water. So as soon as black ground shows up, the larks are here. Also, a mild winter of little snow and some bare ground showing may entice them to stay all winter. However, when they do migrate they only go a short distance south and not down to the real warm zones as do the other birds.

The Indians, on the other hand, will say, "The crows." Personally, I will have to go along with them that the crows are the first sign of spring. The first crows usually arrive about the 12th of March and often there is a snow storm after their arrival which is called, "Crow winter." The crows, however don't seem to mind as long as they get enough to eat. Indians do not shoot or kill the crow, which they claim brought them the corn.

My mother always said the seed catalogues were the first sign of Spring, which start to arrive by mail in January. Being a lover of gardens and flowers, she eagerly looked for them each spring with their pretty pictures of blossoms and vegetables.

Pete McLaren

The strongest man ever to have lived in Dominion City, Manitoba, or perhaps even Canada, was Big Pete McLaren. Two hundred and sixty pounds of bone and muscle backed up his unbelievable strength. It was an easy feat for Pete to lift a thousand pound weight. A lumberman, thresherman and contractor, Peter was somewhat of a legend from Warroad on Lake of the Woods to Winnipeg on the Red River. His reputation was just and deserved.

One time a circus was playing over at Fort Pembina and one of their star attractions was a strong man capable of hoisting thousand pound weights. It was not too long before the ring master was well informed that the crowd could boast of its own superman. Pete was soon invited up on the platform where he casually lifted both the thousand pound weight and the strong man together, well over thirteen hundred pounds right up over his head. The circus was quick to offer Pete ten dollars a day to join the show which was darned good money in those days. Pete declined the offer, though, harvest time was just around the corner and he figured he could make more money with his big Reeves threshing outfit.

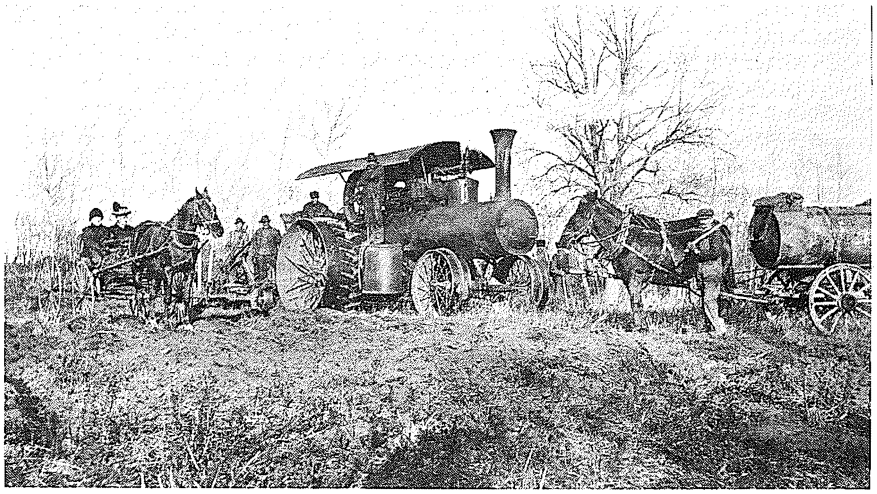
Pete's Reeves tractor was a sight to behold in itself, the balance wheel weighed well over six hundred pounds and stood about six feet off the ground. It was child's play for him to take this wheel off and put it back on its shaft. Pete handled his tractor as a small child would his tricycle.

During an election celebration here in 1914, when Doc McFadden had defeated George Walton in quite a landslide victory, a parade was held to commemorate the occasion. At the head of the procession led by the town band, marched Big Pete carrying an eight hundred pound length of steel rail. Pete had worked off and on with the railway section gang here and knew all about steel rails. When ever they had to be loaded on flatcars, it wasn't necessary to ship a crane down from Winnipeg, for Pete could handle the big rails like most of us handle a good-sized piece of cord wood.

By nature, Pete was a little shy, seemingly backward, peaceful, and good-natured. He never started an argument or a fight and he was very modest about his god-given strength. When Pete first moved to Winnipeg he bought cordwood for the Winnipeg Fuel Company. One time he was sealing up a carload of wood when he was set upon by half a dozen tough characters armed with iron pipes and rods from a railway scrap pile. News gets around and they must have been trying to test Pete's strength. They got a few cracks at Pete before he managed to jump into the boxcar which he had been loading and grab a cord wood stick daring them to follow. Bringing to mind the scene of Sampson slaying the Phillistines with the jawbone of an ass, he swung the club over their heads scaring the hell out of them. Pete could have split their heads open with one well-placed blow, but they turned and ran for their lives. One fellow was so scared that he just fell down into the snow, paralyzed with fear. With the enemy in full flight Pete hit for the nearest doctor to get patched up, as he was still bleeding a little from the first sneak attack.

Pete liked to pull on the lazy stick often pulling against three at a time. With a single opponent, he would never use more than one hand which was all he needed. Oldtimers still talk about his tremendous strength. Paul Bunyon of Bemidji fiction fame came second to Pete hereabouts, who was the real McCoy.

Pete was only a child when his parents moved here from Ontario. The McLarens resided in Dominion City for several years during which Pete worked on the section with Charlie Lynn. Later both the Lynns and the McLarens homesteaded at Woodmore, where they farmed for a number of years, however they moved back to Dominion City, living here until their mother passed away. After her death, Pete and his brother Duncan moved to Winnipeg, where our strongman lived until his death in 1935.



Pete McLaren was a well known sight in the early 1900's, custom threshing around the area with his hugh Reeves tractor outfit. Pete was able to handle this titan of a machine as most of us would play with a simple toy.

Timber Wolves

Timber wolves do not attack or kill men, women or children. Inspite of all the tales you hear or read about these animals, there is no authenticated or proven case of them ever having done so. Man has been their greatest enemy for countless ages and they want nothing to do with him. It would seem that the wolf simply cannot stand the human scent.

One time I shot a deer near Menisino. It was just before dark so I field dressed it and hit for Louis Norberg's, where I was staying. Next morning I went back to skin and dress up the carcass and when I got near it, I saw the fresh tracks of a big timber wolf. He had, apparently, circled the deer twice then went up and took a big bite out of its hind quarters, near the tail. He had taken off on the run and dropped the venison a short distance away, but had kept on running. I followed the wolf for half a mile and it never stopped. I figured he must have gotten the scent of my hands off of the meat from when I had dressed it the night before.

Wolves will travel forty miles or more in one night, which is when they do most of their killing. They generally attack from the rear and do not go for the throat like some killers. The timber wolf is a remarkable animal, one good square meal a week is about all he wants and is able to go for a long time without any food at all. However, the hungrier he gets, the keener his senses become. Each day without food, he seems to be able to run a little faster, hear and smell better, his eyes become more acute and all in all he can hunt better. Once the wolf makes a kill after eating his fill, he sleeps and as a rule slows down until he again becomes hungry. Wolves will attack and kill caribou, moose, deer, elk, and most of our domestic animals. They prefer to hunt in the deep snow when they have a big advantage, as they do not sink down in the snow like the big game.

Although you may have heard of big packs of wolves, very often this pack would be just one family of from five to eight. Two of my hunting pals from Menisino, Louis Norberg and Bill Kreitz dug out a litter of six pups (the usual number of a litter) four were black and two were light grey. They were real cute, just like our pets and they really hated to do away with them, however, because they are such a menace when full grown, they had little or no choice. Adult wolves are umpteen shades of light grey to black.

Some old timers claimed that the big packs of forty to fifty wolves would carry a beaver with them so that if anything tried to get away by climbing a tree, it would have no chance, for the wolves would make the beaver cut the tree down.

Dominion City always had the odd wolf that strayed here from the big timber country to the east. Its probable descendants are the same wolves which now prowl our streets to whistle at the girls in their mini-skirts and cute dimpled knees.

Chapter Twenty-two

Bill Hossick and his Pet Beaver

This yarn may be a little contrary to the previous chapter but it has often been said that there is an exception to every rule.

Many are the tales the oldtimers told and as numerous are the yarns they relate of their narrow escapes.

One day Bill Hossick, who lived east of the Rapids, came to town for supplies, including a side of beef. It was in the dead of winter and Bill trudged towards home pulling his supplies on a light sleigh. He made fairly good progress until he got near New Bridge when suddenly he was set upon by a pack of timber wolves who had caught the scent of his fresh beef. Luckily this area was well-treed and Bill quickly let go of the sleigh rope and scurried up a tree.

The wolves made short work of the beef and began to think that Bill would make a tasty dessert. In a hungry panic they pumped and snapped at the lower branches, growling and howling at Bill, who was so near and yet out of reach. Bill climbed the tree to the highest good-sized and safe branch but he was scared and cold. He figured he could out-stay the pack and stayed in the tree all night. But the wolves would not leave and each hour increased their determination to get him. Towards daybreak, however, they finally left and Bill, who was as stiff as a board from the freezing temperature by this time, managed to come down out of the tree. He was just beginning to get his circulation back when he heard the wolves howling again and getting closer all the time. Forgetting his own misery and because there was no other alternative, he wasted no time in getting up onto his sturdy perch again.

The wolves had the lower branches chewed off in short order. They were hungry and pickings were poor. Bill had been looking upwards, praying no doubt, when he finally managed to look down and saw that a live beaver had seemingly joined forces with the pack. The beaver knew it was Bill or him and had bargained for his life by aiding the wolves and was now chewing for all his worth at the tree.

Contrary to popular belief, animals are not dumb, and the beaver knew that Bill would scarcely provide a bite apiece for the dozen or so wolves and he knew that they would turn on him as soon as Bill was finished. So he watched his chance and when he had the tree about half cut he signaled the wolves to move back so that the tree wouldn't fall on them. At this opportunity, the beaver shot up the tree in a flash and sat down beside Bill on the limb.

The wolves were mad, jumping, and snorting. Their huge jaws snapped at Bill and the beaver. Bill was an Irishman and liked a good joke, even he couldn't help but forget his predicament for a minute and enjoy a hearty laugh at the way they had outwitted the wolves. The moment of relaxation renewed Bill's senses and before long he was struck with an idea. He pulled out his jack-knife (which all oldtimers carried) and cut off a straight six-foot branch from the tree, sharpened one end to make a spear, and took aim. With a mighty thrust he let go. The wolves had been huddling so close together around the tree that it was impossible for Bill to miss, the spear hit home and the pack fell back at the loss of one of their clan. Bill had just started to make another spear when he felt a poke in the back, and be darned if the beaver didn't hand him another one. He had watched Bill make the first spear and this one was even better, the beaver had sharpened the shaft to a needle's point and ate all the bark off besides to make it smooth and easy to handle. Bill took one look at this spear and decided it was good enough for two wolves. Watching his chance, Bill waited and as soon as one big wolf leaped he hurled the missile. It went through the one wolf in mid-air and struck another as it landed. The beaver was getting so excited by this time he almost fell out of the tree.

Bill and the beaver made a couple of more spears and managed to knock off two more. But the wolves were catching on fast and were no longer staying that close to the tree. They were now careful to keep a little distance from the strange pair. The wolves were getting a little full too because it was not beneath their dignity to eat their five dead companions which Bill had speared. On towards about noon the wolves decided they would not be a part of this waiting game any longer and they trotted off towards Mosquito Creek.

Bill and the beaver rejoiced at their victory, kissed each other "good-bye" and Bill hit off home with what was left of his sleigh and supplies and the beaver went back to his home on the river. Bill had just gotten home and lit a fire when he heard a scratching at the back door. He opened the door and in walked the beaver. Apparently when the beaver got to the river he found that his house had been ravaged by the spiteful wolves and what remained had frozen over so hard that he couldn't get back in. Guess he figured there was nothing else for him to do except follow Bill home and besides they had gotten along extremely well in the tree.

The beaver seemed to thrive on the mortal way of life and refused to leave and soon became a great pet for Bill. The Beaver would cut all Bill's wood for him (just to keep in practice) and even hauled it in from the bush. Bill had a little trouble with him later on though. He developed a taste for Bill's chewing tobacco and Bill found it somewhat costly to supply them both with tobacco because the beaver could really chew. Bill also had a pet dog, part collie, and the dog took right to the beaver, but the beaver had quite a sense of humour and it would seem and whenever the dog would doze off for a nap, the darned beaver would slap its tail (as beavers do) against the side of the house and wake the dog with an awful scare. For the most part, however, all three were inseparable.

Bill and his faithful beaver perished, along with the collie, when Bill's house burnt to the ground in 1900. They had become a well-known sight in the district by that time and for years to come this strange trio were referred to as the original "Strange Bed Fellows."

Chapter Twenty-three

Coyotes

Coyotes sometimes cause farmers a pack of trouble and here is a true, story, as told to me by my father, about one instance of this trouble.

In 1874, my Dad homesteaded a mile east of Roseau Crossing, and along about March the following winter, he began to run a little short of fire wood. It was a nice, mild, late winter day. The sun was shining. He harnessed his yoke of oxen, Billy and Buck, to the sleigh, and headed down to the nearby river bank. He thought he would cut a load of green ash. It burned well and held the fire when mixed along with a little dry wood.

He had a young calf, three or four months old that liked to wander out of the stable, nibble at the haystack closeby and play around the yard. So before dad left for the river he opened the stable door for the calf to run in and out to its mother. But soon afterwards the wind came up and blew the door shut.

About this time a pack of six or seven coyotes came along and the fresh scent of livestock set them to howling. This ungodly noise scared the young calf but now that the stable door was shut the little calf could not get in to its mother so it took off after the oxen. The calf, by the way, knew the oxen well having grown up with them. In fact, one of them was its father, before his operation. When the coyotes saw the calf leave the barnyard they, in turn, took off in the same direction.

There was a good trail to the river because it also led to a watering place, and by this time Dad had driven the oxen down on to the river. He had turned the sleigh around so that it faced home, and he was up on the bank cutting his load of ash. All at once and much to his amazement he heard the yelping coyotes and the young calf bawling.

He stuck his axe in the tree he was cutting and ran down to the river to see what was going on. A wild sight was to greet him. Here was the calf running down the river bank with a pack of coyotes right on its heels. They were jumping at its rear end and biting its hind legs and quarters. The calf was just about down but when he saw the oxen he seemed to get a second wind and made for them running in between Billy and Buck and under the tongue of the harness. The coyotes were still close behind.

They had tasted blood and were determined to get the calf. Then all hell broke loose. The oxen started to roar and fight the coyotes with their horns and feet. The calf kept on bawling and the pack didn't stop yelping. Dad had nothing to fight the coyotes with but he did have on heavy knee high leather boots (most Ontario settlers wore these boots) so he went after the coyotes with his feet. A kick here and a kick there; (you might say he was getting a big kick out of it) trying to hit a coyote as they ran in and under the oxen to get at the calf which by now was badly bleeding. At no time though did they try to attack Dad or the oxen. One big coyote turned to look at Dad and he kicked it square in the jaw. It had seen the kick coming and had tried to dodge it but bumped into the oxen's legs and caught the full force of the heavy boot right in the jaws. He let out a howl and took off with his mouth in sad shape. After a few more well placed kicks the pack decided to call it quits and fell away leaving behind a trail of blood.

The poor calf was badly chewed up, most of its tail was gone and he was laying down from the loss of blood. Billy and Buck were stamping their feet and still mad. Normally quite docile Dad claimed that if the oxen had been loose they would have killed most of those coyotes. Dad loaded the calf on to the sleigh and hit back home. As soon as he got there he carried the calf into the barn, but when the mother cow smelled the blood and her calf, she started to bellow and raise proper hell. Dad had no alternative but to take the calf into the house where he dressed the wounds and sewed up the torn skin and flesh. In three weeks the calf was all better and grew up to be a big, strong, and healthy animal.

Dad had enough excitement for one day. He was beat. But the next morning he went and got a neighbour, Dan Harlow, who was a good hunter and a crack rifle shot. He related his tale to Dan and they were on their way in short order. Going back to the river bank where the pack of coyotes had tried to kill the calf, they were able to pick up the trail. With all the blood still around, streaking the white snow, it looked as if there had been a war on. They started out after the coyotes. The trail was fairly easy to follow. It looked as if several of the pack were bleeding badly. This was confirmed about a mile and a half away when they found one of the coyotes dead. It had been gored, apparently, by one of the oxen's horns entering its stomach. They trailed the rest of the pack for another mile or so, then gave up the hunt. It was getting dark and the tracks were becoming harder to follow. Seemingly, the pack had not bargained for a good fight. It looked as if they had no intention of hanging around our part of the country again, at least — not for a little while. Nowadays, you could say, "They decided to lie low until the heat was off."

The Pembina Valley, a hundred miles west of here, is an ideal place for coyotes. Lots of bush and plenty of small game animals make it a real paradise for these wolves of the prairie. Frank Neelin, a farmer who lives near the west end of Rock Lake, witnessed the killing of twelve beautiful big honkers, by a lone coyote during a particularly severe and early snowstorm a few years ago.

During the storm, a large flock of Canada geese settled on a stubble field near his house. The snow, apparently, was so wet and heavy, and coming down so thick, that once the geese set down, they could not seem to get up the strength to take off and fly again. The Neelins were watching the helpless honkers from their front window when they spotted a coyote coming out of the bush. He was able to sneak up to the flock of helpless geese, grab one, and then run back into the bush with it. Twelve times that coyote made the trip to the flock of geese and each time he made off with a big honker, then he quit. No doubt he was suspicious of the number "13".

After the storm died down, Frank went out to where the coyote had taken the geese. He found all twelve of them in the bush. Two had been partially eaten, but the other ten were simply killed with nary a bite missing. Not being a man to waste and being a man of fine taste, Frank carried the remaining ten wild geese home and enjoyed wild goose dinner for the next two weeks.

In the early fall of 1968, Jimmy Cumming, who also farms at Rock Lake, had two calves killed by coyotes. He was combining when he witnessed the killing of a calf by a pair of coyotes. He figured they were trying to find food for their young ones. The calf's mother, a four year old cow, tried hard to protect her calf. However, while she was chasing one coyote away, the other one killed the calf. Jimmy jumped down off the combine and ran over. He managed to scare the coyotes into the bush, but he was a little late as the calf was already dead.

Although coyotes do a lot of killing, and can be one darned nuisance, I still kind of like them and love to hear the rascals howl.

Chapter Twenty-four

Bill Little, Allan Dillabough and Sam Sullivan

One of the most colorful storekeepers ever to set up shop in Dominion City was a fine, upstanding and good-natured Englishman named A. S. William Little. Bill, as he was called, operated his store on the site of the new firehall, from 1906 until he sold out Andersons in 1924.

One extremely hot summer afternoon, Bill got to pining for a nice, cold, glass of beer. But being a thrifty man, and not in the habit of keeping hired help around, now presented a little problem. Although a cool and refreshing drink would sure go down easy about that time, leaving the store unattended was a horse of a different color to Bill. Finally, and just when Bill thought he'd do almost anything for that drink, he he noticed Allan Dillabough walk by in front of the store.

Now Allan wasn't a bad guy, in fact the whole town liked him, but he wasn't too bright. He had a little trouble hearing out of one ear as well as being somewhat deaf in the other. Aside from that he was OK.

Business hadn't been exactly booming that day, and Bill was getting real thirsty. So, he got the brainwave to let Allan tend the store while he went next door to bend his elbow. Dillabough was noted for his honesty, if not for his brilliance.

Hauling him in off the street, and now in a real hurry to get next door, Bill told Allan he had a little business to attend to and asked him if he'd mind looking after things for a little while. Allan agreed and with that Bill shouted, "Now, you might have a little trouble getting rid of that barrel of apples over there. They are a little rotten. But if anyone grumbles, tell them they're only 10 cents a dozen; and only some are rotten, some aren't. If they don't buy them, somebody else will." And with that Bill hurried on his way.

Yes sir, it was one awful hot day! But by and by, Sam Sullivan, who was not known for his good temper at the best of times and was really getting out of sorts from the heat, came wandering into the store.

"Afternoon Allan, Bill around?" muttered Sam.

"Apples are a little rotten," chirped back Allan.

Puzzled but polite Sam says, "Eh Allan, not a bad day."

"Ten cents a dozen," was the reply.

Now getting a little annoyed Sullivan thought he'd try once more and says, "Are you crazy man?"

"Well," came the humble voice, "Some are and some aren't."

Thoroughly disgusted by this time Sam shouts, "I've a good mind to give you a damn good kick in the ass."

"Ah, if you don't, somebody else will," was Allan's response.

By now Sam figured Allan must be right out of his mind and got out of the store. For years to come, however, this was Sam's favorite story. As for Allan, "Well, all in a day's work."

Authentic advertisement from the Dominion City Echo - October 1914.

Chapter Twenty-five

The Dominion City Band — 1880-1970

The Dominion City Band dates back to 1880 and is one of the oldest bands in Manitoba. It was first organized by the community of Roseau Crossing in that year. A deal was made with David Evans who was playing in the newly formed Emerson Band led by Mr Humphey, and Evans drove up to Dominion City twice a month to practice the new band. Evans played an Eb cornet, lead instrument at that time, he was a good musician and a fine cornet player. Some of the members of this first band were Johnny Hart, Shannon Marshal, Jack and Dan McKercher and Ed Sawyer. One of the new beginners, Johnny Hart learned very quickly, mastered his Eb cornet and before long was adept enough to take over as bandmaster. The band came on fast and was soon entertaining at church services, picnics, political meetings and other local functions.

The first time the new band was to perform in public, an amusing incident happened. The occasion was a community picnic held at the Hart Grove (situated north-east of the present bridge over the Hart Coulee and so-named in honour of the Hart family). At the appointed time, most of the band members had assembled and were getting ready to play but bandmaster Johnny Hart had not yet arrived and Johnny McKercher, star alto player, was nowhere in sight either. The crowd had gathered around and were admiring the shiny new instruments which had recently been purchased from Lyon and Heally of Chicago, Illinois, as they patiently waited to hear their new band.

By and by another horse and buckboard pulled into the grove bearing two strange and very well-dressed ladies. Daintily they alit from their conveyance tied their horse to a tree, and casually sauntered over to sit down at one of the picnic tables. People were polite in those days and although nobody seemed to know just who these two ladies were, the crowd made them feel right at home. After enjoying a cup of tea and a sandwich or two, they strolled over to where the band was still waiting; off came their disguises and the two missing bandsmen took their places. Everyone at the picnic had been fooled and once the shock wore off, they all had a good laugh. The band began to play and at their very first public appearance, gave a fine account of themselves. The 'debut' of the Dominion City Band had been a roaring success.

This band lasted until about 1892, when half of the players left Dominion City to go west, and grow up with the country. Johnny Hart, the leader, was one of the first to leave and this dealt a severe blow to the band for he had become an expert cornet player. Hart was the last Eb cornet player our band ever had. Bill Phillips, who took over after Hart left, played Bb cornet, and from that day on, it was all Bb's. The Phillips boys left here in 1894 and they prided themselves in starting up bands wherever they went. What had been almost a shattering loss to our band became a tremendous boost to other town bands, and ere long the Phillips' boys had bands organized in Morris, Cartwright and Tugaski, Saskatchewan.

Dominion City was without a band from 1894 until 1898 when Martin Forrester moved to town and bought the Queen's Hotel from George Brad. It wasn't too long before Forrester started up a church band over at the German village, east of town, on the Hart Coulee. Mart loved bands and was a good cornet player. It was his band that had the honor of playing at the first ice carnival ever held in Dominion City. This carnival was held on a temporary skating rink on the river and west of the railway bridge built by Lockwood Bros. and was our first closed-in skating rink as well.

This church band played for two or three years and finally broke up.

In 1900 Forrester started up the second Dominion City brass band. He used the instruments that were kicking around from the old band and purchased an additional half a dozen new ones. Forrester's band was quite good and did a lot of playing in the area. A good picture of this band is still on hand. Missing, however, are Jim Waddell, piccolo and Harry Croll, clarinet. (At this writing, 1970, only two members of the 1900 band are still living: Abe Cloke and Garnet Coulter, who later served three terms as Mayor of Winnipeg).

In 1905 when Martin Forrester left here for Stroughton, Sask., once more the

Only one still living in this picture taken in 1900 is the tall six footer in centre of back row. This is Garnet Coulter who was mayor of Winnipeg for eleven years. 1900 Band - Top row: Ralph Collins, Billy Dickson, Garnet Coulter, Mart. Forrester, Sam Barber. Second row: Bill Hepburn, Dougald Phillips, Abe Cloake, Tom Fry Sr., Bill Hempton. Third row: Melville Oatway, Fred Phillips, Tom Fry Jr. Missing from photo: Harry Croll, clarinet; Jim Waddell, piccolo.

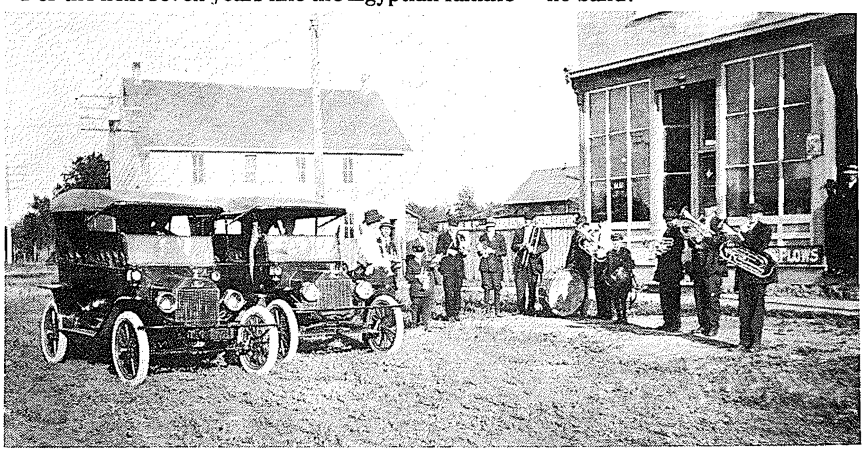
band was left without a leader. The citizens wasted no time in holding a meeting and before long had engaged the services of Billy Judges, a bandmaster from Winnipeg, for one hundred bucks a month. Judges, was an experienced bandsman, he had led the Labor Temple Band and the 90th Band in Winnipeg. He will be remembered as the finest cornet player to ever hit our town. It wasn't too long before he had a first class band going whose talents were in constant demand. This band bought two new Whaley Royce instruments, an Ideal Eb bass horn and an Ideal baritone. Under Judges, Dominion City boasted one of its finest bands and the entire town turned out for the last performance of Judges' Band at the Orange Day celebrations, July 12, 1905. The Emerson Band under Jack Hamilton also played here that day along with a couple of fife and drum bands from Winnipeg.

Reminiscent as the largest Orangeman's Day ever held in Dominion City, it started off with a street parade and carried on well into the night. Boyne Water, Orange Feather, the Protestant Boys and the odd fight were well received by Orangemen from all over. The star attraction of the day was a cornet solo by Billy Judges, "Boyne Water". This is a tough number but Billy was the master of his cornet.

The bar in the Hotel stayed open all day and half the night. In those days liquor was powerful (not watered down like it is now) and besides, it was cheap, ten cents a drink, and three shots for a quarter. If you were hungry, the management passed around free sandwiches with the drinks. A booth set up on the sports grounds handled everything you wanted; a big bag of peanuts or candy for a nickel; oranges or bananas were two for a nickel; to quench your thirst there were nickel glasses or bottles of lemonade, ginger beer, sarsaparilla and lemon sour; cigars were a nickel each or three for a dime and cigarettes cost ten cents a pack. Those were the days, "No 5 per cent sales tax."

It had been a wonderful day, a glorious "12th" talked about for years afterwards. Billy Judges had received a fine send-off but we had lost our bandmaster and the band fell apart. Judges did quite well in Winnipeg, he started up a band that played in the exhibition for years and he went on to play with a big circus band.

For the next seven years like the Egyptian famine — no band!



The band was always on the move and this picture taken in 1913 shows my first band getting ready to travel in style.

However, in 1912 Bill Parker, our local blacksmith decided to start up a fife and drum band. Bill was a dandy blacksmith and a fine fellow and it wasn't too long before he had made up a half dozen fifes out of one-half inch brass pipe. He had plugged the playing end and bored holes in the pipe for the notes. For a home-made job they weren't too bad; the scale was a little out, but they were easy to blow and produced lots of noise. Bill had played fife in a fife and drum band in Ontario before he came here, and even though his band practiced with some regularity this band never had the opportunity to make too many public appearances in town.

Twenty odd years later or so, Charlie Chong, who ran a cafe across from Parker's Shop, wanted a steel bracket made for a shelf. He wrote out a description of what he wanted on a piece of paper, size, etc., and gave it to young Bill Taylor to take over to the blacksmith shop. Bill helped out Charlie after school and on weekends, and he hurried over with the note. Chong was an educated man who wrote both English and Chinese with ease and this time he had written Chinese. Taylor gave the note to Parker who studied it for a few minutes then said, "Well, I sure can't read it but wait right here till I run home and get my piccolo, I'm dammed sure I can play it."

Tommy Owens moved to town in 1912. Tommy played the cornet and it wasn't too long before the band was playing strong once again. With help from the community Tommy was able to put on a few concerts and soon the band had raised enough money to buy several more new instruments. Tommy left town the same year, he never stayed too long in one spot. In late 1912, Yours truly, who played Solo Cornet, took over and the Band has kept right on playing.

In those days a band was appreciated much more than it is nowadays. There were no radios, televisions, hi-fi's or electric organs and a good band was always in demand. Since 1912 there has never been a time when the band, if they wanted to, could not go out and play. The Dominion City Band also established several "Firsts" throughout their long career: They were the "First" Canadian band to change over from high to low pitch in 1914. Also, in 1914, they were one of the "First" bands to switch from cornets to trumpets. From 1914 on, they played either "The Maple Leaf Forever" or "O Canada" whichever anthem the occasion called for. They were one of the very "First" Canadian Bands (the "First" in Manitoba) to use drum majorettes, and lastly - four of the band have played together continually for the last 57 years. They are: the Ginn brothers; Stanley, Norris and Raymond and myself. In fun, (I hope) we are called "The Big Four" by the rest of the band. Maybe they figured we'd gotten swelled heads after playing together for so long.

In writing a history a person should stick as close to the truth as possible; like a fish story though, sometimes this is hard to do. In this write-up I would say it is about 90 per cent fact which allows 10 per cent for fiction, hyperbole or just plain bull (whichever you wish to call it). I love bands. I am partial to the circus bands and my idol was Merle Evans, bandmaster of the Ringling Bros. Circus band. John Philip Sousa, the March King, was another of my favorites. I have always preferred the fast tempo of a circus or American band to the slower pace of the old country precision bands. The Salvation Army bands are pretty hard to beat when it comes to a straight marching band. If you have ever watched the Rose Bowl parade on T.V., when the Salvation Army comes along

playing "Onward, Christian Soliders", you have to take your hat off to them. They are good. I suppose bands are in my blood, I had two uncles playing in the first band in 1880, and we've usually managed to have at least some of the family playing ever since. Our record, however, is not as impressive as that of the Ginns.

I remember back in 1915, the Winnipeg papers announced a big decoration day parade coming up. My father, a staunch Liberal, always took the Free Press and it carried all the details of the parade, naming the bands expected to participate and outlining the route as well. It was to be held on Sunday. To make darned sure that I wouldn't miss it I went to the city on Saturday night. I stayed at Jack Kenny's Royal Oak Hotel. Jack had formerly run the Queen's Hotel in Dominion City, and he had always been a booster for the band. I woke up next morning to the sound of band music. The 106 Band was outside on the market square warming up for the long march and I wasted no time getting dressed and outside where they were playing "United Empire March". This is a good tune and a Canadian march having the "Maple Leaf" as its trio. The 106 was a forty piece band and they could really play that march. They had been practicing all winter and were in top-notch form. When they struck up that march and took off in parade formation my blood started to tingle. I had to follow that band which I did as the children followed the Pied Piper of Hamblin, and I could have followed it to destruction. After following the 106 for half a mile or so I became aware that I was not alone. Looking around I noticed about fifty kids following me. Being the only adult, I felt somewhat foolish and decided it would be a good idea to fall out before I was seen by somebody who knew me and figured I'd finally gone mad. I left the band and the kids and went back to a more respectable viewing point on Main Street and waited anxiously for the parade to swing around and come back. This parade was a real thrill for me and probably the best Decoration Day parade I have ever watched. Shortly afterwards, most of the units and bands that had marched in the parade were shipped overseas to serve in World War I.

The reason Dominion City has always had a band since 1912 is that the "Big Four" play the key instruments; trumpet, baritone, bass, and trombone. Two other players that could always be relied upon were Bill Barber who played bass, and Matt Raw and his alto horn. Here were six good players, enough for a small band and if a larger band was needed, usually we could pick up players from neighbouring towns. In any community band, you are likely to find one individual family devoted to it. Such a family will be made up of talented musicians who love to play. In the first band there was "The Phillips Family", six boys and all bandsmen. In the present band the honors go out to the Ginn family who always have from three to eight of their members playing. Raymond Ginn, our drummer, has his own dance orchestra as well, the Bandits, and he is kept busy playing all over southern Manitoba.

In 1950 the Band ran a special train from Emerson to Winnipeg Beach. Even though it rained most of the day our spirits were never dampened. During the many years, throughout which the band has kept right on playing, "humour" has taken a poke at us now and again. Oldtimers, for instance, claim that in the very first band, during the era when outdoor concerts were so popular, when the mosquitoes were real bad the Eb cornet and the clarinet would strike a certain high note or chord together, and kill all the mosquitoes within half a mile. Anyone who has ever played outside when these vicious insects were bad can appreciate this.

In 1948 the Dominion City Band was the pride of the community, well organized, and in constant demand to play at various fairs and field days. Its members ranged from 12 to 66 years of age. From left to right they are: Front row: Jim Waddell, Raymond Ginn, Eleanor Ginn, Fay Boutet. Second row: Mamie Gunn, Elmer Boggs, Louis Kein, Wallace Kein, Bill Barber, John Schroeder, Eddie Clupp, Norris Ginn, Stan Ginn, Gracie Ratchinsky, Iris Ginn, Roland Jones, Lenore Raw. Back row: Phyllis Ramsey, Gayle Lamont, Ruby Anderson, Nena Maynes, Lorne Woods, Johnny Gunn, Cliff Gunn, Doreen Barber, Audrey Smart, Charlie Marks, Clarence Henry, Beverly Gainer, Harvey Ratchinsky, Bert Grant, Matt Raw, Dr. Skinner, Vic Bobrowski.

Sometimes the band was called upon to play outdoors in below zero weather, particularily at the ice carnivals in the old open air skating rink. The instruments would freeze up and if you kept right on playing, by and by, no music would come out unless they were taken inside and carefully thawed out. If the heat was applied too quickly all the music you had played into the instrument would come out at once with a great "bang" and scare the hell out of you.

One night at practice a young up-and-coming trumpet player was having trouble with one of the valves on his horn sticking, and he was soon informed by the bandmaster that a little saliva would do the trick. A week later he was back at practice, the valve was still giving him trouble because, "the drugstore didn't have any saliva".

A weekly band practice is a "must" when a band is starting up or doing a lot of playing. One time when a new march was being practiced, the bandmaster soon detected that a bass player was having trouble with his part. He went over to see what the difficulty seemed to be and much to the embarrassment of the bass player, found that his music was up-side down. This is true and has happened in other bands because an Eb bass part wrong way up looks very much like a piccolo part.

Bands do most of their practising in the spring to get ready for their summer schedule which is usually a heavy one. One night a strong clarinet section turned out to practice and the bandmaster decided it was an ideal opportunity to play the Clarinet Polka. They went right to town and towards the end of the polka a loud honking noise was heard seemingly coming from the outside. Rushing to the open windows the band was astonished to see a large flock of Canada geese settling down on the street outside. It would appear that the geese had picked up the

The Dominion City Band proudly sport their brand new uniforms (summer of 1949). Back row: John Walters, Stan Ginn, John Schroeder, Charlie Marks, Jim Waddell, Matt Raw, Eddy Clupp. Third row: Nena Maynes, Doreen Barber, Lenore Raw, Alvina Japs, Audrey Smart, Lily Japs. Second row: Norrie Ginn, Nan Witherspoon, Ruby Anderson, (2 visitors) Margaret Baskerville, Gayle Lamont, Phyllis Ramsey, Dorothy Johnston. Front row: Edie Clupp, Eleanor Ginn, Raymond Ginn, Donald Froom, Iris Ginn.

strains of the Clarinet Polka and been summoned down. One of the players, Henry Schultz, is also an avid hunter and he now claims he leaves his goose call home whenever he goes hunting, and takes along his clarinet instead.

Occasionally good musicians move into town and greatly help out the local band. One such man was Lorne Woods, who came here in 1948, and helped reorganize the band. Lorne was a sweet trumpet player with a nice tone, and although his duties as manager of the North American Lumber Co. kept him busy, he managed to devote a lot of time to help raise money which was needed to buy instruments and equipment. While he was here the band purchased new uniforms Mountie red jackets with navy blue trousers and caps. The Band also reached its peak then and boasted 43 members. United services for all faiths were started in conjunction with the local churches at Easter, Decoration Day, Thanksgiving, and Remembrance Day. It was a sad day for our band when Lorne was transferred to Winnipeg, after a three-year stay.

Another good musician, who came to town, was Roy Haycock. Roy played the trombone and was an experienced bandsman. He had played overseas with the Winnipeg Grenadiers' Band in the First World War and he had played in several other bands in the city. Roy took over while he was here and spent much of his time teaching the Band and helping young people learn to love music. Roy enjoyed every minute of his work and the Band was very fortunate. We all benefitted a great deal from his two year residence.

The sad thing about bands, however, is the fact that it takes money to keep them going. Instruments are expensive and the uniforms and music are costly. The money to keep our band running has always come forth from a community effort and town and band have worked side by side to raise the dough. If they don't work together, "no band".

The Morris and Dominion City bands have always helped one another out having worked together since the days of Doctor Skinner, Vic Bobrowski and Alex Godkins, the former mayor of Morris. Alex loves to play and we can usually count on him to help us out if we're short of players.

During its ninety years of playing, the Dominion City Band has stuck mostly to band books. The first band in 1880 used to play from a book published by Wurlitzer Co., Chicago. The second band used Southwells New Beginners (1900). The present band has played from almost half the band books ever published. Popular books were the Promoter, Artarmo and Gridiron. The band's favorite marches are those written by Karl King, these are circus style and full of pep. My personal favorite is also written by King, a rousing march and not too hard to play, "Alamo".

The Dominion City Band has developed many fine musicians but our trouble has been that about the time they become real good, they finish high school and away they go for there is not much here to keep them. Our most reliable players are from the farms near town and are the most likely to stay with the Band. Once you have played in a band and mastered your instrument you will want to play in a band for the rest of your life. A town band, unfortunately, is one of the hardest things in the world to keep together.

Since 1914 our band has played "circus" style. We play mostly marches and at a fast tempo. The leader plays along and a little louder. We have never had a long-haired

musician or a baton-waving director, I guess they figured a red-headed one was bad enough. We start a number "circus" style with the drop of the trumpet or, "One, two, let her go", or "Give her hell". It seems to depend on the humour of the leader.

Bands often lose half a dozen players at a time and if this happens, don't quit your instrument, keep right on practising and you will never regret it. I remember so well when Billy Judges left here in 1905 and our band broke up; I was heart-broken for I loved playing and was getting along just fine on my alto horn. I kept right on practising and later bought a cornet. Seven years later when the band started up again in 1912, I had mastered my cornet and was all set to play. Again I say, "Anytime the band quits playing or breaks up, keep right on playing at home, and you won't be sorry".

About 1916 Emil Hasenrich, who operated the old Hutterite Flour Mill east of town, joined the band. Emil was a fine musician and could play all the brass instruments. He was a great asset to the band. After the mill burned he moved to Fredensthal where he started out a band and played in the new Lutheran church. Emil used trumpets in his band and played one himself. In 1918 the church collapsed and came tumbling down. Many of the oldtimers were sure that Emil's trumpet had brought down their church walls just like the walls of Jericho.

As previously stated many funny things have happened during our ninety year history. One Dominion Day celebration in Emerson brought out a combined band from Fort Pembina, Emerson and Dominion City. Tubby Ardis of Pembina was on the bass drum and during the street parade the band played the Ruby Rose March. Tubby was carrying the drum high, as bass drummers do, and marching along at a fairly good clip when he ran right square into the silent policeman (big cast-iron affair weighing well over 200 pounds). The impact forced Tubby to turn a complete backward somersault which landed him right on his feet. Coming down he accidently hit his drum twice, right in time with the music, and never missed a beat. Spectators watching the parade figured the band had engaged a trick drummer especially for the occasion. Anyone who doubts this story can ask Raymond Ginn, who was marching right along beside Tubby, and playing his snare drum.

In writing a history you are apt to overdo it and when I started to write about the Band I only intended to write about half this much but at times I cannot help but wander, for truth is stranger than fiction and history repeats itself. For example, at Dominion City in 1916, R.P. Roblin, Premier of Manitoba, stepped off his special train and held a short political rally at the C.P.R. depot. The Dominion City Band, with six of the same players, and the same leader, played for Duff Roblin, Premier of Manitoba, when he cut the ribbon and opened the new Legion Hall at Emerson. Duff Roblin is a grandson of the former premier.

We have invested a considerable amount of money in the Band and expenses, like old soldiers, never die. In 1950 when our band attained its largest size our equipment and instruments were worth well over five thousand dollars. Repairs are costly and beginners are forever getting their instruments out-of-order. In a good-sized band there is a constant stream of money being shelled out for repairs. Kids don't look after their stuff like older people. One day a brother and sister who played trumpet and clarinet got into a fight while practising. The brother hit the

"The Big Four"

Jim Waddell - Bandmaster - Trumpet

Norris Ginn - Baritone Horn

Stanley Ginn - Trombone

Raymond Ginn - Drums

sister with his trumpet and she, in turn hit him over the head with her clarinet. Result. . . two more instruments on the way to the repair shop.

In the fall of 1966 the town decided to honor their band, who had played for them faithfully, off and on for the last ninety years. Sponsored by the Community Club, the Legion, and Agricultural Society, a testimonial dinner was held. The date was set for October 15, and invitations were mailed out to all past and present members of the Band. Neil Sullivan was in charge of the arrangements. On this memorable occasion everything went off in A-1 order. The onetime band members arrived from all over and about 250 sat down to a delicious supper. Speeches were made and letters of regret were read from those who were unable to attend. One such letter was from Garnet Coulter, the former mayor of Winnipeg, who had played in the second band under Forrester in 1900. Another letter came from Mrs. Phyllis Bennetts (nee Ramsey) of Edmonton, who also sent a lovely bouquet of flowers to the head table. Phyllis had played an Eb saxaphone in the band. Cliff Ginn, one of our best trumpet players and now living at Fort Churchill, sent his respects. Many compliments were handed out to the band and we were more than proud when we were called upon to provide the entertainment before and after the supper. It was a wonderful night and we really appreciated it.

I, personally, want to thank all who sponsored the supper and all those who helped and worked so hard to make it such a success. Special thanks must also to to the Carillon News for their pictures and for their fine editorial, both of which were done by one of my good friends, the late Bruno Derksen. Bruno wrote one of the nicest tributes ever given to our band which I quote now:

"The Community Salutes"

"Last Saturday residents of Dominion City gave their band a testimonial banquet. It was a pleasant evening, acknowledging the efforts and work of a small group that has kept an active band going in that town for over half a century.

In a way it was a special tribute to the three Ginn brothers and to Mr Jim Waddell, these people having been instrumental to a large degree in keeping their band vigorous and alive.

Their's was a labor of love. It was not for pay or for glory that they did this - it was the fun of playing and of teaching others to play.

Their effort has enriched the community and the lives of many now living elsewhere. We join the citizens of Dominion City in saluting their band."

Thank you, Bruno, this will be framed and hung up in the band room. Shakespeare, himself, could not have written anything nicer.

"Well - time marches on"! How much longer the band will play no one knows, I hope until the twelth of Never, and that's a long, long, time.

Record Crop 1915

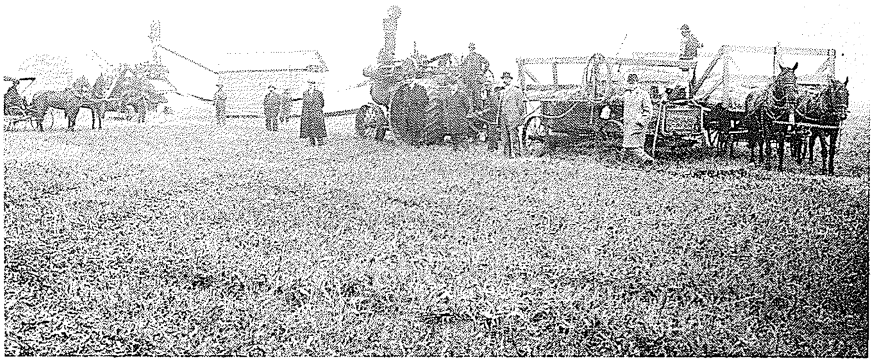
The biggest crop ever to be grown here in Manitoba and the West was recorded in the year 1915. Wheat ran 40 to 60 bushels to the acre and weighed some 66 pounds to the bushel. Oats ran about 70 and barley 50.

Wheat was really the outstanding crop, the kernels were as big as peas. It was the first year for the new Marquis variety, and three carloads of this new wheat had been brought in by the Council from Saskatchewan. The previous year had been very dry and seed was scarce.

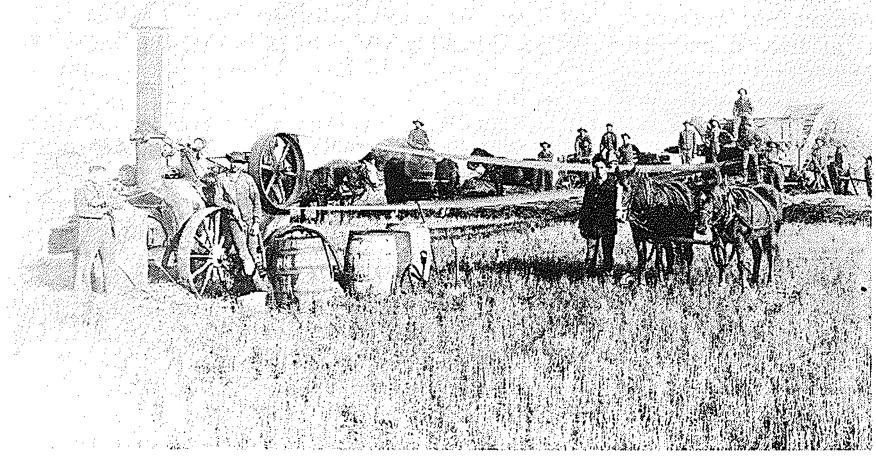
The new Marquis grew exceedingly well. When it was up about two or three inches a hard frost hit in on April 10, 1915, and froze it right down to the ground. A warm gentle rain followed, however, and the result was that piles of grain were stored all over the fields.

This was also the earliest seeding date on record. A lot of the farmers had started March 28.

The accompanying pictures show this record crop being harvested with the most modern machinery available at the time, the dependable horses on hand and of course, the ever-important manpower.



Graham Bros. Threshing Outfit.



Big Sandy

1880 - 1961

One of the most colorful Indians that ever slept under a blanket and is still well-remembered in the district today was Big Sandy of the East Rapids Reserve. He was a fine looking and handsome Indian, the stately redman-type.

Sandy (as his name denotes) was big, strong and healthy. He liked to field pitch in the grain fields during threshing time. Sam Maynes, who used to do a lot of threshing here, said that Sandy was the best pitcher he ever had. According to Sam, he used a big four-tine straw fork and would pick up a whole stook at one time.

Once when Sandy had been threshing with Jack Palmer, he failed to show up for work on the Monday morning. Somehow rumour got around that Sandy was dead, so Jack sent one of his boys over to see whether or not it was true. Sandy only lived about a mile or so north of Jack's place, and when the boy got there he saw no sign of Sandy, but his squaw was there. He asked her if it was true that Sandy was dead, and she said, "No, but he might as well be." Sandy showed up for work about noon. Indians are like some whites, they can work good all week but hate to go back to work on Mondays.

Sandy was one of the last good old Indians that wore his hair in long black Indian-style braids. He was a Pagan Indian, born on the Buffalo Point Reserve, Lake of the Woods. He came to the Rapids from Warroad, about 1900, and later married the widow of Big Jim, another very fine Indian, who had died in the 1918 flu epidemic. Sandy was always happy and good-natured, he was honest and well-liked by all who knew him.

One time there was a big pow-wow at Birtle (near Russell, Manitoba). A lot of Saulteaux from the Lizard Point and other reserves would be there and Sandy wanted to go too, so he borrowed a light two-horse wagon from Jim Timlick and made the 500 mile round trip. He took along a can of axle grease and a gallon of homebrew and greased his wagon and throat every morning. Jim Timlick said when Sandy returned the wagon, three weeks later, that it was in perfect shape, the wheels were well greased and there wasn't a scratch on it. The jug of homebrew was gone but Sandy's throat was still in good shape. "Ah!skit-taw-boo."

Back in the dirty thirties, Sandy grew a bumper crop of amber durum wheat. This was on the big field west of his house. Money was scarce in the thirties but Sandy sold a thousand bushels of his wheat, right off the machine, at a dollar a bushel for seed grain. Right away Sandy decided that the God of Plenty should be rewarded for giving him such a big crop. So he bought a Model A Ford and struck out for the nearest source of homebrew. With the back seat well stocked with skittawboo Sandy hit the trail to Happyland and later the ditch, rolling the car several times. Later, he told Bert Lang that, "It was just like being in a big churn." After a couple of days of celebrating he ended up with a big head and a wrecked car but well satisfied that he had made his sacrifice to the gods.

Big Sandy was a good hunter, as were most of the oldtime Indians, but his outstanding trait was his remarkable memory. He seemed to have the faculty of being able to remember everything he had ever done in his lifetime, as well as the exact date and time of day. The fame of his wonderful memory spread far and wide and finally got to the attention of one of the big Winnipeg daily papers, who decided to see if it was really true. So, they sent out one of their star reporters to test out his wonderful memory.

The reporter came out, located Big Sandy, and asked him a number of questions about his past life and events that had happened to which Sandy had the ready answers, time, date and everything. The reporter was amazed and decided to really ask him a tough one so he said, "Sandy, ten years ago this morning, what did you have for breakfast?"

Promptly, Sandy replied, "Eggs!" This unbelievable test of a man's memory convinced the reporter who went straight back to Winnipeg and wrote up a story about Big Sandy and his astounding memory.

A few years later the same reporter was riding the Soo train and passing through Ah-gom-a-qua (Dominion City) when the train stopped at the station and he happened to look out the window. To his happy recollection there was Big Sandy standing on the platform. The reporter stuck his head out of the window and said, "How."

Sandy immediately replied, "They were scrambled."

Almost too flabbergasted for words, the reporter, on his return to Winnipeg, sat right down and wrote another article on Sandy's wonderful memory and his ability to remember all details.

Sandy was the typical picture of a stately, silent and dignified Redman. Six feet tall, 180 pounds, he stood straight as a rule and his hair hung down in two long braids. Truly, a very handsome Indian, Hollwyood never had a character who could even hope to portray the noble Redman like Sandy. Had movie producers known about him, his services would have been in great demand and Sandy would have been in the big money bracket. So good looking was he, that it is little wonder he had two wives in his younger days.

At the big dances here they used to get Sandy at the checking counter. With his wonderful memory he needed no cards or numbers. He could remember each hat, coat or pair of overshoes that were handed to him and who to give it back to, he never made a mistake. One night at a big dance, a smart alec (lots of those still attend the dances) thought he would have some fun with Sandy. So when the dance was over he went to the checking counter and asked for his hat which Sandy promptly gave to him.

"How do you know this is my hat?" asked the smart alec.

"I don't," replied Sandy.

"Then why did you give it to me?" the wise guy fired back.

"Because you gave it to me," were Sandy's final words.

A few people nearby started to laugh, the fellow's face turned red and he walked away for he had stolen the hat a week before.

Sandy died in 1960, his age being around 80 years, but like most of the older Indians there was no accurate record of his birth. Sandy was buried at the place he loved so well, See-boss-qui-tan (The Rapids), the most beautiful spot on the Roseau, the river of the willows. His grave is just east of the old St. Paul Trail upper crossing and back of where Larry Godon's trading store used to stand. Big Sandy was given a Christian burial, funeral services were conducted by Ben Krueger of the Western Gospel Mission. Pallbearers were Max Smith, Elwood Timlick, Hector Spence, Gilbert Johnny, Sam Hayden and myself.

"Good luck to you Sandy, I hope you found the Happy Hunting Grounds, where all good Indians go."

Chapter Twenty-eight

Hunting

Of the many good things in life, one which has given me great pleasure is hunting, and this part of Manitoba was blessed with an abundance of wild life such as deer, geese, ducks and prairie chicken.

I recall my first deer hunt at the age of 17 when on December 1, 1906, Garnet Lang, Harry Barber, George O'Hara, George Hempton, Walt and Bill Weedmark, and myself struck out on horseback for Pine Knoll (now called Rosa). It was tough going, the snow was very deep and it was bitterly cold. The horses soon became exhausted and we were forced to turn back and head for home both empty-handed and disappointed.

The following year, however, my enthusiasm returned and I was able to bag my first deer with my 30-30 Winchester. I was very proud and excited, and every year, thereafter, I have tried to go out deer hunting and on only two more occasions over the years, have I been unable to bag a deer, namely the years 1928 and 1960.

In the early 1900's, it was not necessary to travel any distance to get your limit, but as time passed, I have found it necessary to travel further and further east for the deer became fewer in our immediate area as the settlers poured in. In 1949, the snow was very deep (a prelude to the 1950 flood) and hundreds of deer died of starvation being unable to get at proper feed. The following year they were very scarce, but I managed to shoot one.

During the course of hunting, I have used many kinds of rifles from my 30-30 Winchester, which brought down my first deer, to a 7 m.m. Mauser, which I still have and consider to be the best rifle ever made. My father also had a Buffalo muzzle-loader, made by W. P. Marston, Toronto, which was a five calibre manufactured in 1874. This rifle is also still in good working order.

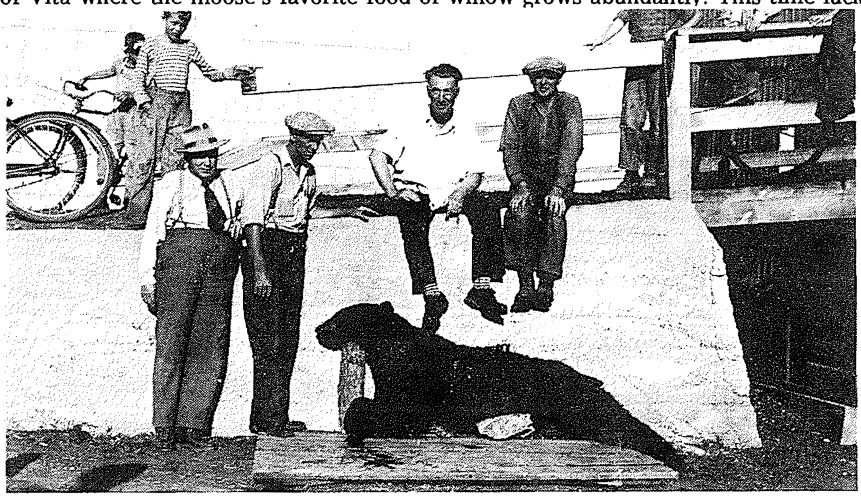
Bow and arrow hunting has always interested me as well, and although I have gone out for the past four years, using a bow I made out of local elm, I haven't been very lucky. (Mind you, I never was a prime marksman with a bow and arrow.)

Hunting has always been a great sport for me and numerous unexpected as well as comical situations can arise. In November of 1948, for instance, with the hunting season in full swing, Alf Solnes and I managed to get our pictures in the Carillon News with this tale:

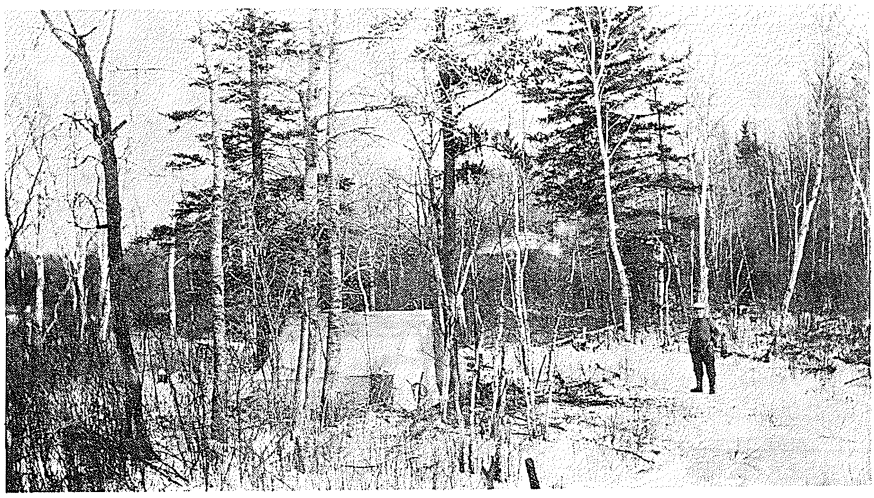
On our way to Piney, during the hunting season, we picked up a lady who was on her way to the Vita Hospital to have a tooth pulled. As we were driving along, a large buck suddenly ran out of the bush into a clearing beside the highway. Alf's rifle was out of sight in the niche formed by the projecting back seat, while my own rifle was leaning up against the back seat. I slammed on the brakes, and Alf leaned over the back of the front seat and made a hurried grab for his rifle which was more or less covered by the woman's skirt. Quite naturally, I suppose, the lady misconstrued his intentions and put him in his place with a resounding whack on the head. Undaunted, Alf tried again, but this time, she nearly belted him through the windshield. By this time I had stopped the car, opened the back door, grabbed my own rifle and had raised the

gun to my shoulder. A look of complete understanding passed over the lady's face and with a gallant gesture she tucked her legs and skirt up onto the seat. Poor, battered Alf, picked up his own rifle and we got the buck. Many a good chuckle Alf and I had over that trip, let me tell you.

My first record of moose hunting is in 1913, when Indian Jack Sone, who was probably the finest hunter ever to live at the East Rapids Reserve, Jack French, Joe Johnson and myself tried our luck in the Lonesand-Woodridge area. But luck was not with us that year and we returned home empty-handed. The following year, we made up for it when Bill Davison, Bill Patterson, Jack Varey and I picked the Zhoda area north of Vita where the moose's favorite food of willow grows abundantly. This time luck



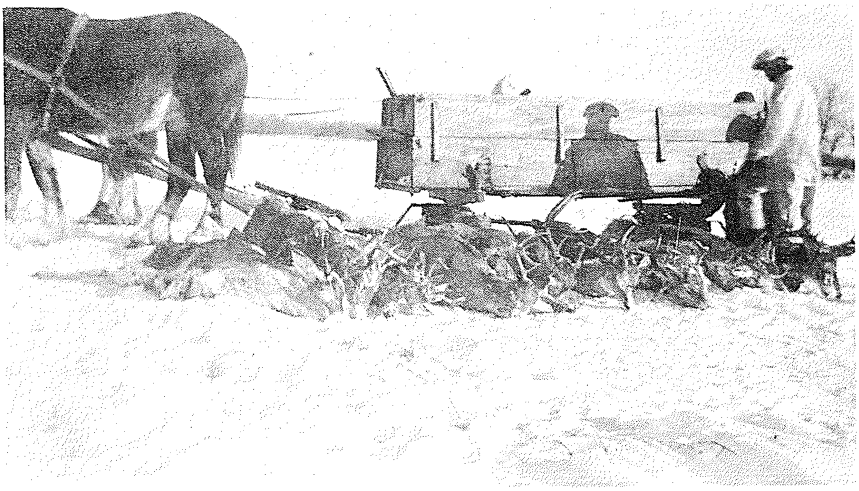
A fine trophy of the native black bear. Left to right: Albert Larsen, Bill Smart, Jim Waddell, (proud marksman), Clarence Cameron.



Nothing like a taste of the outdoors. Hunting camp at Piney.

was with us and we returned with two moose which we shared. But moose hunting was not my favorite and I did not make a regular habit of going as I did deer hunting.

Perhaps one of the reasons I enjoyed hunting so well, was that it gave me an opportunity to travel through every nook and cranny of southeastern Manitoba. Many places are not too accessible today and in the year 1912 the Whitemouth Lake area was considered pretty remote. But will always remember it as here I enjoyed my record goose hunting in 1912. The lake is a shallow body of water into which much swamp land drains and was a favorite landing place for geese on their way south. That year promised to be a good one for geese as the earliest sighting of geese for me was on March 12. It seems the earlier they come, the more abundant they are, and this was a good



Venison for the table ensured a long, happy, winter. Hunting over in the Neelin, Manitoba, area produced this excellent hunt of ten sets of antlers.

A day's limit - L to R: Jim Waddell, Sam Maynes, Wm. Johnson, Bill Smart.

omen. But that year the frost was early and hard on September 21, and by goose hunting season in October, a good portion of the lake was frozen over. We stayed at the Gravette home and on October 16 went out for the shoot. We bagged a total of 13 geese, which was quite a record for me as I have never matched it since. It was also quite an over-all record considering that between the years 1908 to 1951 my total of geese is 37. We retrieved the geese and hauled them over the rubbery ice from Spruce Point to Holmes' Landing. The closest ever that I got to this record was five geese at one hunt and that was in 1942 and 1947. In 1947 the geese were shot on the Red River just below the ferry landing at Roseau River Indian Reservation and I was so excited about them that I swam out in the river to retrieve them despite the cold. Just thinking about it today makes me wonder about the things we would do to retrieve our game and bring our prizes home. I have always had a great admiration for these hardy birds. Not only are they strong fliers but they are wiley as well, and a great challenge. Actually, my record for deer is far higher than that for geese. Many a time I have shot a deer for a friend. When deer are abundant, the best way I found to hunt them was just to sit still and wait for them. But this was never the case for geese regardless of how many there were.

Ducks have been numerous most years right around Dominion City and area, but found the years when there were floods they really outdid themselves. Probably the reason for this was there was a lot of water around early in the nesting season and remained for the better part of the summer in the low-lying spots. There would also be plenty to eat as mosquitoes followed in great numbers and the sloughs were great breeding spots which provided food for the young. I think 1950 was a big year for just about everything, including flies and grasshoppers, and some of the best crops. That year we shot ducks on the Lamont and Huff farms and when a flock of fourteen passed overhead, I downed six with one shot. It certainly was a year of abundance!

While hunting has always given me a tremendous amount of pleasure, it has not been just the bagging of a deer, a duck or a goose. There has always been the anticipation and the satisfaction of the challenge, but along with this a sense of contentment in knowing that the one that got away would be the beginning of a brand new generation. There was always the pleasure of good company and a warm fire after a cold day, and the exchanging of stories of past hunts. And who cannot appreciate a banquet of venison and cabbage or wild duck stuffed with Indian rice?I used to like to invite all my regular customers and friends over for supper after a good hunting season.

A good hunter to my way of thinking also enjoys the beauty of the creatures he hunts for; the grace of a doe as she runs effortlessly, or the stateliness of a buck standing in the wind, nose a-twitching to pick up the scents on the wind. The whistle of wings and the honking of geese; all these make a man feel part of nature and stand humble in its wonder.

Although I think man was meant to hunt, it gripes me to see people shooting out of season, particularly in the springtime when the wild fowl are nesting. Usually it will be these same unsporting persons that will complain the following fall that the ducks and geese aren't too plentiful. On the other hand, I have seen what can happen when there is more wildlife than our land can support and countless deer, water fowl and other creatures die because of a shortage of food, disease, or over-population. It is my sincere hope that we can always maintain a good balance between man and nature.

Chapter Twenty-nine

Good Sayings

The language of our oldtimers was an epitaph unto itself. Unable to pick up popular expressions from radio and T.V. as we do now, our hardy citizens thought for themselves, and I've tried to collect a few of their classics.

Sam Sullivan — "We didn't do much today, but we'll give 'er hell tomorrow."

Jim Hunter (Reeve) — "We've no money."

Joe Casson — "Good, bad or indifferent?"

Alexander (Sandy) Waddell — "Gin and sugar."

Jack Ginn — "Anything new, strange or startling?"

Bert Lang — "That's enough of that 'n that."

Henry Klassen — "There's things going on here that shouldn't be."

Howard Sharp — "Why bring that up?"

Art Scholte — "I'm full to the diddle dam."

Bobby Smith — "Boys, oh Boys!"

Andy Davison — "Those damm boys."

Jim Scott — "See now, I've made a special study of this."

Bert Witty — "Who the hell's paying for it?"

Alex Taylor — "I'm commencing to think."

A Well Known Lady of Questionable Descent — "There's people in this town that's got two faces."

Allison Froom — "A man on a galloping horse would never know it."

Raymond Ginn — "I don't look like hell in the mornings for nothing." (I get a kick out of this one.)

Mrs. Leslie (Mildred) Brad (by no means an old-timer) — "He hasn't the brains God gave a goose."

James Waddell — "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all."

The 1950 Flood

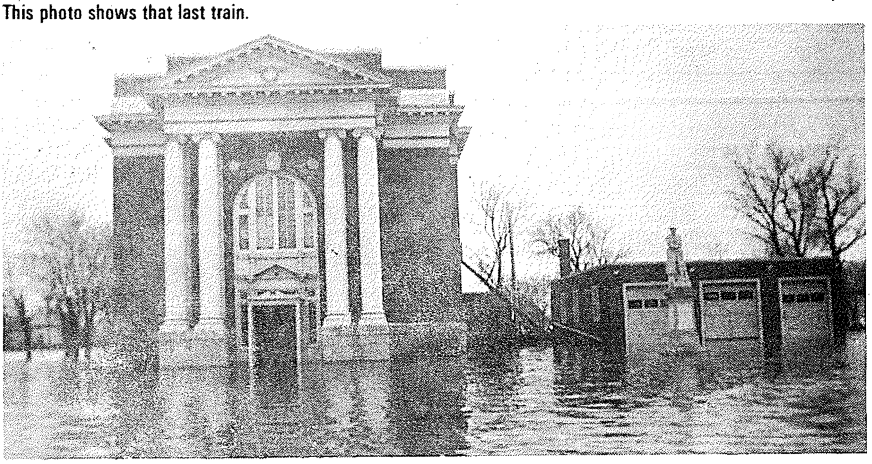
The residents of the Red and Roseau River Valleys are no strangers to the calamities of spring flooding. As early as 1852 our first settlers were to relate their awesome experiences with flooding when approximately six feet of water raged over our entire area. The Indians claim that the whole territory between the Lake of the Woods and the Pembina Hills was one huge and tumultous lake at that time. Another bad flood occurred in 1861 and then an estimated four feet of water raged above what is now Dominion City. Floods of smaller proportions continued on into the twentieth century and fairly bad ones were recorded in 1904 and 1916. There was a respite of thirty-two years until 1948 when the murky spring waters again rose to ravage our lands. The most documented and vividly remembered disaster of this nature by far, however, happened in 1950. Over three-quarters of the town was under water when the crest hit on May 13, 1950, and coincided with a three-inch rainfall - result "sheer chaos".

The town was completely isolated when the murky waters rose to cover the Roseau River traffic bridge and the C.P.R. bridge. The Red River ferry was cut off as well. Nearby towns such as Emerson, Arnaud and Letellier were inaccessible. The Red Cross dropped parcels of food and clothing by plane and these were distributed by the local ladies of the Red Cross organization to those in need. The clean-up job, considering all the muck, mire, and filth that the receding waters left behind, was not a pleasant task but the people as usual, carried out the work in their general good humour.

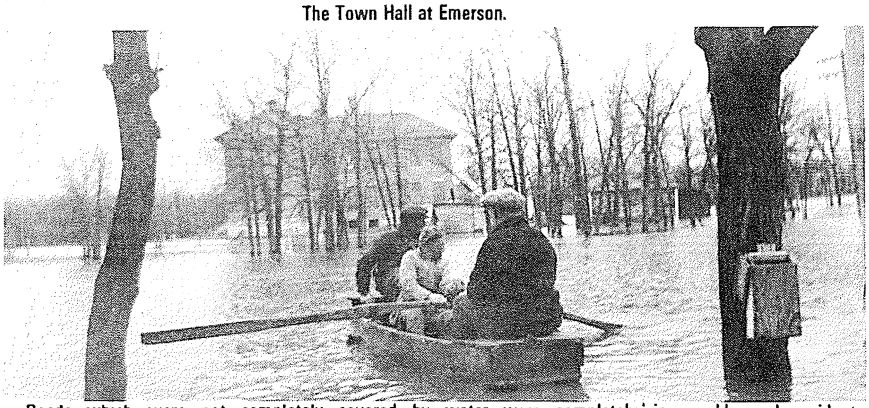
The financial losses over the years brought about by the occurrences of such catastrophies to buildings, public structures such as roads and bridges, stored grain and livestock, cannot be estimated nor can the heartbreak and suffering be measured by the ones closely affected. In recent times the flood most familiar to us is the 1950 flood and I think it can best be described through the following pictures taken in and around Dominion City at that time.

The Wm. Taylor home, formerly the McKercher House. The water running throughout the house in 1950 was not considered the necessity nor the luxury it is today.

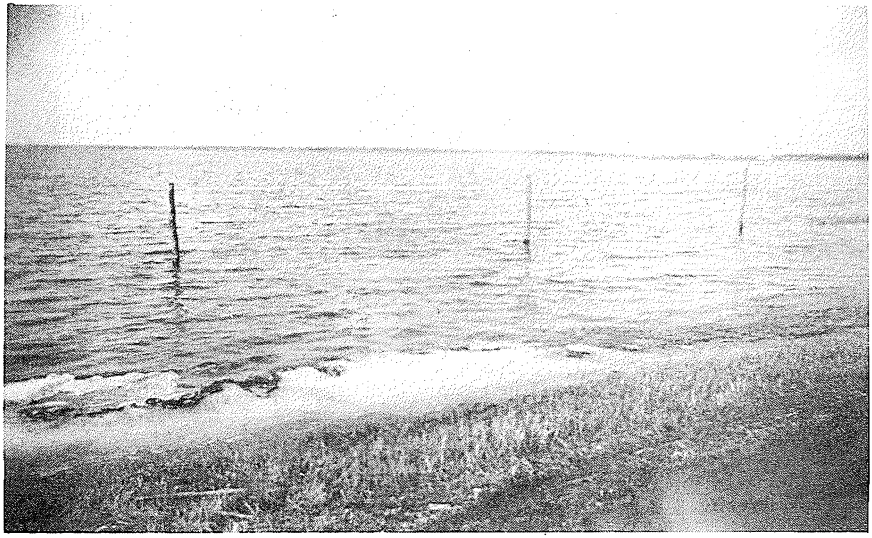
With nary a stretch of track visible on May 9, 1950, the CPR Soo Line discontinued service until May 27 This photo shows that last train.



The Town Hall at Emerson.



Roads which were not completely covered by water were completely impassable and residents fortunate to have boats resorted to this means of transportation. The old school in the background was closed.



Fields around Dominion City were covered with water and instead of land the whole area looked like a large lake. Seeding was very late that year but the resulting crops were of excellent yield and quality.

My good wife Annie and myself spent many hours paddling around the town and our faithful dog Tippy seemed to just love swimming along and would follow wherever we went. (This is taken in front of the Irvin Scott residence.)

The Waddell residence surrounded by water. The ducks are decoys I placed on the lawn or lake as a joke, but a neighbor thinking they were real had hopes for a delicious duck dinner and took a couple of shots at them. Needless to say, he was very disappointed.

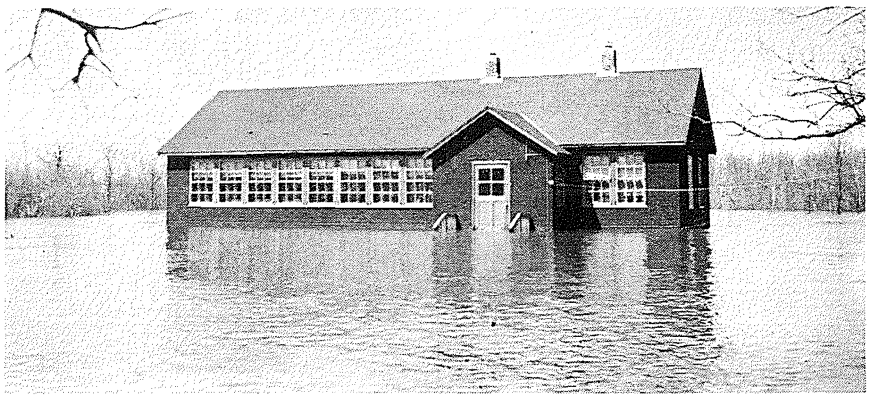
The B. Keller home and W. Smart residence (far right) on Lorne Avenue facing west.

This is an aerial view taken from the UGG elevator in town looking north-east.

The Roseau River traffic bridge was completely covered with water cutting off access to the north.

While water covered most of the town the offices of the R.M. of Franklin and the former Manitoba Telephone System are located on high ground and they continued to remain in operation throughout the flood.

Left to right: present homes of Mrs. A. Scott, Mr. and Mrs. Shorty Carver, Mrs. Swankey and Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson on Morris Avenue.



The Roseau River Indian Reservation School.

The former Reinhold Weiss home, now the residence of Mr and Mrs Barry Boutet.

Looking northward on the main street of Emerson.

Those Were The Days My Friends

With humble regret, neither names (in some cases) nor stories (of great significant historical value) accompany the following photographs, however, I include them at this time for your pleasure and hope that you will find these pictures as candid as the days, gone but not forgotton, when they were taken.

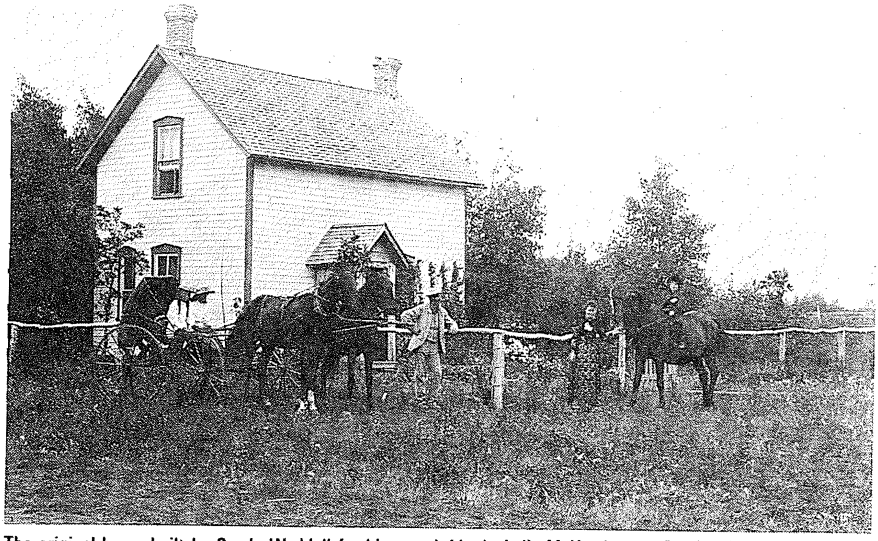
J.M.W.

Dominion City has always had more than its share of beautiful ladies, and the Roseau River has played host to swimming parties for almost a century. A bevy of our fair creatures is shown above, however, the fair sex was very modest in those days and I won't mention any names.

Saturday night in Dominion City (big event of the week)

"What is life without hope?" and it would appear as if my two sisters and I continue to dream of catching another big sturgeon. Renowned for its excellent fishing, the Roseau has put forth many a tasty meal on the local dining room tables, and remains a very popular pastime enjoyed by many local residents.

Fresh-water pearls anyone? Or a tasty clam chowder?



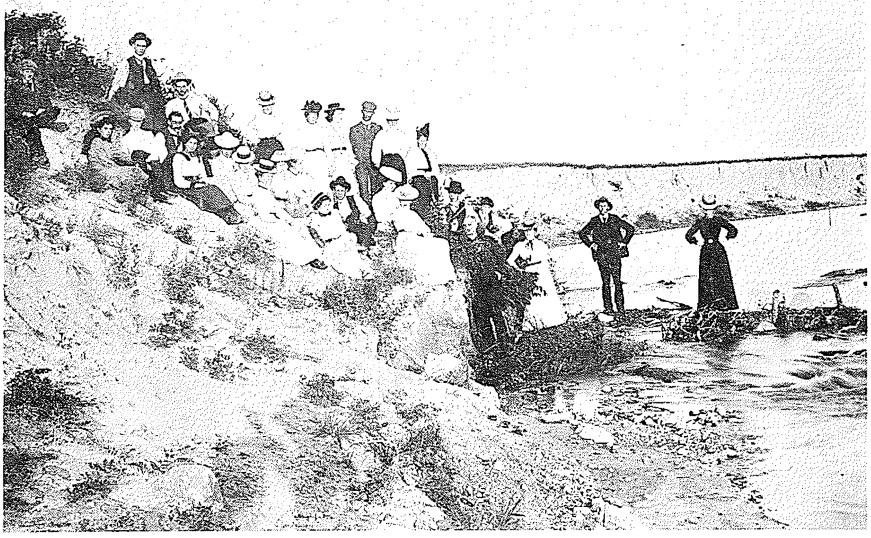
The original home built by Sandy Waddell for his new bride, Isabella McKercher, on Section 20, in 1876. (Now the residence of Mr Ernie Bohinski.)

New Winnipeg City Hall, the "Showplace of Manitoba" — bricks purchased from the Dominion City Brickyard (1884)

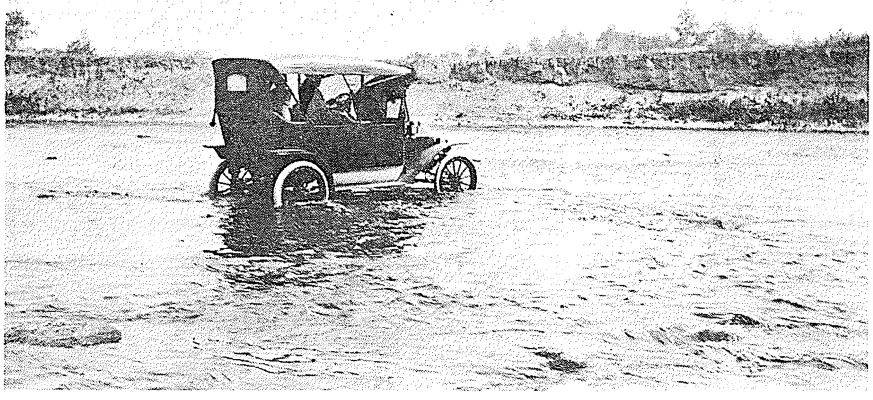
"Cruising Down The River On A Sunday Afternoon" was a reality in the 1890's. The traffic bridge looms in the background. L to R: Sandy Waddell, Nina Lena, Mrs Waddell - Isabella, Jim and Mrs McKercher.

Automatic washers were as reliable then as they are today, although they were still known to act up once in a while.

This picture was taken of one of Dominion City's favorite sons, Garnet Coulter, on the day he left for overseas duty in the First Great War. Garnet Coulter returned to Winnipeg and served our provincial capital as Mayor from 1943 until 1954.

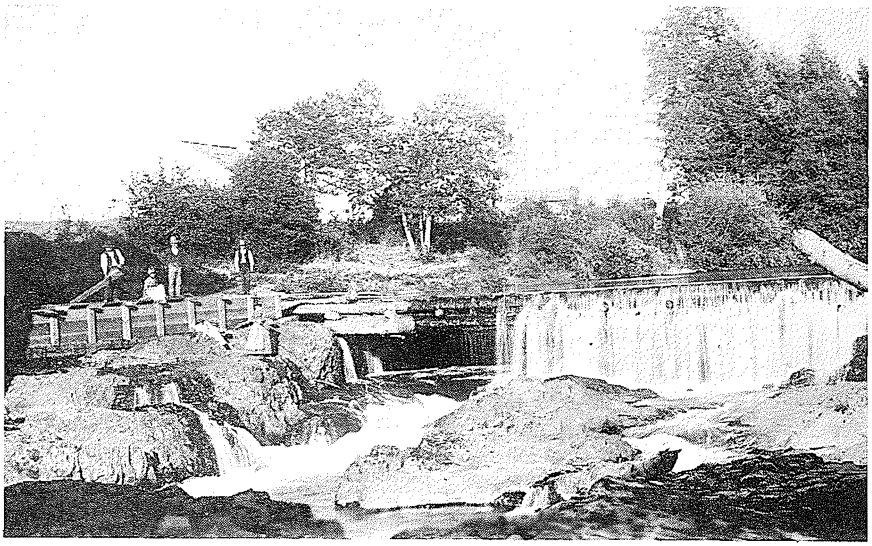


Some of the early church picnics were held at the Rapids, twelve miles east of Dominion City. This is still the most beautiful spot in our district. The lower couple are standing on the ancient Indian fish dam that Raddison and LaVerendrye had to lift their canoes over. This picture was taken on the north high banks just down from the rifle pits where the Saulteaux entrenched and fought the Sioux coming up the Roseau.



Who says you need a bridge to cross a river? In those days all you needed was a little nerve and one of the many good river crossings on the Roseau.

The ultimate in deluxe transportation about 1885.

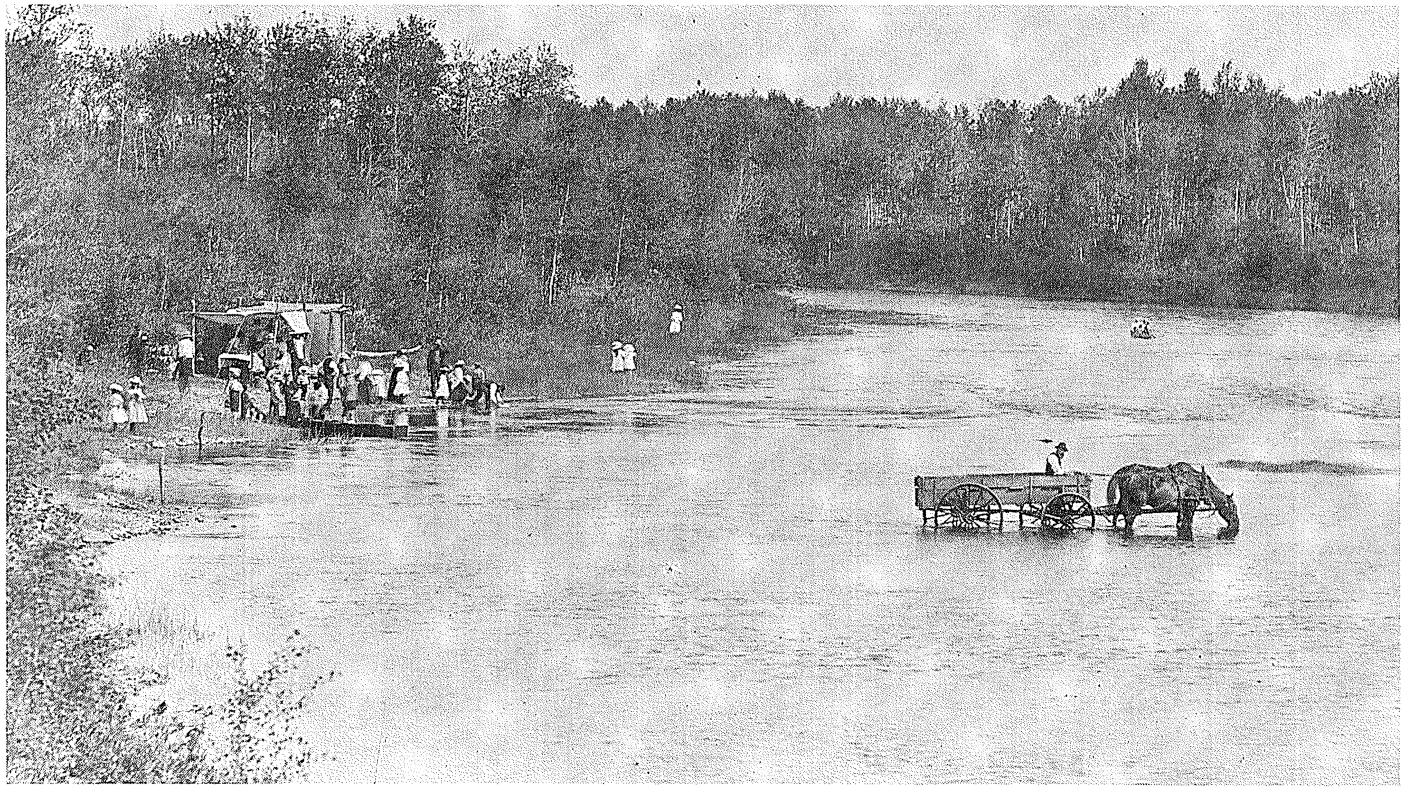


Construction of any kind was a sincere effort in the early years of our area. This photograph is of the original coulee bridge, between the present home of Earl Simpson and the cemetery, as it was being built.

People still liked to gad about in the gay nineties and what better means of transportation than the dependable sleigh and a good pair of horses. The frozen Roseau River bed made an excellent, as well as a sheltered, highway.

Baseball was just as much fun around 1905 as it is today. How many do you recognize? Back row (left to right): Dick Craig, George Lockhead, Jim Jack, Bill Craig, Jack Varey, Jake Krivell, John Heck, Bob Lockhead, Les Ramsey, George Gunn, Ike Adams. Front row (left to right): Joe Raw, Lloyd Hempton, Bert Scott, Harry Barber, Jim Waddell, Bob Scott, Visitor (?), Henry Larsen, Mr Winegardner, Wally Taylor.

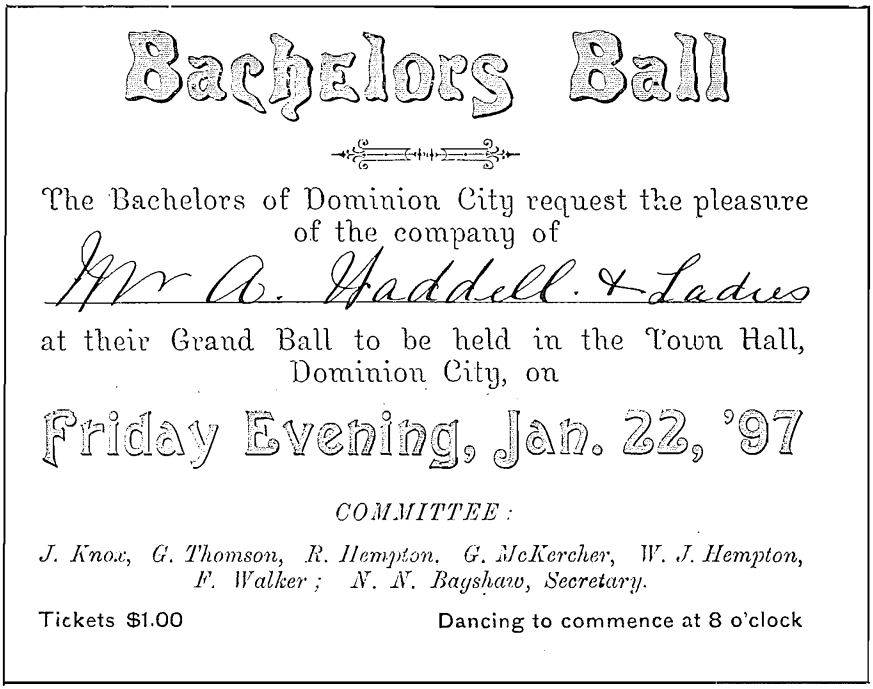
The author - James McKercher Waddell at four years of age.



A good and shallow river crossing was as important to the early settlers as a modern bridge is now. The picture above shows one of the excellent river crossings on the Roseau River and was photographed about 1890.

Mrs Ida Simpson, proudly displays the curling trophy she won at the grand age of 73 years.

Modern kitchens were also popular at the turn of the century, and modern conveniences were in great supply.



Entertainment was both appreciated and well deserved in the early days. The Bachelors Ball was an annual and gala event held in Dominion City. Invitations were always sent out in those days, and it was quite improper to come without one. This particular "do" seemed to have attracted a fair crowd. Apparently my father, mother and both sisters were happy to accept and they are seated in the front row, at the extreme right.

UEEN'S

D.C. Directory — 1935

as compiled by Bill Smart, September 1935

A is for Alton, who starts this rhyme out,
A pretty fair curler, of that, there's no doubt.

B means Bill Maynes, now he's got big feet,
For telling good stories, he just can't be beat.

C stands for Charlie, in the Red & White Store,
And also for Chong, and 'Cafe' on his door.

D is for Dave, he sells lumber, by golly!
If he ain't at the office, you'll find him at Polly's.

E stands for Ernie Pearse, Keeper of Bees.
From handling the honey, he's weak at the knees.

F is for Froom. He papers and paints.
We call him Happy, and don't think he ain't.

G stands for Gustafson. He's tall and thin,
The Grahams, The Gibsons, and also The Ginns.

H is for Hjelti, he's short and he's stout.
He's postmaster here and his tummy sticks out.

I is for Indians, now there's quite a crew.
With their sun dances, pow-wows, and lots of homebrew.

J stands for Johnston. He is the Town Cop,
And also for Swede Johnson, who has a white top.

K is for Kyle, and also the Kells,
They're farmers. Here's hoping their crops will do well.

L is a fellow, we all know as Larson.
Now when he got married, did he pay the parson?

M's for McDonald, now boys just keep still.
There's McClelland, and Murchison, and Mykytiuk, Bill.

N stands for Neil, the Radio Lad,
He seems to be busy, not doing too bad.

O is for Ostberg. He gets sore as a boil
When things don't go right while he's tilling the soil.

P stands for Pearse, Pete and George, they are brothers.
And then there is Stafford and there may be some others.

Q is the Queen's. Their rates are not dear.
When we boys get dry, we go there for a beer.

R stands for Ramsey — you must know old Bob?
He hums, and he whistles, and sometimes he sobs.

S is for Simpson, and also for Scott.
There might be some more, but that's all I got.

T stands for Turner, and Templeton, too.
Bob has a swell hat and the color is blue.

U is for Us and Underwear, too;
And also for Uncles (we've got quite a few).

V is for Veitch. He lives at the Station,
And for being a sport, has a good reputation.

W is for Walter, he watches the foxes.
He keeps them cooped up in some kind of boxes.

X is the mark they will put on the spot
In the picture they take if you accidently get shot.

Y is for You. Now just be yourself,
When you finish this, put it back on the shelf.

Z is for Zloty. Do the folks go there yet?
(It's also the last line in our alphabet.)
