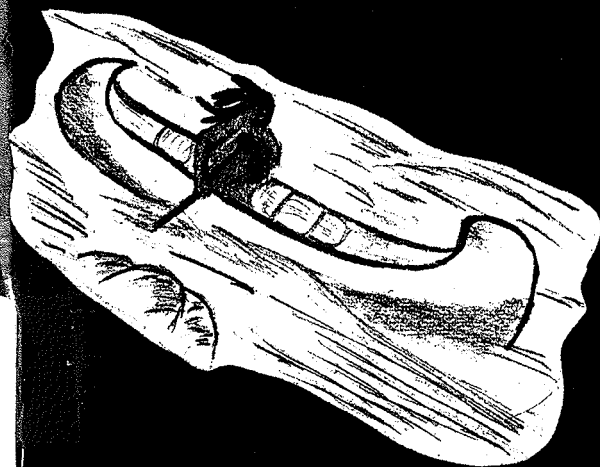


# DAKBURN MANITOBA

## CENTENNIAL

### 1870—1970

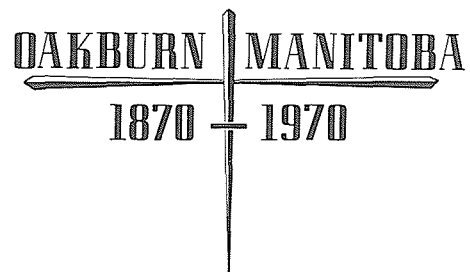


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# ECHOES



Oakburn Centennial Committee

Oakburn, Manitoba





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## Foreword

The principle objective of this book is to inspire in the hearts of the future generations an understanding that the development and progress of a country is dependent upon its human resources. It is the quality of the people and their aspirations and resourcefulness which determines whether a nation will grow to become strong and unified.

The 19th and 20th centuries saw a great flood of people pour into Canada from the continent of Europe. Many of these early immigrants came to this land in search of religious and political freedom which they were being denied in their homeland. Adverse economic conditions forced others to seek a new life in a strange land, and there were the romantics who came to Canada in search of new adventures, fell in love with the land and stayed. All of these people brought with them to this new land not only their families and a few worldly possessions, but also their hopes, ideals, and ways of life. Out of the wilderness they helped to carve a unique nation with a character of its very own called Canada.

Manitoba, which was once a part of the vast wilderness, entered Confederation on July 15, 1870. The past one hundred years has seen it grow from the tiny Postage Stamp Province to the bustling Keystone Province of today. This year is Manitoba's Centennial birthday and throughout the province Manitobans are taking time to celebrate and reflect upon the numerous and memorable achievements of past and present generations. Oakburn along with the rest of the province honours its early settlers, immigrants, and present generation by recording for the very first time the history of this area of Manitoba. It is hoped that this book will provide future generations with an insight as to how this community came into being.

The compiling of the material for this book was not an easy task. Many hours were spent interviewing senior citizens and studying diaries, record books, registers and documents in order to obtain information that was pertinent and accurate. It is sad to say that much valuable information about the early pioneers and the events that took place so long ago are lost forever because they were either never recorded or have been forgotten. Thanks to the old Kodak box camera we do have many pictures which give us a glimpse of what life was like a number of years ago.

In telling the story a large number of names and events have been mentioned. No doubt that there have been some which have been missed. If names and incidents have been missed it has not been done intentionally. Many have been forgotten and others may not have been brought to our attention when the material was being compiled.

On the first Centennial of our province of Manitoba we give future Manitoban's a history of the early pioneers of this area of Manitoba.

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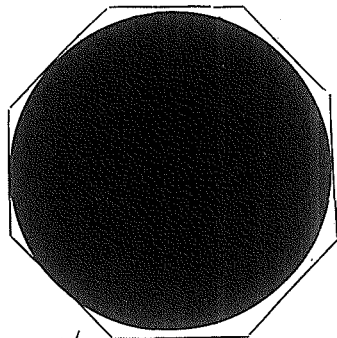
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## Preface

Never in the history of Manitoba's one hundred years have individuals, organizations, and communities shown such widespread interest in the history of our province as this year. All the hard-earned achievements attained by the early pioneers are being recognized by all Manitobans throughout the province. The numerous contributions to the growth and development of our province by the various ethnic groups are being acknowledged this centennial year. It is their personalities and traditions which have helped to develop Manitoba's unique character.

As chairman of our Centennial Organization it gives me and the various committees great pleasure to contribute our time and effort to assist in the projects to honour the early pioneers and the citizens who have contributed so much to the development and growth not only of our community but also of our province and country. We sincerely hope that the publishing of the history of our community and the erection of the commemorative monument shall serve as a symbol and reminder of the time and toil that went into the building of our community by these early and brave pioneers.

— Mike Michalyshyn



*John Menzies*  
DEPUTY GOVERNOR.

# CANADA.

Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, QUEEN, Defender of the Faith, &c., &c., &c.

To all to whom these Presents shall come—GREETING:

Whereas the Lands hereinafter described, are part of the lands known as "Donation Lands," and mentioned in an Act of the Parliament of Canada, passed in the forty-sixth year of Our Reign and known as the "Donation Lands Act 1852,"

AND WHEREAS  
*John Menzies, of Township Eighteen, Range Twenty-three West of the Principal Meridian, in the Province of Manitoba, in Our Dominion of Canada, formerly*

has applied for a grant of the said lands and his aim to such grant having been duly investigated by Us, We have been found duly entitled thereto.

Now Know Ye, that by these Presents We do grant, convey and assure, unto the said *John Menzies, his heirs*

and assigns forever, all the said Parcel — or Tract — of Land, situate, lying and being in the

*Eighteenth Township, in the Twenty-third Range West of the Principal Meridian, in the Province of Manitoba,* in Our Dominion of Canada, and being composed of

*The North East quarter of Section Twenty-three, of the said Township,*

containing by admeasurement *One hundred and sixty*

acres, more or less.

To have and to hold the said Parcel — or Tract — of Land, unto the said *John Menzies, his heirs* and assigns, for ever; SAVING AND RESERVING, nevertheless unto Us, Our Successors and Officers, the free use, passage and enjoyment of, in, over and upon all navigable waters that now are or may be hereafter found on or under, or flowing through or over any part of the said Parcel — or Tract — of Land.

GIVEN under the Great Seal of Canada:—Witness, *John Joseph McGee, Esquire*, Deputy of Our Right Trusty and Entirely beloved Cousin the Most Honourable Her Majesty's Governor General and Vice-Roy in and over Our Dominion of Canada, in the County of Somerset, Earl of Wycombe, of Chipping Wycombe, in the County of Bucks, Viscount Calke and Calke in the County of Avon, and Lord Wycombe, Baron of Chipping Wycombe in the County of Bucks, in the peerage of Great Britain; Earl of Epsom and Earl of Shelburne, Viscount Clannamurragh and Fitzmaurice, Baron of Kerry, Lisnaw, and Dunkerron, in the peerage of Ireland, Knight Grand Cross of Our Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

At OTTAWA, this *Thirtieth* day of *June*, year of Our Reign.

in the year of Our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and eighty *four* and in the forty *eight*

Ref. No 20751.  
Saler's 8133.  
BY COMMAND,  
*H. J.*

*H. J.*  
Under Secretary of State.

*John Hall*  
Joint Deputy of the Minister of the Interior.

The Early Pioneers

## EARLY PIONEERS AND HOMESTEADERS

Dominion Land Office Survey

April 15, 1880

Ottawa, Canada

Ward 5, Township 18, Range 23 West of the First Meridian.

A. Black	R. Gardiner	R. Menzies
John Black	W. Gardiner	Jas. E. Morgan
R. Black	G. Gureau	W. Parsons
H. Brandon	P. Korschur	R. Randall
A. Brown	J. Kusniak	Thomas Richardson
T. Campbell	J. E. Laughton	E. Rush
T. H. Campbell	S. C. Laughton	C. S. Russ
R. Chaple	R. Lawson	F. Simpson
G. Deller	David Mair	H. C. Snusher
A. J. Eastcott	T. Martin	J. Spraggs
J. N. Eastcott	Murdock McDonald	J. S. Stratt
L. Galbraith	J. McMillan	G. Sutherland
A. Gardiner	M. McMillan	R. A. Teskey
G. Gardiner	A. Menzies	Fred White
H. Gardiner	D. Menzies	
J. Gardiner	John Menzies	

## PIONEER LIFE

In Europe there was much suffering because of the revolution and other hardships. These things led the people to search for better lands and since they heard of the new world across the ocean they migrated in search of freedom and land. Among these were my great grandparents.

Since our great-grandparents and grandparents heard of such a free country and such a rich and free place in Canada, they decided to make Manitoba their place to live in. They packed up and said farewell to their beloved country, Ukraine, and boarded the train and later on the ship. Their journey was very long over the rough ocean. They reached Halifax and were very happy to set foot on land.

They heard of a place called Shoal Lake. They took the train and travelled on to meet up with some friends that had been to this new country before them. When the train stopped at Shoal Lake, they got off the train not knowing how they'd get to this place now called Seech. But to their luck, there were men known by the names of Wyman and Menzies. These two men had horses, buggies and sleighs and took our great grandparents and grandparents to different places. They took these families to the unsettled land where not a house nor a shack had been built, but they were happy as they saw there were a lot of trees, and they knew if there was wood there will be a roof over their heads.

They quickly got to work and built shacks and plastered them with clay and put hay on top of the roof. Just imagine living in such a house! Animals such as bears looked into their shacks through the holes which were to be windows.

Everyone had to work hard. What ever they needed to get they had to travel by foot because they had no horses and their oxen wouldn't go that far. They had to bring flour and sugar on their backs so they'd have enough food for their family.

Their life was not an easy task. They had to break their land and gather stumps, roots and stones. Later some had horses and oxen. I remember my grandmother told us how an ox would get stubborn and would lay down and didn't want to work. Just imagine what their life was as compared to nowadays. But they were happy.

They used to visit with their neighbours in the evenings and have sing songs and go for a chat even in the afternoon. They had to walk a couple of miles and found time to do it. Now we barely see our neighbours unless on some special occasions.

I remember my grandparents telling us how they used to get together when they had to plaster their homes with clay. They prepared clay by putting water and fine straw and then with their bare feet mixed it into the clay. They tramped the clay until it was all mixed together. Then they plastered their homes, barns, and other buildings.

As years went by they became great farmers, and built schools, churches, and halls. They passed many traditions on to their children and great-grandchildren of today.

Evangeline Bucklaschuk,  
Elementary School.



## THE HOMESTEADERS 1872-1918

"I often wonder will it ever be told the story of those days and the trip across the ocean. My, oh, my, what a terrible trip it was and what hard times we had in those days!"

— From the diary of Mr. J. E. Menzies

In 1870 the vast Hudson Bay Company territory of Rupert's Land and the North West Territories were transferred to the new Dominion of Canada. Out of this vast expanse of land was to be carved the Keystone Province. On May 15, 1870 the Manitoba Act was passed and the territory entered the Dominion of Canada as the Province of Manitoba.



The James Hallidays — 1886.

In July of 1879 Township 18, Range 23 was surveyed and in August of the same year the survey was approved by the Dominion Lands Office. On April 15, 1880 the first settlers took up their homesteads in the area where Oakburn now stands.

It may be an interesting fact to note that prior to January 1881 the boundary line between Manitoba and the North West Territories ran past Palestine which was later renamed Gladstone.

The majority of Manitoba's early settlers came from Scotland. In those days the voyage across the Atlantic in the small and crowded vessels was long and arduous. Sea-sickness plagued many from the day they left port to the day they docked. Hunger was prevalent for the food rations were usually meagre. Often as the ships neared the coast of Canada they became icebound by icebergs for days before a break in the ice appeared allowing the vessels to complete their voyage. How happy these sick and hungry people must have been when they were at last able to set foot on land!



B. Muirman's first home 1897.

One such group of Scottish settlers sailed from Glasgow and landed in Canada in 1862. Some of the families from this group settled in Ontario while the remainder along with other families from Ontario journeyed west to Manitoba. Their hardships followed them as the westward trek often by foot was full of hard work and danger. Following blazed trails the pioneers had to carry heavy packs by back through miles of dense bush infested by hordes of hungry mosquitoes and flies.

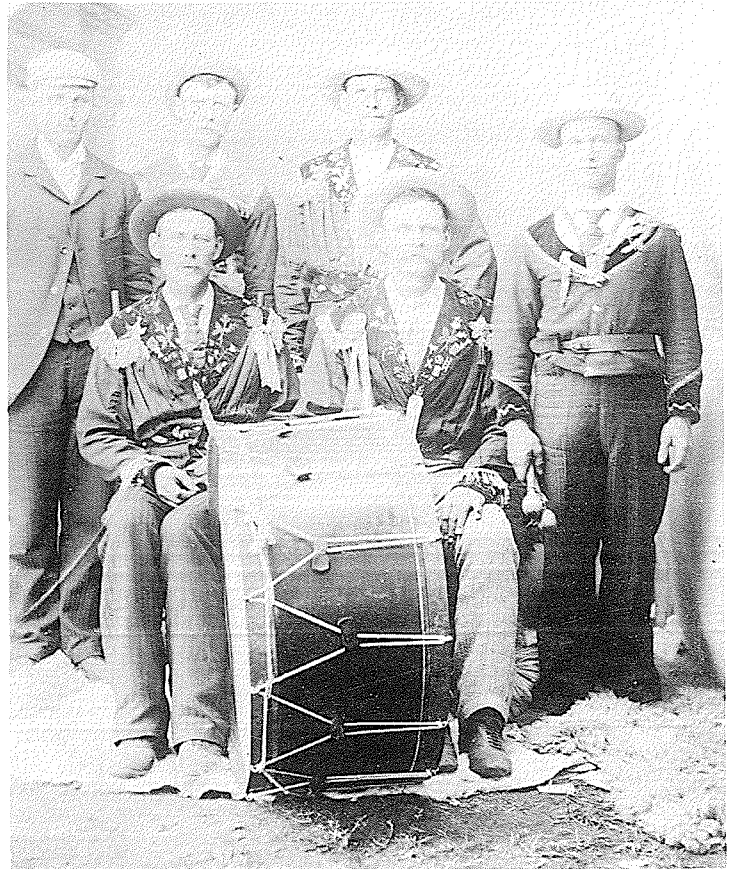
On their arrival in Manitoba, the settlers wasted no time and immediately began the tasks of constructing homes and breaking land. Their first homes were either tents, dugouts, or sod houses. In areas where trees were plentiful log cabins were built. They lived off the land for game and fruit were plentiful at that time. It is said that if one drove a wagon during strawberry season the wheels would be red from the squashed berries.

These settlers from Ontario did not put down roots only in the Red River Valley and vicinity. Many continued by Red River cart to the area north of Minnedosa arriving in the Oakburn district between the years 1878 and 1880 where they began homesteading.

The life of the pioneers was rugged and simple. Neighbours often got together in quilting, corn husking, threshing, and building bees to

assist each other. Besides working together, they played, worshipped, and shared their joys and sorrows together.

The simple life of the pioneers was reflected in their simple homes. The furniture was either homemade or made locally by a skilled pioneer. Much of the clothing was also homemade. The sheep that were raised by the settlers provided the wool which was then spun into yarn and woven into cloth. Their cabins were lit in the evening with tallow candles which were made from beef or mutton fat and a piece of rag for a wick. To obtain more light they simply put the fat in a larger dish and used a thicker wick. Their diet consisted mainly of porridge made from crushed wheat, bread, cheese, butter, buttermilk, and potatoes. Yeast was made from wild or native hops.



Hugh Gardiner's Band — Orangeman's Day, July 12, 1900.

The early pioneers had wonderful forms of entertainment. During the summer they played croquet, went on family picnics, and attended band concerts. In the winter both young and old would go tobogganing during the day and in the evening they would gather at a neighbour's home for a singing party. In those days the grownups enjoyed tobogganing as much as the youngsters.

The early settlers were religious people and on Sunday they would all attend the service which was usually held in a neighbour's home or in a little schoolhouse. Smoking and playing cards on Sunday was considered sinful. In those days a good family man wasn't seen in any tavern.

One Sunday, as the worshippers were gathered at a home for Sunday service, a grass fire broke out in the distance. The men had to run for the quilts from the wagons and dip them in water to be used in putting out the fire. It was very easy to get lost in a burning prairie where there were no roads or even trails to help a family find their way home through the thick smoke.

Before the early pioneer could put in a crop he was faced with the difficult task of clearing and tilling the land. The clearing was done by hand with one small portion of land being cleared at a time. Once cleared it was tilled simply by digging by hand. Later the job of tilling was accomplished with a yoke of oxen and a wooden plough. Though the oxen were slow they did a good job of cutting the roots. At this time horses were still being used mainly for transportation. They didn't become the great workers of the land until the appearance of the first early farm implements. After the land had been cleared, the grain was sown by hand, cut with a cradle scythe, and threshed with a flail. On a windy day the grain was winnowed to remove the chaff. Later, the homesteaders were able to purchase the Red River fanning mill which performed this task quite adequately.

Other farm machines were soon being used in the province. In 1882 the self sweep reaper made its appearance followed by a horse-driven thresher. A self binder known as the Bennett Binder, which was drawn by three horses, made its debut in 1883. Early maturing Red Fife wheat was introduced in 1905.

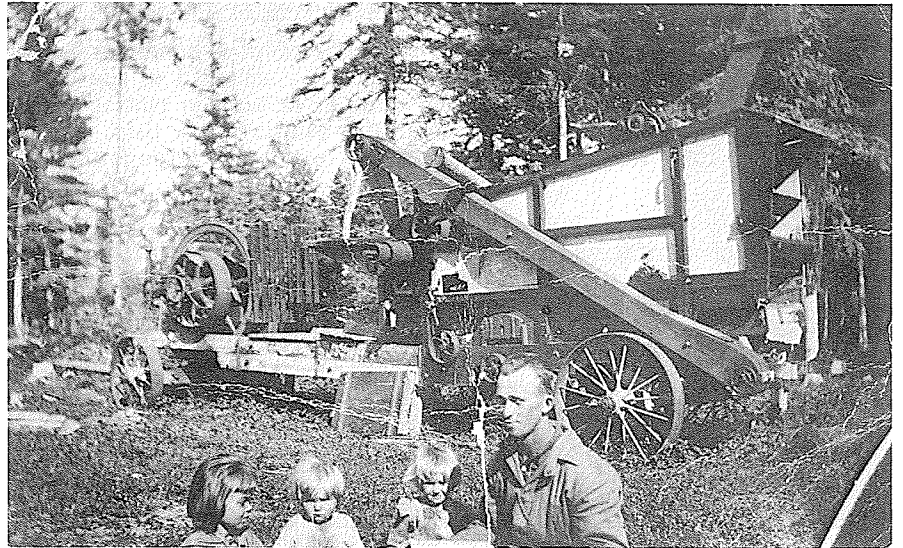
For the first few years money was very scarce so most of the business was carried on by barter. Here are the prices of a few of the common items which were sold in the stores of that period. Flour cost six to seven dollars per hundred pounds. It was of a very low grade and made dark and heavy bread. Salt and pepper sold for twenty-five cents a pound. Low grade coal oil, which was burned in coal oil lamps, gave very poor light and sold for a dollar a gallon.

Scarcity of money wasn't the only problem of those early days. A Shoal Lake newspaper of 1903 printed the following item which may be of interest to today's farmers:

"R. Chaple from Oakburn has a grievance against the C.P.R. that is one common to the hundreds of farmers in this district, and one that no farmer should be subjected to and which the long suffering farming community will not continue to submit to for any length of time. Mr. Chaple applied for a car to load his grain over a month ago and on Monday he was told a car would be spotted for him provided he didn't want to ship to Fort William. To spot cars just when it suited the company was a bitter enough pill for the farmer to swallow, but to dictate to the farmer as to where he must deliver his grain is too rash a dose altogether. There is no other country under the sun where a common carrier could so persistently dictate to an intelligent people."

The pioneers have come and gone and today many of these early settlers have been forgotten. Some are still remembered only by our parents

or grandparents. To the younger generation they are just names mentioned during the course of a conversation. Here are a few of those early pioneers whose name you may have heard.



Kareet Threshing Machine.

The first white man to remain in the district for any length of time was an Irish trapper from Quebec called Jim Munroe who arrived in this area in 1872. It was said that he did well at the trapping business and returned to Quebec in 1882.

Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Brandon and their son John came from Belgrove, Ontario and settled in the Oakburn area in May of 1877. Their squatters claim soon became known to the people in the district as "Cozy Nook". That same year Murdock McDonald took a homestead.

Andrew, John, and Robert Black took up squatter claims in May of 1878. Andrew Black's wife and their four sons, William, Robert, John, and Thomas came to the district in 1880. A nephew, George, had taken up squatter claims the preceding year.

Alex Beaton, who came in May 1879, was a bachelor for about thirty-five years and married later in life. He was followed by David Mair who arrived in June of the same year. In the early part of 1880 Mrs. Mair came out from Ontario accompanied by David's father, mother, and his brother John Jr.

In 1883 John Mair Jr. was working at the sawmill at the Bend on the little Saskatchewan River. On Friday afternoon he left work and started for home. That Sunday forenoon it was learned at church in the Oakburn school that he had not arrived home. On Monday a search party found gun and clothes on the river bank and his body lodged against a stone. His body was buried north of the village of Oakburn and a few years later it was moved to the Shoal Lake Cemetery.

John Brodie, who was born in the Orkney Islands, had heard a considerable amount about Canada from the many Orkney men who had been in

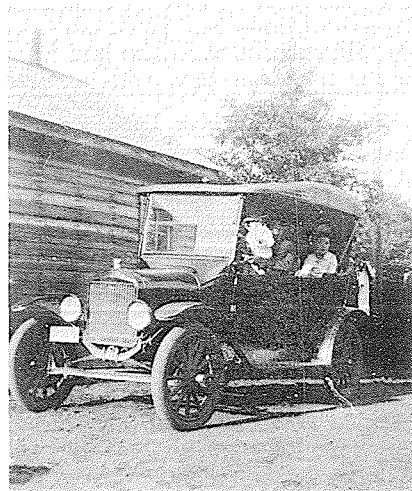
the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. While in Edinburgh, Scotland he met a David Stevens and the two decided to emigrate to Canada. They arrived in the North West Territories in 1879. After purchasing a number of oxen at Winnipeg and Portage, the men arrived in the Oakburn area and took homesteads. John Brodie's homestead was located on section 22, township 19, range 24 west. The trip from Winnipeg to the homesteads had taken the men three weeks.

John Eastcott came to Shoal Lake in 1879. He took up squatters claim on the land where the village of Shoal Lake is now located but later sold the land to the Manitoba and North Western Railway and took up a homestead in the Oakburn area.

James Halliday Sr. homesteaded north-east of 36. His son Vic took over the homestead when he passed away.

Reverend J. E. Morgan was another early settler. He was followed by his brothers who lived with him and were later buried where Wheatfield School was located.

Thomas Martin was another early settler. Thomas Gardiner came to the Oakburn district from near Clinton, Ontario in 1883. While in Portage he was given a mauling by a half dozen breeds from which he never did fully recover. He died three years later and his remains were buried in an unmarked grave close to the north line on N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , section 33, township 18, range 23, west.



1921 Model T. Ford.

The Richardsons arrived in 1884.

The Menzies family came from Dull in Perthshire, Scotland to Owen Sound, Ontario in 1862. They arrived near where the village of Oakburn now stands in 1880 and took up squatters claim on what later proved to be the west half of section 16, township 17, range 23 west. By 1913 John Menzies Sr. had acquired 3040 acres of land. He also organized the Shoal Lake Agricultural Society, which is still very active today, served as a trustee for eight years, and reeve and councillor for twelve years.

John Menzies Jr., who was ten years old when the family left Scotland, tells his story.

"In the spring of 1877 I left for the west with my brother, Dan, Hugh Gardiner and David Mair.

We took a lake boat at Goderich across the Lake to Sault Ste. Marie, then across Lake Superior to Duluth.

We walked all the way from Duluth to Fargo, where we got on a flat bottomed boat and came down the Red River to Winnipeg. There was considerable building going on at the time and we got jobs as carpenters at fifty cents per day.

In the winter of 1877-78 we came to Portage la Prairie where we got work cutting cordwood at fifty cents per cord. We worked for farmers in the summer of 1878. In the spring of 1879 Dan stayed at Portage working at carpenter work, and Dave Mair, Jack Laughton, Hugh Gardiner and myself came west to where the old N.W.M.P. barracks stood and then north to where we took up squatters claim.

I bought Mr. Hutchenson's claim, N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  23-18-23 W. I bought the claim with ten acres broken, a yoke of oxen, a yoke and harness, two carts, a small stable, a set of building logs, hewed, a dugout and cradle for cutting grain, all for fifty dollars cash and a note for another fifty.

Mr. Hutchenson was in poor state of health and became somewhat despondent. He went to the U.S.A., and was later reported to have been drowned in the Red River in Minnesota. This report, however, was definitely an exaggeration for Mr. Hutchenson was next and last heard of in Portland, Oregon in 1920 when the note was paid without interest.

After making our claims we walked back to Portage la Prairie. Hugh Gardiner and Jack Laughton stayed at Portage, doing carpenter work they could get. Dave Mair and I walked on to Winnipeg, then on to Ontario where we both married, and came west in the spring of 1880, bringing our brides with us. We were in the company with a number of other settlers who were coming to make a start in the west.

In 1885 the North West Rebellion broke out. Among those who went from this district were David Mair, Robert Gardiner, Jack Laughton, Robert Teskey, and Hope Hays.

In the late fall of 1881 Wm. Gardiner and I went to Winnipeg for supplies, each of us taking two oxen and two carts. About twenty miles west of Winnipeg we were struck by a blizzard and pulled into a bachelor's place. There was no one in the house but the oxen were in the stable. We stayed over night and fed his oxen and our own, stayed all the next day and night and then started for Winnipeg. The owner still did not come home. On the way back we stopped at the same place and were informed that he had been found dead on the prairie.

It took us six weeks to make the round trip.

In 1886 the railway reached Shoal Lake and made a great change in our way of getting supplies.

This same year a fire broke out in the bush to the north of our place and burned over a strip ten miles long by six miles wide.



In the very dry fall of 1889 fire again broke out and burned over the country between Birdtail Creek and the Little Saskatchewan River, and from Squaw Creek to the Shoal Lake Railway line. Many farmers lost a lot of hay but managed to save their straw. Even so, winter feed for the stock was very sparse. The earth in the meadows caught fire and the meadows were spoiled for five or six years. Some farmers had to go north of Squaw Creek from 1890 to 1895 to get wild hay for winter feed for their stock; among them being McMillans, McDonalds, McKinnons, McLeod, McLeans, Menzies Bros., Gardiners, Blacks and Moultons."

This is as far as the story of John Menzies Jr. goes.

Here are a few humorous memories from the diary of Mr. John Menzies Sr.

"In the days of the pioneer they would go to Winnipeg for their supplies to save freight. In the latter part of May 1882, Andrew Black took two oxen and Red River carts and John Menzies took one cart and set out for Winnipeg.



John and Emma Handley 1873.

Mr. Black had a sack of brown sugar on top of one cart to keep it out of the water when crossing streams. Somewhere about Gladstone heavy rains began. He moved the sugar to the bottom of the load to keep it out of the rain. They were following what is known as the "High Water" trail. When they got to the Cozy Nook crossing on Wolf Creek the water was rather high. Mr. Black had one contrary ox that would not lead or drive, but would follow. But when he got into the creek he turned down stream with the cart and the sugar in the bottom of the load and got into a deep hole. By the time the men got the load out the sugar had gone to the fish."

It would appear that there might have been work for the Bracken Liquor Commission even in those days of the pioneers to judge from Mr. Menzies' humorous memories of Hermit Jim.



### Pioneers Lament

There's a whiskey still in the Brandon hills,  
Where the smoke goes a wandering to the skies;  
Where Hermit Jim brewed mountain dew  
In the hills that show so clearly.  
I'll sing a song both loud and long,  
I'll sing it late and early.  
My heart goes back to the Brandon hills  
And the still I left behind me.  
I drove my oxen all day long,  
The trail was stiff and winding,  
Till I came to the spot where Jim had squat,  
And left his woes behind him.  
Now Hermit Jim was tall and slim,  
His hair long and shaggy,  
His whiskers too, they were not blue;  
And at all times not tidy.  
Now Hermit Jim made mountain dew,  
And made it very fairly.  
He made his mash from berries and trash  
As his forefathers had before him.

"Pioners Lament" which Mr. Menzies had evidently intended to write in free verse was not completed.

### JOHN W. SMITH, Q.C., OAKBURN, MANITOBA

Born at Gladstone, Manitoba on November 16, 1899. Jack Smith died at the Assiniboine Hospital, Brandon, Manitoba on June 28, 1963.



J. W. Smith, Q.C.

He received his public and high school education at Gladstone and proceeded to the University of Manitoba from which he graduated with his B.A. and then from Law. He set up a successful law practice at Oakburn in 1929 and in 1950 was appointed to Queen's Counsel.

In 1933 he married the former Margaret Kotyk and they had two daughters, Grace and Joyce.

He served for many years as chairman of the Oakburn School Board and was official trustee for Flower S.D. for 20 years. He acted as school arbitrator, being a sitting member of the Arbitration Board.

An ardent sportsman, he excelled in football, tennis and curling during his University years. He was a member of the University curling Executive, and a fervent promotor of this sport in the Oakburn district.

He was an active member of the Liberal Party, and a devout member of the Westminster United Church in Oakburn and Shoal Lake.

### MY GRANDFATHER

Around and in the vicinity of Oakburn there are many members of the older generation. I think one of the outstanding members of this generation is my grandfather, Hnat Sytnyk, not only because he is my grandfather but because he has seen and lived through the changes from 1899 to 1970 and is still continuing to do so. He came to this area when he was thirteen and has travelled over this area of Oakburn many times. He can remember many interesting facts about Oakburn.



Hnat  
Sytnyk

Hnat or "George" Sytnyk was born in Kopychinsty, Poland in 1885. His parents heard of free land in Canada and because of the poor conditions there they moved to Canada. They arrived in Halifax in 1899 and bought a homestead for ten dollars. At this time there were no churches or schools, but in 1900 Father Dalaere came to this area. My grandfather still remembers him since he was the first priest or missionary around here. He was not a Ukrainian but when he saw this area was mostly Ukrainian he learned this language. Father Dalaere, a Roman Catholic of course, was not any-

thing like the priests today. He himself went out with other people in this area and cut logs for this church. All the people over a fifteen mile radius came to this church in 1901. There was only a Roman Catholic Church in this area at this time.

When my grandfather was a few years older he went to work for other farmers in Hamiota, Griswold, and even Oak Lake. In 1908 he had earned enough money and bought a farm from Alvin Westover. He built a log house in the same year. They used oxen instead of horses in those days. The main reason was that oxen could be bought for one hundred dollars and horses cost over two hundred dollars. After two years they had raised enough money and bought a quarter of unbroken land which is still unbroken and used as pasture.

He got married in 1910 to Mary Hachkowski. In a few years the war broke out which concerned the farmers since many goods were rationed. My grandfather's step-brother was killed in 1914. He did not come to Canada but remained in Europe. After the war conditions got worse. People worked for twenty-five cents a day. Money was very scarce at this time. A few years later conditions improved and my grandfather bought his first car. It was a 1921 Model T. This was considered something great since there were very few cars in this area at this time.

They still remember Oakburn as a booming town, where there was a stable, blacksmith shop, doctor's office, bank and even an apothecary. He still remembers when the rivers around his farm contained a bountiful supply of fish. The people fished with forks at that time. They flicked the fish out of the rivers.

In 1910 he bought his first team of horses. This was the beginning of a hard time for the farmers. By this time he had a family of six, two girls and four boys. His sons roamed the country on freight trains looking for work, which was hard to find. This carried on until the war. Conditions still continued to be poor and now many goods were rationed again. In the last year of the 2nd World War one of his sons was conscripted, but failed to see any action. Also a few years after the war he adopted a German boy.

Today he lives on the same farm but in a three storey house instead of a log cabin and has a tractor of over a hundred horse power.. My grandfather although he is eighty-five years old can still work quite well and enjoys all work done with horses.

— Syzon Sytnyk

#### JOHN EASTCOTT AND FAMILY

John Eastcott was born in Devonshire, England in 1850, and came with his parents to Canton Hope, Ontario. There he grew up and married Annie McMaster in 1874. Annie was born at Saint John, New Brunswick in 1845, and moved with her parents to Canton Hope, Ontario.

In 1878 the couple came west by boat via Duluth, U.S.A. and up the Red River to Winnipeg. John's ambition was to farm, so refused work in Winnipeg, coming west to the Shoal Lake area, spent the winter, and setting up his claim of a homestead. Returned to Winnipeg and in May 1879 brought his wife, four year old Richard, two year old Joseph and three month old Alfred John by Red River cart out to his claim. Here Wilson and Elizabeth were born, 1880 and 1883 respectively.

John joined the survey gang and worked with them as far west as Fort Ellice.

For settlers protection from natives John was issued a Synder-Endfield rifle by the N.W.M.P., and is now donated to the R.C.M.P. Museum at Regina.



John Eastcott Family 1887.

When the Manitoba and North Western Railroad came he sold his land to them for their townsite for three thousand five hundred dollars, which is now the present town of Shoal Lake.

Then the family moved north to the Oakburn district in 1885 and took up homestead and preemption on half section 4-18-23. Here Edward (died in infancy) and Ira in 1886 was born.

As a reward to hard work and straight dealings with fellow beings John and sons purchased and cleared two thousand eight hundred and fifty acres of land. Log buildings were replaced by frame buildings: house built in 1898 by Robert Chaple - Menzie and barn built around 1900 by Andrew Black - Oakburn. Sons settled in the immediate area and set up farming: Richard James settled on E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  35-17-23 married Ida May Black - Oakburn and had a family of eleven sons and two daughters. Deceased in 1959. Joseph William - settled on W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  35-17-23 married Gertrude Elliot - Glenforsa and had a family of three daughters. Deceased in 1949. Alfred

John - lived at home - bachelor. Deceased in 1955. Wilson Wilton - farmed in Oakburn area and later at Crandall - married Flora Chegwin - Vista and had a family of three sons and three daughters. Deceased in 1954. Ira - settled on S.  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 5-18-23 - married Emily Chegwin - Vista and had a family of two sons. Deceased in 1956. Elizabeth - spinster, living at home.

John was associated with public and fraternal societies a major portion of his life, and having been a member of the Rural Council for over twenty years, a number of years on the U.G.G. board, a life member of the Masonic Order and a long time member of the Orange Lodge.

The family belonged to the Presbyterian Church and attended at Oakburn.

Mr. and Mrs. Eastcott celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in November 1924 with all members of the family present.

Being one of the best known and oldest pioneers of the district John Eastcott passed away in 1932 at the age of eighty-two. His wife Annie being the oldest resident of the Municipality and one of the first settlers of the Shoal Lake townsite passed away in 1938 at the age of ninety-three.

In 1970 Elizabeth Nottingham Eastcott is the only living member of the pioneer family and is the oldest English settler of the district. She was the first white baby girl to be born in the townsite of Shoal Lake and was named after the name of the town proposed at that time. Has lived all her life on her parents' farm except for a year's schooling in Winnipeg.

In 1967, Canada's Centennial, she received a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -century farm ownership certificate from the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba certifying a recognition of continuous family ownership of section 4-18-23 since 1885.

Her nephew Wiefred Ira lives with his Aunt and has operated the farm since 1938. He does mixed farming and has a herd of cattle which pasture on the home farm. He also grain farms S.  $\frac{1}{2}$  3-18-23 and S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  11-18-25.

Buildings and log graineries are still in use and many relics can be seen about the farm and home.

John Eastcott imported the first grain cradle in 1879.

Telephone was installed in 1911.

#### BIOGRAPHY OF J. NICHOLAS MANDZIUK - LL.B., Q.C., M.P.

Born December 13th, 1902 in Western Ukraine of Ukrainian parentage - at two years of age migrated to Canada with his parents who settled on a farm west of Dauphin in Manitoba. Public school education received at a rural school. High school course completed in Dauphin and Winnipeg. Graduated from Teachers College in 1921 and taught schools in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

In 1927 entered University of Manitoba in course of law and graduated with honours in 1933. Started law practise at Oakburn in Manitoba in 1934 until his retirement in 1968. Active as Provincial President of Ukrainian Self Reliance League and its organizer as well as in community affairs. A member of Professional and Business Mens Club. Organizer of Oakburn Credit Union, a chairman of the School Board at Oakburn, president of the Chamber of Commerce and member of several other organizations.

June 10th, 1957 elected in Constituency of Marquette to the Canadian House of Commons, re-elected in March 31, 1958, 1962 and in April 1963 - Party Politics, Conservative.

In June 1959 member of Canadian delegation to NATO Conference in London and a member of Canadian delegation to United Nations session in September 1959. Regular contributor to Ukrainian and English papers on Reports from Parliament Hill and on International Affairs.



J. N. Mandziuk, LL.B., Q.C., M.P.

Appointed Queen's Counsel in 1961.

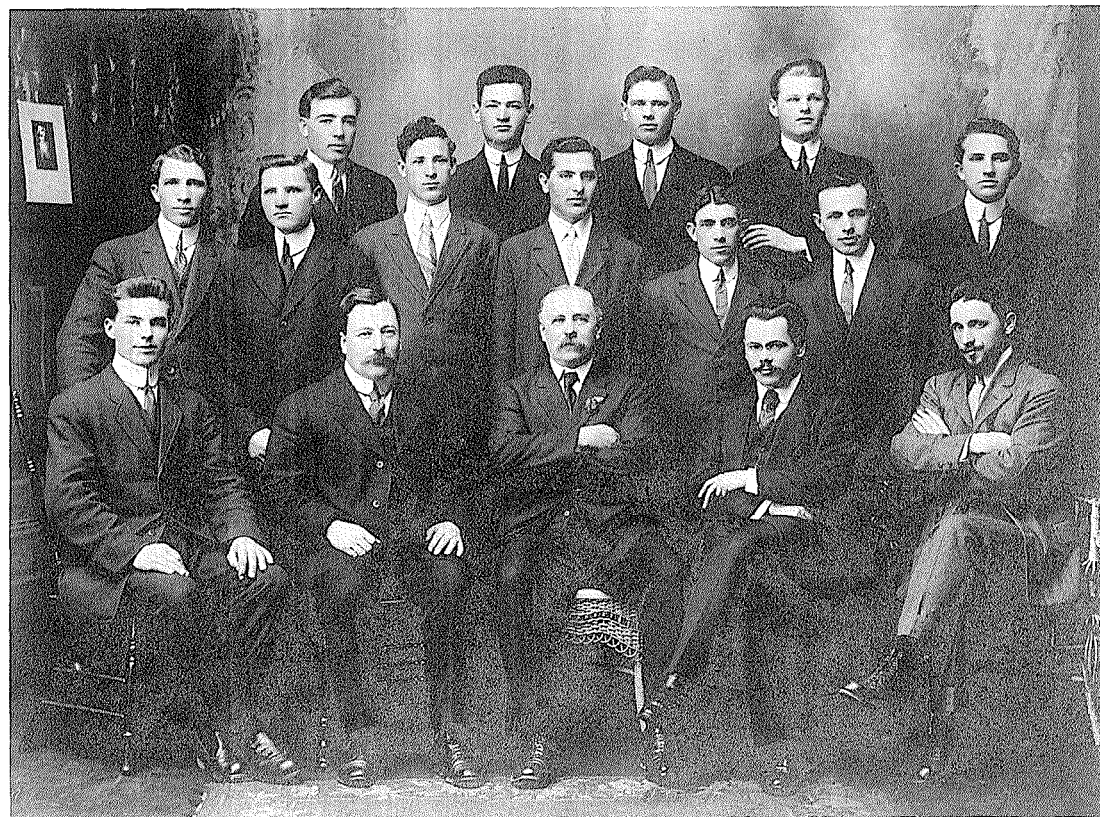
Popular as speaker in the House of Commons and a staunch debater and is best known for his defence of the Monarchy and the Union Jack.

He passed away September 7th, 1969.

#### BIOGRAPHIES OF THREE PIONEER TEACHERS MICHAEL NOWASAD

Michael Nowasad is well known to many of us. He came to Canada in 1903 at the age of thirteen. He worked as a cowherder during the summer, for a farmer near Rivers and during the winter he attended public school with the farmer's children.

With the help of a friend, George Shkwarok who was a student at St. Boniface College, Michael Nowasad was admitted to this College in 1909. In 1911 he completed his high school education and was fortunate



Students attending Ruthenian Training School in Brandon 1907. Many of these graduates taught in and around the vicinity of Oakburn.

in getting a position as a permit teacher in Chmelnyski School sixteen miles north of Rosburn.

Children were taught to read in both English and Ukrainian. This system was discontinued in 1916 and lessons were taught in the English language only.

After three months of teaching on permit he went back to school to take his teachers' training. He taught at Olha School in 1913. In 1914-1916 he taught at St. John Kant School. From 1916-1919 he went back to teach at Chmylnysky School. He was married in 1917 and raised a family of five children. He attended Normal School from 1919-1921 and in 1921 he received a teaching position in Ruthenia School where he taught till 1926.

He operated a General Store in Oakburn for many years and was active in community affairs. In 1947 he moved to Winnipeg where he resided until his death in 1968.

The community was very fortunate to have Michael Nowasad as a guest speaker at our Centennial Celebration in June 1967.

#### DMYTRO M. WOWK

Dmytro M. Wowk was one of our pioneer teachers. He attended the teachers' training school under the name of "Ruthenian Training School" on Minto Street in Winnipeg. This school was established in 1904 by the Conservative Government. Thirty boys of Ukrainian origin were accepted to this school and amongst them was Dmytro Wowk.

These first teachers used bilingual text books in their schools until 1916 when they were discontinued.

Dmytro Wowk's first school was the Ruska Rawa School, in the Rosburn Municipality where he taught from 1907-1911. He also taught in the following schools: Zaporozha, Rogers, Chmylnysky, St. John Kant, King George, Mink Creek (Sifton District) and in Lemberg School which is around Dauphin.

In 1922 he retired from teaching and started farming in the Oakburn District.

#### J. MAYDANYK

J. Maydanyk taught in St. John Kant School in 1915. He was very well known in the Olha and King George districts.

Besides being a teacher he is a professional cartoonist and author of many books. He has used humour and satire in most of his writings.

#### A UKRAINIAN WEDDING

When the immigrants came from the Ukraine to Canada and settled in what is now Manitoba, they still continued with their traditional customs. One of these customs was the wedding festivity.

In preparing for the wedding the bride invited the guests to the wedding herself. The guests came to the brides home first; the men carried a round loaf of Kolach\* bread while the women carried a fried chicken. Meanwhile



the younger girls braided or weaved a flowered crown that the bride wore on her head. When they finished making the crown, the mother of the bride placed it on top of the Kolach bread, and set it on the table. After a short



Marriage in the Ukrainian Catholic Church at Oakburn.

while, the mother then placed it in the cupboard. All the guests were then served dinner with different kinds of Ukrainian dishes. After this a dance was held followed by presentation of money and the singing of songs. Following presentation, supper was served with such dishes as beet soup, buckwheat holubtsi, with thin pieces of cubed bacon and plums. To top this off, wine and whiskey were served.



Ukrainian Wedding.

The next day the young couple got dressed to go to church to be married. Meanwhile a small Ukrainian orchestra was playing and the groom would have to seat his bride three times on a chair and ask permission

for his bride from her parents. Then the parents of the bride unbraid her hair and placed the flowered crown on the bride's head. Holding the Kolach loaf of bread in their hands, the parents then sat down, and the bride and groom bowed three times before their parents. After this, the mother of the bride proceeded to sprinkle holy water onto her daughter's head. This represented the sign of "good luck." After the "good luck" blessing of their children, blessing of the bride, the young couple were then ready to go to church. When the ceremony was over, the newlyweds returned to the bride's parents' place. The mother then gave the couple each a glass of wine, and sat them behind the table. All the guests present proceeded to eat the dinner.

On the third day relatives and close friends took the bride's dowry to her new home. Again there was feasting and rejoicing.

— Joan Sytnyk

\*Kolach bread, fancy braided bread only used for special occasions.

#### A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEECH

The first settlers arrived in Seech in 1900 travelling through Olha. They were Fred Barabash, Steve Hnatiw, Steve Derkach, William Kuch, Prokip Twerdun, Maxim Gerelus, Joe Dunits, Paul Yarashewsky, Kost Kuch, Peter Matiowski, Sam Matiowski, Fred Karasewich and Maxim Nykoliati. At Olha they stayed at the home of Anton Kalishyn and Harry Maduke, while they searched for sites for their new homes, approximately two weeks. Finally John Menzies led the party to where now northern Seech is. He gave them particulars as to size of farms and where they were likely to be situated. This was the southern-half of township twenty. Incidents arose where two settlers built their homes on the same quarters and later one had to move out.

While the northern part of Seech was being settled the same was happening in the southern part, and people such as Sam Melnyk, Harry Peech, Andrew Matiation, Dan Slobodzian, were taking up homesteads in township nineteen. Both groups came for economic reasons mainly that free homesteads were offered by the government.

Soon word came from Winnipeg that the northern settlers had settled on the wrong land. This land was intended for Riding Mountain National Park. It was to be evacuated and new homes were to be sought further south. Fred Fairly M.L.A. of Ukrainian descent and a man nick-named "Kryworuka" pleaded for the settlers, suggesting to the government, that homes were already there, and crops and gardens started. The government finally allowed them to stay, but only on the southern half of township twenty.

Shortly after Jim Prout Jr. from Horod Manitoba, began surveying this land, and by 1908, most of the settlers had paid their \$10.00 (ten dollars) received their titles and became British Subjects.

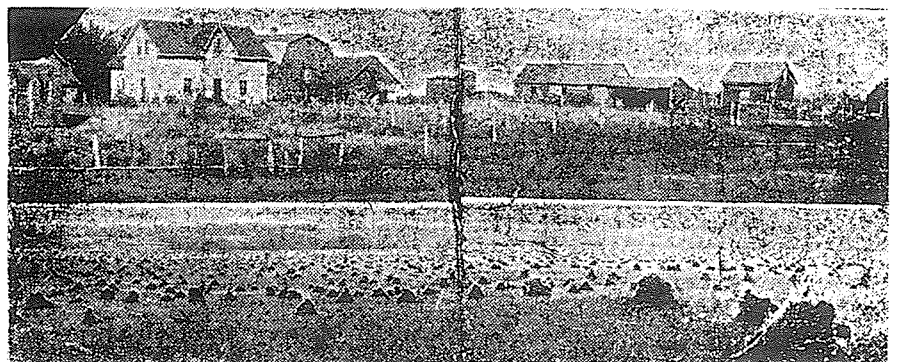
The settlers had all come from an agricultural part of Ukraine. Fred Barabash one of the first pioneers, took no chances. He brought a plough and a wagon. The plough had two wheels in front of it, and a steel mold board. The wagon though narrower than the one found in Canada, served his purpose. He also brought more agricultural equipment. All this came dismantled and carefully packed on the same ship in the lower deck.



Progress! 1918.



Lukash Pshyshliak — violinist and his orchestra. Mr. Pshyshliak was the first violinist (white shirt) in early 1918 in Seech.



Making Good in Canada.

It was difficult to establish wheat at first. The varieties brought over froze before maturing. George Karasewich, Peter Peech, and Nick Sicinski produced the first crop that did not freeze. It was probably Red Fife. Almost all this crop was distributed for seed to the rest of the settlers. Prokip Twerdun and Sam Matiowski purchased the first cows, each paying \$25.00 a head. Later more cows were purchased, by settlers from John Menzies and Badger. Chickens were also bought from the English in Menzie, Shoal Lake, and Oakburn. The first horses were purchased from a priest, and the second from Harry Peech, who had been working for a farmer,



Seech Orthodox Church.

but the farmer had no money to pay him as wages. The farmer offered Harry a horse, who sold it to Nick Sicinsky. At first Nick Sicinski had one ox and one horse for a team and it worked. Oats was sown as one of the early crops and was fed to chickens. There were no pigs at this time. Heifers that were born were kept for breeding purposes and males were used as oxen.

The first church was in open air between two spruce trees. Branches were pruned some distance from the ground and a bell hung in between. Fred Barabash brought the bell from the Ukraine. It is still preserved in the Ukrainian Catholic Church at Seech. At Easter appropriate hymns were sung such as "Christ Has Risen" and loaves of bread and food were blessed by Fred Barabash, who was the oldest settler.



Students at Seech School — A. T. Siwicky, teacher.

The first death demanded a cemetery, and again the need for a church. The first meeting for this purpose was held at Fred Barabashes' home. He sold  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres of his farm for fifty cents for the purpose of building a church and a cemetery. To make this legal, George Karasewich paid him fifty cents. A committee was organized and the following built the first foundation, Steve Derkach, William Kuch, Prokip Twerdun, Steve Hnatiw, George Karasewich, Steve Karasewich, William Twerdun, Joe Gerelus, Steve Gerelus, Schepin Labitt, Alex Matiowski, Joe Dunits and William Dunits. It was constructed of logs and lumber, and work began in 1911 with William Kuch, Marco Nowasad and Fred Nowasad as the main carpenters. Bishop Miketa Budka consecrated the church in 1912 with Rev. Dalary the first minister, a priest from Belgium. A large bell was purchased from Meneely Bell Co. Tray. in New York U.S.A. for the price of eleven hundred and thirty dollars.

Seed was first sown by hand and harvested by means of sickle, scythe and flail. The first threshing machine called "Keerat or Karet" was owned by George Karasewich and Anton Sicinski who did custom threshing for the settlers around. It was turned by eight horses, sheaves were fed by hand and grain was bagged at the outlet.



Michael Peech — Ph.D.

Seech School No. 1454 was built in 1907, with an enrollment of 80 pupils. Since there were only enough desks for the older pupils, the smaller ones were compelled to sit on benches. The name Seech was given in honour of Zaporozian Seech in greater Ukraine. This was the birth place and head-



quarters of the famous Cossack Seech Regiment, that fought the invading Turks and other Asiatic nomads. The name Seech was given by Fred Stefaniuk who used to come out from Winnipeg to act as interpreter for the immigrants.

Peter Peech built the first general store at Seech in 1919 and operated it until 1932. He supplied all groceries for Peden's sawmill and people in surrounding areas. The buildings in the picture "Making Good in Canada," belonged to Peter Peech, and were all built from lumber bought at Peden's saw mill in Riding Mountain National Park between the years of 1912 and 1920. The first windmill was also owned by Peter Peech. He also owned the first touring Ford car that only had low and high gear.

The first post-office was owned by George Karasewich. Schepin Labitt bought the first thresher that had a blower. The steam engine was not self-propelled and was moved by horses, and so was the thresher. The first Titan engine with an exhaust and a chimney, and a McCormick Deering thresher were owned by Joe Matiowski.

Michael Peech, son of Peter Peech was the first Ukrainian graduate in Canada with a P.H.D. in soil chemistry. Presently he is professor at Cornell University in New York U.S.A.

Michael Twerdun was the first native teacher of Seech. Some of the first teachers to teach in Seech School were: Mr. Bilinski, Mr. Klymkiw, Mr. Siwicky and Mr. Hallas.

Although these first settlers had to overcome many hardships they were always happy. They all raised large families and always found time to visit one another. We of today owe much credit to these settlers who helped to make Manitoba a better province to live in.

#### SETTLEMENT OF OLHA

In 1898 there came into the district, now known as Olha, a group of Ukrainian settlers who settled here and were the first pioneers of this area. It was these courageous people who opened the way and encouraged others to follow in the coming years.

The history of their coming and the reason for it is interesting and dates back many years. The Ukrainians are one of the great Slavic nations. At the time of the immigration to Canada, a large number were concentrated in the province of Galicia under Austrian rule. They were greatly dissatisfied for they were mostly farmers but had little or no land to work on and also because their children were denied education.

The illiteracy of the peasant farmers was not of their own making or desire. The teaching of village children was prevented for a long time by restrictions adopted by the nobility who objected to the education of the peasant farmers class because education would awaken in them aspirations to rise above the social station into which they had been born.

The first Ukrainians to come to Canada were from the provinces of Galicia and Bukovina. This immigration was made possible through the efforts of Dr. Oleskiw. Josef Oleskiw was a Ukrainian and of Greek Catholic religion. He was a Professor of Agriculture at a teachers seminary in Lemburg, Austria.

His interest in finding a suitable country for Ukrainian peasant farmers dates back to 1895 when he wrote a letter to the Department of the Interior in Ottawa requesting informative material about Canada and intimating the possibility of directing mass migration of Ukrainian farmers to Canada. This letter was acknowledged by the Superintendent of Immigration, L. M. Fortier and all information on Canada requested by Professor Dr. Josef Oleskiw was forwarded to him.



St. Michael's — Olha Church Congregation — 1910.

He was very much concerned about the welfare of the immigrant peasant farmers. Prior to sending any immigrants out he asked the Canadian Immigration Authorities for Assurance of financial assistance during the initial period of settlement in case of a crop failure and other disasters. To further ease the initial burdens of settlement, Dr. Oleskiw suggested placing at the lead of each colony an intelligent, unselfish man to direct the affairs of the settlers under a Co-operative system. The Canadian Government could not grant him this request but it assured him that the settlers would be looked after.

In August 1895 Dr. Oleskiw was sent out by the Educational Society of Lemberg, Austria, to study western Canada. When he returned to Galicia he published a book and pamphlets on what he had seen in Canada. His efforts were not in vain because in 1896 Ukrainian mass immigration started.

In 1897 he corresponded with Sir Clifford Sifton, the Minister of the Interior and assured the minister that at least two hundred Ukrainian families would settle in Manitoba the following year.

The first group that settled at Olha in 1898 came to Winnipeg by train from Halifax and stayed here for several days. They needed a rest after their hectic voyage across the Atlantic. They had a chance to buy seed potatoes and a few other necessities. A few families bought stoves



which were shared by the group when they reached their destination. These people were detained at Strathclair in May, 1898.

Three children died on the train between Portage la Prairie and Minnedosa. This was a great shock to all parents as most of them had at least two or more children in their family. These three children were buried by the tracks at Strathclair. More and more children fell ill and the families realized that it was an epidemic. Fear enveloped their hearts. To make things worse, they were sheltered in two unheated buildings at Strathclair. They slept on hay spread on the floors of these shelters, and cooked their food over an open fire outdoors. They were detained in Strathclair for several days and during this time several more children died. Wasyl Swystun's baby died during the stay at Strathclair but the parents kept it a secret as they wanted to take the body and bury it near their homestead. The mother held the body of the baby in her arms during their journey from Strathclair to Patterson Lake in the Olha district.



Burial of an Olha Pioneer.

On May the tenth these settlers were conveyed by wagons to their temporary shelters near Patterson Lake which is between Oakburn and Olha. They lived in tents while the land designated for them to settle was being surveyed.

They arrived on a cold rainy day, before the tent was set up everybody was drenched to the skin. Two stoves were placed at opposite sides of the tent. It was very difficult to start a fire as they could not find any dry kindling. After the fire was started in the stoves they changed into dry clothes, and after a meagre supper went to sleep on the hay that was spread over the frozen ground.

The drivers of the horse driven wagons had a separate tent as did the surveyors and engineer. Another tent sheltered the men who were sent down by the Department of Immigration to look after the new settlers.

That night while everyone slept a freak Canadian snowstorm dumped two inches of snow on this area. The adults woke up in the morning and peered out at the unwelcome guest. The future didn't look too promising as most of the children became very ill. A rash covered their bodies and they burned with fever. The disease which had developed was a very malignant type of Scarlet Fever.

In spite of all, life had to go on. When the snow melted that same day, a ray of hope entered the hearts of the pioneer families. This happiness was short-lived as late that night a five year old boy, the only son of Anton and Anne Kolyshyn died. On the day this little boy was buried Nykola and Kcenia Maydaniuk lost their little boy. A few days later Michael and Teklia Shwaluk lost two of their children. Harry and Cassey Berehulka lost two boys. Harry and Teklia Glushka lost two children also. Andrew and Anne Woychyshyn lost their little boy. Zahery and Anne Jumaga lost two of their children while Michael and Anne Holowicky lost all three of theirs. These are only a few of the forty-two children that died in a two week period. The disease also claimed the lives of three adults. Two of them the wives of Wasyl Ewanyshyn and Stanley Trach. The third was an elderly person.

Dan Topolniski, a pioneer of Oakburn recalls that he was fifteen years old when this plague struck. He and three other boys of his age, namely Hilko Kotyk, John Shwaluk and Roman Hrynkiw carried the bodies of children for burial every day for two weeks. Close to the tent was a fresh cemetery of considerable size. There were new graves every day. The little graves were marked with small wooden crosses. It was a pitiful sight to see the weeping parents kneeling and praying by the graves of their beloved children.



Outdoor Bake Oven, Mrs. Alex Dnistriansky baking bread.

Many of the adults had contracted Scarlet Fever but were fortunate to recover. For two weeks death had reigned supreme and claimed the lives of all but four small children. The lucky four were: Marion Woychyshyn, Sam Chichaluk, Matwey Woychyshyn and one little girl.

After the epidemic was over the settlers were quarantined for three weeks. When the quarantine was lifted the settlers were allowed to leave the settlement.

As soon as the land was surveyed the families moved to their homesteads. Wasyl Swystun chose Section 30-19-22 as his homestead. Michael Drabniasty moved eight families by wagon to Wasyl Swystun's homestead where they built six huts in a row. These huts were made of wooden poles and then covered with turf. The first hut was occupied by three families, namely Michael Sitko, Nykola Kuzyk and John Shatkowsky. The second one was the home of Onofrey Malanchuk. Wasyl Swystun lived in the third hut, Tom Woychyshyn in the fourth, Zahery Jumaga in the fifth and John Stadnyk in the sixth. These huts were only temporary shelters. As soon as the homesteads were surveyed for these settlers, they moved and built log homes for their families. These huts were used by many families who migrated to Olha district later. The remains of them can still be seen on Michael Swystun's farm today.

The homestead which is the historic site of the first cemetery was allotted to John Yanick. He couldn't stand the sight of that fresh cemetery as it brought back memories of the great sorrow of all those parents who had buried their little ones there. For this reason he sold the farm to a Morrison and moved to Saskatchewan.

The new owner was not aware of the cemetery on his farm. His cattle grazed around the lake and on the cemetery. The little crosses were knocked down and soon there was no trace of the graves. For some unknown reason the place became infested with snakes. The spot where so many tears were shed was neglected and forgotten.

In 1915 Jacob Maydanyk bought this farm. He farmed and taught school at Olha. He did not know that there was a cemetery on his farm so he cultivated the place leaving no trace of the historic site.

The neighbours informed Jacob Maydanyk of the cemetery on his farm. He was told that the children buried there paid a high price for that Canadian homestead. He immediately fenced off this cemetery. After some time he sold this farm to Theodore Stebelesky.

The witness to the fact today is a mound on the site where the cemetery was. This was done by the people of Olha on personal request of Nicholas Maydanuik. On top of the mound, replacing the birch cross, is a concrete monument in memory of the dead and every year a religious memorial service is held there. The monument was erected in 1941 when the Ukrainian settlers in Canada celebrated the 50th anniversary of their settlement in this country.

In 1967, when Canada celebrated its one hundredth birthday, Oakburn and district held a Centennial celebration in June. A religious memorial service at this historic site was held. It was conducted by Reverend Slabjy and Reverend Luhowy of the Ukrainian Catholic parish and Father Rygusiak of the Roman Catholic parish and Reverend Melynk of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox parish. A large crowd attended this service.

The location of this mound is five and a half miles north of Oakburn on Section 22-19-20.

It would be remiss if the names of those first few settlers were not mentioned. Those who blazed the way for many who were to follow were: Nykola Wozney, Sam Topolnisky, Wolena Slon, Harry Berehulka, George Chichaluk, Prokop Hrytcak, Sam Yanick, Fred Hulyk, Jacob Hulyk, Wasyl Swystun, Tom Woychyshyn, Wasyl Leschyshyn, Martin Woychyshyn, Hilko Maskiw, Macko Bewza, Fred Tokaryk, Mikita Ewasiuk, Zahery Jumaga, Anton Shurgot, Dmytro Nychek, John Bucklaschuk, Kindrat Shwaluk, Anton Kalyshyn, Wasyl Dirbawka, John Yanick, John Kuzniak, Wasyl Luhowy, George Ewanyshyn, Anton Danyluk, Stanley Trach, Paul Bilesky, Wasyl Filas, Harry Glushka, Fred Yaworsky, Silvan Sawchuk, Dmytro Werzak, Anton Kuzniak, Woytko Dziver, Onofrey Korolyk, Andrew Woychyshyn, Macko Woychyshyn, Stephen Kokorudz, Nykola Maydanuik, John Stadnyk, Anton Sitko, Dmytro Maksymchuk, Michael Antonation, Boychuk, Osadets, Kotyk, Sicknski, Mychasiw, Maduke, Derkach, and Onofrey Malanchuk.

In 1908 the pioneers elected their first councillor Dmytro Luhowy to serve in the municipal board at Rosssburn.



Early Pioneer Home — 1902.

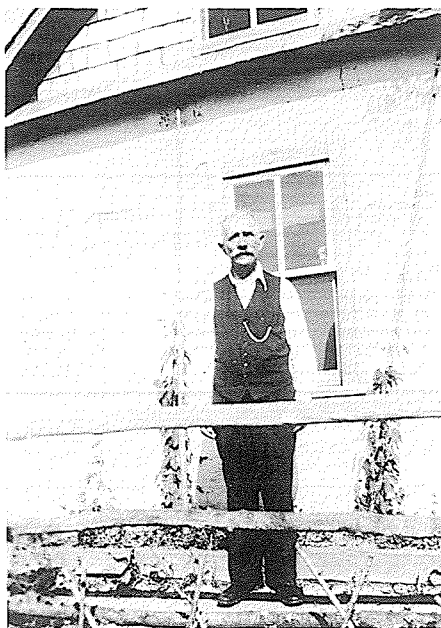
The following settlers arrived at Shoal Lake and were conveyed by wagons to Olha between 1900-1912: Yanko Antonation, Lukash Zegalski, Onofrey Dnistransky, Paul Chegus, Alex Dnistransky, Carl Wawryk, Nykola Dmyterko, M. P. Kuz, John Dmyterko, and Alex Zegalski, Yanko Ternowsky, Nykola Borodie, Kost Maduke and Harry Maduke.

The country occupied by the Ukrainian pioneers was a wild bush land but it didn't take long before trails and patches of land around buildings were cleared. Most of the settlers had to leave their wives and children on the homesteads and look for jobs amongst the farmers who had already

established themselves. Some of them took jobs on the railroads but in general the Ukrainians were soil tillers in the old country and became quickly adapted to farming in Canada. Some of them worked for farmers as far away as Hamiota and further. They walked all the way there as that was their only means of travel. On Saturday nights they would walk home carrying a bag of flour on their backs for their family. Theirs was a hard life but their spirit never faltered.

Ukrainian people have always been known for their wedding celebrations. In fact the phrase "Ukrainian Wedding" envisions a get-together of families, friends and outsiders and always proves to be a very enjoyable occasion. An essential element for these festivities is a good, lively orchestra which has an unlimited repertoire of Ukrainian folk songs, polkas and kolomykas. Throughout the years this music has remained essentially the same.

The first priest who visited the settlers in the fall of 1898 was Reverend Kulaway. He held his first service at the home of Prokop Hrycak. The second priest, Father Delaere (a Roman Catholic of Belgium Nationality) visited the new settlers in 1899. He travelled from Brandon by horse and buggy in summer and horse and cutter in winter. He held his services at the home of Mike Drobinasty on Section 10-19-23.



Popular Church Cantor —  
Philip Bilinski.

Amongst the Ukrainian immigrants, who were in general Greek Catholics, were a number of Polish Roman Catholic settlers. Father Delaere had organized a Roman Catholic parish in 1901 and the Polish and Ukrainian people joined together and built the first log church on Section 24-19-23. There on the same site is a new frame church.

The first Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest to visit the colony in 1904 was Reverend Hura. Father Hura organized the Greek Catholic parish at Olha and services were held in the settlers homes until Olha church was built in 1904. Reverend S. Didyk and Reverend N. Kryzanowsky conducted the first services in the new church. St. Michaels Church at Olha was consecrated in November 1907.

As time went on, the bush was cleared, the land was cultivated and roads were built. The settlers were content and rejoiced that by the grace of God they were able to enjoy freedom, equality of opportunity and freedom of religion in this new land.

They soon picked up sufficient English to make their wants known and couldn't have wished for a better country to live in.

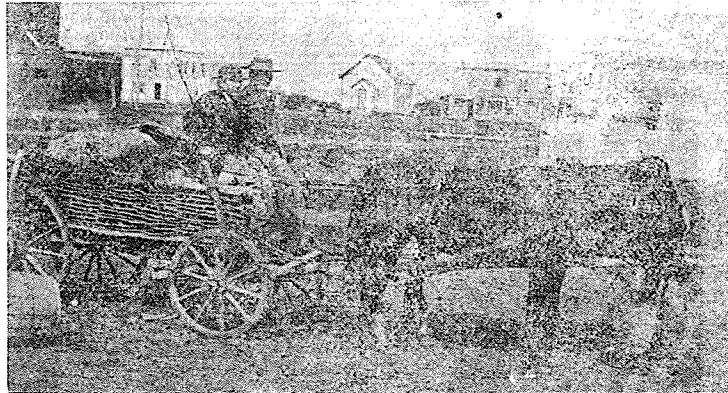
In 1918 another plague of flu hit the settlers. The symptoms were a high fever and a very dry cough. The homes were quarantined and people were not allowed to go into the store to get their groceries. They could only pass their grocery list to the storekeeper through the door and wait outside while he got the groceries ready for them to take home. There were many deaths as a result of this flu. The mortality rate was very high among people who were in their thirties as well as expectant mothers. When an expectant mother caught the flu she did not last more than two days. Babies and small children were ill too but they survived.

It might be of some interest to our present generation to compare the prices of some commodities in those pioneer days with the prices of similar commodities in this Centennial year. The following list will give you an idea of the tremendous difference in prices of now and then.

20 loaves of bread - 25c	1 workshirt - 25c
1 lb. good quality meat - 4c a lb.	1 dress shirt - 35c
1 quart whiskey - 75c	Laundrying of shirts - 5c each
1 ten gallon keg of beer - \$1.25	Haircut and a Shave - 15c
1 pair of shoes - \$1.00	A full course meal - 15c
1 pair overalls - 70c	3 glasses of beer in the hotel - 25c
Average labourers wage - 10c per hour	Contractors wage 25c to 35c per hour

### THE SETTLEMENT OF DOLYNY

The second colony of pioneers arrived in Shoal Lake in 1899. Some of these settled north of Rosburn while the following established themselves six miles north east of Oakburn, in what is known as Doly, Meaning



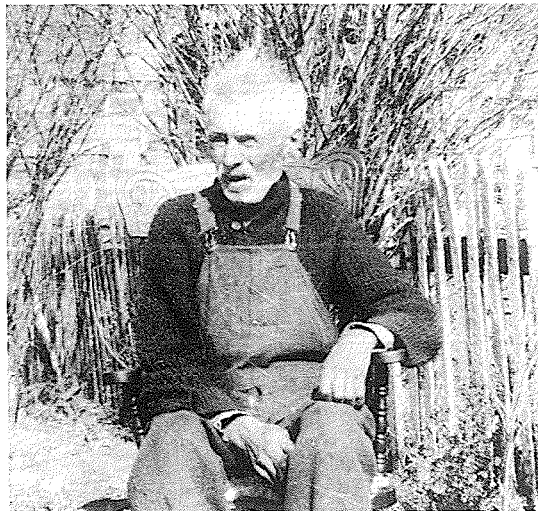
View of a Galician outfit from the colony north of Shoal Lake. The wagon was made entirely by the younger of the two Galicians sitting on the load. It was made in their colony with tools brought from Galicia or improvised by his own ingenuity for the occasion. It is a piece of work that demonstrates mechanical ability to a high degree. The spokes, hubs, felloes and other pieces that require turning were turned by hand, and is done exceedingly well. The wagon was ironed in a workmanship style in the colony by the same mechanic. The wood of which the vehicle was made was all cut from the mountain.

"dales." Nykola Labay, Woytko Dziver, Tomma Kiez, Fedir Drul, Ilko Chwaluk, Wasyl Chwaluk, Ivan Kachur, followed by Alex Groshok, John Yagilniski, Mike Bachewich, Mike Leganchuk, Kost Kotyk and Ivan Boychuk. The area was heavily wooded with white poplars and stately white birch. Numerous lakes were any fisherman's paradise.



Wasyl Chwaluk and wife content on their homestead.

An interesting coincidence occurred whereby three families wished to have their homesteads together. When their first log houses were completed and the fencing was in progress, much to their dismay they discovered that the homes were built on the same quarter section.



Tomma Kiez with wife and family took homestead in Dolyny in 1900. He brought with him from the province of Galicia, a prayer book, a Bible, a Kobzar, and a reader.

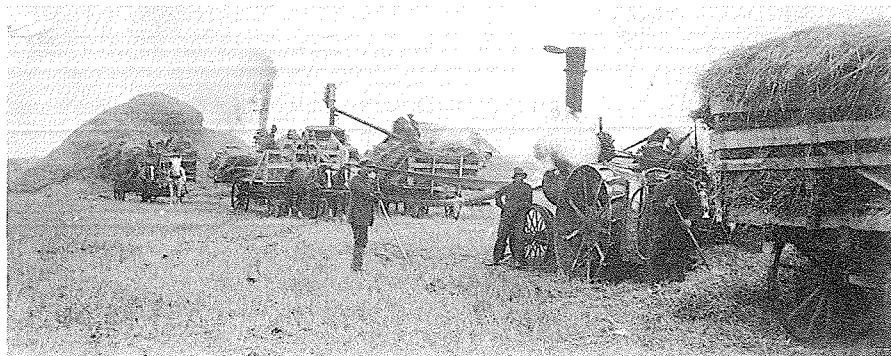
People made their livelihood by cutting trees into cordwood, hauling it a distance of twenty to thirty miles to retail at fifty cents a cord. Definite progress was made when Nykola Labay set up his first sawmill. Eventually two story log houses, all loam plastered, finished with cedar siding and shingles became common land marks in the settlement. These homes were mansions as compared to the early sod houses. Some of these still stand though few are lived in.

Buckwheat, a substantial food was grown by every family, seed was taken to Nykola Labays to be husked on a type of grist mill known as "dzorna." Since Nykola had robust sons he was the first pioneer to possess a threshing outfit. John Ostash owned a handsome yoke of oxen, with which he did all his field work. Once when John arrived in Oakburn with his lovely team pulling a load of lumber, the Oakburn teachers were so intrigued, they posed with John for a picture. There after the enlarged picture received prominence on John's living room wall.



Seeding time over fifty years ago.

For many it may be interesting to know that for these early Ukrainian settlers the church was not only a centre of religious activities but also a centre of social activities. The many church holidays provided the people with an opportune time to get together and forget their daily hardships. These were festive occasions where families who had not seen each other for a long time were able to exchange news and entertain themselves. One such church holiday was St. John's Holiday which falls on July 7th.



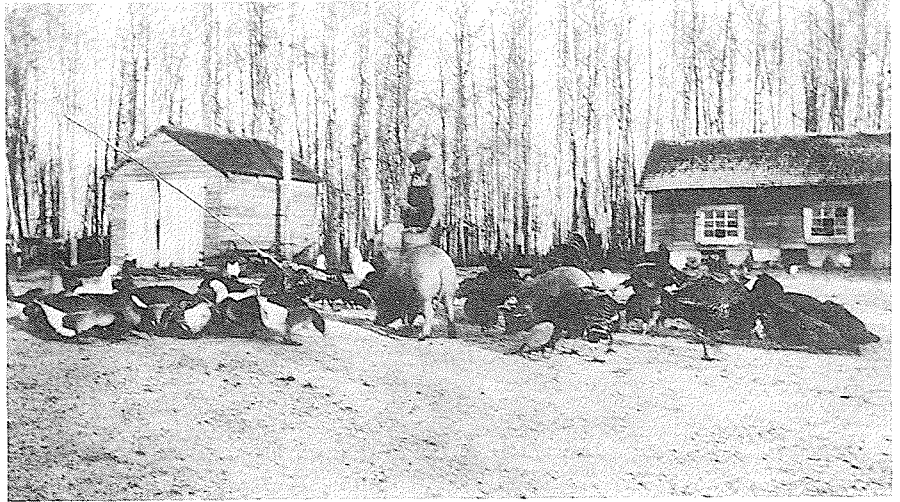
Gardiner's first steam outfit changed hands to John Kokoruz who threshed in Dolyny area.

St. John's Holiday ushered in the season of growth and productivity. On this day all the farmers and their families would congregate at the church for the religious service. In fact people came from the neighbouring settlements a day in advance and visited with their friends on this occasion.

In general July 7th rewarded the people with a drenching rainfall in the morning. One could see a procession of wagons, buggies, democrats,



and pedestrians a mile long on the trail to church. Grades built of young trees and willows reinforced with stones and layers of manure became impassable during the heavy rainy seasons. On one occasion Nykola Labay was kind enough to let the procession through his prize wheat field which was just heading.



Pioneers' progress by mixed farming.

On such an occasion mothers prepared an abundance of food to take along to church. After mass the food was served outside and often shared with relatives and friends. The children would gather bouquets of wild flowers to be laid on the graves of their loved ones which were marked by wooden crosses. Relatives and friends who had not seen each other for a long time would exchange news. Too soon the festivities were all over and the families would once again start off for home.

Gradually the population of Dolyny has diminished in number. New homes dot the now sparsely settled area. The once heavily attended one room rural schools have disappeared entirely. Automation has eased the work that once was a burden to the stalwart pioneers who dared to make a living at Dolyny.

#### OAKBURN SETTLEMENT 1898-1920

The reader is familiar with the tyranny and oppression that existed in many European countries for hundreds of years. Ukraine was no different. Because of its abundant resources it was constantly attacked by barbarous invaders, till gradually its people lost their farmer rights and privileges and were forced into serfdom. Though fearless ones organized an army known as the "Cossacks" and fought for liberation their efforts were futile. Russian domination and rivalry added to their hardships. Herewith begins the history of the nine hundred and forty-one Ukrainian and Polish immigrants who came to Canada in 1898-1899-1900.

As stated elsewhere in this book these people travelled to Strathclair or Shoal Lake where they settled in hamlets of Olha, Marco, Dolyny and Seech so called after famous historical names in the Ukraine.

Mrs. Margaret Yanick, nee Hrycak, now eighty-three years old and a resident of Oakburn gives an account of the pioneer life and hardships encountered in a diary for her children and grandchildren to read.

"There are just a few of us left now to tell the story, there's my sister Mrs. Lena Shwaluk (Woychychowski), my brother Wasyl Hrycak, Mrs. Sisinsky, Mrs. John Shwaluk and my sister-in-law Mrs. Mary Hrycak.

We arrived in the spring of 1898 at Strathclair by C.P.R. that's as far as the track was built. We were driven in wagons five and a half miles north of Oakburn and took homesteads in Township 19, Range 23 west of the first meridian. The country was heavily wooded with many small lakes and sloughs. The families arriving in 1899 settled in what is now Rosburn, Marco and Dolyny. The third group arrived in Shoal Lake in 1900 and settled at Seech.

I recall how we went down a trail in narrow wagons in a long row. I was very cold and saw small children crying, their faces and bodies red with fever. At dusk we reached our destination which was Olha. The men immediately cut dry hay and the children like myself carried it into the tents so we could all get some rest. Fortunately Matchko Bewza, Onofrey Korolik, Sam Yanick and Fred Tokaryk had brought some stoves. The meagre cooked meals added strength to our weary souls. At last came the day when we were to be taken to our new homesteads. We were driven



White-washed clay home.

in a wagon for a few miles and since it was late afternoon the agent told us to walk the rest of the way as he was anxious to get back to his camp, a distance of six miles. (She smiles and shakes her head as a tear runs down her cheek.) Imagine! My father and two older brothers had taken some of our belongings there and knew the way, unfortunately father lost

his sense of direction and we found ourselves on a large meadow. We had to spend the night in the cold drizzling rain, huddled together covered with hay that the men had gathered. Early the next morning we arrived at our new home. The sod house was just started when my mother told us that our baby Peter had died. We all cried bitterly, but my father sat on a stone and reminded my mother, "Anna you wanted Canada, you've got it." Anna, my mother, remembered how badly she wanted to leave the old country with her friends. She tried to convince my dad that this way they could save their sons. Father was considered wealthy then as he had twelve morgues of land (a morgue was smaller than an acre) and had served as a judge and councillor. Anna visited her sister in the next village where she spoke to a teacher and lawyer, and secretly told them of her desire to move to Canada. She did not want her sons serving in the Austrian army as her husband had. Besides her oldest son was in poor health. When the passports were issued we understood my brothers were to remain with my aunt. When we reached Hamburg what a surprise it was to see my brothers on the train! We boarded a ship and arrived in Halifax on April 27, 1898.



Nick Maydaniuk with prize horses.

I remember the first horses my father bought from a man named Bolton. My brothers had to unharness them piece by piece. They soon knew why! The horses were broncos. The harness went back on piece by piece and dad drove back and exchanged them for another team. The neighbours worked together chopping down trees for our log cabins, mixing clay, plastering the spaces between logs, making our own white wash, sharing the food. Whenever food was needed, my brother Alex (who did the errands for the brotherhood) gathered orders for flour and other necessities and drove to Hamiota to shop. Hamiota had a mill but the flour was a poor grade compared to the fine wheat that was ground. He used to bring back forty bags and charge the people twenty-five cents for a fifty mile trip. Once he had the flour loaded and went to the store for

some soda crackers. When he came back the flour was gone. He didn't know what to do so he ran to the first house pulled a man out by the arm and showed him the empty wagon. The man understood and got two horses. Riding bareback they followed the fresh tracks and came to a place where Alex's precious bags of flour were being hidden under wheat in a grainery. The culprit paid for the stolen goods. Alex bought another supply, loaded and drove home all night.

Summer time was berry picking time. Pails and pails of strawberries and raspberries were picked by the women and children, then loaded on a wagon and taken to Shoal Lake or Rosssburn. Sales were readily made at Shoal Lake as the women made delicious jams and jellies. The pickers were pleased with the print and calico materials, shirts, pants and other necessities they bought in exchange. We all reached the age where we left home and walked to Shoal Lake and Hamiota to look for work. I got three dollars per month while my brothers got twenty-five dollars for the summer. We had to milk as many as twelve cows.

My husband knew the Polish language and learned English easily. He did all the interpretations for the non-English speaking people in our area. It seems to me I've lived through many hardships, but our life was meaningful. Sometimes I seem to hear the roosters crowing early in the morning. This was a reminder that it was time to get up. It also served as a direction to the neighbours. In those days when a son married he brought his bride to live with his parents where she helped look after the household and raised a family of her own. As families grew in numbers there was need for more land and Olha settlers began to move south to Oakburn.



Gasoline Engine — Threshing Outfit.

Seech farmers grew the first hardy Fife wheat Number One Northern. When the farmers brought it to Oakburn to an elevator the agent offered them a number four grade. They knew they had been cheated, so one



Alex Hrytsaks 1917.



Prokip Hrytsaks.



Panko Luhowys 1917.



George Karasiewichs 1915.

sturdy farmer by the name of George Karasiewich put on a pair of rawhide mocassins, a heavy mackinaw, and with a bushel of wheat boarded a train to Winnipeg. He immediately found his way to the Board of Grain Commission where he successfully got a number two grade for his wheat.

Gradually the thin top soil was exhausted. This was reason enough for the farmers to move to better lands. Dolyny district had been an attraction for the people from Shoal Lake and Hamiota as the lakes were teeming with fish. In fact people came with wagons, stayed overnight and went home the next day with wagons filled with fish.

John Kuzniak and his wife were the first Polish couple to be married on Canadian soil. They took their homestead in Township 18 and Ward 5.



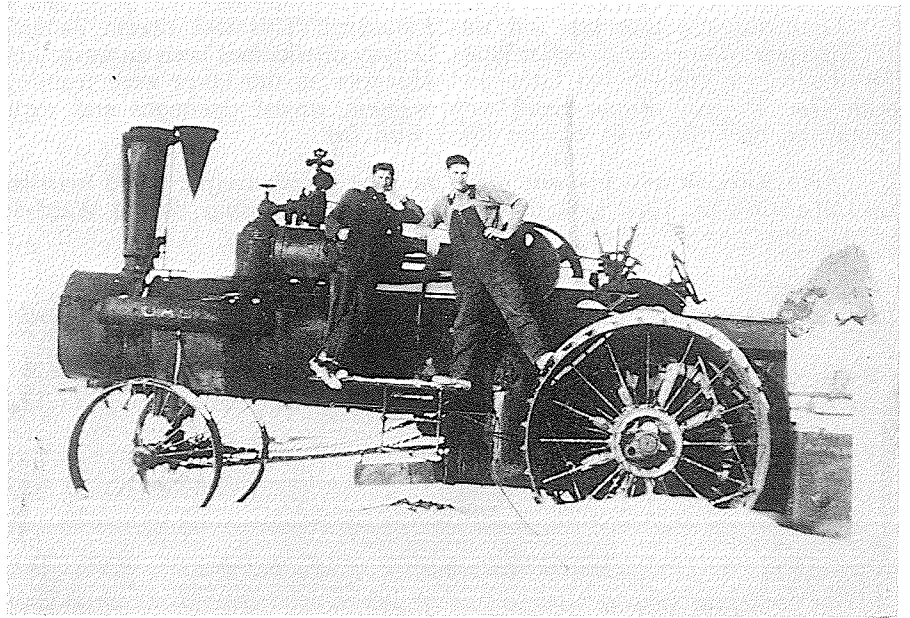
Sam Yanick family 1916.

In 1917-1920 the following farmers bought land around the Oakburn area: Panko Luhowy, Alex Hrycak, Sam Yanick, Prokip Hrycak, N. Maydaniuk, Alex Yanick, John Osadec, Wasyl Yanick, Metro Yarish, Paul Luhowy, Metro Luhowy, Mike Luhowy, Mike Belbas, Mike Ostash, W. E. Ewanyshyn, G. Karasewich, N. Tutkaluk, S. Citulski, S. Shwaluk, G. Skavinski, Joe Matiation, Harry Gnutel, Mike Gnutel, M. Antonation, H. Sytnyk.

Panko Luhowy, Wasyl Luhowy and John Osadec had the first Kireet threshing outfit. In fact Panko Luhowy lost his arm when he tried to dislodge some grain while the machine was in motion. Later Alex Hrycak and Panko Luhowy bought a gas engine outfit in partnership. Greshko Skavinski had another gas outfit and did most of the threshing for the

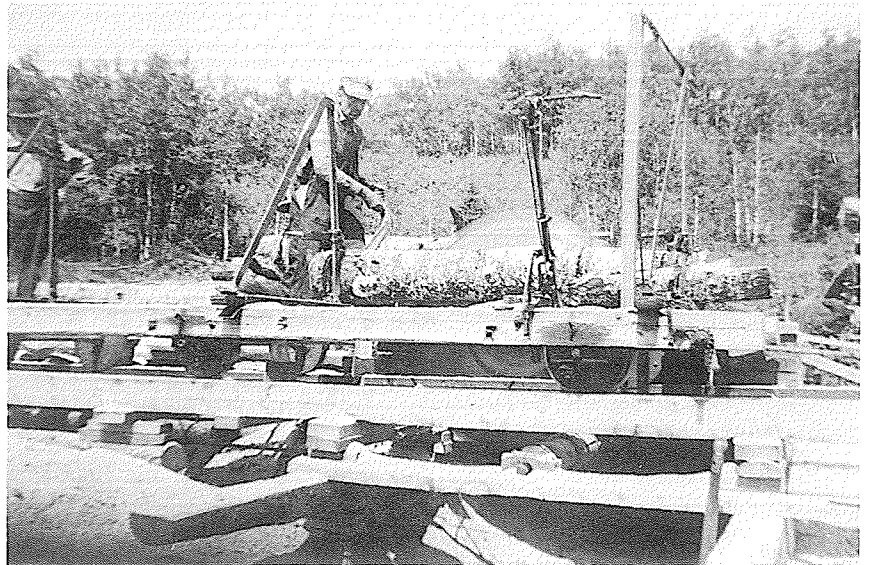


farmers. Partridge and the Gardner brothers had big steam outfits. Alec Hrycak purchased one of these outfits and did much threshing in this



First Steam Engine.

area. Threshing time was such an exciting time! The women had a chance to use every recipe in the cook book. Thanks to the outdoor bake oven



Early Sawmill.

it was no chore for any woman to bake thirty loaves of bread, the aroma of which cannot be forgotten. Lunch was taken out to the field, with a box full of sandwiches, buttered hot tea biscuits and a cake fresh from the oven, plus a great big pot of tea or coffee. Just for comparison with today's wages a strong pitcher who was a field hand who helped the teamsters fill the rack with sheaves, received a dollar a day and worked from sunrise to sunset. Young boys fourteen years of age received a man's wage and were expected to work like one. If it rained the men stayed in the caboose, their living quarters for the duration of the threshing season. They stayed until the weather cleared up. Many helped to churn butter, milk cows and dig potatoes. There was no electricity or electrical appliances, such as deep freezers. All the meat was put into a salty brine or smoke cured. Fresh fruit such as pears, plums, and peaches were inexpensive and were cooked in an open kettle and stored in crocks. A very happy atmosphere prevailed when the weather was fine and the grain was gathered in good time.

Winter time meant that ten to twenty cords of green wood and about two hundred posts would have to be hauled from the bush, plus lumber from the camp. Hay that was stored in long stacks on the fields would be hauled as needed and much manual labor was required to clear away the snow. The odd load of grain was sold in winter as the blown up roads made hauling hazardous. Winter was time for getting together to pluck feathers, play cards and enjoy visits with relatives and neighbours. Teachers played a prominent role in providing entertainment in the district. Plays, dances, pie socials and picnics were well attended.



Four horse binder 1910.

By 1930 jobs were scarce even though the following men had their college degrees: John Maduke, Nick Yanick, Steve Hrycak, Mike Zubrak, John Karasiewich. Basil Lazaruk and Nellie Maydanuik were the first teachers. Ann Luhowy and Margaret Antonation obtained their nurses diplomas.



Ministers ordained in the Olha Church were Reverend Basil Osadec, Reverend Anton Luhowy, and Reverend J. Koltusky.

The once pioneer district is now prosperous in that farmers have adopted advanced methods of farming that is highly mechanized. The little red school houses have been replaced by larger administrations. Many of our educated people make their living elsewhere and the pioneers have either passed away or reached their retirement age. In spite of sorrows and hardships I'm glad my mother convinced dad to move to Canada. We lived a good life.

## History of Municipality Shoal Lake (Ward 2)

### HISTORY OF THE MUNICIPALITY

Oakburn Township 18, Ward 5 is 9 miles north of Shoal Lake, and its Municipal Office is in the Shoal Lake Village where the reeve and councillors gather every month for their meetings of business.

The first municipality was formed in 1884 with its first Reeve of Oakburn Ward 2 John Menzie, A. R. McDougall Secretary-Treasurer, H. McKinnon, Thomas Clark, Capt. McLean, John McNair as councillors. At first there were only 3 Wards, council election was held every year. Office was held in Shoal Lake Town Hall till the municipality built their municipal office in 1963.



John Menzies — first Oakburn reeve of Shoal Lake Municipality.

In 1878 a large contingent of North West Mounted Police were stationed five miles south of Shoal Lake, the barracks being opened July 15th, 1878 by Capt. Herchmer, brother of commissioner Herchmer. In that year the Town of Shoal Lake was recognized as the western boundary of Manitoba, it being on the old Hudson Bay Trail that linked Winnipeg and Edmonton. In 1876 Frank Dobbs of Shoal Lake joined the North West Mounted Police under Col. George French and served in the rebellion.

Shoal Lake Municipal Council in office in 1884 set up the first fifteen bylaws:

1. To suppress gambling within the municipality.
2. To appoint a secretary-treasurer.
3. To appoint assessors.
4. To appoint poundkeepers.
5. Respecting boundaries and line fences.
6. Pathmasters and duties.

7. Poundkeepers.
8. Fence viewers.
9. Money bylaw.
10. Rates for 1884.
11. To amend by-law No. 4.
12. Debentures, Manitoba North Western Railway.
13. Provide vote on Manitoba North Western Railway.
14. Election 1885.
15. Remuneration of councillors.

These first fifteen bylaws are most effective today. From 1884 till 1970 there is a total of 807 bylaws.

In 1909 the Village of Shoal Lake separated from Shoal Lake Municipality. A homesteader had to live on his homestead for six months per year for three years before he received his deed.

Included are some bylaws of early years that may be of interest to our present generation.

Bylaw 6: Pathmasters and duties.

Respecting pathmasters and their duties, where as it is expedient to appoint pathmasters for the distribution and the application of the Slave laborer in the Municipality of Shoal Lake. That the pathmasters for the year 1884 with their respective deals and shall be enumerated.

In 1898, fourteen years later another bylaw No. 204 was passed, whereas: Bylaw of Rural Municipality of Shoal Lake to abolish Statute Labor. (Slave Labor).

Whereas it is expedient to abolish statute labor in the said Municipality of Shoal Lake and substitute a money tax instead of such statute labor of one dollar per day. This was enacted by council of Rural Municipality of Shoal Lake, that statute labor be abolished and money or tax of one dollar per day be substituted instead of said labor.

Bylaw No. 10: Taxes.

The first levy on taxes in 1884 shown in the analysis. The first levy on taxes were 8.45 mills. 1884 school purpose 4.9 mills. Municipal purposes 3.55 mills.

#### Analysis of levy in 1969 General

Municipal .....	21.8 mills
Snowplow .....	1.0 mills
Health Unit X-ray .....	1.5 mills
Dept. Municipal Affairs .....	2.0 mills
Weed Control B. ....	.8 mills
Replacement reserve .....	5.8 mills
Tax reserve .....	.4 mills
Centennial reserve .....	1.0 mills

1898 Shoal Lake Municipal council gave a grant of \$400.00 to separate protestant school of Oak Creek.

#### Others

General school (resident or farm) .....	17.0 mills
General school (other) .....	33.5 mills
Birdtail River Division (special) .....	17.9 mills
Pelly Trail Division (special) .....	20.3 mills
Code 3, Oakburn or Kelloe St. lights .....	4.0 mills
Code 4, Oakburn Sewer Frontage Tax .....	30c ft.
Code 5, Oakburn Sewer Utility Tax .....	17.6 mills
Business Tax .....	13%

Bylaw 278, Law passed June 11th, 1904.

Divide Municipality into six wards.

A bylaw of the Rural Municipality of Shoal Lake to divide the said Municipality into six wards and elect annually six councillors for such wards. This petition was signed by sixty rate payers of the rural municipality of Shoal Lake. The six wards above said and that the wards be numbered as follows and bylaw 133 is forthwith.

- No. 1: Twsp. 16, Range 23
- No. 2: Twsp. 16, Range 24
- No. 3: Twsp. 17, Range 23
- No. 4: Twsp. 17, Range 24
- No. 5: Twsp. 18, Range 23
- No. 6: Twsp. 18, Range 24

A few years later another By-law was passed where the Reeve and Councillors were elected every two years in each ward respectively.

Shoal Lake Municipality formed a Birtle, Shoal Lake Health Unit.

In 1950 there was little gravel on all municipal roads. At present the municipality is renting a shed in town for three snowplows and other machinery. Highway No. 21 is the main highway coming into Oakburn from Shoal Lake. It was first built by Shoal Lake Municipality.

Manitoba Good Roads Association have presented 3 shields 1959-60-69 for the best roads in the municipality.

A Trophy in 1969.

Class 1 - Division - B - Best Maintained System of Municipal Roads in Rural Municipality fifty to a hundred miles.

From 1884-1970

Mr. John Menzies served fifteen years as Reeve and 8 years as councillor from ward 5. Other councillors from ward 5 are as follows: Simpson nine years, Campbell ten years, Melnyk four years, Holubsky five years, Tutkaluk eight years, W. Luhowy sixteen years, Mike Antonation who is originally from Oakburn farms, is at present farming in Shoal Lake area and is serving his nineteenth year as Reeve of Shoal Lake Municipality. Mike attended Rogers School.

#### THE OAKBURN BOARD OF TRADE

The first meeting of the Board of Trade was held in the 1940's just after the conclusion of the Second World War.

Mr. Steve Matiation was the first president and Joseph Michalyshyn, secretary-treasurer. It was organized for the purpose of looking after necessary improvements within the village such as drilling wells, repairing streets, and fire truck service. The first fire chief was Mike Borodie and John Matiation was deputy chief. The present fire chief is Nick Antonowich and Peter Matiation is the deputy chief.

Mike Borodie is and has been President for the past fifteen years and Stephen M. Waytowich is the present secretary-treasurer, with Mike Michalyshyn as vice-president.

## Rural Post Offices

### OLHA

Olha Post Office was established in 1908 and Dmytro Luhowy became the first postmaster. The post office was located at his farm home, one mile north of the present post office.

In 1910 Hnat Budiwski bought Luhowy's farm and he became the second postmaster.

Hnat Budiwski had to go out working so his wife Barbara carried the mail on foot from Olha to Oakburn and back. She states that there wasn't much mail at first in the big bag she carried but it got heavier as time went on.

During the long cold winter it was really a problem to walk to Oakburn twice a week to get the mail. After some time her husband saved enough money to buy a horse so she drove the horse to get the mail from Oakburn.

In 1916 Yanko Antonation became a postmaster and the post office was moved to his farm which was about a quarter of a mile west of the present post office. He had it in the house at first, then later used a small building on the side till 1940 when his son, Stanley Antonation moved it to his store on the corner where it still is to this day. It was operated by Stanley Antonation until Sept. 1947. Since then it has changed hands several times. The following people have been postmasters since 1947: Peter Wasilka, Miss Joyce Werzak, Michael Procak, Fred Posmituck, and Walter Swereda.

### MARCO

As the settlement spread to the north west of Olha, the settlers felt that because it was too far for them to go to Olha for their mail, another post office should be organized.

In 1913 Bill Young helped Marten Hachkowski organize Marco Post Office. The post office was at his farm home which was located on Section 16-20-23 W. This farm was later owned by Anton Wasilka.

In 1921 George Lazaruk became the second postmaster and the post office was moved to his farm home about one mile north from the first one. In 1944 Harold Hlagie took over and operated it until 1945 when John Zimmerman took over. He was later followed by John Herchak and Joseph Hachkowski. Mrs. Kathleen Hlagie became the post mistress in 1955 and operated it until February 7, 1969 when the post office closed.

## Education

### OAKBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 255

The first meeting of the Oak Creek School District was held on February 6, 1882 at the home of John Black. The first order of business was the election of trustees. Andrew Black, John E. Laughton, and David Mair were appointed first, second and third trustees respectively. It was decided at this meeting that the school be near the centre of the school district.



First Oakburn School — No. 255, Miss Bray, Teacher.

The newly elected Board of Trustees held its first meeting at the home of Andrew Black. At this meeting Samuel B. Paul was appointed secretary-treasurer at salary of ten dollars per annum. Tenders were called for the construction of the schoolhouse.

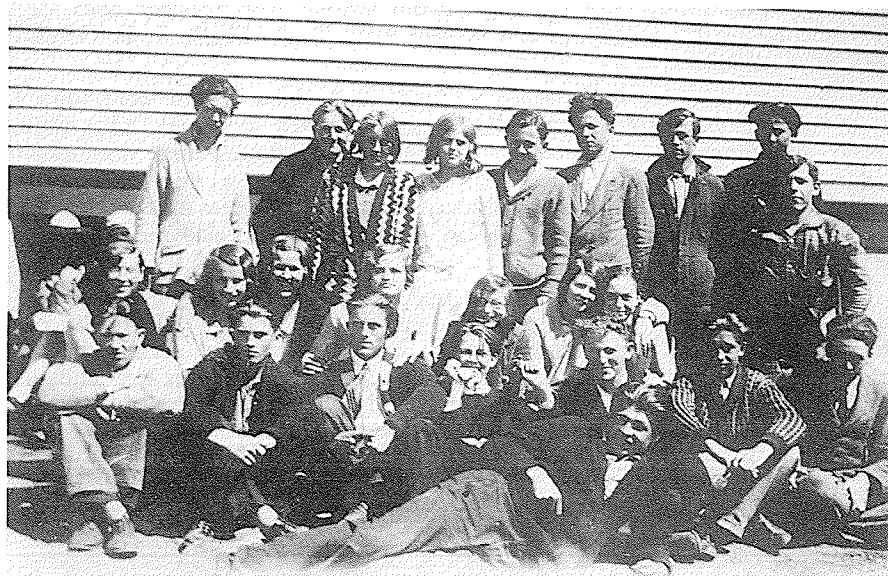
Donald Menzies' tender of three hundred and eighty dollars for the construction of the schoolhouse was accepted. A parcel of land on the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 21, Township 18, Range 23W. was chosen as the school site. (This site is located one mile south of where Oakburn now stands.) By September the schoolhouse was completed.

Robert Strath was hired to teach for the two months at a salary of forty-five dollars per month. The first classes in the new school were held on September 25, 1882. (During the early days school was in session for about two months of the year, during the summer.)

On April 20, 1883 Mr. Gerrard was engaged and commenced to teach on April 23 and finished August 8, 1883. He was paid a salary of thirty-five dollars for the first three months and forty dollars per month for the balance.

It is also interesting to note that in the trustees' minutes of the same year the Oak Creek School District suddenly for some reason not mentioned changed to Oakburn School District. For a period of a few years they seemed quite undecided as to which name they should use.

In 1884 Miss Christina Menzies taught for a period of eight months starting April 1 and ending December 1. Her salary was thirty-eight dollars per month.



First Oakburn High School — Miss J. More, Principal. Standing: Joe Menzies, Bill Budiwski, Elizabeth McDonald, Nell Kiez, John Nowosad, Mike Sytnyk, Walter Ognowski, Nick Shwaluk, Mike Slon. Second row: Helen Wolochatiuk, Olga Nowosad, Frances Kry-sowaty, Ann Luhowy, Mildred Douglas, Ethyl Menzies, Alice Turner. Front row: John Tutkaluk, Mike Kotyk, Bill Raginski, Ray Peden, Bill Lamb, Mike Antonation, Peter Koltusky, Adam Halliday.

According to the trustees' minutes of February 8, 1886 the school district is referred to for the first time as Oakburn School District No. 255.

On August 15, 1898 the Board of Trustees called tenders for the construction of a new schoolhouse. Mr. Andrew Black's bid for four hundred and ninety-five dollars was accepted and within a short time the school was completed and occupied.

With the increase in students, plans were laid in August 27, 1895 for an addition of one room to the school. It was built the following year by John Menzies whose tender of one thousand one hundred and eighty-five dollars had been accepted.

Within increases in the school population it became necessary from time to time to rent the hall in town for an extra classroom. Many pupils still had to walk to the two room school one mile south of town. In 1925 D. McKenzie was hired to drive the children to the school with his team and wagon as there were no buses in those days.

Plans for the construction of a new four room school began to take shape in 1926. A site was chosen in town where the schools now stand by



Inspector J. B. Morrison and approved by the Board of Trustees and rate-payers. When the Board approaches A. B. Fishman to purchase the five acres of land, a problem arose about the price of the land. It was finally settled through arbitration and the land was purchased for seventy-five dollars an acre instead of the previously demanded price of eighty dollars an acre. The contract for the construction of the school was awarded to Sheppard Construction of Hamiota and by fall of 1928 the school was ready to be occupied. The Honourable R. A. Hoey, Minister of Education was invited to attend the opening of the school. The trustees who were instrumental to the success of the project were D. A. Black, S. P. Gerelus, and W. S. Walker.

The first teachers to be hired to teach in the new school were Miss J. L. More who was principal and taught grades seven to eleven, Miss Stella Laing who taught grades three to six, and Miss Zelma Peden who taught grades one to three. The teacher of that day received a salary of around nine hundred dollars with the principal receiving a little more. The first janitor of the school was J. McMillan who received a salary of thirty-five dollars per month.

Miss J. L. More and her active and dedicated staff did much to promote sports and physical education in the school. The school participated in field days which were held annually with a number of school districts competing in the games. Miss More, who was concerned about her students, also helped a number of students financially to continue their education. She served in Oakburn until 1935.



John Parsons, teacher, and his musical talents.

John Parsons, another teacher, is remembered for his musical talents. He organized a thirty student orchestra which performed at a number of events. Miss Ann Smigel conducted a school Girls' Choir. They were the first to attend the Fine Arts Festival in Hamiota and won top honours.

There were many dedicated teachers who did much for both the school and the community. Many who deserve credit but have not been mentioned, however, are not forgotten.

In 1941 grade twelve was taught in the school for the first time.

Although consolidation had been talked about as far back as 1915 it was not achieved until 1958 when Oakburn and all the one room rural schools formed the Oakburn Consolidated School District Number 255. That same year construction of a new school was begun.

#### OLHA SCHOOL No. 1243

The first school organizer arrived from Winnipeg in 1905. His name was Mr. Boderski. He organized a school district nine miles north of Oakburn under the name of "Boseslav" which was changed to "Olha."

Olha School was built in 1907 on Anton Kalyshyn's farm. The first teacher was M. Basarabovich.

The members of the first School Board were: Hnat Budiwski, Mykyta Mychasiw, Ilko Maskiw, Sam Yanyk, Paul Luhowy, Peter Szwakuik and Paul Semaliuk.

Some of the teachers who followed Basarabovich were: Kohyt, Smaltyk, and Michael Nowasad.

This school was moved in 1930 to a new location which is one mile west from the old site.

#### ST. JOHN KANT S.D. No. 1242

St. John Kant School was built in 1907, five miles north of Oakburn. The members of the first School Board were: John Bucklaschuk, Stephen Nychek, and Paul Yanick.

Some of the teachers who taught in this school were: Michael Drabiniasty, (the first teacher), Stephen Lytwin, M. Basarabovich, K. Gwordz, K. Gwordicky, Wasyl Kohut, Yaroslav Koltuk, Dmytro Wowk, Michael Nowasad and J. Maydanyk.

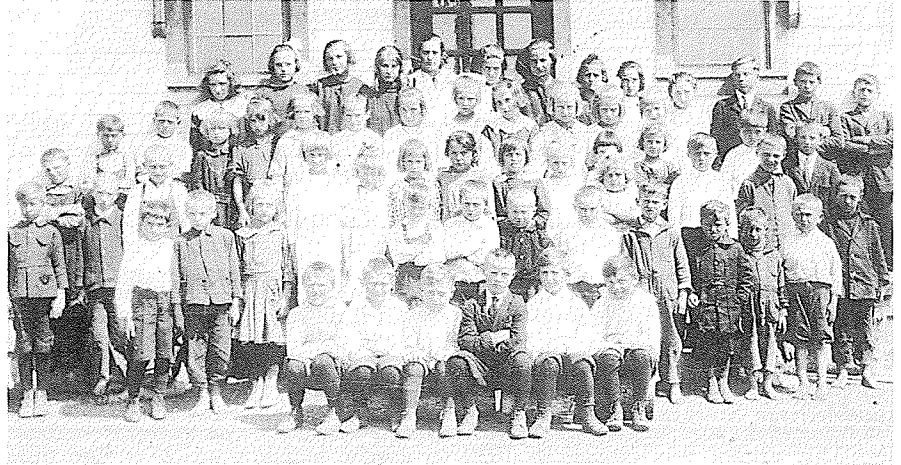


Outdoor entertainment.

#### KING GEORGE S.D. No. 1242

In 1918 King George School was built to replace St. John Kant School. It was built four miles north of Oakburn. The following people made up the first School Board: Gresko Skavinski, Paul Yanick, Nykola Glushka and Dmytro M. Wowk.

The first teacher of King George School was Dmytro M. Wowk.



King George School Children — 1920 - 21.

#### ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 1267

The Rogers School District was organized by Inspector Morrison of Hamiota. The school, which was built in 1908, was located four miles east and four miles north of Oakburn. Its first teachers were Mr. Goletz and Mr. D. Wowk.

The children walked as far as five miles to school. In the beginning the roads were very poor. Many used only trails, crossing creeks and grades made of young white poplar or willows covered with manure. If the winters were heavy, the grades would get so mucky in the spring that the children had to walk through the fields to get to school. For years those coming from the south had to cross a ravine gushing with water every spring. One of the bigger boys would have hip-waders and would take the young children across one by one. In the winter months most children came with a horse and toboggan.

The first Ruthenian grammar books came out in 1904-1905 and were used in the Rogers School District until 1915. At this time Ukrainian was being taught for a half hour each day. Evening classes were held through the winter for young people and parents who were working away from home all summer. Sing songs were held for entertainment.

Every spring the teacher and children planted a small garden near the school. This garden provided the teacher with interesting lessons in biology for the pupils.

School ended on July 12 which was also a Ukrainian holiday. Children and parents would gather in the school grounds for a day of fun and enter-

tainment. The children ran races, broad-jumped, and played baseball and football. On the east side of the school there was a platform with a stage on which the children performed their annual concerts. In the evening the stage was taken off the platform and was used by the elders to dance on. This evening of gaitly concluded the school year.

Many children from this school district reached important positions. Some of the people who became teachers were Mary Nychek, Bill Raginski, John Kowalchuk, and Stan Kokorudz.

#### WHEATFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 954

In 1899 a piece of land on the north-west quarter of Section 18, Township 18, Range 23 was purchased for ten dollars from Adeling Morgan for

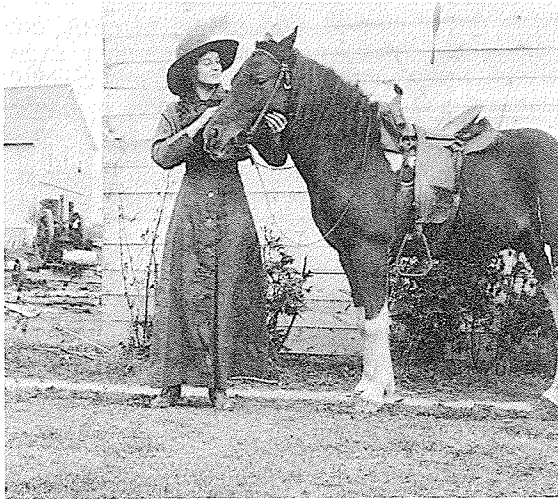


Wheatfield School District No. 954.

the purpose of building a school on it. The school, which was built by James Smith, cost two hundred and thirty-four dollars. It got its name of Wheatfield from the heavy crops of wheat which the surrounding fields produced.

The first trustees of this new school were J. E. Morgan, James Hamilton, Tom Morton, with Adam Halliday as secretary-treasurer. Miss Ema Clark and John McLeod were the first teachers. The children who attended classes in 1900 belonged to the Simpsons, Martins, McLeans, Squires, McKinnons and the Hamilton, and Muirman family.

The school remained in operation until 1958 when all the schools in the Oakburn area were consolidated. The last trustees to serve the district were M. M. Shwaluk, William Lazaruk, and Tony Tutkaluk. The following year the buildings were sold by public auction. All that remains on the site is one lonely evergreen which was planted by the pupils in 1934. Plans are underway to erect a monument to mark the spot of Wheatfield School.



Culross School, 1918. Miss Gardiner getting ready to write her finals.

#### RANDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2148

Randale School District No. 2148 was formed in 1926. The school was erected on south corner on N.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 3-18-23, land purchased from J. C. Randall from whence came the name. The school was built by Miller Bros., Vista.

School opened fall term 1926 with Miss Phyllis White as first teacher and twenty-five pupils in attendance hearing such names as: Dellers, Randalls, McDonald, Spraggs, Eastcotts, Lees, Waytowich, Bodnar, and Straths.

The first board of trustees were J. C. Randall, also acted as secretary-treasurer, George Deller and John Eastcott.

Miss Verna Cockrane (Mrs. Marshall Findlay) taught seven years.

Pupils participated in mostly all school Field Days.

They had a good hockey team during the years around 1935 which won victories over many men's teams and High School teams: players were: William and Walter Deller, Loyal Preston, James and Alex Kerr and Wilfred Eastcott.

Good school concerts were put on every Christmas and a closing picnic in June which during the 1930's was the only means of entertainment for families of the community.

The last teacher was Mrs. Ethel McNulty, Elphinstone with eight pupils in attendance. Last trustee's were Joseph Bobinski, Wilfred Eastcott, Tony Nowasad as secretary-treasurer.

Randale School District was dissolved in 1959 and consolidated with Oakburn and Shoal Lake District.

#### OAKBURN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

As had been mentioned Educational trends drastically changed in the province of Manitoba in the late 1950's. First of all was the formation of



Mrs. Burnett with her piano students at a recital at the Oakburn Elementary School.

larger School Divisions for secondary education. Oakburn and district became part of the Pelly Trail School Division. Shortly after, and more specifically one year later 1958, Oakburn and surrounding rural one room schools formed the Oakburn Consolidated School District. The first step towards consolidation was the election of a new slate of school trustees. The following slate of trustees were elected: Mrs. Peter Nycek, Mr. Frank Zubrak, Mr. Tony Kalmowich, Mr. John Muzylowski and Mr. Paul Michalyshyn.

At the inaugural meeting Paul Michalyshyn was elected chairman and John Muzylowski as vice chairman. Mrs. Helen Antonation was re-appointed by the board as its secretary.

The new board of trustees were faced with two immediate problems. Firstly they were obligated to offer transportation to all rural children. Secondly the board was faced with an acute shortage of classroom accommodation. Since it was only two and a half months before the end of the school year - that is end of June, the board decided to pay in lieu of transportation instead of contracting school buses. This type of arrangement proved satisfactory.

In regard to classroom accommodation the school board could see no other alternative but go into a building program immediately. After a number of meetings with the inspector and staff members it was decided that we select an architect and build an elementary school. The board decided to employ Pratt and Lindgren architects to design our school. Due to the urgency of the situation within a matter of four to five months in the fall of 1958 our school structure began taking shape. It was to consist of six actual classrooms and a three classroom size auditorium with a principal's office and a staff room, kitchenette, furnace room and storage room. Total cost of school and furnishings estimated at one hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars. At that time the government offered sixty per-

cent for the construction of our school while the ratepayers were to make up the balance of the forty percent cost assessed to the special levy. This automatically called for a money bylaw. This was highly passed by the ratepayers prior to the actual construction. By late fall 1959 this building was fully completed for occupancy.

The initial staff of the new school were as follows: Stan Biluke was principal, John Bydak taught grades five and six, Romeo Hrytsak taught grades three and four, Mrs. Anne Matiation taught grade two and Mrs. Olga Yarish taught grade one.

From 1959 on our new Elementary School very adequately served our children's needs. As years rolled on staff members changed. Most teachers were devoted, capable educators worthy to be remembered. There were also changes on the school board. Each member serving his or her term or terms devotedly and to the best of his or her ability.

The most recent major change in the Educational system came about in 1967. The most prominent change was the termination of a local board. One Division board took over all school operations in the entire division.

#### PELTY TRAIL SCHOOL DIVISION NUMBER 37 — OAKBURN

The most dramatic change in the Educational System in the province of Manitoba occurred with the creation of the Divisional Systems in school administration, proposed by the Michener Royal Commission, established by the Campbell Government of Manitoba in 1956.

It was during the referendum in the province of Manitoba in April of 1959 that the Division school system was accepted by the majority of the voters in the province.

Oakburn School District was formed in 1958 by consolidation with the following rural schools; Wheatfield, Culross, King George, Braddock, Randale, Harrower, Menzie, St. John, Rogers, Olha, and Zaporozha. The total enrollment of the above consolidated school district of Oakburn was two hundred and eighty-six pupils, and it became a part of the Pelly Trail School Division Number 37. Pelly Trail School Division consisted of seven wards with seven High Schools as follows: Inglis, Russell, Binscarth, Angusville, Rossburn, Oakburn, and Elphinstone.

Mr. S. P. Gerelus was the trustee representing Oakburn from its inception for nine years till 1968. When Mr. Gerelus retired, Mr. Paul Michalysyn was elected as trustee representing Oakburn.

In 1968 another change in the administration took place for during the period of 1959-1968 the original board of trustees had the jurisdiction only over the High School population. After 1968 the entire High School and Elementary children were the responsibility of the board.

The High School population of the Pelly Trail School Division Number 37 in 1959 numbered five hundred and thirty-two pupils and twenty-seven teachers. Elementary School population numbered two thousand and three pupils in 1959. In 1970 the High School population increased to seven hundred and thirty-two pupils, but the Elementary population decreased to one thousand eight hundred and eighty pupils, with forty High School teachers and eighty-four Elementary teachers. The decrease occurred due to the economic conditions in farming.

## The Early Churches

### ST. MICHAEL'S UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH AT OLHA

Olha is one of the oldest settlements in this vicinity. It was here that the first Ukrainian pioneers migrated in 1898. St. Michael's Church at Olha, more commonly known as the "Central Church" is situated eight miles north of Oakburn. This church was built in 1904 by John and Peter Kowtucki and was the first church built by the early pioneers of this area. It was consecrated on November 21, 1907 on St. Michael's Day.

The Belfry was built by Nykola Dmyterko. In 1915 a rectory was built near the church at a cost of two thousand dollars. The cemetery lies adjacent to the church. The land for the church and cemetery was donated by Wasyl Luhowy. The parish hall was built in 1928 and serves as a community centre.

The cost of building the church was around seven hundred dollars but with all the church necessities it came to two thousand dollars. It was painted in 1927 by Mr. J. Maydanyk.

Since this was the only church in this area, it served not only the people of Olha but also those of Seech, Dolyny and Oakburn.

From 1899 to 1904, before the church was built, Olha and surrounding districts were served by Reverend A. Delaere. The first Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest who was visited by the colony was Reverend Father Hura. In 1904 he organized the Greek Catholic Parish and services were held in the settlers' homes until Olha church was built. Reverend S. Didyk and Reverend N. Kryzanowsky conducted the first services in the new church.

In 1919 Metropolitan Andrew Shepticky visited the St. Michael's Church at Olha. Several visits were made by Bishop Budka.

The organizers of this church were the early pioneers whose names have been mentioned previously.

### UKRAINIAN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - OAKBURN

The Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada was established in 1918. In 1921 the Dolyny-Menzie area was organized and the services were held in the homes of the faithful. Between 1918 and 1920 more people bought land around Oakburn and settled in the area. The worshippers had to travel many miles to church with horses or by foot. It was much easier for the minister to come to the people so the first services were held in Oakburn at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Nadolsky in 1929. Reverend Berik was first minister followed by Rev. Symchich. In 1932 regular church services were held by Reverend O. B. Fedak in the United Church in Oakburn.

In 1945 a site on the north side of Main Street was purchased for a church. In 1947 the first committee of President George Karasiewich, Secretary Steve Gerelus, and Treasurer Stan Borodie began to put the plans for the construction of the church into effect. Architect and builder John Mnoholitny with the assistance of thirty-five volunteer workers erected the





Oakburn Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church and congregation.

beautiful building of Greek Byzantine-Ukrainian style. In 1948, Metropolitan Ilarion Ohienko officiated at the blessing of the church which was given the name of St. Wolodimer. The minister who served the parish at this time was Reverend Wasyl Fedak.

The parishioners helped to provide the essential furnishing for the church. Mike Swystun built and donated the altar table. The chandeliers and two banners were donated by the CYMK. Another two banners were presented to the church by Mrs. Phillip Tutkaluk, Vista. Fred Omelko donated a Bible and two more banners. The tabernacle was donated by the Ukrainian Women's Association of Oakburn. A large icon was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Anton Drul and another one to match by the parishioners.

In 1953 a belfry was built and a bell was donated by Mr. and Mrs. George Karasiewich. That same year a minister's manse was constructed and fully furnished by the parish. A beautiful iconostasis was erected in 1964 at a cost of thirty-five hundred dollars. The parish cemetery is located one mile south of town. Mr. Mike Matiation was a cantor for 36 years.

Today the parish is served by Reverend Leonard Dyachina who also resides in Oakburn. He ministers to a huge area which is composed of the parishes of Oakburn, Rossburn, Angusville, Glen Elmo, Vista, Seech, and Sandy Lake. Services are held in Oakburn once a month but usually there are two or more. His duties include a monthly teaching with the Ukrainian Youth Association to guide them in the Christian way of life. Sunday school which was taught in passed years by Mr. Chalaturnyk and Mr. Kowalchuk followed by Mrs. Jean Matiation and Mrs. John Hrytsak is now taught after Sunday service by the minister because of the decline in the number of children.



Christening in the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church, Oakburn.

Presently the church has forty members. It is looked after by the church elders and the sisterhood who take pride in their duties and their

church. The ministers who have served the church so faithfully are: Reverend Wasyl Fedak, Reverend Ylan, Reverend Stratychuk, Reverend Glisky, Reverend J. Rebalka, Reverend J. Kulish, Reverend Melnychuk, Reverend J. Melnyk, Reverend Swetz and Reverend Leonard Dyachina.

Much credit has to be given to pioneers who after seeing that they had complete religious freedom spent many hours of strenuous voluntary work in constructing these beautiful and richly decorated churches which dot the landscape. Many have passed away but they are still remembered by the great contributions which they made to our district.

#### HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN OAKBURN MANITOBA

To readers of the present and the future generations, the following knowledge has been obtained from the first financial records and incidents recalled by a few local pioneers. It dates back to the year 1932, when Ukrainians of Catholic faith, living in Oakburn and vicinity, began organizing into a parish, the likes of which were already in existence in the surrounding communities, such as Olha, Dolyny and Seech. Prior to the year 1932 the people of Oakburn were serviced by a parish priest who resided in Olha, which had been a clerical see since 1905, with a district ranging from Sandy Lake to Russell. At this time, the majority of Ukrainians living in the Oakburn area, were still members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Michaels at Olha, where they or their parents took up the first homesteads. Due to many inconveniences, such as distance to other parishes, poor communication or none at all, and the fact that more Ukrainian settlers were making their homes in the Oakburn vicinity, the people saw a need for their own church.

For a few years pre-Easter confession, baptism, and masses were held at the home of Nicholas Maydaniuke's, on the north-eastern corner of Oakburn.

By 1932 forty-nine Ukrainian members were living in Oakburn and district. These are the members who actually layed the foundation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Oakburn, and they are as follows: Michael Antonation, Joseph Antonation, Thomas Boychuk, Philip Bilinsky, Wasyl Chobotiuk, Fred Citulski, Wasyl Dunits, Roman Ewanyshyn, Stephen P. Gerelus, Michael Hirak, Joseph Hirak, Prokop Hrytsak, Alex Hrytsak, John Kokorudz, John Koltusky, Paul Luhowy, Panko Luhowy, Michael Luhowy, Wasyl Luhowy, Fred Matsyshyn, Walter Melnyk, Nicholas Maydaniuk, Joseph Matiation, Frank Malanchuk, Joseph Michalyshyn, Sam Melnyk, Michael J. Nowasad, Nicholas Nowasad, William Naherney, Nicholas Olinuke, John Osadec, Peter Ogonawski, Stanley Puida, Michael Oroschuk, John Shwaluke, Hnat Sytnyk, Andrew Siwicki, Nicholas Tutkaluke, Michael M. Wolochatuke Sr., Peter Waytowich, Michael Waytowich, Michael Wasilka, John Waychichowsky, John C. Yanick, Stanley Yanick, Michael Yanick, Andrew Yanick, Dmytro Yarish and Nicholas Labay.

Three of these members namely Joseph Michalyshyn, John Osadec, and Paul Luhowy were appointed to find an appropriate building which would serve the purpose of a church. In the summer of 1932 they purchased a hardware store on Main Street for the sum of two hundred and twenty



Oakburn Ukrainian Catholic Congregation.

five dollars. This store which in earlier days was a Methodist Church, was located on the spot where presently stands a house between Oakburn Tire Shop and Mikes Cafe. With a few alterations and additions the building was converted into a church which served the intended purpose. Since the location on Main Street was rather inconvenient, after two years, it was moved to the present location.

The first church committee was then organized, and under the presidency of Nicholas Nowasad the following were nominated to the staff: Financial secretary, John Osadec; Treasurer, Thomas Boychuk; Cemetery committee, Joe Michalyshyn, Paul Luhowy, Alex Hrytsak, and Nicholas Tutkaluke; Caretaker and Brotherhood, Roman Ewanyshyn.

The first two ladies to the Sisterhood were Tasiana Yanick and Ksenia Tutkaluke, who in the following years were replaced by Teklia Michalyshyn, Rosalia Osadec, Anna Shwaluk, Maria Hrytsak, Rosalia Michalyshyn, and Maria Boychuk.

Consecration of the church took place in 1936 by Bishop the Right Reverend Vladimir Wasil Ladyka, with Reverend Peter Pasichnyk officiating as the first minister. Reverend Michael Hryhorychuk arrived in 1934 and was replaced by Reverend Sulatitsky in 1937 and in 1938 by Reverend C. Zarsky.

A belfry was built in 1938 which was an asset to the small church. The Church Committee purchased a cemetery plot from Wilf Eascott, one-half mile south of Oakburn, on the east side of the main road. The first burial to take place was that of Alex Yanick a farmer and pioneer of this district. In 1935 a mound of stones, gravel and earth was erected on the cemetery plot. A cross was mounted in the centre of the mound where annually mass and prayers were conducted for the Freedom fighters in the native Ukraine.

As time passed the members became more active in social activities. A small parish hall was built in 1939 where members participated in meetings, bazaars, dinners, dances and social gatherings. This hall was built from materials from an old Catholic Church purchased from Sandy Lake.

By the end of 1940 Oakburn became a clerical see and the first parish priest to reside in Oakburn was Reverend C. Latosky, followed by Reverend Shwed. One of the first cantors to sing in Oakburn church was Philip Bilinski, a truly versatile man who was loved and respected by many. John Sydor devotedly sang at all church activities and presently Fred Twerdun of Shoal Lake has taken over these duties.

The parishioners worshipped in the small converted church from 1932 to 1947, and as membership increased and times became prosperous there was definitely a need for a larger and more modern church. Subsequently in 1947 the small church was sold to the Catholic parish of Menzie Manitoba, and in June the following year the new church was under construction. A building committee consisting of Mike Lazaruk, Adam Luhowy, Dan Holobitsky, Walter Melnyk, Tony Kalinowich, and Peter Osadec, was appointed to collect funds and raise money. During the construction masses were held in the small parish hall. In addition to the men-folk, the ladies organization and the Catholic youth gave much of their effort to raising finances for completion of the new church. The cornerstone was laid on October 1, 1950 by his Excellency the Right Reverend Andrew Roboretsky with

Reverend Fornalchuk officiating. During his time in Oakburn Reverend Fornalchuk encouraged and organized the young people into what is called the "Ukrainian Catholic Youth." Reverend Peter Romanyshyn came to Oakburn in 1952. He immediately organized a community choir and a ladies church choir. With the arrival of Reverend R. Zakrewsky in 1962, the parish priest moved to Shoal Lake, where a rectory was built. Reverend Slabyj (a married minister) came in 1965 but due to ill health was called to eternal peace in March 1967.

In 1967 more land was purchased from the Roman Catholics to enlarge the cemetery, and a caretaker was hired to keep the plot clean. The main entrance gate to the cemetery was brick-laid by Joseph Michalysyn an active eighty-two year old parishioner.

Reverend S. Borys arrived in August 1967 and presently is the parish priest. He is very deeply interested in the welfare of the youth and the well-being of his parishioners in general.

On completion of the new church the members became enthusiastic about a new hall. At an annual meeting in 1958 discussions were brought up and although many members were rather leary about this new project, a building committee was appointed. Under the presidency of William J. Shwaluke, the following were appointed, John Peech, Joe Antonation, Tom Sytnyk, Tony Tutkaluke, Mike Nowasad, Mike Lazaruk, and William P. Luhowy. Construction was soon in progress and all members participated either financially or manually. The hall completed in 1962 has two compartments, with a dance hall, dining room, kitchen, washrooms, bar and stage. The exterior was constructed of cinder-blocks. All social activities are carried on in the new convenient and spacious hall.

Presently the Ukrainian Catholic Parish in Oakburn has ninety members, with four active committees. "The Men's Church Committee, The Ukrainian Catholic Women's League, The Ukrainian Catholic Youth and the Hall Committee."

The members of the parish are proud of their achievements. We of the present generation are truly grateful to the pioneers who paved the way so our lives may be more rewarding.

#### ST. MARY'S CHURCH - SEECH

St. Mary's Church at Seech is situated twenty miles east of Oakburn. It was built by Theodore Nowasad and Kuch in 1911-1912 at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars. Mr. Grist painted it in 1937. Theodore Barabash donated the land for the church and cemetery. There is a belfry by the church.

Reverend Delaere served this community from 1899 to 1904 before the church was built. The first organizers of this church were the early settlers whose names have already been brought to our attention.

#### UKRAINIAN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - SEECH

In 1936 a group of people of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox faith held their first services in the homes of Peter and Ann Kurchaba, John and Anastasia Manuliak and John and Tekla Storozuk. The first ministers

to serve these people were Reverend Berik, Reverend Stefan Hrebenuk, and Reverend Stefan Symchich.

A piece of land on 33-19-22 was donated by John Storozuk for a church and cemetery. During the summer months open air services were held on the plot where the church was later built.

In 1939 a committee was elected with Peter Kurchaba as President, Michael Manuliak as Secretary, and Michael Citulski as Treasurer. Other members included Steve Manuliak, John Storozuk, Mike Swystun, Ilko Shawaga, John Manuliak, and Dmytro Procak. Each member was to cut two loads of logs to be milled for building materials for the new church.

Mike Swystun and ten volunteers built the church, and it was blessed in 1942 by Bishop Teodorovich and given the name of the two apostles, Peter and Paul. The Ukrainian Women's Association though very small furnished the church with benches, chandeliers, banners, and a Tabernacle. The painting inside was done by Mrs. Olia Moroz. Later a belfry and dining area was added to the church. Mr. Mike Citulski was the first cantor.

The sisterhood keeps the church immaculate and on July 12, they serve dinner for the parishoners after a special service to the patron saints after which the church is named.

#### ST. JOHN CHURCH - DOLYNY

St. John church at Dolyny is situated eight miles northeast of Oakburn. It was built in 1907 by John and Peter Kowtusi at a cost of one thousand dollars. Mike Bachewich donated three acres of land for the church and cemetery. The stained glass windows were donated by the parishoners who had to cautiously carry them through bush trails to the building site. It is interesting to note that the first organizers of the church were: William and Eliah Chwaluk, Matey Hambisky, Theodore Drul, Mykyta Galan, George Scotylas, Mike Maydaniuk, Lawrenty Zurbyk, Max Penuita, Nick and Phylip Tutkaluk, Rymetro Kowalchuk, Sam Hucel, Nick Kachur and Tomma Kiez.

In the early days the church services were infrequent. When a priest did visit the parish it was not unusual to see as many as seventeen couples standing in a row in front of the altar to be married at one time. Similarly ten families baptised their babies one Sunday.

With the growth of the settlement, the church became too small for the congregation and in 1917 an addition was built. In 1939 the community of Dolyny built a parish hall.

#### UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - MENZIE

The first Ukrainian Greek Orthodox services in the Menzie area were held in the home of Alex Drul. In 1924 a church committee was formed for the purpose of organizing and building a church. The committee consisted of thirty-six members with Tomma Kiez as President, John Peleshok as secretary, and Nykola Drul as Treasurer.

John Peleshok donated a piece of land for the church and cemetery and in 1925 a neat church of Ukrainian Byzantine architecture was erected. Its builder was John Panchuk. All the members volunteered to help in its construction.

On August 15, 1925 the new church was blessed with Bishop Teodorovich and Reverend Sawchuk officiating at the ceremony. Reverend Berik was



Menzie Church.

its first minister. John Peleshok was the first cantor and continued to hold this position until 1968. A belfry was built in 1930.

A choir master was hired and the first choir consisting of twenty-five people, young and old, was formed. This choir still performs today.

A Ukrainian National Home was built in 1920 where the Ukrainian Women's Association hired teachers to teach Ukrainian school during summer holidays. Concerts and plays were organized with the proceeds going toward the purchase of a Tabernacle, iconostasis, banners, chandeliers and the installation of electric heat in the church.

The church with its traditions still has a strong influence on family life. The Julian calendar is followed and traditional Christmas, Easter, and other church holiday customs are observed and carried on. Some of these are carolling at Christmas, the observation of Lent, blessing of Easter baskets and many others. The people still cling strongly to their ritual beliefs.

#### VISTA CHURCH

In 1930, two and a half miles from Vista, a group of farm people organized and decided to build a little Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church. Many of these small churches were being built in different parts of the country because of the poor roads. In the winter months these roads were badly blown in that the people had to use their sleighs. With the coming of spring mud became a problem. Travelling any distance to church was not as easy as it is today.



Mr. Starenky, a local farmer, donated the land for the church and a cemetery. The church was built by Mr. Karpiah with voluntary help from its members. Mr. Miller of Vista finished the interior. The church was of Byzantine-Ukrainian design with three domes. All the furnishings and essentials for the church were donated by its members.



Funeral of Andrew Matiation, Rev. S. Simchich officiated.

In 1932 the church was completed and was named Presvietaya Troichy (Holy Trinity). Bishop Teoderovech officiated at the blessing of the church. The first minister to officiate was Reverend S. Simchich.

The president of the organization at the time of the construction of the church was Dymtro Wowk and the secretary was Michael Matiation. The members were Peter Starenky, Kocz Bilinsky, Bill Nycek, Joe Woychisyn, Matwie Misanchuk, Sam Matiation, Mike Bewza, Paul Bewza, Michael Wowk, Stanley Kurchaba, Andri Matiation, Harry Peech, Michael Peech, and Andri Wishnewesky. Many of these members later moved to Oakburn and became members of the Oakburn Greek Orthodox Church.

#### ASSUMPTION CHAPEL - OAKBURN FARMS

The Polish settlers who arrived six miles north of Oakburn in the summer of 1898 and took up homesteads in the area of Township 19, Range 23, did not remain long without the ministration of a priest.

Father Adalbert Kulaway was the first Polish Oblate Father to visit the homes of the settlers. He held his first service in the area, in the sod home of Prokip Hrycak who was a Greek Catholic.

Another missionary, Father Dalaere, who visited the scattered parish on horseback, found enough settlers to undertake the task of constructing a log church and rectory. The church was completed in 1902 and named St. John Cantius. On its completion it was found to be trespassing on the public road allowance and later to be moved to the present site. The first recorded marriage which took place in the church was of Anna Yaskiw to Michael Hrycak. A boy, Nick, born to Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Macsymchuk



St. John Cantuis Chapel, Oakburn. The people that settled on the homesteads all participated in building this first chapel in 1902, though the homesteads were scattered it took an area of 3 Townships.

was the first to be baptized on January 1, 1901. A total of one hundred and fifty baptisms were recorded.

It is interesting to note that Father Plucinski's parish in 1914 was comprised of one hundred and twenty-two families living within a radius of one hundred and twelve miles of the church.

On November 2, 1928, a short time after Father Kurys replaced Father Maciaszck, a fire burned the church to the ground. A new church was built in 1929 and in August of the same year Archbishop Serinat blessed it and gave it the title of the Assumption.

In 1943 the rectory was sold and Rossburn became the residence of the priests. The Assumption Chapel at Oakburn Farms then became a mission of the Rossburn parish.

#### ST CATHERINE CHAPEL OAKBURN

With Tom Sincinsky and Paul Hrytsak as carpenters the construction of this lovely chapel was begun in 1947. Father Michalik was the pastor at that time. The chapel was built in town to accomodate about twenty families who lived there. They were mostly farmers who had retired in town after long years of toil, and who were unable to make the six mile trip to Assumption Chapel in the country. Many did not have cars or any other means of transportation.

When Father Ciephy took charge of the chapel it was still a shell of a building. With the voluntary help of twenty-five parishioners the interior was completed, a belfry was constructed and the entire structure was painted giving it a trim appearance.

Mass is celebrated every Sunday. Though it has been predicted that this chapel will soon be closed because of the lack of a congregation there are still a few young and retired couples who come to worship and call this chapel "our church."

Presently the church committee consists of Mike J. Matiation and Joe Babinsky.

#### THE UNITED CHURCH

The first church in the district was the Culross United Church, situated on S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 15 on Malcom McKinnons fathers farm. The first religious services were conducted by Mr. Jus McArthur in 1880. He covered a large territory holding services every day wherever he could gather a group of people. He was succeeded by the Rev. William Hodnett the first ordained minister. The first church was built in Oakburn in 1895 one mile south of town. On July 14, 1895 Rev. James Robertson D.D. Superintendent of Missions officiated at the opening service. The church was opened entirely free of debt, a fact very creditable to a little band of people. Special credit is due to the enterprise of the late James Halliday. The church was moved into town in 1906. For several years Oakburn and Shoal Lake existed as one congregation.

#### THE BAPTIST CHURCH

We understand a Baptist Church was built in 1880 four miles west of Oakburn. In this church the gospel was preached in both English and Gaelic this being a Scottish Settlement.

## Organizations

### THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL HOME

The present Ukrainian National Home Organization evolved from a series of early organizational efforts among the pioneer elements within the Oakburn Community and immediate area. These early efforts were gradually consolidated into the present National Home Organization.

The earliest recorded organizational effort was during November 1914, when the Amateur Dramatic Circle was organized by Reverend Drohomereski at Olha. This group was formed in honour of Taras Shevchenko. The first executive comprised: president Jacob Maydaniak, director Max Maydaniak, treasurer Dmetro P. Kowal, recording secretary Dmetro Pawshuk and financial secretary John Chupak.

The other members were Andrew Siwicky, Carol Pawshuk, John Budiwski, Anne Osadec, Rose Maydanuik, Warwara Wowk, Dmetro Maduke, John Nowasad, Michael Nowasad, Nykola Nowasad, and Dmetro Monasterski.



D. Wowk—play director  
— 28 years.

The first production of this small amateur group was "Swatania Na Hanchariwtsi," which was presented at the John Kent School. This first production was followed by a number of other productions, which were performed during the succeeding few years. The play performances and other social gatherings netted a substantial amount of money. However, differences of opinion on the disposal of the proceeds, caused the dissolution of the Amateur Dramatic Circle.

The second organizational effort was in 1919 and was entitled the Lesenko Association. The executive on this occasion comprised: Wasyl

Boychuk President, director Dmetro Wowk, secretary Demtro Kowal, and treasurer Wasyl Ewashko.

The members of the Lesenko Association were Michael Zubrack, John Maduke, Michael Swidinski, Nykola Nowasad, John Nowasad, Peter Ewashko, Warwara Wowk, Anne Osadec, Jacob Hlagi, Dmetro Dutchak, and Michael Demchik.



J. Nowosad — Choir director, 1925-1939.

Their first dramatic performance was held at the Oakburn Community Hall. This drama was also performed at Rosssburn. Both performances, six to eight per year, during the following two years. From the proceeds of these performances, they were able to make donations to the Press Institute, Red Cross, Hospitals, and others.

In 1921, plans were finalized to construct their own hall. They purchased an acre of land for three hundred dollars from Nick Maydaniak and bought lumber from Peden's Sawmills. A charter was procured from Barrister Arsenych. Some members insisted on building under the name of Ukrainian Catholic Home, and others wanted the name Ukrainian National Home. This controversy held up the actual building until 1926. The majority of the members at that time agreed to build using the name Ukrainian National Home. Panko Chyshyk was president. The building committee was nominated. The members of the committee were Stan Kurchaba, Wasyl Novitsky, and Peter Ewashko. John Panchuk was hired as carpenter and labour was voluntarily donated by the members.

Members were: Nick Zubrack, Tom Zubrack, Fred Kurchaba, Hnat Golets, Nick Budiwski, S. P. Gerelus, Michael Wolochatuik, D. P. Kowal, John Nowasad, Michael Yarish, George Karasewich, Marion Bandruch, Stan Yanick, Panko Luhowy, Warwara Wowk, Fred Michalyshyn, Mike Antonation, John Osadec, Alex Hrytsak, Alex Drul, Anton Tesarski, John Peleshok,

John Kiez, Alex Groshok, Stan Trach, Steve Novilsky, John Kolody, Wasyl Boychuk, John Derkach, Philip Tutkaluk, Paul Luhowy, Stan Pujda, Anton Kiez, Anton Tesarski, Stan Borodie, Carl Kotyk, Anton Kowalchuk, Nick Tutkaluk, Peter Starenky, Sam Kolody, Michael Gapka, Michael Ewashko, Dmetro Nowasad, John Kukorudz, Roman Ewanyshyn, Nykola Ewanyshyn.

The organization was proud of its hall, substantial collection of costumes and books valued at approximately seven hundred dollars. The community members were entertained by plays, concerts, debates, socials, and dances. Meetings were held occasionally.

John Nowasad directed a chorus of about forty members. Dmetro Wowk and John Nowasad directed plays. Some of the performers were Warwara Wowk, Margaret Hrytsak, Mary and Rose Nycek, Rose Karasewich, Olia Nowasad, Mary Luhowy, Stan and Tacia Yanick, Walter Sitko, Nick Budiwski, Nick Zubrack, Stan Kurchaba, Dmetro and Anastasia Kowal and Joe Remenda.

The first efforts to teach the Ukrainian Language was initiated in 1928. Teaching of Ukrainian classes was conducted during the summer holidays. The members of the Ukrainian National Home formed a Committee and hired teachers to teach sixty children during the summer holidays. The first teachers were Peter Kripiekevich, Peter Sitnyk, Bill Wolochatiuk, Mike Hawrychinski. When the hall burnt in 1933, the Oakburn trustees gave permission to hold Ukrainian language classes in the school, after school hours. Ukrainian school continued to be taught in 1933 and 1934.

The loss of the National Home in 1933 was a temporary setback, but one that didn't deter the determined group. Later, Lots 4 and 5, Block 2 were bought from M. J. Nowasad for two hundred dollars. The new hall was built the same year. The carpenter was Wasyl Koltusky, assisted by Tom Sicinsky. Labour was supplied by the members. The executive that year comprised of: President George Karasewich, Secretary Mike Yarish, and Treasurer Fred Kurchaba. The stage scenery was painted by Paul J. Boretski.

Activities were not so numerous during the depression years but increased after 1937. The teaching of Ukrainian was continued by Mr. and Mrs. Nick Mandziuk and Mrs. Mary Matiation. In more recent years Ukrainian instruction has been administered by the ministers serving the parish. Drama was continued throughout the years from 1943 to 1958. Documentary and entertainment films were shown in the fifties.

In 1955, the dining hall was added and water and sewage facilities by 1970. It is fitting to thank all the numerous caretakers and male and female volunteer labourers who generously contributed time and effort to the maintenance of the Home.

The Ukrainian National Home has served as the centre for the advancement of Ukrainian cultural endeavours throughout the years. It has also served as a meeting place and centre of various activities of the CYMK, the Young People's Organization, and the Ukrainian Women's Association. Social activities such as weddings, banquets, and dances have also been held in the hall.

During the duration of the Ukrainian National Home the following have served as presidents:

1932 - S. P. Gerelus  
1933 - George Karasewich  
1934 - Mike Nowasad  
1935 - 1937 - George Karasewich  
1938 - 1940 - Nick Mandziuk  
1941 - Dan Holobitski  
1942 - 1943 - George Karasewich  
1944 - 1945 - Nick Mandziuk  
1946 - 1948 - Steve Matiation  
1949 - 1950 - Nick Mandziuk  
1951 - 1952 - S. P. Gerelus  
1952 - 1956 - Mike Borodie  
1957 - D. P. Kowal  
1958 - Stan Borodie  
1959 - 1960 - D. P. Kowal  
1961 - 1970 - Tony Slon

## ORGANIZATIONS

Among the first women's organizations in Oakburn was the Women's Institute. This was an active body of ladies who possessed ability and energy. Since sound guidance was needed in the homes, the W.I. was instrumental in promoting this cause. During the war years extra efforts were made to raise money for the Red Cross and to send parcels to the local boys overseas. Many willing hands were involved in sewing and knitting for the troops and wounded in hospitals. This organization worked in conjunction with the hospital in Shoal Lake. In time there was need for expanding the hospital unit and the Oakburn Aid was formed. A few active members willingly canvassed for funds, held teas and raffles, bingos and pantry showers to raise the allocated funds for this area. A few of our New Year babies have been recipients of a silver baby cup donated by the auxiliary. In 1965 over fifty ladies and young girls received their Red Cross diplomas in Home Nursing conducted by registered nurses in our area.

There was definitely a need for better teacher-parent co-operation and the Home and School Association was organized with an enrolment of fifty.

Card parties, dances and raffles were held to raise funds for delegates to attend Local and Provincial Home and School Conventions. Students received financial support to attend a United Nations Seminar held in Brandon in July. Programs were often livened with films pertinent to teacher-parent child relationships. Lively discussions followed with rewarding outcomes. Everyone enjoyed the annual school picnics at the end of June. We still remember the hectic "shoe race," or "thread the needle race," or bicycle obstacle race. Efforts were made to obtain a piano teacher and one was available for several years. Plans were discussed to start a weekly kindergarten class supervised by mothers. This was such a rewarding project that in time a permanent teacher was engaged until the Division took over. Who could possibly forget the Hallowe'en party when old and young came in costume and all had a perfectly hilarious time. At one of the

meetings a guest speaker spoke on "The Retarded Child." As a result the following resolution was sent to the P.T.A. convention in Winnipeg. Whereas a number of parents have retarded children in their homes who do not attend any school throughout the year be it resolved that the provincial government of Manitoba show proper concern for the welfare of retarded children by providing grants for classrooms, teachers, equipment and maintenance similar to the grants provided for public schools.



Oakburn Fine Arts Display at Dauphin Festival, Cecilia Bucklaschuk, hostess.

As a result one such school was established in Shoal Lake and operated by the Kinsmen.

The P.T.A. sponsored the local 4-H Home Economics and Garden Clubs. Many leaders have volunteered time and effort aiding young people in learning their projects, as well as becoming good citizens in their community and country. Public speaking, demonstrations, leadership courses, exchange trips, camp and scholarships are some of the highlights of a 4-H program. It's an honour for a girl to model or have her garment displayed at a summer fair. A boy in the beef club feels equally proud of his prize calf or steer. Many a young girl and boy have been honoured by being crowned Vegetable Queen or King.

We are indebted to the leaders who in 1935 received instructions from the Extension Service and formed the Ladies Sewing Circle, whereby they learned the basic skills in sewing, knitting and fancy work.

4-H had its beginning in 1937 when the Poultry Club was formed and members received twenty-five chickens, took care of them all summer and



and development of Ukrainian art and culture, the enlargement of domestic knowledge of home economics, and the participation in community and world affairs. The Association is a member of the Canadian National Women's Council.

The Oakburn women divided and formed its first Ukrainian Women's Association in 1931 which worked in association with the Ukrainian National Home. Mrs. Barbara Wowk became the organization's first president. In 1945, the year the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church was built, the Oakburn Branch of Lecia Ukrainka had a membership of forty members. The Oakburn Local is still very active. Its members participate in provincial and dominion conventions. The Oakburn district, which consists of Oakburn, Rosburn, Menzie and Sandy Lake, appoint and send a district representative to the provincial executive. Past district representatives were Mary Mandziuk, Nellie Hrytsak, and Mae Chwaluk.

The local members participate in many functions such as Mother's Day, Ukrainian Authors Day, a book day, sponsoring handicrafts projects, displaying handicrafts at regional conventions, and participation in the Ukrainian Art Festival in Dauphin. The local has also made donations to the St. Andrew's College Building Fund which is located on the University of Manitoba Campus. It also supports the Ukrainian school which is taught in the Oakburn Elementary School. The Ukrainian National Home and the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church are also supported by the organization.

The presidents of the organization from 1923-1970 are as follows: Barbara Wowk, Nellie Kowal, Miss Anna Gregor, Kay Goletz, Rose Hirak, Mary Polowy, Margaret Remanda, Mary Mandziuk, Tacha Yanyk, Mary Matiation, Anastazia Hrytsak, Mary Kowal, Jean Matiation, and Ann Bucklaschuk.

The Oakburn pioneer ladies of district, guests of Women's Institute, worked with women of ethnic groups and in 1935, '36, '37 they took lessons through the Extension Service in sewing, knitting and crocheting. When the Second World War broke out the women of the community formed into groups where they made quilts in the Ukrainian National Home, and sent them together with knitted articles to the Red Cross. They gathered and packed parcels for the boys serving overseas. The conveners for the Red Cross were Mrs. Dan Menzies and Mrs. Mike Dutchak.

#### UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

No community could flourish were it not for the women. Such was the case when the first Catholic Parish was formed at Oakburn.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Mary Boychuk (daughter of the popular Cantor Bilinski) who in 1931 arrived from the Ukraine, The Princess Olha Organization had its beginning and she was the first president.

The ladies worked faithfully in the church and community in general. Fowl suppers and post Easter dinners consisting of popular Ukrainian foods such as borsch, holubtsi, pyrohi, home made sausage, chicken noodle soup would whet the poorest appetite. Box and pie socials were equally popular as well as bingos. Dramas, Comedies and Concerts were seldom advertised but were well attended even on the coldest nights.



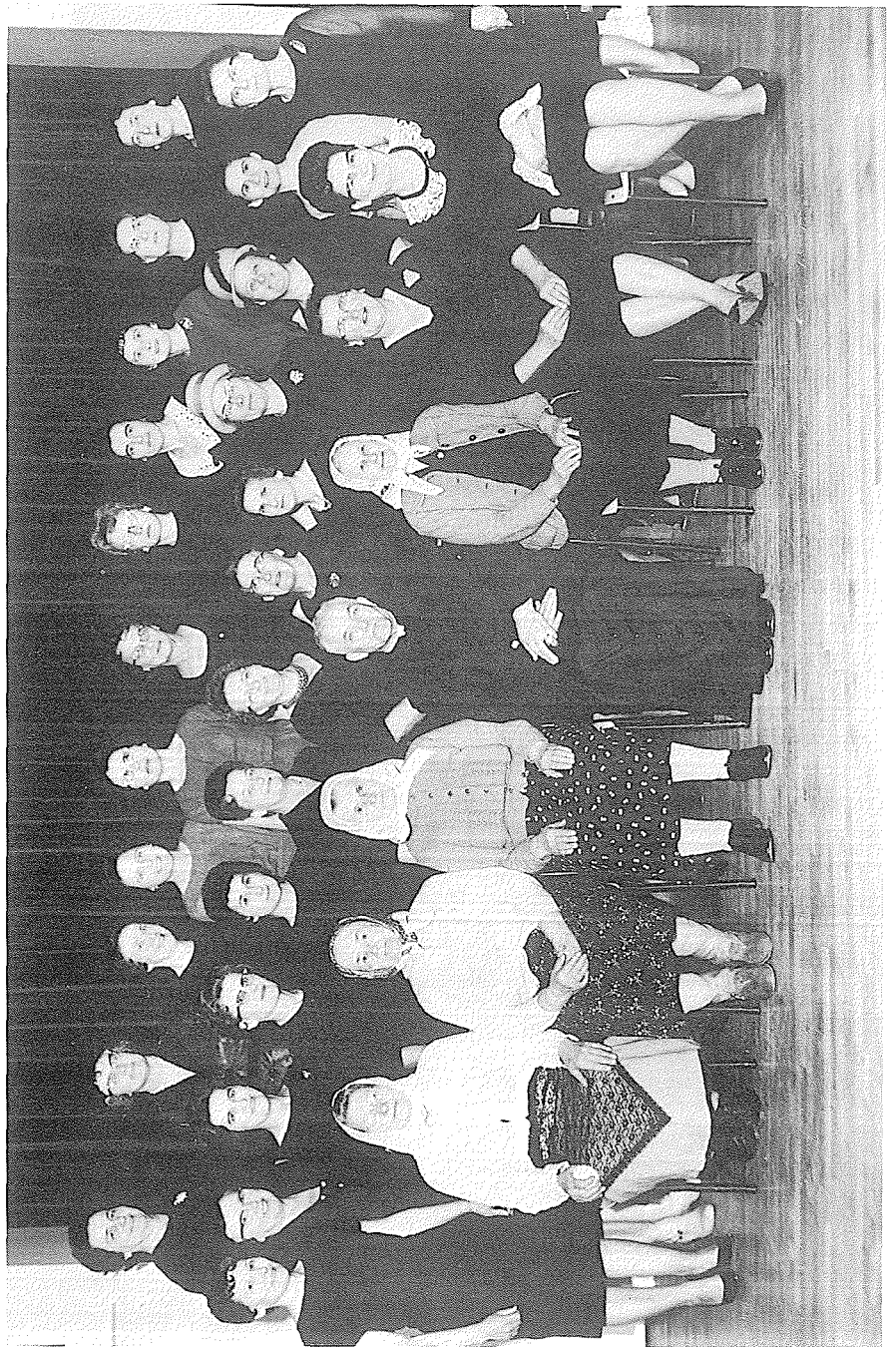
Pioneer Ladies of District, Guests of Women's Institute  
Oakburn, Man., Sept. 25. — Above is a photo of Oakburn and district pioneers, all of whom have resided here over fifty years. The snap was taken recently at the home of Mrs. F. F. Sewell at a social gathering under the auspices of the Women's Institute in honor of the respected ladies.

Top row, left to right: Mrs. John Black, Mrs. Tom Badger, Mrs. Robert Gardiner, Mrs. A. Richardson; lower row: Mrs. John Eastcott and Mrs. W. S. Partridge.

A pleasing feature of the social was the presentation of a bouquet of flowers to each of the honored guests, who in turn made appropriate speeches. Mrs. Badger and Mrs. Partridge also helped with the programme by way of vocal and instrumental numbers, and in a short dance that followed, the group joined in several of the light fantastic steps to the accompaniment of the local orchestra. Upwards of sixty friends were present at the function. The tea proceeds went to the fund for the memorial to pioneer women of Manitoba.



First Ukrainian Catholic Women's Organization — 1928.



Oakburn Ukrainian Catholic Women's League — 1967.

In the mid forties the name Ukrainian Catholic Women's League was adopted and many of the younger ladies were initiated as members. Extensive fund-raising programs to build a new church were carried out. Delegates were sent to the regional and provincial conferences. Through the voice of the women a course in the Ukrainian language was implemented at the Oakburn High School. Scholarships have been presented to grade twelve students who successfully completed their course and further their education.

The League in conjunction with the church committee hired the painter J. Baron to paint the interior of the church. The newly installed deep red carpet in the sanctuary and vestibule with matching aisle runner was also purchased with the League's assistance. Credit must also be given to the "church sisters" who devote so much time to keep the church linens, priestly robes and church clean.

Pre Easter sales of home bakings and handicrafts are well attended. We are indebted to Mrs. Melnychuk who taught the ladies in this district the art of Ukrainian cross-stitching. The work displayed at the Achievement Night and Dauphin Festival was indeed beautiful.

The members enjoy the annual Christmas carolling in the church and homes. This was made possible by talented musicians and choir leaders like Mr. John Nowasad, Mrs. N. Wolochatuik, Reverend P. Romanyshyn and Reverend S. Borys. The songs taught will never be forgotten.

Throughout the war years food parcels and cigarettes were sent to the boys overseas. Endless numbers of hours were spent by the ladies knitting and sewing to help in this cause. Many of the older ladies offered assistance so willingly.

In 1970 the year of Manitoba's Centennial, The League proudly remembers the dedicated pioneer women who treasured and practised the traditions of their homeland and preserved them for future generations.

#### THE CANADIAN UKRAINIAN YOUTH ASSOCIATION

The CYMK is a youth organization concerned with guiding the youth in its civic and cultural education within the limits of their social setting. The objectives of this organization are to further youth education and to promote spiritual growth of its members through a program of cultural, social, spiritual, and physical activities. These activities are designed to develop good citizenship and character. Further activities include the acquisition of useful skills such as conducting meetings, dramatics, folk dancing, handicrafts, and leadership.

In 1932 Mr. H. Tezuk organized a large youth association in Oakburn, Menzie, Olha, and Sandy Lake. The headquarters of the first group was in Oakburn. The first president was Helen Wowk and vice president was Eugene Golletz. The original club consisted of approximately forty members. When the membership in Oakburn declined, the interest was sustained in the Menzie area under the leadership of Mae Karasevich as president and Mary Drul as secretary.

A visit in 1935 by Mr. Peter Kripychewich renewed interest in the organization. In 1937 the Oakburn CYMK took part in a momentous con-

vention and Jamboree in Sandy Lake. In addition to the two organizers, who contributed to the success of the local, there was Reverend S. V. Sawchuk, Chaplain for the association. The late Basil Sarchuk, Julian Stecheshyn, Nick Labiuck, and Andrew Pawlik also contributed much to the efforts of the club.



Oakburn Ukrainian Youth Association.

With the outbreak of World War II many of the members volunteered their services to the war effort temporarily halting the local activities. The Oakburn local was re-organized in 1945 by Reverend Wasyl Fedak.

Among its first projects in 1947 was the initiation of music lessons under the leadership of John Parsons, a school teacher. Another project was the teaching of the Ukrainian Language during the summer months and Saturdays under the leadership of Reverend Stratychuk.

Throughout the years CYMK has participated in dramatics, Ukrainian folk dancing, and extensive choir work. Since 1960 Mrs. Mae Chwaluk has contributed much time and effort in singing and dancing instruction. The CYMK group has won acclaim on many occasions when the group participated in various functions throughout the province such as the variety shows held in Rivers and Hamiota, Brandon ACT Night and others. It has also taken part in queen contests competitions on the provincial level. At a Youth Rally held in Dauphin Evelyn Peleshok came first in a beauty contest.

Throughout the years the CYMK has gone carolling at Christmas with the proceeds going to the respective churches. During Pre-Easter lent the girls have taken lessons in writing Easter eggs conducted by the Ukrainian Women's Association and cross-stitching offered by Mrs. Melnychuk.

The CYMK attended the unveiling on the Legislative grounds of the monument honouring the famous Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. With the establishment of St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg many of the Oakburn youth have taken summer courses there.

In addition the young people have performed in local functions such as Remembrance Day, Taras Shevchenko, and Mother's Day concerts as well as in the Oakburn Centennial parade and other ethnic and seasonal functions.

The present Executive consists of President - Pat Manuliak, Vice President - David Slon, Secretary - Cecelia Bucklaschuk, and Treasurer - Alice Starenky. On the Advisory Board there is Tony Slon, and Mrs. Jean Matiation. The Chaplin for the group is Reverend L. Diachina.

### UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB

In 1946 when Reverend J. Fornalchuk arrived at the Ukrainian Catholic Parish in Oakburn he immediately saw a need to organize young people in the district. The first U.C.Y. meeting was held in the old Parish Hall and the following executive was elected: Mike Michalyshyn - President, John M. Nowasad - Secretary, Elsie Antonation (Mrs. H. Kruk) - Treasurer. Monthly meetings were held and so much interest and enthusiasm was created that by 1950, a peak membership of fifty-eight was reached. Within a short time the U.C.Y. became an active auxiliary to the local church. Before midsummer a Carnival Queen Contest was in progress. Elsie Antonation was crowned queen having sold the most tickets. A substantial sum was realized and subsequently turned over to the church building fund.

Throughout the years the U.C.Y. has sponsored a number of plays, concerts, dances, and bingos. Inter-parish youth social activities led to the formation of the Sandy Lake-Oakburn Regional U.C.Y. This covered parochial areas from Mountain Road to Russell including Shoal Lake. Elected to this executive were Bill Stasuik - President, Elsie Antonation - Secretary, Mike Michalyshyn - Treasurer. Spiritual directors were Reverend J. Ewanchuk, and Reverend P. Romanyshyn. Funds raised by the regional executive at the Clear Lake and Shoal Lake rallies were turned over to the arch diocese and Roblin Seminar.

Presidents holding successful terms of office to 1970 were: Mike Michalyshyn, William J. Shwaluk, Sam Shwaluk, Orest Matiwski, Sonia Antonation, Sonia Topolnisky, Ned Derkach, Patsy Lamb, Sonia Waytowich, Peter Majko, Allan Michalyshyn, Eugene Leganchuk, and Russell Matiwski.

At present there are thirty-five members fourteen years of age and over. Father Borys is the spiritual leader and guidance counsellor who is constantly advocating the need for preserving our language, culture and heritage.

In 1967 as a Centennial project the club purchased a steel mission cross which was mounted in the churchyard.

During Ukrainian Christmas members go carolling, a tradition enjoyed by young and old alike. Part of the money raised by the club is donated to the needs of the Parish Hall or Church. Recently a number of members have been reading the epistle during mass and sing in the choir.

The club has always sent delegates to the provincial conferences held in Winnipeg and Brandon. In 1969 Oakburn received an ovation for being the most active rural U.C.Y. Club in Manitoba.





Ukrainian Catholic Youth.

Curling bonspiels, ball tournaments and rallies have been well represented by regional members. The trophies and plaques displayed in the Parish Hall are an indication of the clubs' success.

#### COOPERATIVE STORE 1915-1925

The Ruthenian Co-Operative Trading Co. Ltd. of Oakburn, Manitoba, was organized in the year 1915 with 285 members. Their turnover was as high as \$44,231.65 per year with Capital Stock of \$20,000.00. In the early years a lot of business was done by exchange of products for goods. A weakness in the running of the business by giving too much credit led to the closure of the store in 1925. The store was sold to S. P. Gerelus in 1926.

Early records show managers such as John Chupak, Andrew Siwicki, S. P. Gerelus.

Its directors were as follows:

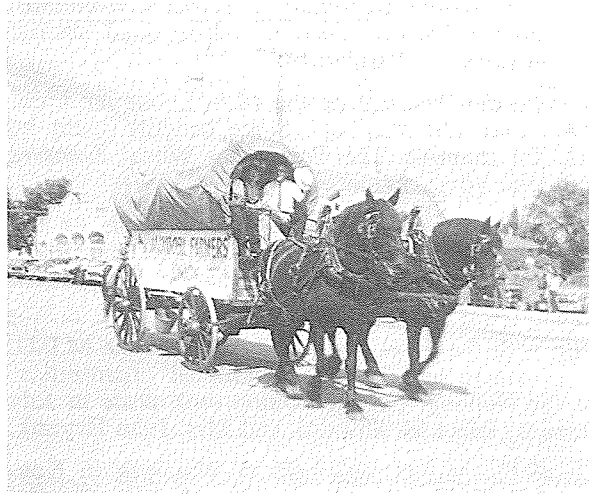
John Osadec  
Michael Antonyshyn  
Yurko Karasiewich  
Panko Luhowy

Alexander Hrytsak  
Stefan Nychek  
Dymtro Kowal

#### MANITOBA FARMERS UNION 1951-1969

Though the people of the Oakburn community took part in many farm organizations, the Manitoba Farmers Union (1951-1969) had the biggest

effect on the social life of these people. Being a nonpartisan, nonpolitical organization it involved most of the farmers and others closely associated with farming.



Farmer's Union Float 1967.

Local No. 58 was formed in 1951 with Harry Boychuk as president. The founding convention of the M.F.U. was held soon after in Portage la Prairie which was attended by Fred Muzykowski, Peter Kashton, Nick Osadec, Wm. J. Shwaluk, Harry Boychuk and Harry Kotyk.

Annual meetings were held every year and officers were elected each year. Because the constitution allowed one to hold office only four years in a row, elections brought changes. Wm. J. Shwaluk took office of president after Harry Boychuk followed by John Nowasad, Peter Matiation, John Muzykowski and Dick Lamb.

The members of this local saw a definite need for a grass root organization. A high signup was achieved most of the years with the highest being in 1962 when a total of three hundred and twelve members joined, making it the largest local in Manitoba for the year.

On the local level activities were mainly meetings, concerts and dances. Most meetings were concerned with organization policy, agricultural problems and how the privileges of such an organization could be exercised. Concerts and dances were successful in raising extra money to cover expenses of the local, but were most successful in bringing the community together because the members felt free to take part and most who took part enjoyed it. Some Union Bonspiels and farm-practice improvement field-days went over quite well too.

Away from home, Oakburn members travelled many miles to play important roles. Wm. J. Shwaluk was district director for four years. He later became chairman of the M.F.U. marketing board committee which required him to attend a number of meetings in Saskatoon. Mrs. John Hrytsak was women's director and became the women's first vice-president. During the march to Ottawa in 1959, Oakburn was represented by John Nowasad and Wm. J. Shwaluk. The delegation to Ottawa in 1965 included Mr. and Mrs. Peter Matiation and Mrs. John Hrytsak. Mike M. Shwaluk



won coverage in the Winnipeg daily papers by his dramatic presentation on the "Buying Strike" at the annual convention of 1967. He later became alternate district director in District No. 3. Oakburn members were always well represented at the provincial annual conventions, district conventions, at the meetings with the candidates before elections, also, when district briefs were presented to the Member of Parliament.

No one at Oakburn became rich because of the M.F.U. but most did benefit by it, even many who were not members. Some benefits could be measured in dollars and cents for example, The Temporary Wheat Reserves Act, Acreage Payments, and cash advances.

There were various other legislations that either came about or fell through, because of the influence of the M.F.U. The extent of benefit to the membership at Oakburn is a matter of personal opinion, but benefit they did.

Times change, to keep up with the times, the membership of the M.F.U. decided to join with other provinces and became a national organization. The founding convention of the National Farmers Union took place in July 1969. Oakburn was represented by Mike M. Shwaluk and Mrs. John Hrytsak.

The windup convention of the M.F.U. was held in Winnipeg in November 1969. It was fitting that Oakburn was represented by one who attended the founding convention in 1951, Wm. J. Shwaluk accompanied by Johnny Bucklaschuk.

On April 4, 1970 twenty-four Oakburn farmers participated in the historic demonstration in Winnipeg organized by the National Farmers Union.

#### THE OAKBURN CREDIT UNION SOCIETY LIMITED

The Oakburn Credit Union Society Limited originated in 1954. The first Board of Directors meeting was held on March 1, 1955. The Foundings Committees were:

Board of Directors:

President - Tony Slon

Vice-President - Walter Melnyk

Secretary - John M. Nowasad

Treasurer-Manager - I. N. Mandzuik

Director - Stanley Lazaruk

Director - William P. Luhowy

Credit Committee:

Steve Matiation

Mike Borodie

Mike Lazaruk

Supervisory Committee:

Mike Michalyshyn

S. P. Gerelus

Adam Luhowy

In 1957 Paul Michalyshyn took over as manager and served the Credit Union for twelve years.

During the fourteen years of the Credit Unions existence the following named persons had at some time or another played an important role in

one of the committees: Mike Beck, Steve Malnyk, Tony Chwaluk, Peter Matiation, Alex Matiowsky, Jeannette Ziemianski and George Polowy.

In 1968 the Credit Union bought I. N. Mandzuik's law office and converted it to the present Credit Union building. On February 1, 1969 Arnold Slon was hired as manager and the Credit Union opened to a full-time scale. The Credit Union now offers a full-time chequing service as well as Share Accounts and loans. Also available now are Term Deposit Certificates at  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ .

The Oakburn Credit Union has been continually growing and to-date stands with approximately three hundred and seventy members and assets of \$310,000.

The committees at present are as follows:

Board of Directors:

President - Tony Slon

Vice-President - William P. Luhowy

Secretary - Nick Franko

Treasurer-Manager - Arnold Slon

Director - Julian Lucyshen

Director - Mike Polos

Credit Committee:

Chairman - Mike Borodie

Mike Lazaruk

Alex Prosyk

Supervisory Committee:

Chairman - Mike Michalyshyn

Mrs. Alex Prosyk

John Muzykowski

## Recreation

### THE OAKBURN MEMORIAL RINKS BUILDING FUND OAKBURN RECREATIONAL CENTRE

In the latter part of the 1950's a group of sports minded citizens became concerned in improving the competitive quality and potential of our young athletes by providing the necessary sports facilities to bring Oakburn in line with other sports minded communities. Their objective was to stimulate community interest in building a closed in skating rink.



Oakburn High School Hockey Team, 1945 and 1950, Buck Matiowsky, coach.

In February, 1958 a special meeting was held in the Oakburn Memorial Rink. With a heated discussion and some controversy a nucleus committee was formed under the name of "Oakburn Memorial Rinks Building Fund Committees" with Orest "Buck" Matiowski as President, Stanley Yanick as Vice-President, and Mike Michalyshyn as Secretary-Treasurer. The committee immediately began raising money for the project by sponsoring a bingo, banquet and dance, raffle and carnival. By February, 1959 it had realized a profit of almost six hundred dollars.

As the undertaking became larger, the committee found it necessary to enroll more members. At a special meeting on August 26, 1959 Messrs. Stan Biluke, Steve Waytowich, Nick Ness, Frank Kominko, and Victor Michaluk were elected to an advisory committee. Plans were also made for the first sports day to be held on September 13, 1959 on Dorko Michalyshyn's field. The sportsday has now become an annual event.



The Oakburn Memorial Rink Building Fund. These school beginners raised most money on a talent night for the Oakburn Memorial Rink Building Fund.

With the departure of Orest Matiwski, a meeting was held on April 25, 1960 where Stephen M. Waytowich was elected to replace the departing president.

On June 5, 1962 the committee agreed that the land south of the town-site which included thirty-eight lots, be purchased from A. B. Fishman at the cost of one thousand nine hundred dollars. At the same time a referendum was adopted in order to incorporate the land to the "Oakburn Memorial Rinks," and to give more power to the committee by allowing it to use the raised money to purchase the land, and the authority to call the grounds the "Oakburn Recreational Centre."

To improve the facilities on the grounds a booth was built in May, 1963. The students of the Oakburn Consolidated School raised and donated a substantial sum of money toward its construction.

In the early months of 1967 it was decided that the Oakburn Recreational Centre be implemented as a 1967 Centennial Project. A general meeting was called and the Oakburn Centennial Committee was formed with Mike Michalyshyn as Chairman and Stephen M. Waytowich as Secretary-Treasurer. Within a matter of a few short months an entire plan was laid down and executed. July 28, 1967 was chosen as the date for the Community's Centennial festivities.

On July 28, 1967 at 2:00 p.m. the "Oakburn Recreational Centre" was officially opened with the traditional cutting of the ribbon by our Member of Parliament, Nicholas Mandziuk, Q.C.

#### OAKBURN GAME AND FISH ASSOCIATION

The idea of forming an association was realized quite a few years ago. However, it wasn't until April 1967 that an attempt was made. Mr. Murphy who is the executive director of the Man. Wildlife Federation visited Oakburn and the Oakburn Game and Fish Association was formed.

As we are in our 100th year of Confederation we hope to be able to realize a membership of 100. Our organization has grown from 45 members in the first year to 84 in the second year and 93 in the third year, and as previously stated we hope to reach or surpass the 100 mark this year.

Our membership is constantly expanding to support education and recreation. We have sponsored a Hunter Safety Course with 63 people young and old completing and receiving hunter safety crests and certificates.

We have also built a rifle range for small bore and big game rifles. For the trap shooters we have built a trap range in accordance with The National Rifle Association specifications and we welcome members.

It is hoped additional finances will be found for more facilities on the ranges.

The past winter saw members make a trip by power toboggan from Oakburn to Lake Audy with local as well as outside sponsors participating on a per mile completion basis. The response was overwhelming and it is with this money that we hope to realize our Centennial objective and that is to build recreational facilities at Chorney Lake to include kitchenettes, tables, stoves, benches, etc.

In the past we held a Fish Derby which was a great success.

Our organization has been instrumental in having local lakes and streams checked and stocked where biologists feel it is feasible to do so.

Also with the assistance of Mr. J. Hrytsak we were instrumental in having a part of his farm designated a special Wildlife Project and in the near future Canada Geese will be introduced and it is hoped a foundation stock will be established. By so doing we will have been instrumental in preserving wildlife for future generations.

In closing it is our hope that we have helped preserve wildlife and will continue to do so for our succeeding generations. That they may enjoy nature and its inhabitants on our next centennial in even greater abundance. This is the greatest heritage we can pass on to our children and they to theirs in turn.

#### THE OAKBURN ORIOLES FASTBALL CLUB

The Oakburn Orioles Fastball team was organized ten years ago, coached and spearheaded by Stephen M. Waytowich who at that time joined the Oakburn Collegiate teaching staff.

It was shortly after the team was organized that the Oakburn Recreational Centre was purchased in order to add more facilities for community recreation and every spring the Recreational Committee along with the Orioles host many neighbouring clubs in one of the finest fastball tourneys for miles around.



Oakburn Orioles — Steve Waytowich, Coach. Back row (left to right): Edward Bobinski, Bill Kominko, Taras Chwaluk, Ernest Peleshok, Lawrence Kristalowich, Joe Leganchuk. Centre row: Maurice Skotlas, Chris Novalkowski, Steve Waytowich, Leonard Sitko, Patrick Migas. Front row: Ernie Stebeleski, Eugene Leganchuk, Mervin Stebeleski, Leonard Drul.

The Orioles are one of the top teams playing in the North Central Fastball League and on weekends participate in fastball tournaments sponsored by other clubs in the area.

In the past ten years many of our youth were proud owners of the attractive "Orioles" uniform only to find that upon completing high school the call from the outside world takes them elsewhere into different walks of life. The team can boast of several top notch stars now performing with city teams of the highest calibre but above all the club is proud for having given the local boys an opportunity to mold personalities and promote good sportsmanship.

## Events Through the Years

### GLEANINGS ABOUT OAKBURN



Village of Oakburn — 1925.

The Canadian National Railway built in 1906 saw the beginning of the little village of Oakburn, so called by the Scottish settlers because of the many "oak" trees and "burn" from a creek, a mile and a half east of town which wound itself south to Shoal Lake. In fact there were nine bridges to cross between Oakburn and Shoal Lake, until the new road was built.

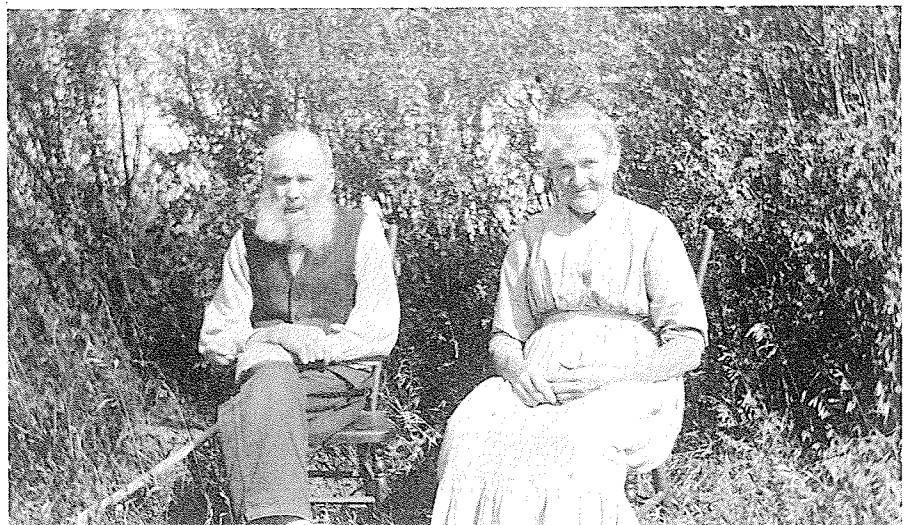
Mr. McCulloh the first section foreman took charge of the railroad station until Charley Blair the station agent arrived. Other railroad employees were John Yaworski, John Grodesky, Peter Ognowski, Stanley Puyda, Frank Clearwater and John Zapski.

Joe Partridge built the first shanty house. Painters Bert and Cecil Grist built the home now occupied by Mrs. Julia Kowal. Dmytro Luhowy built a third house now the residence of Julian Lucyshyn.

Emil Rush operated the first dry goods business. James Walker and Dave Moffat built the first general store followed by John Menzies' store operated by his son, Dan. These stores had forty gallon barrels of apples, herrings, crackers, salt, vinegar, cider and other commodities on hand. Customers brought coal oil tins of (kerosene or naphtha) to purchase a week's supply for their wick lamps. To avoid spillage the spout was capped with a colourful delicious gum drop. Bananas came in tall veneer tapered barrel-like crates. They were hung down from a huge hook on the rafter and cut off as needed. Fifty pound circular discs of cheese and bologna in waxed wrappings were commonly seen. Eggs and butter were taken in exchange. Butter was generally well salted and packed into barrels, eggs re-crated, and both sent to Winnipeg.



Mrs. Blair — wife of  
first station agent.



Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Campbell, homesteaders, lived two and one half miles west of Oakburn, were the first postmasters on the farm.

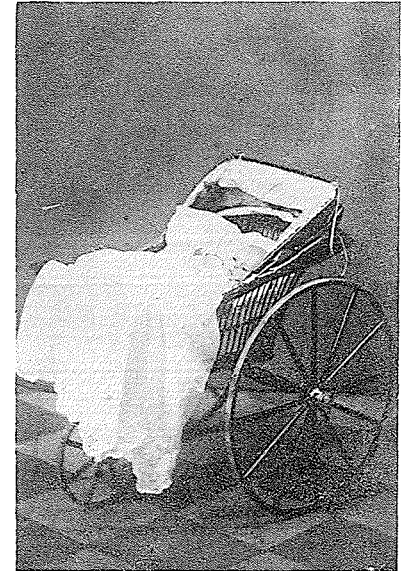




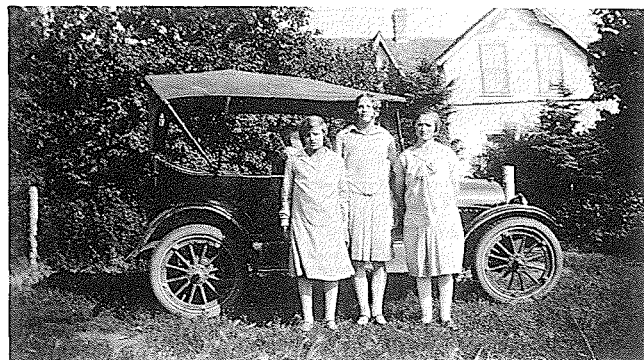
First Hearse in the area.



Mrs. E. M. Connel R.N., 1919,  
nursed people during flu epi-  
demic.



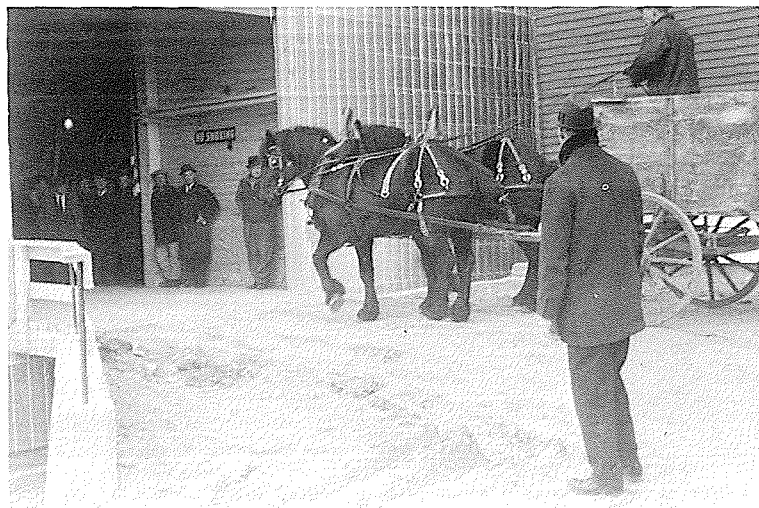
My Lady's Pram.



Going Places.



Kashton's oxen of Olha. The early manpower days grain was hauled by bagfuls.



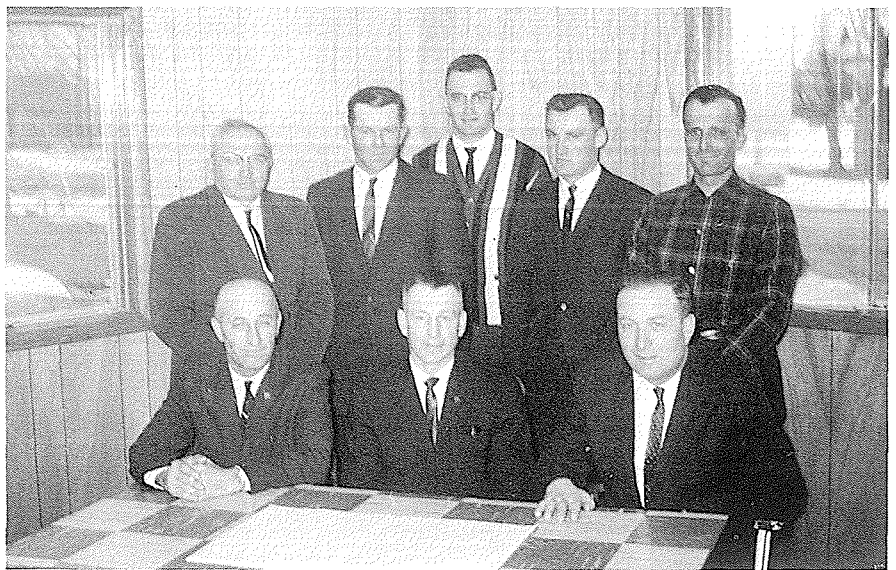
Dick Drul of Oakburn hauling grain by horses.



Mike Bucklaschuk and sons combining.



Oakburn's new Pool Elevator, 1965.



Prominent farmers who care about producing good grain. They are directors of the new Pool Elevator. Back row, standing from left to right: Peter Migas, Dick Drul, Garry Dunits, Leonard Sitko, John Nowosad. Seated, left to right: Harry Boychuk, president; John Muzyłowski, secretary; Frank Zubrak, vice-president.

A few pioneers recall a little store operated by Mr. Black, situated five miles north of town, that served the people of that locality.

Every town had its blacksmith shop where people stopped to exchange news while the smithy sharpened their plough shares or harrow teeth, shod horses or jointed iron bars over a forge. Tom and John Black, C. Butter, F. Chizuk, Fred Citulski, Mike Citulski, Tom Boychuk, Joe Herak, Mike Kuzniak, Sam Kolodi were masters of this trade.

The post-office was the only means of communication. The first was located on Tom Campbell's farm, the site of Bill Lazaruk's present home. When Thomas Halliday built a boarding house, the post-office was established here. The postmaster was Ramsey followed by Bill Stacey, Duncan McKenzie and James Foxton.

A lean-to by the boarding house was the first bank. A union Bank later changed to Royal Bank was constructed, with Harold McKnight as manager. In the late 1920's it went bankrupt, and was later sold to John Hrubenuk to be converted into a store and then the present Oakburn Hotel owned by Julian Wasylkiw. The boarding house changed hands from Bill Stacey, to Mike Smuttell. This building served its purpose in that it provided accomodation for many single people, and travellers. In 1945 Mike Borodie bought and converted the place into a garage and tire shop. J. Lucyshyn present owner added a liquor outlet to it recently.

Since all homes were equipped with wood heating furnaces, box stoves, pot-bellied, or cast iron Quebec heaters much wood had to be hauled and sawed during the winter months. Eastcott, Stan Yanick, Nick Chobotuik, Joe and Paul Hrysak had the fascinating wood-sawing outfits. They charged about twenty-five cents a cord and could saw twenty cords in a good day.

Located on the opposite side of the now Oakburn Hotel was Mr. Wong's false brick front hotel and cafe resold to S. Gerelus in 1927 to

M. Kowalsky in 1930. Unfortunately a fire in July destroyed this building plus an adjoining house, and stores belonging to Hoffman and Unickow, and A. Siwicky. No fire-fighting equipment was on hand except for the local bucket brigade. Due to shortage of water all efforts were futile. The buildings were tinder dry and disappeared in no time. Any goods that were salvaged and placed in the middle of main street were pilfered or burnt by falling sparks. The windows in the buildings on the opposite side of the street cracked from the blaze, the chocolates melted, and were distributed to the excited children. Farmers, who brought cream to be shipped by early truck or train, were surprised to see the town in flames. Even the cattle at the stock yard bawled plaintively at the belching smoke, while the confused crowds were warned to keep a safe distance away as there was danger of bottles, cans, rifle and gun shots constantly exploding. All that remained was smoke, debris and charred horse posts.

A. Siwicky eventually built a new store. Mrs. Albina Raginski's home is the site of Findlay's store later owned by Louis Fishman. Louis Fishman's was the only store saved in the fire of 1930. It was completely destroyed by a fire a few years later on a cold winter night. Lou was away to Winnipeg to sell his fine pelts that he'd bought from the rural trappers. The family was awakened and no sooner vacated from the second storey when the entire floor collapsed. Lou rebuilt a smaller store as his family was leaving

home. This he sold to Steve Matiation which was resold to Mike Raginski and converted into a home.

John Groshok built a store in 1947 and retired a few years later.

A garage built by Arnold McLean was sold to Lou Pozner and converted into a store, resold to Steve Gerelus and Mike Twerdun, and resold to N. Unickow the present owner. Sam Dubowski's store was demolished and a new store built by Steve Gerelus resold to Stan Antonation, presently owned by Peter Matiation.

A store built by Findlay situated on the north side of the track was destroyed by fire. He built another store and sold it to B. Lamb - resold to the Ruthenian Co-op 1915 - resold to Steve Gerelus, Nick and Mike J. Nowasad, Mike Nowasad - present owners Mike and Paul Michalyshyn.

A small store built next to the community hall by Charles Douglas became a cafe when the Zeppa brothers took over. Under Mike Yarish it was converted into a store and demolished in later years.

The community hall built by Menzies, which is presently N. Unickow's candling station, served as an elementary school for a number of years and a hall for social gatherings, meetings and movie theatre. Silent movies with Charlie Chaplin were a highlight of the evening followed by a dance with music supplied by the local orchestra.

The dance and pool hall built by Joe Partridge also served as a Court House until the mounty was established in Mrs. Smith's present house. Joe's daughter, Miss Adeline played many old favorites on the piano and entertained the guests in the pool hall while Joe sold cigarettes, cigars, and confections. One could buy the tastiest giant sized ice-cream cone for a little five cent piece and a colourful paper tube of Long Tom Popcorn with a ring included for a cent.

A barber shop and pool room presently owned by Stan Borodie was built by Tomchyshen in 1922 and sold to Nick Olyniuk who added watch repairing and a confection to his trade.

Paul Sokolski, Dmytro Shwaluk and Philip Hubert were the town's shoe repair men and business was good as shoes were resoled cheaply.

The first garage (present location of Gulf Oil) was built and operated by John Menzies, sold to Bill Peden, and then to Walter Melnyk and Lazaruk Brothers.

A garage built by Dan Holobitski is presently owned by Mike Borodie. Another built by H. Kristalovich north of Peter Lamb's home burnt down, rebuilt by Stan Wasilka and destroyed by fire also.

Nick Antonowich presently operates a car body shop.

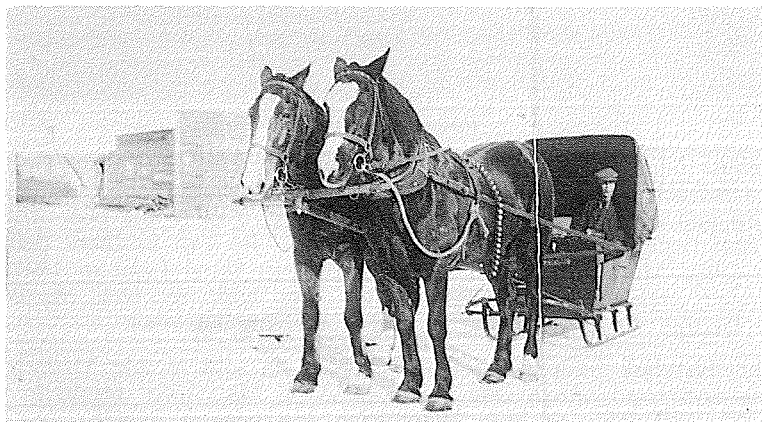
Tony Slon built a garage which he still operates.

The first lawyers were Frank Sewell and Ferguson followed by J. W. Smith and N. Mandzuik. The latter two were in partnership until N. Mandzuik built his own office which is presently the Credit Union Building.

The first drug store was operated by Mr. Cathcart followed by Mr. Walker. Mr. Walker was engaged to marry Miss Keith, a school teacher. She died of Scarlet Fever on Valentine's Day, and he suffered a coronary



Railroad Employees — M. Hirak, J. Yaworski, foreman (sitting), M. Grodecky (back), S. Puyda, J. Nowosad.



Gardiner's Early Winter Transportation.

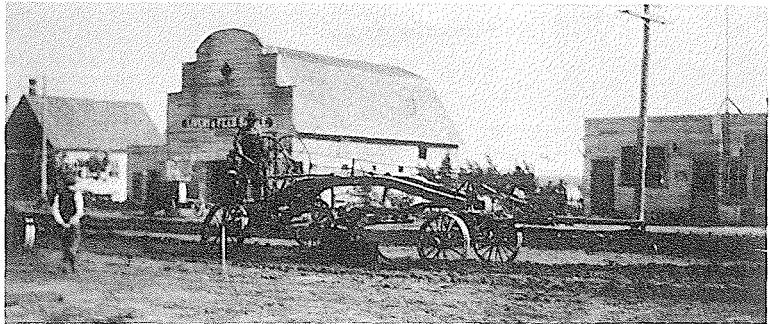


Wood Sawing Outfit.



and passed away a few years later. The first doctor was Dr. Yule. He was a typical physician travelling far by horse and buggy delivering babies and tending to his patients. It was rumored that he travelled to Seech to tend to two ladies expecting babies but was unable to reach them due to floods consequently the ladies died. Dr. Zivot, also served as a dentist and built a fine practice in the Oakburn and Shoal Lake area.

To maintain law and order, Charley Badge was the first policeman followed by Kirk a real tall red-headed Scotchman. He literally kicked the truth out of the accused.



First Livery Barn.

Jenkins built the first livery barn which he sold to James Gardiner. Jim and his son Abe operated a delivery dray drawn by horses. They met the trains and delivered parcels to the stores and mail to the post-office. In 1917 after James' death Almer joined in and the two brothers delivered mail to Olha, Marco and Seech. They moved to Shoal Lake in 1943. The cafe owned presently by Mike Starenky was built by Nell Maydaniuk sold to George Tkachuk where he did a thriving business.

John Boychuk built a radio shop which he sold to Joe Michalyshyn. This was converted into a cafe and sold to Al Matiowski, resold to Orest Matiowski, and later to Stan Waytowich the present owner.

John Kashton built a cafe which he operated till his death. The building was sold to Jerry Matiation for a radio TV shop, presently vacant.

The first cattle buyers were Johnny Menzies, Louis Fishman, Frank Malanchuk and Bill Matiowski. These men went out among the farmers and bought the cattle which was plentiful. They were brought to town, loaded on the train from the stock yard, and taken to Winnipeg to be sold.

Trucks replaced train transportation which is an economical asset. Kominko and son are presently Oakburn's trucking people.

There would be no homes in the world were it not for carpenters. The first were Cameron, Brown, Findlay, D. Luhowy, Frank Sicinski.

Johnny McKenzie, a well known veteran, formed the Wolf Cubs and Boy Scouts. Many boys will remember their camping trips to Lakes Audy and Stewart. The open air skating rink they built and flooded by themselves.

Credit must be extended to John Matiation (now deceased) who operated a taxi and could be relied to come to the rescue at a moments notice.



First Oakburn Elevator  
— 1915.



Wood Hauling.

Prosperous farmers realized a need for grain elevators and the first was erected by Western Canada Flour Mills Company with J. P. Simons as buyer. This elevator is now owned by Manitoba Pool Elevators and the present buyer is Nick Ness.

The present Federal elevator was bought from the Ruthenian Elevator Company in 1930 and is operated by Nick Franko.

United Grain Growers has Mike Beck for its buyer.

This history could not have been completed without the aid and co-operation of many individuals. We thank them for their help. To the people who laid the foundations of this village their indomitable courage will be remembered.



## The War Years

### THE WAR YEARS

In 1885 the Saskatchewan Rebellion broke out and the Federal Militia was sent to quell the uprising. A number of boys from our district who joined the militia were David Mair, Robert Gardiner, Jack Laughton, and Robert Tesky. Geo. Sutherland Jr., another individual from the district, was believed to have been killed at Batoche. It was not known whether he was in the militia or not.



World War I Veterans,  
1914-1918. Standing L. to  
R.: C. Martin, Dunc Mc-  
Kenzie, Wm. Menzies  
(killed in action). Seated  
L. to R.: J. Seekins, Jim  
Richardson, Herb Richard-  
son and Cyril Hammond.

World War I broke out in 1914. Britain's declaration of war on August 4 of the same year automatically included Canada in it. Some of the boys from Oakburn who joined the forces were C. Martin, Dunc MacKenzie, William Menzies, R. J. Seekins, Jim and Herb Richardson, and Cyril Hammond. Killed in action was George Dick.

World War II began in 1939 and Canada declared war on Germany on September 3 of the same year. The boys from Oakburn who lost their lives in this conflict were Wes Shwaluk, Nick Kryswaty, Steve Hnatiw, Donny Gnutel, William Menzies and Joe Hirak.

If names have not been mentioned or not printed correctly, it is because information concerning the wars has been very difficult to find.

## CANADIAN LEGION No. 211 OAKBURN BRANCH

Shortly after World War II former members of the armed forces organized for the interests and welfare of the veterans of the two World Wars.

On September 15, 1947 the first meeting was held in the old post office. The following members attended: Tony Gerelus, Duncan McKenzie, Mike Ewanyshyn, Henry J. Brown, Walter Michalyshyn, George Menzies, Nick Danyluke, and Mike Michalyshyn.

The following provisional officers were elected: President - George Menzies, Secretary - Henry J. Brown, First Vice-President - Duncan McKenzie, Treasurer - Walter Michalyshyn, Second Vice-President - Walter Luhowy.

A special meeting was held on October 27, 1947 in the Ukrainian Parish Hall in which an application for a Charter for the Oakburn Legion was submitted to the National organization.

On November 10th of the same year a district representative inducted the following Oakburn members into the Canadian Legion. They were comrades: Fred Myzylowski, M. Herchak, Mike Michalyshyn, George Menzies, Walter Michalyshyn, Alan Korolyk, Duncan McKenzie, Henry J. Brown, Nick Danyluke, Mike Macyshen. George Lauman was the guest speaker at the ceremony.

On December 29, 1947 Comrades George Lauman and Gibson formally presented the Charter of the Oakburn Branch of the Canadian Legion No. 211. Some changes were also made in the executive with George Menzies chosen as President, Mike Michalyshyn as first Vice-President, and Walter Michalyshyn as Secretary Treasurer. Eighteen other members were honoured by having their names enrolled in the Charter.

Before the end of 1948 the Oakburn Legion reached its peak enrolment of thirty-four members. Participation in community activities necessitated the organization of a womens auxiliary to assist the Legion members with their programs.

Throughout the years social activities such as parties, smokers, banquets, and the bonspiels of 1954 and 1955 were organized with veterans and friends from neighbouring communities participating. Money raised by the Legion has been carefully spent, distributed, or donated to worthy local projects and national charitable organizations.

In 1950 the Legion combined forces with the Oakburn Board of Trade and raffled off a car with the proceeds being turned over for the construction of a curling and skating rink which was completed in 1954. For their efforts the veterans demanded that the rinks be named "The Oakburn Memorial Rinks" and that a seperate Legion Club Room be built in the waiting room of the skating rink. All these demands were met.

Other Legion activities included the organization of a Santa Claus parade for the kiddies in 1953. John McKenzie, a member interested in the activities of young boys organized a troop of Boy Scouts.

As the years went by changes in rural economic conditions led to the exodus of many of our admired personnel to the larger urban centres.



## Oakburn High School

*Rich. Yanick  
Rellio Yanick  
Gertie Yanick  
Mike Yanick  
Jim Black  
Roy Pedon  
Dick Radridge  
John M. Yarbuck*

WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
—>>>>> WITH <<<<<<<  
CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

*Walter Bilinski  
Rich. Bilinski  
Rowland Chawater  
Rich. Garapick  
Barney Goudalech  
Frank Goudalech  
Wilton Easwell  
Enoch Goddard  
Eugene Goddard  
Enoch Grist  
Tony Grist  
Adam Halliday  
Joe Hirsch  
Walter Hubert  
Tom Klee  
Michael Kellick  
Stanley Kellick  
John Karsawich  
Eddie Leisner  
Raymond Leisner  
Rita Macgishyn*

*Max Makohon  
Bud MacLean  
George Menzies  
Walter Menzies  
Gordon Menzies  
Joe Menzies  
Hoyd Menzies  
Howard Menzies  
Edward Menzies  
Douglas Menzies  
Joe Hubert  
Walter Macgishyn  
Albert Maherny  
Walter Maherny  
Annie Maherny  
Eugene Kewasad  
Arnold Kewasad  
Walter Kewasad  
William Pruyda  
Mike Serridge  
Tom Tesarski*

*Oliver Mandpink  
Mervin Yanick  
Mike Macgishyn  
Jim Menzies  
John Menzies  
Duncan Menzies  
Bob Menzies  
Ernest Wall*



Though the membership had dropped the remaining members still carry on. Annually we remember our comrades who sacrificed their lives and those who have contributed so much to our community.

OAKBURN CANADIAN LEGION No. 211 B.E.S.L.

Officers:

1947-1948

President - George Menzies  
Secretary - Henry J. Brown  
Treasurer - Walter Michalyshyn

1949-1950

President - Fred Myzolowski  
Secretary-Treasurer - Frank Manuliak

1951-1952

President - Paul Hrysak  
Secretary-Treasurer - Nick Danyluk

1953-1954

President - Vern Tully  
Secretary-Treasurer - Nick Danyluk

1955-1956

President - James Foxton  
Secretary-Treasurer - Steve Susky

1957-1970

President - James Foxton  
Secretary-Treasurer - Mike Michalyshyn

## Centennial Celebrations



Ukrainian Women's Association Float, 1967.



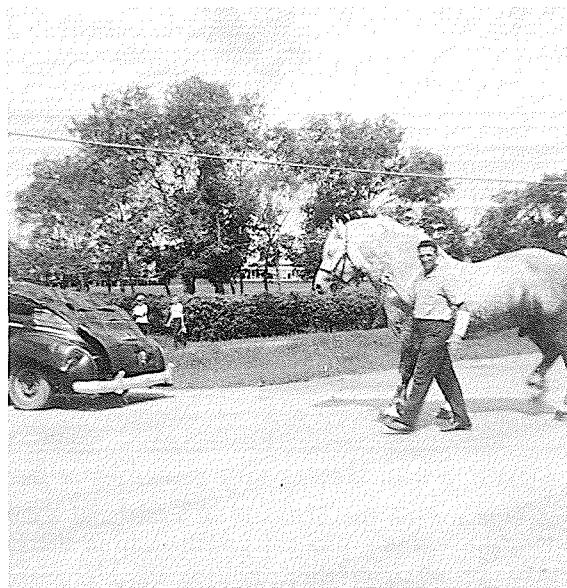
Mike Borodie's Buffalo, 1967



Municipal dignitaries?, 1967.



Cutting the Ribbon at the official opening of the Recreational Center, 1967, by Nicholas Mandzuik.



1967 Grand Champion Toronto Royal. Myrcel Michalyshen and his horse in an Oakburn Centennial parade. Justamere par Excellent — Percheron stallion — a ten year old horse chosen by Manitoba Selection Committee to compete in the Toronto Royal Winter Fair nine times and was six times Champion horse among Canadian and U.S.A. horses.

### OAKBURN CENTENNIAL DAY 1967

On June 29, 1967, the people of Oakburn celebrated Canada's Centennial. The opening of the Centennial Celebration began at 8:00 a.m. with the church bells ringing. An inter-faith service was held at the historic site, five miles north and one-half mile west of Oakburn where forty-two children and three pioneers had passed away in 1899 during a brief epidemic.

The participants in the inter-faith service were: Reverend A. Luhowy, Ukrainian Catholic priest from Brandon, Reverend J. Shwetz, Ukrainian Orthodox minister, from Oakburn, and Reverend Rygusiak, Roman Catholic priest from Rossburn. Approximately four hundred people took part in the service.

After the service all the people travelled back to town by cars and buses for the 11:00 a.m. parade. The parade was comprised of floats and models sponsored by the businessmen and organizations of the community as well as by the neighbouring towns of Rossburn, Shoal Lake, Menzie and Sandy Lake.

At 12:30 p.m., a special luncheon was served at the Parish Hall for the Senior Citizens and distinguished guests. Speakers at the luncheon introduced by M.C. Mr. Mike Michalyshyn were Reverend Shwetz, Reverend Rygusiak, Reverend Luhowy and senior citizen Mr. Stanley Yanick. Meals for the general public were served at the Ukrainian National Home and at the Sports Grounds.



1967 Centennial — Float depicting early pioneer life in Manitoba.

The Official Opening of the Oakburn Recreational Centre took place at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Mike Borodie brought greetings from the Oakburn Board of Trade, followed by an interesting address by Mr. Mike Nowasad, a former pioneer of Oakburn. Mr. Mike Antonation reeve of the R.M. of Shoal Lake gave his greetings. Earl Dawson, M.L.A. brought greetings on behalf of the provincial government and spoke of the future of Canada.

Mr. Nick Mandziuk, M.P. directed his address to the pioneers, and had the honor of cutting the ribbon, which officially opened the Oakburn Recreational Centre. Official Opening was followed by a very colorful children's parade and picnic for the Elementary School pupils.

A ladies' and men's Fastball Tournament was held as part of the Centennial Celebrations.

Over three hundred people registered at the school auditorium to view over two hundred items consisting of relics, antiques and Ukrainian Handicrafts. A souvenir postcard of oxen as an early transportation, was on hand for everybody.

At 8:30 p.m. an open air Concert was enjoyed by a large gathering, followed by street dancing in front of the local Post Office, with fireworks on the grounds to complete the day.



## 1970 OAKBURN CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

Centennial Celebrations began on Sunday, July fifth when one hundred and twenty-two Oakburn Senior Citizens signed the guest book at a banquet



This buffalo was the first centennial project by the school children of Oakburn.

held in their honor at the Parish Hall, Steve Gerelus chaired the evening's activities and variety concert. Special guests were: Rev. L. Diachina, of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Reverend A. McColl of the United Church of Shoal Lake, Father S. Borys of the Ukrainian Catholic Faith, and a former son of a pioneer Father A. Luhowy of Selkirk, who presented centennial pins to the elderly citizens.



The parade with dignitaries followed by Band.

Threatening clouds and signs of an ensuing storm of the previous night did not daunt the enthusiasm which heralded the bright glorious morning of July sixth. Excitement mounted as girls and ladies in gay

centennial apparel and gentlemen hurried to fulfill last minute obligations and tend to their designated positions.

Hundreds of spectators parked their vehicles along Oakburn's main thoroughfare anxious to witness and photograph the cosmopolitan parade. Preceded by the band and majorettes in colorful array the parade wound its way through the town to the Recreational Park. One recognized the history of the community portrayed in the fine variety of some forty colorful floats. These were sponsored by church organizations, Clubs, individual and business enterprises.

Centennial Day! What an opportune time to renew acquaintances with hearty handshakes, friendly embraces with a lump in the throat and a tear in the eye. Such was the feeling indeed as old and young reminisced about the good old days. It was an ideal time for snapping pictures, viewing floats, having family picnic dinners or enjoying a delicious lunch served by the ladies at the booth.

Perhaps an artist could capture the spirit and devotion of the people assembled for the inter-faith service held at two o'clock that hot afternoon. Here and there umbrellas and wide brimmed hats provided shade for the



Oakburn Wild Life Float of six wild geese — newly developed project on John Hrytsak's farm.

ladies. Master of Ceremonies Mike Michalyshyn opened the program with the singing of O Canada. He expressed his gratitude to all who helped him during his term as president of the Centennial Committee in 1967 and 1970. Both occasions extremely successful. Mike Borodie as president of the Board of Trade brought greetings from Oakburn and extended a hearty welcome to participants in the Centennial Day Celebration.

The highlight of the afternoon was the unveiling of the monument dedicated to the pioneers. The honors were given to two senior citizens George Sytnyk and Dmytro Wowk. Excited school children jubilantly sang "Manitoba".



Oakburn Board of Trade float.



Ukrainian Catholic Float — Replica of the ship "Assyria" one of the ships which brought the early pioneers of 1898 that settled around the vicinity of Oakburn. A number of the original pioneers are on the float.



Oakburn 4-H'ers with Centennial Cake Float.



The Golden Boy—Micha-  
lyshyn Bros. Float.

“Let’s sing a song  
And sing it loud and clear.  
Sing it for all to hear.  
Let’s tell all people the world around  
That we’re glad to be living here.”



Credit Union Float.

Flags and pennants flapping in the refreshing breezes and fleecy tufts of snowy white clouds drifting in the azure sky added a feeling of sentiment to the memorable occasion. The congregation in unison with the Centennial Choir sang, “Lord of the Lands,” after which Reverend L. Diachina gave the benediction in the Ukrainian language. D. Wowk gave a short talk in the Ukrainian and English languages on the plight of the pioneers. Father Ragusiak read a Scripture in the Polish vernacular and Reverend A. McColl read a psalm and poem which stressed the need for unity through neighborly love.

Father S. Borys's Scripture reading in the Ukrainian and English languages dealt with Christian Love. The inter-faith service closed with the choir singing a Ukrainian hymn entitled "God I Love You".

Guest Speaker, Craig Stewart, M.P. for the constituency of Marquette commented on the fine spirit and co-operation found in a small community like Oakburn. He was deeply impressed with the day's activities.

Reeve Mike Antonation brought greetings from the Rural Municipality of Shoal Lake and complimented the Oakburn people on their inspirations and enthusiasm. He said "Active people keep a small community interesting and alive."



Inter-Faith Service at the unveiling of the monument.

The program was brought to a close and all were invited to view the museum held in two classrooms of the Oakburn High School. One such display consisted of fine arts such as Ukrainian embroidered cloths, dress ensemble and a hundred year old lady's costume from the Ukraine. Fascinated onlookers could browse for hours viewing the modern ceramic display, old pottery and photographs, antiques, and relics, truly a collectors dream but owned and shared by many individuals.

Entertainment at the park consisted of a kiddies parade where one saw riders on prancing ponies, decorated bicycles and wagons, children carrying kittens or pups and one little girl proudly leading her pet lamb.

The crowd was entertained by the Federal Grain Western Union Band featuring Ross Gurr. Old time and modern songs were played and sung. Another attraction which had the children fascinated was the Mid-Western Manitoba Caravan display of Trains operated by Earl Symonds. How about the Mixed teens and under ball game between Oakburn and Shoal Lake! Some game!



To avoid the heat of the day many spectators visited the popular beer gardens situated in a shady spot of the park. Here the refreshments were frothy and cool.



Sitting in front, left, is Mrs. John Black who used to farm in Oakburn vicinity. Mrs. Black who is in her 80's came to celebrate Oakburn Centennial. Mrs. Harry Wyman, right, who is in her 90's. Her husband passed away recently. He used to own the early sawmills and farmed two miles west of Oakburn. Her present home is Hamiota.

A day would be incomplete without savoury food to whet the appetite. The chefs were to be commended on their attractive buffet-style evening meal consisting of genuine buffalo roast and barbecued buffalo burgers, new baked potatoes and the works all for only one dollar and twenty-five cents. Due to shortage of buffalo meat last servings were somewhat scanty and some people couldn't partake of this delicious delicacy.



Manitoba forests and lakes float, Oakburn Tire Service, J. J. Lucyshen.

The open air variety concert emceed by Julian Lucyshen featured such local talent as dancers, singers, guitarists and a pianist and an acrostic by the kindergarten children spelling "Manitoba". This entertaining program was well attended.

A paved area on a side street provided ample room for street dancing in the evening, with music supplied by a local orchestra. Fireworks were set off to brighten the gala event.

Just as weary feet began to feel the pressure of the day's activities a gentle rain began to fall slowly augmented by the wind. People hastily retreated to their cars and hurried home. What a perfect ending to a centennial day!

It could only happen at Oakburn a small rural community caught in the squeeze of dwindling population, loss of schools and business.

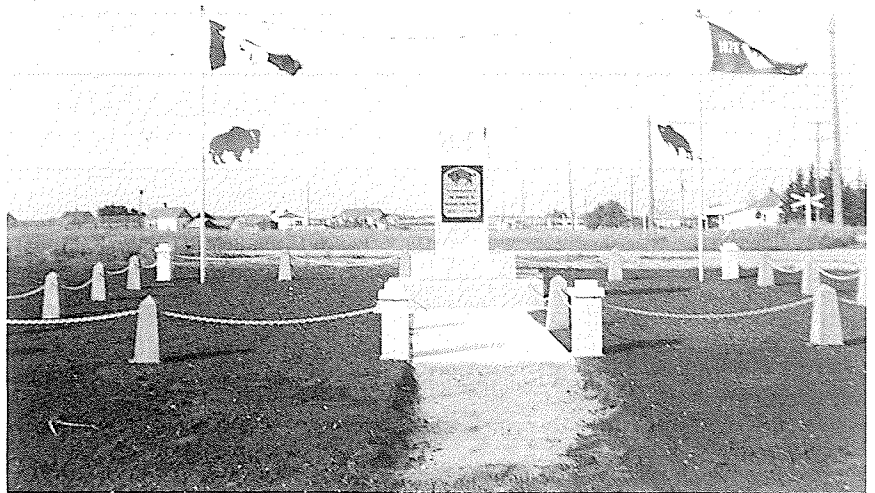
May the monument situated at the crossroads of the town's east end be a reminder that much can be done by a small group of energetic citizens.

Like an "Echo" these words race through one's mind. Years will pass and times change too, but Manitoba we'll stand by you.



## Finale

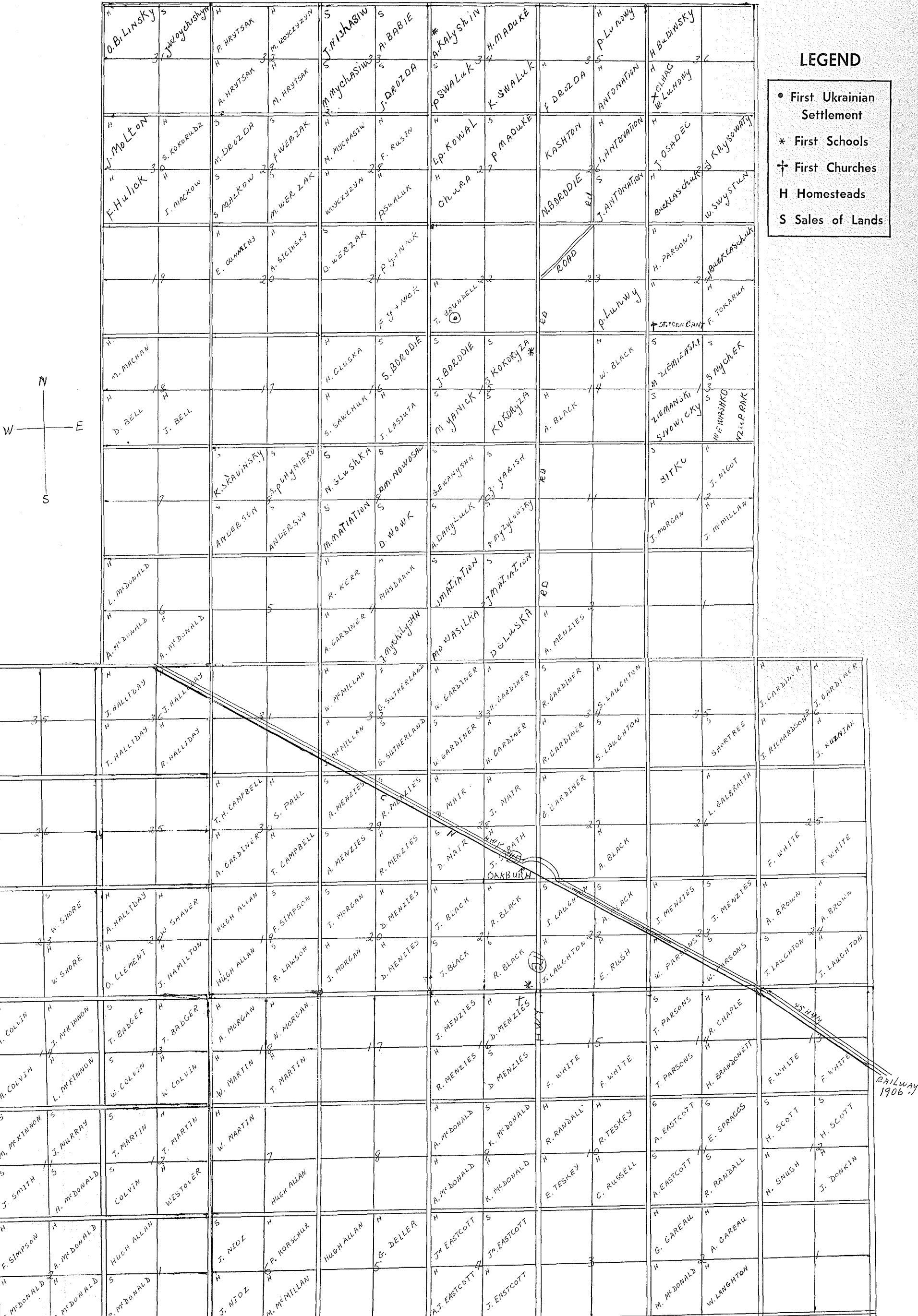
The completion of the Oakburn History Book with its finale of the Manitoba Centennial celebrations gave our community a stronger bond. The early pioneers with their heavy axes and blistered hands have built modern farms and found highly assessed land. The Federal government Lift program this spring changed the scenery from swaying golden wheat fields to yellow rape blossoms as far as the eye can see. The new committee set up of the Federal Task Force on Agriculture that was tabled this spring will be another National policy maker on agriculture, where who knows what will become of the little communities that had such a strong chain of progress. Our Oakburn High School built in 1927 closed its doors this season. Many businessmen are ready to retire, but younger men are hesitant to take the business over. We hope that the study will be made through many such history books that were written where little communities can still be in existence.



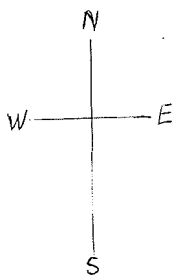
"A Centennial Marker of 1970". In commemoration of the early pioneers in Oakburn and area.

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