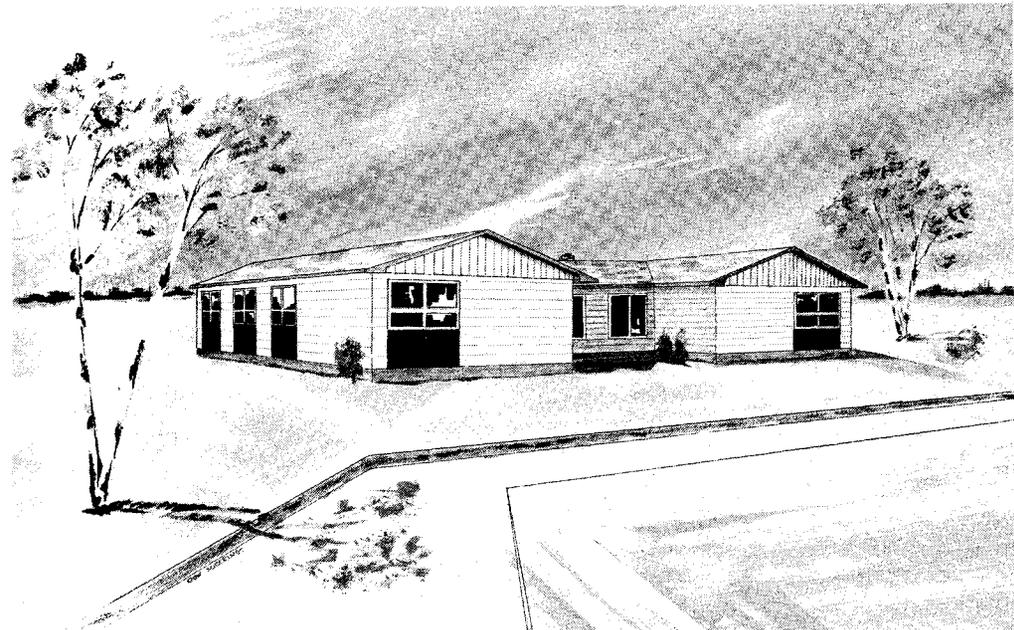


# Starbuck Seedlings

*A history of Starbuck  
and vicinity by  
Floris Olsen*

April 1973



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## Preface

At the request of the members of the Starview Manor Society this material has been prepared. All profits from sales will be used for the benefit of the Starview Manor.

The accumulated information has been an endeavour to depict the beginning and growth of Starbuck and the surrounding area. No doubt there will be omissions of names and events which have not been included and this is regretted. However it is very difficult to get people to submit information in writing.

Appreciation and thanks go to the people who submitted information. Furthermore from conversations with Old Timers, clippings from papers, municipal and school records, some of the history of Starbuck is recorded.

I particularly want to thank "Bill" Dechene for his generous help in obtaining so much of the material. I feel well repaid for the time I spent, as it was a pleasure talking to people and reminiscing about "old times".

I should like to pay a special tribute to the ladies who have spent so much time and energy to further the good of the community — the members of the Starview Manor Society — Teena Brown, Min. Buss, Minerva Baldwin, Pearl Baldwin, Bertha Demler, Eva Frantz, Pat Johnson, Ethel Halstead and Agnes and Gerda Schrof. *Ladies Church*

The pioneers of Starbuck toiled  
with determination and hope —  
So that their descendants are  
better able to cope,  
Here on the Prairie we see the  
good land around,  
On the banks of the La Salle River  
the laughter of children sound,  
May the residents in the Starbuck area  
salute those who labored here,  
And carry on the good work, as new  
horizons appear.

F.J. Olsen.

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## Starbuck on the Map

Starbuck really became a place on the map when the railroad came through in 1881. This railway was known as the Manitoba, South-western Colonization Railway and later was purchased by the Canadian Pacific Railway.

An engineer employed in the building of the railroad lived in a box car on the banks of the La Salle River. The story is his name was "Starbuck" so he named the place "Starbuck".

The Boyne Trail ran from Emerson to the Assiniboine River right behind Dechene's property and there people forded the La Salle River. A legend exists that one spring when the river was flooding, a pair of oxen named "Star" and "Buck" were drowned at this point, resulting in the name "Starbuck".

In the same year of 1881 the Municipality of Macdonald was incorporated with Cornelius Wheatland as the first clerk and John Cody as secretary treasurer. Previously this area was in the municipality of St. Francis Xavier. A blue print of the Town Plan of Starbuck, surveyed by R.C. McPhillips dated 25 May, 1899.

Before Highway No. 2 was built people usually travelled to Winnipeg via the Headingly Road usually called the Deslaurier Trail, which started about a mile and a half east of Starbuck and ran diagonally to Hog's Point, then to Headingly. A ferry transported the passengers across the Assiniboine River to Portage Avenue.

When the railroad first came through Starbuck there was an old box car for a station but no agent. The first section man was Mr. Larson, succeeded by Mr. Brynelson. It was quite a novelty to see the section men pumping the handles of the "jigger" as they inspected the rails and ties. What a thrill if one was allowed to take a ride. After the station was built, early agents recalled McQueen, Torrie and Robinson. Usually the C.P.R. had a competition for the best landscaped station grounds and there were some very fine displays of shrubbery and flowers.

The railway was built to encourage colonization of the western part of the province, as Land Act was passed in 1872. It offered a man over 20 years, one quarter section of land for a nominal fee of two dollars. He could obtain a clear title of the land providing a stipulated acreage was cultivated and a building erected. The building was often just a shack. "Homesteading" as it was called, became quite popular and from this \$10 and a quarter section of land. Providing you didn't starve to death in three years you were established in the community. Several large farms today were originally homesteads, e.g. Houstons, Richardsons, Allinsons, etc.

Quite often the original building was a sod shack built around a flimsy framework of wood. The sod was plowed from slough bottoms and laid much in the same way as bricks. Along the wooded river many homes were built of logs.

In the early days horses were a luxury and hay and oats were expensive so oxen proved more practical for motive power. They grazed on the prairie grass. They were usually used in the evening or early hours of the morning as they could not stand excessive heat. On a plow, oxen could do eight or ten miles a day and on the road, about a mile an hour. Many still remember Billie Allinson's father with his team of oxen on a light wagon plodding ten miles into Starbuck.

Needless to say it could be very lonely on the prairie. Neighbours sometimes were miles apart. You could look for miles and not see a moving object and no sound but that of the wind and birds.

As the one-room country schools sprang up there was keen competition for the favor of the new teacher. Many teachers married these bachelors and became leaders in the community.

In those days there were no baby sitters. The whole family would be bundled into the sleighs and crouch down in the straw or hay with buffalo robes for a cover. For long distances there might have been foot warmers heated by charcoal or hot bricks wrapped in a sack or flannel cloth. The horses were given their head and would follow the trail, when they stopped you knew you were home, perhaps just in time for breakfast.

Power machinery changed the pattern, the prairie steamer, reaper, and threshing machine. Each served to lighten the burden. These were merely the forerunners of the modern tractor, swather and combine.

The automobile has replaced the horse and oxen. Hilding Corneliusen recalls the two-cylinder McLaughlins owned by Dr. Bouthilier and Mr. Dechene in 1912. William Qually had a single-cylinder

Packard. Hilbert Anderson had a "Brush" and Dave Houston a "Case". Later the most common cars were "The Tin Lizzie" (Ford), and Chevrolet. The radiators often boiled over and the connecting rods often broke but you repaired them with baling wire, the side curtains flapped, you measured the gasoline in the tank with a ruler, but all rolled merrily along, jumping the ruts, avoiding gopher holes and pedestrians. On cold mornings if your car wouldn't start you poured boiling hot water on the carburetor and if the batteries got wet you'd jack up the hind wheel, adjust the gas and spark levers and start cranking.

## Chapter Two

### Voter's Lists — Municipality of Macdonald

Many people do not realize that Starbuck was not always in the Municipality of Macdonald. Clark Frantz has in his possession two pamphlets — Voters List of 1895 and 1898.

The List of Voters 1895, Municipality of Macdonald in the County of D'Iberville does not contain any Starbuck residents. However the 1898 Voters' List registers the following names, with Starbuck as the address. (It is interesting to note a number of women's names.)

"Ward Five comprising the two tiers of Sections in Townships 7, 8 and 9, R. 1W and the east two tiers of Sections in Townships 7, 8 and 9, R. 2W. O'dilon, Marcel and O'dilon Jr. Arnal; John Barr; Thomas and William Burns; Samuel Benson; Patrice Dauphinais; G.E. Dechene; Pierre Deslaurier; August Ginjerson; Alex, David, Isabella and Robert Houston; Alex Hay; J.W. and M.N. Lowry; Nels, Robert and Andrew Larson; Samuel McIntyre; Donald and Peter McKellar; Jas. Charles and James McDonald; Carleton McColl; Elizabeth, J.A., J.J., and Finlay McRae; William and Edward Orr; Michel and Ded Page; David Rae; Wm. McG. and D.R. Stewart; Wm. Wayling and Wm. Wrixon.

**Ward Six** comprising the West four tiers of Sections in Townships **7, 8 and 9 R 2W** list the following names with Starbuck addresses: Isadore Boucher, S.L. B. Pierre and Paul De Chauny; Pierre, Louis and Alexes Dauphinais; Onesime Falchon; Christopher William and James Guness; Camille Gulbault; John Benjamin, Robt., and Alex Longmare; A. Meakin; J.M. and Jas. G. Murray; Alfred Page; Henry Sance; and Francois Welsh.

Officers for the Municipality of Macdonald in 1898 were: Dougald R. Stewart, Reeve - Starbuck; B. Theroux, Treasurer - La Salle; John Cuddy, Clerk - Blythfield; Hon. L.A. Prud'homme, County Judge - St. Boniface.

## Chapter Three

# Excerpts from a Pamphlet on Starbuck

Prepared by: **The Starbuck Board of Trade in 1909**

**President: F.B. Roberts**

**Secretary: H. Torrie.**

This pamphlet was issued to inform intending immigrants of the conditions existing in the country in which we live and to describe the immediate neighbourhood of Starbuck.

"There is more sunlight in Canada than any other wheat growing country in the world. The average rainfall is 14½ inches, always enough to ensure good crops and drought is practically unknown."

In a letter to the President of the Starbuck Board of Trade, Mr. H. Torrie (agent of the Canadian Pacific Railway) gave the following information. "Starbuck is situated on the Souris Branch of the C.P.R. and is distant 25 miles S.W. from Winnipeg. This line is laid with heavy steel, 85 pounds to the foot, and on a solid gravel roadbed.

There is an excellent passenger train service, two trains each way daily, except Sundays. The fare to Winnipeg is 85 cents one way, and \$1.45 for the round trip. The excursion rate is \$1.15 for the round trip, and during the Winnipeg Fair the rate is 85 cents round trip. Special excursion trains are also run.

Local freight service each way daily, refrigerator cars are run in summer and heated cars in winter to protect fruit and other perishable freight. A special stock train is run on the first and third Tuesday in each month to Winnipeg, carrying stock only. Stock can be loaded for any other freight train. There is a good stock-yard and a grain loading platform as well; also two coal sheds, the total capacity of which is 275 tons. The grain shipping season usually commences about the middle of August and continues until all the grain is shipped out. A few farmers hold their grain until spring, but as a rule 90 per cent is shipped out by the end of November. The car supply is excellent, and there has never been a car shortage or delay in supply in cars.

During the fall of 1908, 15,500 bushels of wheat were shipped from this station. This was grown within a radius of five miles, as there are stations on each side, Fannystelle, a distance of eight miles, and Springstein, eight miles. There are also three competing roads at a short distance.

The freight rate on wheat is 12 cents per 100 pounds in carloads from Starbuck to Fort William the shipping port of the lakes, a distance of 447 miles. This is a lower rate than that charged by United States railways from places the same distance to Duluth. Grain is stored in the C.P.R. elevators at Fort William for 15 days free of charge.

The C.P.R. freight yards in Winnipeg are the largest on the American continent, there being over 100 miles of tracks, and this is taxed to the limit during the grain season.

The rate on a carload of settlers effects from St. Paul or Minneapolis to Starbuck is \$36 per carload of 24,000 pounds.

Carloads of settlers' effects may be made up of the following described property for the benefit of actual settlers, viz - Livestock; any number up to but not exceeding ten head all told, viz - cattle, calves, sheep, hogs, mules, or horses; Household Goods and Personal Property (second hand); Wagons, or other vehicles for personal use (second hand); Farm Implements, Machinery and Tools (all second hand); Soft Wood Lumber (pine, hemlock, spruce or basswood only) and Shingles, which must not exceed 2,000 feet in all, or the equivalent thereof; Seed Grain; small quantity of trees and shrubbery; small lot of Pet animals or Poultry and sufficient feed for the live stock while on the journey. Cars must

contain a sufficient quantity of household goods to make the intention of a permanent residence at destination evident."

No doubt there will be many people who remember Hector Torrie, the station agent, handsome, obliging and helpful. He married Mamie Blake of Starbuck, later moved to Riverton, Manitoba.

Another item in this book is headed — Prosperity Abounds In The Neighbourhood.

"The 12 townships of the Municipality of Macdonald a tract of country 18 miles by 24 is all within the celebrated Red River Valley, unsurpassed in point of fertility on the continent and so uniform in character that lots may be chosen blindfold. It is drained by the La Salle and Morris rivers and served by four lines of railways making every point easily accessible from Winnipeg, distant six miles from the nearest part.

Many fine sections of land can yet be bought at prices ranging from 20 to 25 dollars per acre or even in larger blocks, and all of it wheat land and especially suited to steam or gasoline cultivation.

The following are the crops of individual farmers in the south-eastern part of the Municipality: Notlen 5,000; Rodgers 6,000; Jenkins 5,600; Dryden 6,000; Elliot 9,000; Lewis 10,000; Mansell 8,000; McCurdy 5,600; Blanco 5,000; Cormier 9,000; Woods 5,000."

Some of the assets of Starbuck were recorded thusly:

"The village boasts of two general stores which would be a credit to any town of greater pretensions; (all minor trades are represented — blacksmith, lumber, butcher, livery, hotel, bank, etc. — and it is seldom that a person cannot supply his needs, whatever they may be, locally. At a recent meeting it was decided to entertain the movement for the consolidation of schools, and plans have been made for the erection of a large brick building, the estimated cost of which will be from \$7,000 to \$10,000. There will be four acres of land in connection with this school and a large basement for recreation during the winter season. Thus the children of the settlers will have the means of obtaining a thorough education which will prepare them to accept any post in life they may be called upon to fill. It is also proposed to establish a department of domestic science in the school, which will enable the daughters to receive training in the work of the household even at an early age."

Electric light was anticipated shortly. To quote from the Manitoba Free Press, 29 May 1909. "Prospective rates of the Great Falls Power Co., which they believe can be sold, and the prices realized for same in the province of Manitoba at the completion of their plant in 1911."

Starbuck (Estimated): Distance from plant - 95 miles; Probable

requirements - 50; Probable rate - \$20; Probable gross revenue - \$1,000.

"In the matter of telephones, we are equipped far above the average country town, having four separate lines bringing us into communication with distant points, the Government owns the long distance telephones and the other companies represented are The Starbuck Telephone Co., The Farmers Telephone Co., and Municipal Telephones."

Under Natural Forces, the board states: "The La Salle, a beautiful winding river, runs through the village. The banks of the river are thickly wooded and from an artistic point it would be difficult to find any town of its size showing to better advantage.

The country surrounding the village is prairie, and is almost entirely free from stones or brush. The soil is of the best alluvial loam, and such is the amazing fertility of the land that an entire crop failure is unknown in the memory of the oldest settler."

Some remarks from a letter to President of Board of Trade received from Mr. Geo. Halland, one of Starbuck's respected merchants states:

"At your request I have much pleasure in giving you a little of my experience in Starbuck. I came here in April, 1902 prepared to go into farming, and what with the backward weather and exceptional high water, it was a spring forbidding enough to any newcomer. However, I had gone through similar conditions in North Dakota and was not easily frightened. I borrowed a spade, and I assure sir, it was a revelation to me when, after digging through 30 inches of black loam soil I came to a solid clay subsoil. On enquiry, I found this vicinity had been sparsely settled for 20 years, and this question was forced upon me — Why is this land so cheap and no settlers on it? The only answer I could get was that there was not enough people, but the land was good.

From the southern boundary of Manitoba to Edmonton, Alberta, a distance of 900 miles, consists of farming country that is now being taken up by settlers largely from the United States. I might add I much prefer the climate to that of North Dakota. We have little or no damage from storms (lightning and hail), no hot winds to hinder our ripening crops, and while the days are warm, we get delightfully cool nights; the rainfall is sufficient and there has been good crops every year. The great North West offers better opportunities today than any of the Western States ever did, and I will conclude by saying we can eat more, sleep more, and make more money here than any place I have been."

Yours faithfully,  
(signed) Geo. Halland.

Mr. Wm. Miller, one of the largest and most prosperous farmers in the community comments in part to the President, Board of Trade, Starbuck:

"I arrived here in March 1905, I bought my ticket at an old box car, which is now replaced by an up-to-date station; there was not a telephone pole in sight and now we have a fine telephone system. It is only lately that Starbuck has awakened to the fact of its possibilities and I hope yet to see it rank among the foremost of Manitoba's towns. When I first arrived, land was worth from \$12 to \$20 per acre and now the same land is valued at \$25 to \$40 per acre.

Wheat has yielded from 18 bushels to 20 bushels per acre. My oat crop averaged 67 bushels to the acre and the barley about 40 bushels to the acre.

From these figures it will be seen what a farmer can do with even a half section of land, as the price of wheat at this moment is \$1.20 per bushel and oats and barley is worth 50 and 60 cents per bushel.

I have travelled through all the Western and Southern States, visited Alberta and Saskatchewan and several times the length and breadth of Manitoba but never, have I seen such good land for the price as can be bought in this locality. There is land right in this district which has produced over 30 wheat crops in it in succession, yet the wheat sown on the same place this year looks as though it were the first crop.

In conclusion, let me quote a few figures which, though startling, are true, as the parties connected with the deal are well known to me.

A man had a farm rented in Iowa at \$4 per acre, and the land was valued at \$100 per acre. He came to Canada and rented land worth \$25 per acre and his one-third share of the crop as it lay in the granary represented an income of \$4.07 per acre. It is easily seen that his income would be just four times as much. I would say that a man cannot invest his money to better advantage or more securely than in land situated in the Red River Valley, for within a few years the value of this land has doubled."

Yours truly,  
(signed) Wm. Miller.

A letter was submitted to the Starbuck Board of Trade by Robert Houston too, as he had been a successful farmer in this locality for the past 30 years as well as being a leader in the community.

Some quotes from his letter read thusly: "I have found the climate

both healthy and invigorating, sufficient rainfall in summer which the hot sun and long days, causes very rapid growth and as a rule we have good ripening weather in August, the dry autumn gives good opportunity for ingathering the crops. I do not find the winters unpleasant, although cold dips occur occasionally. They seldom last long and I firmly believe we have more real comfort than those who live further south, exposed to sudden changes and rain and sleet also the blizzards in winter, and cyclones in summer which we are in a measure exempt from.

Our facilities for shipping wheat and farm produce are unsurpassed. Road and bridge building are well advanced. Our splendid municipal owned telephone system, installed last year, is an immense success. Our people have always recognized the importance of education and have established and literally supported schools whenever necessary, and are now on the eve of making important advances in the direction of consolidation.

Local option has been the law for years with the unanimous consent of the rate payers. Churches are well attended and liberally supported. There are four leading denominations viz Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist with all their associated activities. The young people have ample opportunities for indulging in all healthy and wholesome outdoor recreations. I think it would be difficult to find a more agreeable location or more pleasant surroundings."

(Signed) Robert Houston.

This pamphlet was issued to inform settlers.

There was also a contribution by R.S. Woods, Reeve of the Municipality re-iterating the assets of the area. He particularly mentioned Mr. Jacob Fast the first settler in the Brunkild area whose nearest neighbour was six miles distant.

Another settler enjoying the advantages and prosperity of the Brunkild district mentioned was Mr. William Blanco and his family. It was interesting to note that in 1909 they owned 1,600 acres of fine land, 60 head of horses, two threshing machines, a first class equipment of all kinds of farm machinery — all paid for."

We wish to thank Wilfred Polton for loaning us this pamphlet prepared by the Starbuck Board of Trade in 1909.

## Schools

Schools in the Starbuck area were: Kinlough to the west, Elm Bank to the north, Holyrood to the east, Ferndale to the southeast, and Prairie View to the south.

In scanning the records in the Municipal offices, By-law No. 26 established Ferndale School and made adjustments to Holyrood School in 1887 and it appears the Starbuck School was built at this time.

Old timers particularly remember Miss Valad as one of the first teachers in Starbuck. Bill Dechene remembers attending her classroom over the Halland and Corneliusen store before the school was built. She was a clever, strict, talented lady who later married Jack Johnson (one of the Johnson brothers farming north of Starbuck) and moved to Kenora to live.

Fred Meakin attended Kinlough School and recalls Miss May Dowsett was the first teacher. He also remembers sharing his double desk with Almire Arnal. Almire later sired the largest family in the Fannystelle district (ten girls and seven boys). Education was caught as well as taught and Elmire learned English from Fred and Fred in turn learned French from Elmire.

Starbuck school registers were checked and were procured through Judy (Reese) Lindsay. Some registers are missing. However, we thought it might be interesting to readers to record the names of teachers and pupils. There are various spellings of names probably as the teachers saw fit. All grades were not listed.

In 1906 the teacher was L.D. Adams and pupils listed were: Randina, Nels and Oscar Brynelson; Louise, Robert and Rose Lavallee; Arthur and Conrad Stenberg; Lena and Carrie Powers; Lyda Melsness; Gustave Dechene; Rolf and Svere Aspelund; Cecil, Hesper and Carrol Olsen; Yvonne Plourde; Marion Robertson; Celeste Dauphinais; Edwin Storsteth and Louis Deslaurier.

In 1907 and 1908 the trustees were J. Powers (Sr.), C. Stenberg and D.W.H. McKellar. Teachers were J.D. Evelyn and T.W. Holligan. Pupils included Pearl Powers; Susie Cummings; Ole, Ingvald, and Hilda Sten-

berg; Ole Johnson; Selina and Axel Halland; Henry and Mildred Olsen; Gustave Deslaurier; David Milne; Fannie Meakin; Aggie Blake; Wilfred Dechene; John and Oscar Brynelson; Clara and Annie Storsteth; Knute Johnson; John and William Alderson (grown-up men); Nettie, Clara and Julia Sandmoen; Vincent Meakin; Rae Lavallee; Barney Melsness and Marion Robertson.

In 1908, teacher Miss Lillie A. Winram (later Mrs. Johnnie Brynelson).

Pupils included Tom Barr; Lena and Willie Powers; Cecil Dunlop; Teddy, Lily, Henry and Adolph Reese; Alice, Lily, Joseph and Edward Page; Tillie Malone; Rosie Simpson; Thelma Corneliusen; Juliette and Cecile La Croix; Gretta, Evelyn, Hendrick Halland; Svere and Ralph Aspelund; Sarah and Agnes Sandmoen; Nels and Radina Brynelson; Albert Simpson; Louis and Robert Lavallee; Carroll Olsen; Alida Melsness; Louis Deslaurier; Selma and Annie Rice; and Mary, Alfred and Olaf Storsteth.

In 1909 and part of 1910 the old school, a two-storey building, was used and the teachers during this period were Mr. C. Bowman (principal) and other teachers were Misses Winram and Broadworth. Pupils: Grade IV - Agnes Sandmoen, Conrad Stenberg, Edwin Storsteth, Gustave Dechene, Elsie Meakin, Harry Whitmore, Louis Deslaurier, Rolf Aspelund, Henry and Adolph Reese.

Grade V - Ingvald Stenberg, John Powers, Cecil and Hesper Olsen, Julia Sandmoen, Cecile Lacroix.

Grade VI - Vincent Meakin, Marie Lacroix, Wilfred Dechene and Marion Robertson.

Grade VIII - Pauline Whitmore.

Grade IX - Mildred Olsen, Mabel Rose and Fanny Meakin.

In 1910 the new Starbuck Consolidated School No. 1150 was ready for occupancy. It was a white brick structure, two storeys, four class rooms, finished basement with hardwood floor (used for recreation and for concerts, dances and meetings), indoor toilets, furnace room and a fire escape. It was one of the first consolidated schools in Manitoba. With the closing of Kinlough and Holyrood schools the pupils were transported to the new consolidated school by school vans (horse drawn). Various van drivers were employed but the one most fondly remembered by old timers is Charlie Sheldon, who drove the west van and resided in the renovated Kinlough School.

The new school had a beautiful location. A four acre lot with a large playing field partly circled by beautiful trees on the bank of the La Salle

**River.** Up to the present time the grounds serve as an excellent playing and picnic grounds.

The trustees of the new school were Robert Houston, C.O. Stenberg and A. Meakin. Principal was Andrew Moore (a personable young man who later went to greater heights in the Provincial Department of Education). The two other teachers were Misses Nellie Young and Lillian Henders. Grades I to XI were taught.

Mr. Moore was succeeded by Mr. R. Meadows and Miss Henders by Miss Burt.

In 1911 to 1912, other teachers were Elva Cowan and Misses Bradley and Wallace.

Mildred Olsen was the first student to graduate in Grade XI.

Later Levant Thompson succeeded R. Meadows to be succeeded by A.S. Gibson.

The trustees in 1912 to 1913 were George Halland, Wm. Miller, Robt. Houston, M.O. Olsen and A. Meakin.

In 1913, 1914 and 1915 other teachers on the staff were Misses E. Close, M. Olsen, and in 1914 and 1915 Mr. R.H. Flewelling was the principal and taught the senior grades. He made a decided impression on the pupils, particularly in their discipline and penmanship. He also started a museum in the school in the area which is now the "teachers' room". The school was immaculately kept.

Registers show the following pupils attending at this time: Grade VII - Edna Myers, Mary McRae, Floris Olsen, Susie Mills, Dan McRae, Tom Barr and Willie McTaggart.

Grade VIII - Gladys Reader, Lillian Reese, Selma Rice and Nels Brynelson.

Grade IX - Harry Whitmore, Hendrick Halland, Carrie Powers and Margaret Van Camp.

Grade X - Thelma Corneliusen, Anna Sheldon, Katie Ross, Hesper Olsen and Clifford Houston.

Some teacher changes took place in the middle of the term so this includes more than three teachers: Miss L. Winram, Edith Houston, M.E. McLeod and M.A. Olsen.

In 1916 to 1917 teachers included were Messrs. R.H. Ester and Neil D. Reid; Gladys Houck and Jean McCrea.

On into 1918 Mr. E.G. Trick (lawyer), Misses E. Fingland, G. Houck and M. McCrea.

In 1919 to 1920 the principal was G.R.F. Prowse (originally from Newfoundland), Alice Good, Margaret Trick, Alice Piper, V.P. Ring and

M.L. Smith.

In 1921 Margaret Underhill and Gladys Frame were added to the roster of teachers. Trustees were Messrs. Veldi, Bragg, Hartry, Ross and Houston.

In 1921 to 1922 Miss E.L. Suttis became principal. She took an active part in the community including organizing and leading one of the first Canadian Girls In Training groups in Canada.

Miss Suttis was succeeded by Mr. F.K. Coleridge and Lara B. Thordarson was added to the teaching staff. She is admirably remembered by her former pupils — especially the "Norton boys."

In 1925 to 1927 Mr. R.C. Paris joined the staff as principal along with Misses Carmichael and Rogers as well as Isabelle Allan. Mr. Paris was highly regarded in the community and often indulged in a game of tennis. Mary McRae joined the teaching staff with Rogers and White. The people of Starbuck were very pleased that one of their native daughters so ably helped to educate their children.

Time or space are not sufficient to record all the teachers and pupils but from 1928 to 1936 we noted the names of the following teachers: Mary Murkar, Doris Dill, Elsie Fellingham, Gladys Hamilton, Amy Fellingham, George Owens, M. Solomon, M. Loree, Edith Carlson and Carolyn McCuaig.

It was interesting in checking existing school registers that a Holyrood register revealed that 1906 to 1907 in Holyrood School No. 391, Miss Broadsworth was the teacher, also L.I. Brett. Trustees were Mr. R. Houston, Wm. Livingston and Wm. Wrixon. Pupils attending were Bessie and Agnes Blake; Ray, Earl, Ruth and Clyde Miller; Robert, Lowry, Edith, Lillian, Clifford and Minnie Houston; Howard, Bert and Lillian Livingston and John Rose.

In 1908 the trustees were Messrs. Livingston, Houston and Fetterman. Teachers were Broadsworth, Fowler and Pope. Salaries were \$550 per annum. Pupils included Laura, Walter, Beatrice, and Arnold Hay; Cecil Dunlop; Clyde, Ruth and Earl Miller; Clifford, Lillian, Edith and Minnie Houston; Fred, Laude and Pansy Fetterman; Robert, Lillian, Bert and Howard Livingston and John Rose.

One readily sees how the pupils from Holyrood swelled the attendance of the new Starbuck Consolidated School in 1910.

## ELM BANK SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1016

Information submitted by Eva Shirtcliff

On July 31, 1899 the rate payers of Elm Bank assembled to discuss a by-law for the purpose of borrowing \$700 and issuing debentures for the purpose of purchasing a school site and erecting a school house and its appendages.

On the 4th of August the loan was granted by the Department of Education to form the Elm Bank School District in the Rural Municipality of St. Francois Xavier.

The school was completed in the same year and a Miss Mills was hired as teacher with a salary of \$40 per month. Mr. Wesley Church was hired as caretaker at a salary of \$2 per month.

Records show an account of the first expenses: galvanized iron pail - 30 cents, dipper - 10 cents, broom - 30 cents and one box of chalk - 25 cents.

In 1929 the school was torn down and moved  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile east to the present site on the La Salle River. In 1966 the school closed as the district was consolidated with Elie.

In 1966 a school reunion was held at the one-roomed school house and over 400 former students, teachers and friends attended from all parts of Canada and the United States. This very successful affair was emceed by a former, much revered teacher and former resident of this area, Miss Delma Todd.

## PRAIRIE VIEW SCHOOL

No school was more appropriately named. It stood on the north-west corner of Kuebler's farm, four miles straight south of Starbuck. One had a view of the prairies in every direction.

No records are available but it is assumed that it was built in the early 1900's. A complete list of teachers is not available, however, the following listed were recalled: Miss Ruttan, Mamie Blake, Emily Inkster, Nellie Meakin (who commuted every day in horse and buggy from her home), Mr. Jones, Gladys Van Camp, Eva La Marsh, Ruth Cole, Miss Helgason, Miss Olafson, Mary Bruce, Eva Eldred, Floris Olsen, Miss Purdy, K. Dowd, Miss Arnett, Eva Leavens, Thelma Kidd (Mrs. F. Weidman), Bertha Halstead (Mrs. P. Demler), Pat Johnson, etc.

Various secretary treasurers and trustees served on the school board including Messrs. Kuebler, Milne, Fetterman, Frantz, and Schrof.

Generally a goodly number of children attended school in the district with the largest attendance during the winter months as during the spring and fall many of the boys were required to work on the farm.

Pupils attending school were from the following families: Milne, Frantz, Fetterman, Rathert, Demler, Kaiser, Weidman, Kuebler, Schrof, Cantlon, Buss, Lozinski and Wuerch.

The school not only served as an educational centre but also a social centre. Many concerts, dances, box and pie socials and picnics were held. The Christmas concert was really a big event where every child attending school participated, either alone or in a group and Santa Claus always made a grand appearance and vanished so mysteriously. Many recall the concerts which invariably included a duet by Mrs. Frantz and Mrs. Jim Milne. Music for dancing was often provided by Billie Allinson with his violin and later Fred Buss and his accordion.

Later the school district became part of the Starbuck area and vans picked up the children and the school building was sold and moved away.

## Chapter Five

## Post Offices

The first post master in Starbuck was John Powers Sr. He was succeeded by Nat Hay, then G.E. Dechene became the post master in 1894. He was succeeded by son Bill, then Bill's wife Mi'Lou and now their daughter Armele.

The Elm Bank District obtained a Post Office in 1899 known as the "Shipperlay Post Office". The name was derived from the names of the first settlers in the area — the first three letters from Shirtcliff, the second three from L'Esperance, and the last three from McKinlay. It served the community for 16 years and was closed in 1915.

In 1905 when McKinlay moved away the post office was moved from his house to J.S. Cawston's house. Alcide L'Esperance was the faithful mail carrier for many years. Each Friday he took a sack of mail

from Shiperlay P.O., drove to Starbuck and returned with the incoming mail.

There was also a post office between Ferndale and Sanford called Blythe Field.

We must also mention the introduction of rural mail delivery which occasioned many mail boxes placed at the entrances to farms throughout the area. The delivery of this mail was looked forward to with eagerness, especially by those who had been out of communication for some time.

The post offices also provided a number of boxes which could be rented and the public could come in after hours and unlock their box and obtain their mail. Of interest is the fact that George Dunlop still keeps a post office box in Starbuck — likely the longest maintainer of this service.

Bill Dechene was elected Secretary Treasurer of the Manitoba Branch of the Post Masters' Association and on retirement was awarded life membership in the Post Masters' Association.

## Chapter Six

# Livery Stables

These stables, or barns, played a very important part in the early days. Farmers would leave their horses in the barn and then board the train to Winnipeg or in the winter time they stabled their horses while they attended meetings or dances.

These buildings were usually large rectangular affairs with a big loft space for hay and straw. There was a wide space in the middle with stalls and mangers on either side.

Large harness pegs extended from posts and horses were unharnessed carefully so that they could readily be reharnessed.

The livery stable owner might be called upon to provide teams to pull hearses or surreys at weddings. A surrey was really a status symbol in the early days.

Coal oil lanterns were used for lighting. The heat for the barn was provided by the horses and usually they were quite warm at least it seemed so when one came in from the cold.

If it was stormy weather some patrons were allowed to curl up in their horse blankets and stay the night. It was quite a meeting place to "chew the rag" as well as their tobacco, get the latest news and perhaps do some horse trading.

The livery man provided not only horses for hire but a driver, if necessary, for travelling salesmen, land speculators, politicians, doctors, merchants and city beaus.

At one time Starbuck had two livery stables. Gunnesses served the community for many years. The Gunnesses were old timers in Starbuck. There was Alec, Tom, Billie, Dave, Maggie and Annie. Alec married Ethel Ross and their children live from Winnipeg to British Columbia. Their stable was located opposite to where the curling rink stands. Sad to say this stable burned down and some of the horses would not come out so Mr. Dechene was called upon to shoot them. Mr. Dick Wilson had a livery stable in the vicinity of the Masonic Temple. It also burned down, then Jimmie Johnson ran a stable where the Co-op store now stands.

Pupils attending school from the country and driving into Starbuck in their buggy or cutter stabled their horses too.

There being so many horses used in the community, this gave rise to a full time harness maker. George Hiebert set up shop in a little building beside the bridge and was busily employed for many years.

Speaking of horses, we might add that all places of business, e.g. stores, hotels, etc., had wooden hitching posts at the front with iron rings to which the horses were tied. Many of the posts were chewed down by the horses and had to be replaced.

## Chapter Seven

### Doctors

Starbuck survived without a resident doctor until Dr. Bouthilier came. Prior to this, the people looked after themselves and in crucial cases doctors were called from Carman or Winnipeg.

Dr. Bouthilier served the community until the fall of 1917 when he left to accept a position in Ottawa.

Dr. Vernon succeeded Dr. Bouthilier and served the community for many years, travelling by buggy and cutter and later by car. The Vernons had three girls, Evelyn, Dorothy and Ruth. The family took a very active part in church work. Evelyn married Gordon Parker of Sanford. They farmed for many years in the Sanford area then moved to Winnipeg. Their son has continued on with the family farm.

## Chapter Eight

### Farmer's Co-op Store

The Farmer's store was built on the property where Olson's garage now stands. The early directors were Messrs. Fetterman, Meakin, R. Houston and M.O. Olsen.

The upper story of the store consisted of a suite for the residence of the manager. Managers of the store were Johnnie Brynelson (married to Lillian Winram). Mr. Axel Axelson, his wife and family moved into residence in the early 1920's when Mr. Axelson became manager. Carl, Joe, Ruth and Violet attended school. The Axelsons were active in the community. Joe Axelson usually visits Starbuck at least once a year as

he states "some of the happiest years of his life were spent here." Joe resides in Minnesota and Texas. The Axelsons left Starbuck to farm in the Peace River area; they later came back to Winnipeg.

Other managers were Mr. Herbert, Nels Brynelson, Marion Montague, Bill McRae. Later it was run independently by Harrison and Lawson and unfortunately was burned to the ground.

## Chapter Nine

### Hotel

The first and present hotel in Starbuck was built in 1903. The first owner was Tillie (Tappen) Dunlop's mother. Tillie and her sister Mabel (later Mrs. Dan Bye) who were in their teens, helped their mother with the hotel work.

Later the hotel was bought by Blakes and then changed hands many times. Names remembered are Mary Trandem who had Randina Brynelson to help her. Another name recalled is "The Brocks."

In the early 1920's the Cardinals from Kenora bought the hotel and ran it for many years. There was Joe, Oscar (King), Noella and Bob. The Cardinals brought their piano with them as Noella was taking music lessons and many times the piano was loaned for various functions and Noella often played a piano solo. Joe worked in the bank and later left Starbuck, got himself a wife in Quebec and retired as a bank inspector. "King" moved back to Kenora, married, and still lives there. Noella was one of the switchboard girls and as afore mentioned married Hilding Corneliusen. Bob married "Tony" Wlasiuk and moved to Winnipeg. He died at an early age leaving a family who reside in Fort Garry.

While the Cardinals owned the hotel a "beer parlour" was built at the rear so the residents in the Starbuck area didn't have to go to Fannystelle.

The "Cardinals" was the meeting place for many of the young people and in the evenings you could usually hear music emanating from the living room. On occasion a party of lady skiers, skaters, etc.

would come out on the bus from Winnipeg and take over the hotel for the weekend. The Curling Club would even let them curl after the rink closed to regular customers. Their chief guide was usually a little girl, named Armele Dechene, and her dog.

## Chapter Ten

# Starbuck Pool Elevator

A great deal of time and discussion took place by the farmers in the area before petitioning to the Manitoba Pool Elevators to have a pool elevator in Starbuck.

Mr. R. Houston received a letter from Mr. T.E. Patrick of the Manitoba Pool Elevators on January 14, 1927 stating: "We are not attempting to urge that you carry on organization work or attempt to have a pool elevator unless it is the wholehearted desire of the farmers of your district. The demand for pool elevators must originate in the country, and it is folly to attempt to have them at points where the grain available is not sufficient to make operation economical."

After many meetings and discussions a petition was signed 1927 - 1928 giving the names, location and acreage of farmers in the district and these are listed: R. Greenway, E.D. Morse, H.L. Eber, Andrew Milne, Geo. Dunlop, Ben Fetterman, O.L. Rhynard, C. Cummings, John F. Goldsborough, R.L. Livingston, C.W. Livingston, L.A. Houston, J. Meyers, Peter Velde, M. Mills, H.F. Mills, John E. Ross, J. Wuerch, H.W. Livingston, L. Richardson, John A. Juaguer, C. Dauphinais, H. Rathert, D.A. Houston, G. Westerlund, G. Holland, O.A. Johnston, D. Benson, A. Schade, A. Metvedt, Johnson and Anderson Bros., L.L. Ramstad, Frederick Shirliff, Gustave Schultz, F. Flodden, Alex McCurdy, Joseph Todd, F.J. Meakin, E.H. Cockerill, Ernest Olund, Geo. Richardson, John H. Houston, Thor Lee, Robert Houston, David J. Houston, Jos. Stewart, Chas. M. Johnston, R.F. Houston, C. Baldwin and Sons (H.E. Baldwin, Melville Baldwin, Eli Baldwin), F.E. Schrof, D. Dauphinais, S.E. Baldwin, K.H. Rees, J.F. Crosby, Andrew Holm, F.W. Keubler, W.S. Wilson, M.O. Olsen, James Murray, John Goldsbor-

ough, Jas. Goldsborough, James Milne, P.H. Cole, I. Macdonald.

Mr. R. Houston posted a notice stating: "Pool Elevator Meeting".

Mr. Chapman of the Manitoba Pool will address a meeting of all farmers interested in a Pool Elevator at Johnson's Hall in Starbuck on Thursday afternoon, 2:30 p.m., March 10th, 1927.

It is expected that if satisfactory support is forth coming steps will be taken to organize all present in favour of a Pool elevator in Starbuck.

Signed,  
Robert Houston,  
Chairman.

Starbuck, March 8th, 1927. From a letter written to Mr. Robt. Houston from Mr. Donovan of Winnipeg stating he had received minutes of the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Starbuck Association, and noted that Mr. Houston had been made secretary for the coming year.

"We would also like to quote from this letter: "once the elevator is operating and you have an agent there, these expenses can be covered by your having the receipts O.K.'d by the President and presenting them to the agent, who will send them to Winnipeg with his regular expense account, and reimburse you."

A letter to Mr. Robert Houston dated August 16, 1927 from the general superintendent, Mr. Donovan stated that Mr. E. Carroll had been in their office. "We arranged with him to operate your elevator for the next three months, or as long as we find it necessary to keep the elevator open. We have arranged to pay Mr. Carroll \$115.00 a month."

Mr. C.H. Burnell, President, Manitoba Wheat Pool, attended The International Co-operative Wheat Pool Conference in Kansas City in the 1920's and here are some excerpts from his address given there. "In Canada we now have some 15,000 more members than when we met in conference last year.

"The farmers of Ontario are now actively engaged in organizing a grain Pool and all the Canadian Pools are now engaged in acquiring their own elevator facilities. Probably the biggest event in agricultural history on the continent was the purchase by the Saskatchewan Pool of the Elevators of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company whose assets totalled over \$11,000,000.

"Alberta was the first province to complete organization and opened for business on October 29th, 1923. Saskatchewan and Manitoba effected organization the next summer in August, 1924. The three pools joined to sell their grain through one central selling agency, the Canadian

Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited, with head office in Winnipeg and branch offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Fort William, Toronto, New York and Paris.

"The farmer is really a manufacturer working with nature to produce raw food products. If the farmer prospers all other businesses prosper also.

"As agriculture was the cause of civilization in the first place, so agriculture may yet save civilization for the world by organizing co-operatively."

It is noted that the early secretaries were Robert Houston, M. Mills, L.A. Houston, H. Kendall, J.W. Houston and Clark Frantz.

Early (agents) operators were E. Carroll, Joe Greenway, Mr. A. Brown, Frank Owens and Charlie Dauphinais.

An interesting item in the minutes of the meeting January 21, 1936 was a motion by C. Olsen and seconded by C.W. Livingstone "that whereas we were led to expect a payment on the 1930-31 crop and many have made arrangements with creditors with the expectation of receiving this payment: And whereas the crop failure of this past season makes the need of this payment more imperative, be it therefore resolved that, we the Board of Directors do beseech our member of this constituency to do all in his power to assume and hasten the date of this payment." — Carried.

The members took an interest in community affairs and in February 1937 voted a sum of \$10 to finance an event to be given to the newly formed Starbuck Curling Club's local bonspiel.

At the January meeting in 1938, it was decided that J.H. Houston be appointed to interview Mr. G. Johnson to arrange for a dance to be held in his hall. Then at the February meeting, Mr. J.H. Houston reported that Mr. G. Johnson agreed to accept \$7 as rental for his hall for the dance on the 18th.

L. Houston reported that he engaged Reese's orchestra for the sum of \$5 for two hours' music or \$8 for three hours.

L. Houston was authorized to make necessary purchases of bread, ham, coffee, and sugar. J.H. Houston and L. Houston volunteered to take charge of the making of sandwiches and any other details that might arise.

A group of Willow Heights ladies in the late 30's provided lunch at annual meetings at the rate of 20 cents per lunch with a guaranteed minimum of \$8.

At the October 24, 1940 meeting the agent was instructed to pay the

Prairie View ladies the sum of \$10 for lunch served at the annual meeting.

At the October 1939 annual meeting the guest speakers were Father Brunet, Father Benoit, Mr. Burnell and Mr. Richmond. Father Benoit of St. Malo described in a very inspiring address the development of the Credit Union at St. Malo.

On June 12, 1940 a motion by J.W. Houston, seconded by L. Fatterman read "That we take over the newly acquired Western Canada elevator as a unit of this Association. This being a temporary arrangement pending approval by our shareholders at our annual meeting."

On June 25, 1940 a motion was carried to engage E. Baldwin as operator for the Western Canada elevator.

In February, 1941 it was moved by H. Kendall, seconded by C. Frantz "that we ask head office to mail all reading material to J.W. Houston, Secretary of Starbuck Study Groups, as the study groups have made arrangements for the setting up of a library in Dechene's store." — Carried.

A goodly number of study groups were organized and there was a keen interest by members. A weekly radio program was listened to at each meeting followed by discussion and observations. One group was composed of a group of farmer bachelors.

It is interesting to note that at the April 24, 1943 meeting "the family plan for hospitalization was studied and it was decided to study further at the next meeting."

The June 29, 1944 meeting we note that the extermination of rats was discussed. It was moved by H. Kendall and seconded by W. Masse "that we get a cat for each elevator."

It was evident from the discussion held at a meeting June 29, 1944 that the directors and members were interested in the community by the following suggestions:

1. Rural electrification as planned by the commission be set up by the Provincial Government.
2. Health and hospitalization services be made available to all people with emphasis on the prevention of sickness.
3. Recreational centres and Community Halls for use of the young people to stimulate interest in rural life.
4. Local industries promoted wherever possible and diversified farming encouraged by price control which is fair to both Producer and Consumer.
5. Cold storage made available in small towns to take care of the

produce of the farm.

6. Co-operative packing plants in the large centres to insure the continuity of the meat and dairy industry.

The rise in the cost of living was noted as at the October 20, 1944 meeting "it was decided to ask the ladies of the Mennonite Church to supply lunch at the annual meeting. This charge for the lunch to be a total of \$15 or 25 cents a plate."

"It was also agreed to put the "long rings" over the telephone lines at noon the day of the annual meeting, inviting members and their wives to the meeting.

From the meeting held on November 16, 1946 we get an insight into wages paid — "Moved by W. Tinkler, seconded by L. Miller that bill received from P. Rempel for painting annexes 100 hours at 65 cents per hour be paid."

## Chapter Eleven

# The Swiss Settled in the Starbuck Area

Submitted by Louise Ammeter and Clara Ammeter

The Ammeters originally left Switzerland to go to Georgia in southern Russia as a wealthy German baron had acquired land and needed cheese makers.

In a few years they bought land and set up business at Karabalach (Black Brook). They had dairy lands and cheese factories. The Ammeter family grew and prospered.

In 1918 after World War I the Russian Revolution broke out. Terror reigned throughout the land. The Ammeter family lost all their possessions and were left with empty houses.

After two years of red tape, passports, papers, two trips all the way to Moscow made by Gottlieb Jr. (known as "Fat" in Starbuck) and Christian Jr. everything was in order. With the help of the Red Cross and the Swiss government the Ammeters decided to immigrate to Canada. Each

adult could take \$5, some clothing and bit of bedding.

On July 28, 1929 the Ammeters arrived in Winnipeg. They stayed in the old Immigration Hall for six weeks while the senior Ammeter fathers went looking for a home. They travelled to British Columbia and Alberta looking for dairy country. They were advised to stay near Winnipeg as it was described "The Gateway to the West". Finally they chose Starbuck. The Swiss Consul, Mr. Bowman, and a C.N.R. lawyer Mr. Carsten were very helpful.

In September 1929 the village of Starbuck saw a strange sight. About 80 people, men, women and children got off the train. They walked to what was known as "The Old Meakin Farm" west of Starbuck on the La Salle River (ten families in one house). A reporter interviewed Grandfather Ammeter and asked him, "What do you think of Canada?" In his quiet way Grandfather replied: "Come back in 50 years and I will tell you." Fifty years was the time spent in Russia.

At first everyone lived in "The Big House". Later some families moved one mile west to a farm known as "The Carlson Farm" (Emma Ammeter had married Adolph Trachsel and they had come with the Ammeters). The Trachsels, Peter and Gotthelf, moved to the Carlson farm with their families. Two old houses were repaired and Christian Sr. and Fritz Sr. also moved their families. As Grandfather had said, "In years to come we will be scattered in a wide radius."

The first winter in Starbuck was very hard. It was bitterly cold, food was scarce and no one could speak English. One of their first visitors was Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dyck who brought milk for the children. In the large barn there were only two cows and two horses. Not afraid of work the older boys went to the lumber camps and the girls found work in Winnipeg.

A special teacher (Miss Meinke) was obtained to teach the younger children. The school basement was used as a classroom with 20 children. At the end of the winter the children learned enough English to be moved into regular classes. For many years there were Ammeters in every grade in the Starbuck school.

A Lutheran German-speaking pastor from Winnipeg came out to Starbuck twice a month and St. Paul's Lutheran Church was started. The Ammeters rented Bethania Lutheran Church as a place of worship. Rev. Giese was the first pastor, then Rev. George Swift who stayed for 15 years, later Rev. H. Kroeger. As the years passed the majority spoke English so the two churches joined and became known as the Bethania Lutheran Church under Pastor A. Nelson.

The young Ammeters joined in the sports life of the community. They had a skating rink on the La Salle River and a huge toboggan slide. They were known as "The Swiss" and had their own hockey and baseball teams. Later some of the neighbours, Lavallee, Murray, Dauphinais, and Dycks joined and the teams were called "Starbuck West".

The Gotthelf Ammeters moved to Anola in 1952. The Trachsel family moved to Warren in 1937. The Christian Ammeter sons have moved to B.C. except Gottfried who lives in Stony Mountain.

With much perseverance, thrift and hard work the Ammeters have once again become independent. For the third time in their lives they started from the beginning. They consider they chose well and are happy in Starbuck, Manitoba, Canada.

## Chapter Twelve

# Chautauqua

During the 1920's one of the greatest attractions during the summer was the coming of Chautauqua. In its huge tent it brought entertainment and culture of a very high order. Starbuck warranted a "Four Day Chautauqua".

What excitement! The advance crew arrived including the director (better known as the "Chautauqua Lady"). She called on the people in the area who guaranteed their support. Being an attractive lady there was no scarcity of manpower to set up the tent and all was ready. There may have been others but it seems that Everett Morse was always chairman and handled the introductory remarks.

Many a university student was employed during vacation working for Chautauqua either as tent boys or directors.

The season ticket for the four days was \$2. The programs were varied and provided entertainment for the whole family — lectures, plays, children's programs, and the very finest of music (both vocal and instrumental). Such people as Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst of England, who led the struggle to secure the franchise for the women of England; Capt. S.N. Dancey, noted Canadian lecturer speaking on "The

Real League of Nations"; Dr. Jen, the wizard, getting "a dinner from the air"; Marks, the young Canadian violinist; The Belles of Old Britain in their colourful hoop skirts singing old medleys including: "Seeing Nellie Home"; Strongheart, an educated full-blooded Indian, grandson of Chief Standing Rock, lectured on Indian lore; The MacDonald Kiddies had a spectacular Musical Revue; a play "The Girl of the Whispering Pines" and the Tziganos, a Gypsy Novelty Duo, instrumentalists, vocalists and comedians were just some of the rich entertainment. Everyone looked forward to Chautauqua from year to year.

The enjoyment of Chautauqua would not have been possible had it not been for the committee residents of the area who signed agreements to guarantee a given amount to the Chautauqua Enterprises. If there was a deficit these people paid it and they did so quite often and willingly. Sometimes there were as many as three or four guarantors in one family. While attending college in 1930, Floris Olsen was employed one summer as a "Chautauqua Lady" but with the depression and failure of crops in the 1930's the people in most districts appealed to the Chautauqua Enterprises and were released from their obligations. However Chautauqua continued in larger centres but gradually faded out.

## Chapter Thirteen

# Grand Lodge of Manitoba A.F. & A.M.

### Information obtained from Clark Frantz

The first meeting, for discussing the ways and means of forming a Masonic Lodge in Starbuck was held November 20, 1949 in Starbuck Motors Garage. S.E. Baldwin was appointed chairman and E.C. Wilcox secretary for the meeting. Myrton Mills read the petition that would have to be submitted and proposed by Crescent 103 to Grand Lodge.

A petition to establish a Starbuck Lodge was presented to Harry Coddington, Grand Master of Masons in the jurisdiction of Manitoba.

The petition was signed by Myrton Mills, Charles George Daum, Howard William Livingston, Knute Haddeland, Sanford Ernest Baldwin, Clarence Wilbert Livingston, Iver J. Velde, Earl C. Wilcox, John Adam Stewart, Gordon Forbes Macadam, Willard Laurence Baldwin, Robert Leslie Livingston, Joseph Gordon Wrixon, Clark Smith Frantz, Burton L. McDole, Frank A. Owens and Homer Frank Mills.

This petition was granted February 20, 1950 empowering and authorizing "our trusty and well-beloved Brethren to form and open a lodge: after the manner of Ancient, Free Accepted Masons and therein to admit to membership and make Freemasons, according to the ancient custom and not otherwise."

Myrton Mills was appointed to be the first worshipful Master; Charles Daum, first Senior Warden; Howard Livingston, first Junior Warden.

During the winter after the petition had been granted, officers were busy during their spare moments rehearsing their respective offices for the installation on August 16, 1950. It was agreed that the committee interview the following ladies re: serving lunch for this event, Mrs. G. MacAdam, Mrs R.L. Livinston, Mrs. E. Wilcox and Mrs C. Frantz.

A very successful Installation night was held August 16, 1950. One hundred seventy-three Masons attended representing a total of 36 various Masonic Lodges. The Worshipful Grand Master, C.E. Cole (Portage) opened Starbuck Lodge V.D. and installed the officers. This was the first installation of a lodge by Worshipful Grand Master C.E. Cole.

The first meeting of Starbuck Lodge V.D. was held on Thursday, August 24, 1950 with all officers present.

There were a few outstanding events during their first meetings. Their Master, Wor. Myrton Mills had the honour of receiving his own son F.M. Mills into their new lodge as the first candidate. In their first three sets of first degrees they were honoured to have a pair of brothers in each degree — the Westerlund and Qually brothers, and the third time the Magarrell brothers. Brother A.B. Simpson (United Church) was the first clergyman to be accepted into the Lodge. The first church service of the Starbuck Lodge was held June 17, 1951 in Starbuck United Church.

In 1953 discussions were held re: building their own temple. The building site was donated by Wor. Bro. Myrton Mills. Estimated cost of a building 28 feet by 60 feet (material only) was approximately \$5,000. Labour was to be voluntary.

The Masons decided to sponsor a general cemetery clean up, which proved a huge success.

During the early part of the winter 1956, the new temple was com-

pleted enough to hold meetings. The first meeting in the new temple was held January 14, 1957 with Wor. Bro. Niel Simonsen in the chair. Rt. Wor. Bro. M. Mills took on the Master Chair for the latter part of the meeting.

Many donations were made to help furnish the lodge by their own members and members of other lodges. Curtain material donated was made up and sewn by Mrs. L. Baldwin, Mrs. J. Norton and Mrs. C. Frantz.

Several bonspiels were sponsored and in 1960 a rink from the Starbuck Lodge won the Annual Masonic Bonspiel in Winnipeg.

Through the years many interesting meetings were held: educational, controversial, social and recreational. Guest speakers participated from various vocations and occupations.

## Chapter Fourteen

# Historical Sketch of Starbuck Lutheran Church

This church celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1961. The following information was taken from a pamphlet distributed at that time. Mrs. Ed. Gellien, Mrs. Viola Dechene and Mrs. Homer Mills assisted in preparing this record.

The congregation history begins in 1904 and 1905 with the efforts of Mr. Christ O. Stenberg to get pastors from Grand Forks, N.D. From 1904 to 1910, various men came to conduct services in the homes. The Rev. L.M. Skunnes confirmed the first class in this area in 1906. It took place in the Presbyterian Church and the following people were confirmed: Clara Storseth, Susie Rice, Sarah and Axel Holland, Melvin, Ole and Hilda Stenberg, Kjettle Holland, Teddy Lofto and Freda Aspelund.

In the year 1909, Pastor O.H. Haugen came to the area and at Starbuck organized the Hauge Synode Congregation (Zion), with the following charter members: Mr. and Mrs. C.O. Stenberg and family, Mr. and Mrs. A. Stenberg, Mr. and Mrs. Julius Stenberg, Mr. and Mrs. Christ

Stenberg, Mr. and Mrs O. Storseth and family, Mr. and Mrs. A. Sandmoen and family, Mr. and Mrs. K. Reese and family, Mr. and Mrs. M. Aspelund and family, Messrs. Gunder, Ole and John Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Arne Sandmoen and family, Mr. and Mrs. Ole Melsness and family, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Skramstad and family, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Larson and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Sem and family.

In the year 1910 Pastor A.H. Bergford organized the Forenede Synode Congregation (Bethania) with the following charter members: Mr. and Mrs. George Holland, Mr. and Mrs. M. Corneliusen, Mr. and Mrs. T.O. Rice, Mr. and Mrs. Brynelson, Miss Marie Trendom, Mr. and Mrs. A.H. Bergford and Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Larson and family.

These two congregations merged in 1913 and began work toward the building of a church and parsonage. Under Pastor A.O.B. Molldrem this was accomplished in 1915 to 1916.

Times were not easy, and the Bethania records show that the ladies worked side by side with their men to make their church a success.

On October 18, 1953, while Pastor M.B. Odlund was pastor of the congregation a confirmation reunion was held. The afternoon service was held in the Starbuck Community Hall with 200 people in attendance. With the offering, a Gestetner duplicator was purchased.

Many improvements were made including an oil furnace which was purchased in October 1953 and paid for by the Ladies' Aid. The roof was shingled in 1953. The interior was redone in 1954 by the Ladies' Aid. The communion set was dedicated on Easter Sunday 1954. It was presented by Selina, Hendrick and Axel Holland and Sarah Haddeland in memory of Mr. and Mrs. George Holland. The altar cross and the candle holders were dedicated on May 23, 1954. The cross was in memory of H. Mills and M. Stenberg by Mrs. Susan Stenberg and Mrs. Homer Mills. The candle holders were given in memory of Elizabeth Petersen. In August 1955 the pews and floors were sanded by a Winnipeg firm and paid for by the Ladies' Aid. The other hymn board was given by Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Trottier, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Olson and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Schade. The rug and upholstered chair were placed in the church in the month of February 1956 and paid from the memorial account. The new Baldwin electric organ was paid from the memorial account and the congregations of Bethania and St. Paul's and was installed in November 1958 and dedicated on May 17, 1959. In May 1959 new tile was laid in the church parlor and linoleum laid in the vestibule, both paid for by the Ladies' Aid.

In the latter part of 1960 negotiations began with St. Paul's re:

merging. This congregation was organized in the early thirties by a number of Ammeter families. For a number of years this congregation rented Bethania premises for their services. They were served by A.L.A. pastors from Winnipeg. Following the merger of the three Lutheran Synods, the E.L.C., A.L.C. and the U.E.L.C., the merger was consummated between Bethania and St. Paul's on February 1, 1961 and known as "Starbuck Lutheran Church". Pastor A. Nelson remained as the pastor with Pastor H. Kroeger continuing to serve the merged congregation in the German language.

During the 50 years Bethania Lutheran baptized 172, confirmed 177, married 28 couples and had 59 funerals.

A special tribute was made to Mrs. Viola Dechene "who has played the organ regularly for the past 21 years, and on and before that time."

The anniversary cake was baked by Mrs. Arthur Nelson and Mrs. Helen Olson. The decorating was done by Mrs. G. Lavallee.

Altar flowers were given by Miss Hannah Pedersen and Mrs. Helen Olson.

Guest speaker was Pastor Marvin B. Odlund who is now serving a parish in Prince Rupert, B.C. Mrs Odlund and their children, Raymond, Albert, Carole and Lois were also present.

Pastors serving the congregation in chronological order were: O.H. Hougen, 1909-1911, (Houge Zion); A.H. Bergford, 1910-1912, (Forende-Bethania); Otto Lock, 1912-1913, (Layman); S.A. Nelson, 1914-1914; A.O.B. Molldrem, 1915-1916; J.K. Lerohl, 1916-1920; E.J. Tetlie, 1921-1922; O.O. Hougen, 1923-1925; L.J. Larson, 1926-1931; J.T. Borgen, 1931-1935; O.O. Hougen, 1936-1939; M. Aandah, 1937-1947; K. Bergsagel (supply, while he served Winnipeg); Student Pastor A. Dohlen, summer 1947; Student Pastor H. Frostad, summer 1948; Pastor A. Dohlen, 1949 - December 1950; Pastor M.B. Odlund, March 1951 - February 1956; Pastor Arthur A. Nelson, June 1956.

## Chapter Fifteen

# Historical Sketch of Starbuck Lutheran Ladies' Aid

The Lutheran Ladies' Aid of Starbuck originated in 1905. The ladies were hard-working homemakers in a pioneer community. Cooking, washing and mending had to be done with simplicity and ingenuity. From the old country they brought with them a deep love for their church, and they wanted to have a church built as soon as possible. Toward this end they faithfully labored, putting on suppers, auction sales, socials and picnics. It is interesting to note for one such cafeteria supper each woman was asked to bring two cakes, one jar of pickles, one bowl of scalloped potatoes, one bowl baked beans, one bowl fruit salad, one bowl of vegetable salad and 50 meat sandwiches.

It is recalled that the first meeting was held in May 1905 at the home of Mrs. George Holland (where Ole Olson now resides). A second meeting was held in June 1905 at the home of Mrs. M. Corneliusen; a third meeting was held at the home of Mrs. C. Stenberg.

As there was no Lutheran Church in the community, Rev. L.M. Skunnes came from the States occasionally and held services in Norwegian homes. Student ministers came up for several summers and held Bible school during July and August. The young people would meet daily — one month in Dacotah and the next month in Starbuck.

The first Ladies' Aid meeting records it being held January 13, 1910 at the home of Mrs. A. Stenberg. The balance of cash from the previous year was \$4.31 and this was turned over to the treasurer. Plans for an auction sale and supper in Johnson's Hall were made. The charge for the supper was adults 25 cents, children 10 cents. Receipts for the supper were \$30 and for the sale \$68.

The following were members of this early Ladies' Aid: Mrs. A.O. Sandmoen, Mrs. A. Stenberg, Mrs. O. Larson, Mrs. O.A. Storseth, Mrs. C.O. Stenberg, Mrs. J. Stenberg, Mrs. B. Sandmoen, Mrs. M. Aspelund, Mrs. K. Johnson, Mrs. O. Haugen, Mrs. Ole Johnson, Mrs. Albert Wold and Mrs. Otto Skramstad.

Two groups held meetings for about two years. The second group

held their organizational meeting on March 7, 1911 at the home of Mrs. A.H. Bergford with the following members: Mrs. George Holland, Mrs. M. Corneliusen, Mrs. T.O. Rice, Mrs. Brynelson and Miss Marie Trenderom. It was decided at this meeting to call their group the "Bethania Ladies' Aid" and meetings were to be held on the first Thursday of every month. Their aim was to work toward building a Lutheran Church in Starbuck.

The Zion Ladies' Aid held their last meeting in Johnson's Hall on July 26, 1913. When it was decided to merge with the Bethania Ladies' Aid on August 4, 1913 they turned over their money (\$86.70) to this group. Mrs. M. Corneliusen donated \$500 toward the Parsonage. The Ladies' Aid gave an organ in 1915. In July, 1919 the Ladies' Aid donated the altar painting. Miss Marie Trenderom gave the bell to the church.

In 1916 the altar, pulpit and pews were bought through Holland and Corneliusen which was paid for by money collected by the Ladies' Aid amounting to \$165.

At the close of 1960 there were 28 active members in the Ladies' Aid. At the present time there are two circles of Lutheran Church Women, one group serving the German speaking ladies.

## Chapter Sixteen

# St. Paul's Roman Catholic Parish, Starbuck

### Information received from Bill Dechene

In 1885 the first Catholic colonists left St. Francois Xavier to settle in the vicinity of what is now the village of Starbuck. At that time Starbuck consisted of one building — the section house built by Northwestern Colonization Railroad (later taken over by the C.P.R.).

People of this area had to go to Fannystelle where a church was founded in 1890 by a group of colonists from France. Later, mass was celebrated by the parish priest from Fannystelle in a small log house situated a mile and a half west of Starbuck. This was actually the birth place of the parish of Starbuck.

More immigrants moved into the community and it was felt that a

church was needed. To build a church was no small feat. There was very little money, wages were low — 65 cents a day was paid in the harvest fields. A day's work consisted of stooking grain from seven in the morning to nine o'clock at night.

Notwithstanding the heavy debt they were placing on their shoulders, the parishioners decided to go ahead.

A piece of land was bought and a church was erected in 1904. It was blessed on October 23 by the Vicar General, Mgr. A. Dugas who also celebrated the first mass.

Archbishop Langevin had promised that should the parishioners show ability to maintain a church, a resident priest would be appointed. In 1905 true to his promise the Archbishop appointed Rev. J. Joubert as the first parish priest, formerly vicar at Fannystelle.

With a resident priest it was necessary to provide a home for him. It was decided that a rectory would be built. Accordingly a contract was let and in 1906 the rectory was built costing \$1,200.50.

In 1907 a subscription was taken for the purchase of a bell, to call the faithful to church, to announce a baptism, ring out the glad tidings of a wedding, or bid farewell to one who had passed on. It could also give a warning of fire or disaster.

On October 20, 1907 a 320 pound bell was purchased from a firm in France. Blessed by the Vicar General, this bell was given four names: Marie, for the Blessed Virgin; Pie for the then reigning Pope; Adelard for the Archbishop at that time; Edward for the then reigning Monarch. To mark the installation of the bell solemn high mass was followed by a banquet prepared and served by the local ladies.

1909 was a memorable year for the parish, it being dedicated to the apostle Paul. The first pastoral visit took place and the Archbishop announced that Fr. Joubert had been appointed director of the newly founded seminary of St. Boniface.

A former pastor of St. Lazare, Fr. L.H. Hogue became the second parish priest. He remained until 1916. During his tenure the Starbuck Consolidated School was built.

The hope of having a Catholic separate school prompted the purchase of the old town school property. Because of heavy indebtedness and many obligations, this hope was abandoned. The property was sold for the same price paid. Mrs. L. Fetterman now occupies this property.

In October 1916, Fr. Hogue left Starbuck to take up duties at Elie. He was succeeded by Fr. A. Moreau. Due to ill health he resigned and

retired from the ministry in 1917.

In October 1917, Fr. A. Beliveau, nephew of the Archbishop, was appointed. He was young, active and enterprising. During his occupancy the parish debt was considerably reduced. He died very suddenly in December 1920.

Fr. L. Roy of Letellier succeeded Fr. Beliveau. He came to the parish at Christmas 1920. During the ten years of his shrewd administration the heavy debt was wiped out. Several improvements were made including the installation of a furnace in the church and a heating plant in the rectory. The church was painted both inside and out.

When Fr. Roy left in 1930 to assist Mgr. Guy Vicar Apostolic of Grouard, he was succeeded by Rev. Fr. G. Couture from Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

Along with the electrifying of rural Manitoba in 1930, the rectory was wired and electricity installed. At Christmas 1931 the electric lights were turned on in the church.

Due to the illness of Mgr. Beliveau a co-adjutor in the person of Mgr. Yelle was appointed at the latter's request. Rome gave the parish permission to establish an oratory in the rectory, where the Blessed Sacrament could be kept during the cold winter months as it was very costly to keep the church warm at all times. The oratory was blessed in December and dedicated to the Canadian Martyrs.

Father Couture left the parish in October 1936 to minister to the parish of Rainy River, Ontario and was replaced by Fr. L. Brunet, who had been at Morden and Manitou. During Fr. Brunet's regime the building which stood where Brandt's garage now stands was purchased and used as a parochial hall. Many card parties, socials, meetings and other enjoyable events were enjoyed here.

Fr. Brunet, realizing the financial difficulties of the people in the district in procuring working capital from banks, introduced the idea of a Credit Union. After many meetings and discussions a Credit Union was organized and open for business.

After many deserved tributes from the entire community Fr. Brunet left to become parish priest at Sioux Lookout, Ontario. He was replaced by Fr. Messier who remained until 1945.

Tragedy hit the parish on March 20, 1944 when a fire completely destroyed the rectory. With the help of nearby residents part of the furniture was saved. Fr. Messier lost valuable books and a great many of his souvenirs.

The parishioners counteracted this severe blow by subscribing

funds for a new rectory and the pastor moved into the new building on October 30, 1944.

Fr. Messier was named parish priest in the newly formed parish of Carman on September 1, 1945 to be replaced by Fr. Joyal who remained only until March, 1946.

Fr. L. Sabourin succeeded Fr. Messier, having been Vicar at St. Pierre. During his time the parochial debt was reduced by \$1,000. The grounds were improved, a fence and cement sidewalks were built. Harold Kendall levelled the ground and fence posts were donated by E.D. Morse.

Fr. Hebert succeeded Fr. Sabourin in 1946. During his time the interior of the church was renovated.

From 1948 to 1958 the parish was served by Fr. V. Beaulieu. His ability was only surpassed by his love of hard work. He improved the grounds. The cemetery grounds were plowed and sowed to lawn grass and a hedge was planted. There was no doubt he thrived on work and made many friends in the community.

Fr. O. Valcourt took over when Fr. Beaulieu was transferred to Swan Lake. He remained for two years during which time the 50th anniversary was celebrated.

In 1960 it was decided that Starbuck would no longer have a resident priest and would have mission status to be served by Fr. A. St. Laurent from Fannystelle.

The rectory was sold in 1963 and is now occupied by the Lavoie family.

The parishioners can well look back with pride on their accomplishments and despite all the ups and downs mass is still celebrated in St. Paul's Church at Starbuck.

## Starbuck United Church

### Information supplied by Mrs. Hesper Fetterman

The present church was opened on January 17, 1904.

Prior to this the congregation held services in three school houses.

The first service was held in a small log house three and a half miles southeast of Starbuck belonging to the Holyrood School District. In the year 1885 a well organized congregation held services regularly with Mr. Norman Russell and Rev. James Douglas supervising as the first ministers of the district for the Presbyterian Church.

In 1888 a new wooden school was built on a site two and one quarter miles southeast of Starbuck — this being the second Holyrood School. In this school, church and Sunday school was held regularly. In this school for the first time a reed organ was used, much to the amazement of the children.

In 1901 when the village of Starbuck was beginning to grow, a third school was built and services were held here until January 17, 1904 when the present church was built.

Without one vote of dissent in 1925 the Presbyterian congregation entered the Union of Churches (Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational) known as The United Church of Canada.

Sincere tribute should be paid to those loyal pioneers who in the "Eighties" established a church in this community on a foundation that has continued to the present time.

Among the early pioneers were Robert and Alex Houston, Alex Hay, S. McIntyre, Wm. Livingston, Thos. Burns, T. Greenway, John Houston, W. Orr, M.O. Olsen and Wm. Dunlop.

There were many others who served as "supply" and if any names are omitted it has not been intentional and we honour all for their efforts.

The pews of the church which are still sturdy and attractive were purchased in 1911 when Rev. J.S. Lowe was minister.

Listed below are ministers since 1885: Mr. Norman Russell; Rev.

Jas. Douglas; Rev. Bryce (later Dr.); A.B. Baird (later Dr.); Rev. J.S. Lowry; Rev. W.B. Tait; Rev. J.S. Dobbin; Rev. Menzies; Rev. N. Stevenson; Rev. R.B. Cochrane; Rev. D.M. Reid; Rev. J.D. Harley; Rev. G. Bompas; Rev. W.W. Smith; Rev. J.S. Lowe; Rev. Fleming; Rev. T. Latto; Rev. Bygrave; Rev. Horn; Rev. J. McNair; Rev. J. Wilson; Rev. Geo. McNeill; Rev. Scott Leith; Rev. Lloyd Stinson; Rev. G.D. Wilkie; Rev. Geo. Dyker; Mr. Smith; Rev. Reynolds; Rev. A.D. Watson; Harold Wyman; Rev. Marion Johnson; Rev. G. Fay; Rev. A.B. Simpson; Rev. C. Manning; Rev. A. Suitters; Rev. O. Hodge; Rev. R. Kendall; Rev. A. Lucy; Mr. R. Mattock; Rev. A.D. Bennett and Mr. P. Laidler.

## Chapter Eighteen

### Prairie View United Church Women's Association

Submitted by Hesper Fetterman

In June 1938 a group of women met at the home of Mrs. Laude Fetterman with Rev. and Mrs. A.D. Watson. An association was formed with Mrs. Fetterman as president and Mrs. A. Weidman secretary treasurer. As the records have been lost the names of all the women at this first meeting are unknown. However, Mrs. Dan Wuerch was also in attendance.

Many faiths were represented — United, Lutheran, Baptist, Catholic and Mennonite — but all worshipped and worked together in harmony (an ecumenical movement). They met in the homes and shared their joys and sorrows. Two meetings were held in Winnipeg at the homes of Mrs. Engelhart and Rev. Marion (Johnson) Quong.

On April 20, 1938 they serenaded Rev. and Mrs. Watson on their silver wedding anniversary. Mrs. Weidman played her violin and Bud Fetterman played his guitar and the ladies joined in song.

There were various activities such as wedding and baby showers and knitting for the Red Cross. Some received pins from the Red Cross

— awards for so many knitting hours. Parcels were prepared and sent overseas.

There were times when it was difficult to attend meetings because of the weather and bad roads. Modes of transportation were by car, sleigh, buggy and even by stone boat. One time Mrs. Wuerch was driving horses on the stone boat to attend a meeting at Mrs. Buss' and she was going so fast Mrs. Fetterman fell off.

To raise money much initiative was shown such as Grandmother and Galloping Teas, Grab Bag Sales, Bazaars, Saturday Night sales of baking and farm produce; serving lunches to the Pool Elevator members. They took charge of eating booths at the school picnics, and served lunch at the curling rink. There were auction sales with Mrs. Wuerch acting as an auctioneer and in some instances E.D. Morse volunteered his services as auctioneer.

On December 9, 1953 Mrs. L. Fetterman resigned and was presented with a pin honouring her 15 years as president. Mrs. F.E. Schrof succeeded her as president.

## Chapter Nineteen

### Early Days in Elm Bank

The following information was written from notes and recollections of A.E. (Bert) Shirliff by Nellie Shirliff.

Just as villages and hamlets sprang up around the junctions or portages of rivers so also individual settlers in Manitoba chose to live along the banks of rivers. Thus in the district later to be known as Elm Bank, we find wooded sites along the La Salle River were selected for homes, before those of the open prairie. A good source of water was necessary. A supply of trees was needed for simple log buildings and for fuel. It is interesting to note that while many early home sites were to be abandoned, most of those occupied today continue to be on the same location so carefully chosen by the pioneers of nearly one hundred years ago.

During the 1870's and 1880's surveyors were busy throughout the west. Thus we find many parcels of land listed "The Crown" as owner in 1873. An exception to this was the registering of some of the land by "Assignment". That is, early settlers had taken possession and occupied their land for many years. It would appear they were legally given rights to their land. Unfortunately, choice pieces of the newly surveyed land were frequently snapped up by land speculators and resold to immigrants at higher prices.

It is surprising to note that some 65 former home sites can be marked along the river in the area beginning two miles south of Elie and ending near the old Highway No. 2, a distance of roughly 12 miles, along the curve of the river. Today there are only 24 occupied sites along this stretch. So we can imagine there was a far greater population in the time of large families. Neighbours were sometimes less than a quarter of a mile away. Near enough so that when the Schultz house burned down about 1924, the Shirliff boys and other neighbours were able to dash over and save old Mrs. Schultz's beloved plants and most of the furniture. Near enough that many must quickly have gathered when Mr. and Mrs. Louis L'Esperance lost a boy and girl by drowning in the flood of 1904. Louis and his brother were visiting at his brother Alcide's place when the children decided to use an old trough as a raft. It capsized and the tragedy resulted.

It is difficult to determine just who the first settler of the district might have been, but certainly J.H. (Sandy) Murray was one of the first. Records show that in 1884 an Alex Murray obtained the deed to N.E. 32-9-2W buying the land from a Wm. Hardy. Bert Shirliff remembers that when he was a small boy the frame house was in ruins and the site abandoned, but some of the log buildings remained. Mr. Murray was a member of the Manitoba Legislature for a while.

When Bert's father moved into the district in 1895 the Murray's had been here for many years and ran a large herd of cattle, about 150. Cornelius Baldwin bought the place about 1915 and lived there until his death when his sons took over, farming there for many years. In turn they sold to Dan Wuerch whose son Don still lives on the original site.

In 1895 Frederick Shirliff bought N. W. ¼ 5-10-2 from the law firm of Osler, Hammond and Nanton, at a price of \$3.00 per acre. He had come out from Doncaster, England about 1885. He had worked in Ontario then gone to Montana where his brother Henry was ranching. Mr. Shirliff returned to farm near Headingly. He married Mary Walsh and the first two children, Alice and Fred were born in Headingly; he decided a better opportunity

lay in the Elm Bank district. Of first importance was a house, as there were no buildings. After the fashion of most settlers the barn and smaller buildings could be built using the trees nearby, but the house must have the very best logs he could find. He secured the logs some 8 miles northwest in a heavily wooded area, which is now the Walheim Hutterite Colony. The house had two rooms downstairs and two up, a frame kitchen being soon added for more space.

Mary Shirliff may have been lonely at first, and must have welcomed former friends and neighbours in the traffic past her door, for the buildings were situated beside the regularly travelled trail between St. Francois Xavier and Fannystelle. This trail crossed a fork in the La Salle River between where the farms of Mr. and Mrs. Don Fossay and Mr. and Mrs. Paul are today. In those days Mr. and Mrs. McKinley lived just west of the ford. It is said that the river had a hard bottom at this point necessary for fording. But it must have had its drawbacks in times of high water, for soon Mr. Shirliff and his neighbours built a bridge over the river at this point. Later it went to ruin but parts of it could be seen for many years after it was no longer in use. It was used until 1904 when the municipality began building roads and bridges along the section lines. These roads soon replaced the old trails, which had usually been more direct across the open prairie.

Bert Shirliff also remembers seeing ruts in the sod, crossing the prairie toward Fannystelle, probably formerly made by the Red River carts. He also believes that his Dad's building site was an old Indian burial mound. Although there was every indication of mounds no one investigated further.

Sometime before the 1900's the settlers became numerous enough that it was deemed necessary to erect a single room log building on Section 27-9-2 to serve as a Roman Catholic church for several years until a new frame church was built in Starbuck. The building was then used as a school, and later it became a home. Bert Shirliff, who was born in 1900, was christened there. Later as a small boy riding past he remembers admiring the rows of large windows (3 on the east and 3 on the west). It is interesting to note that these early pioneers erected a church as their first public building.

Other public buildings were also needed. A petition for a post office was accepted by the government and it was opened on October 1, 1899 in the home of John McKinlay. (For further information refer to the topic Post Offices). Mr. McKinlay moved away in 1905.

Mr. McKinlay had been a prospector in British Columbia before coming to Manitoba. He bought 112 acres just west of the ford crossing and built

**frame buildings - now gone. Harold Shirliff now owns the land. McKinlay built the first cottage-type house in the district. He sold out to O. H. Holland about 1905 and moved away. Hollands had a family of eight children. In 1918 they too moved, selling to Mrs. Canute Haddeland. While she was the owner, the buildings were torn down and the lumber used to build a new house in Starbuck. She in turn sold to Russell Shiftliff.**

It was said there had been another house closer to the ford. This is probably true as for years Hollands had a potato patch there, in a clearing and they had found broken dishes and other articles indicating that the site had been occupied.

Mrs. J. S. Cawston lived south of Mr. McKinlay on the farm now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Art Krauss. After McKinlay's left he kept the post office for many years and was also Secretary-Treasurer of the Elm Bank School in the early 1900's.

On July 31st, 1899 the residents held a meeting to elect school trustees and a secretary-treasurer, and to "duly authorize them to borrow the sum of \$700.00 for the purpose of purchasing a site and erecting and furnishing a school house and its appendages." One wonders who thought up the delicate title "appendages".

The settlers of the early days were rough and ready, sometimes un-schooled, but this does not mean they were unlettered. Hark to these words copied from a small note book which served as the first school record book. "And whereas the Department of Education on the 22nd day of August 1899, did assent to the said loan."

"Therefore the school trustees for the School District of Elm Bank No. 1016, duly assembled, enact as follows:" etc. There followed a very business-like arrangement for the issue and sale of debentures. These were to be repaid in ten years at the rate of \$70 per year. They were bought by Sandy Murray.

The trustees further ruled that "each debenture shall be signed by the Secretary-Treasurer and countersigned by one of the trustees of the said School District, and that each coupon shall be signed by the said Secretary-Treasurer."

There followed detailed instructions re: the interest at 6 per cent and the requirements for the payment of the annual school taxes. The meeting concluded:

"Done and passed by the said School Trustees of the School District of Elm Bank No. 1016 assembled at the house of the Secretary-Treasurer in the Municipality of St. Francois Xavier in the province of Manitoba this 5th

day of August, A.D. 1899."

G. Church  
Chairman

J. McKinlay  
Secretary-Treasurer

By the 21st of September, 1899 the Board of Trustees held a third meeting to consider tenders for the building of a schoolhouse. Mr. Buchanan of Headingly won the contract with a price of \$620. An application for the position of teacher from a Miss Phillips was received and accepted.

There may have been some informal meetings of the trustees during the building of the schoolhouse, but the next written record we have is a meeting held on the 15th of November, 1899 in the new schoolhouse! We must admire the speed of the carpenters, doubly so, as it appears that classes are already being held. Mr. McKinlay proposed a motion that: "on account of the dark mornings and the distance some of the children have to come, that the hour of opening school be changed from 9:00 to 9:30 until the 1st of March." The proposal was agreed to. Notices of tenders for the supply of ten cords of wood was also confirmed. Mr. Alexis L'Esperance was not present but he probably received an unwelcome surprise when notified that he had been appointed auditor. The furnishings of the school appear to have been simple:

"Motion - 2 Jan. 1901. McKinlay - Todd: that \$4.50 be paid Mr. Church for stove for school and teacher's chair." One concern of the trustees was the constant necessity of finding wood:

"Motion 20th Jan. 1902. "That notices be put out asking for tenders for firewood for next winter (greencut) poplar, cottonwood or other hardwood."

Motion 7th January 1903. Shirliff - Todd "That the secretary post notices at the Shipelay Post Office, at Murray's bridge and at F. Shirliff's corner calling for tenders for 5 cords elm and 5 cords green poplar to be delivered to Elm Bank School in 4 ft. lengths, the poplar to be good size and the elm sound." Had some previous orders been unsatisfactory?

There also seemed to be some difficulty with teachers: "Motion - 10th Jan. 1902. McKinlay - Church, that an agreement be made with Mr Wellwood to teach until the end of June!" But troubles followed: "Motion - 7th January 1903. Shirliff - Todd: that the Secretary write the Inspector regarding Miss Bradford's certificate."

"Motion 2 February 1903. L'Esperance - Shirliff: that the secretary write to the Clerk of the Court for particulars re: judgments against Mr. Wellwood, also regarding bill by Andrews thought exorbitant (Mr. Andrews was a Winnipeg lawyer).

The families sending children off to school in the fall of 1899 - the Shirliffs (George and Fred) Todds, (Gilbert and Peter) L'Esperances, (Louis Alcide and Mederic) G.E. Church's, J. B. Lagimodiere and the McKinlays (no record of the number of children from the latter families). Most families resided within one or two miles from the school. The Louis L'Esperance family lived in a log house built on S.E. 7-10-2W. He had first built west of the creek then moved his house to the east side to a more favorable site. This house was occupied until a few years ago when a new house was built by Inga and Ingwall Broten, the present owners.

Alcide L'Esperance had built a log house on S. E. 5-10-2W on the west side of the La Salle River. Years later Harry Baldwin was living in the log house when it burned. A new frame house was built just east of the river, the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Misonne.

The third L'Esperance brother, Mederic, had built a half mile south of Louis' place. After his death from T.B. in the early 1900's the buildings were abandoned. Bert Shirliff remembers his mother telling how she was driving home from Starbuck with her groceries, watching anxiously as a storm approached. As she passed the empty L'Esperance buildings she was tempted to take shelter there but decided to urge her horse on for home. She was thankful for her decision, as a few moments later glancing back she saw the buildings were completely demolished in the storm.

Brothers, Gilbert and Peter Todd came down from The Pas. Gilbert settled on S.E. ¼ 7-10-2W and Peter on the same quarter but at the east end. Gilbert and his wife raised a family of eleven children. The original log house was replaced by a new frame house in 1927. Peter Todd and his wife raised eight children but moved away in the early 1900's. The original log house remained until recently when the land was purchased by Harold Shirliff.

An interesting resident of the district was Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere who lived where Oliver and Lilah Broten live today. It was said that Lagimodiere was the son of the first white woman in the West. Therefore he was the son of the Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere who made the famous walk to Montreal in 1815 with papers for Lord Selkirk. The Lagimodieres moved away before 1905. Shilhelm Schultz owned the place for many years, adding to the original house. It burned down about 1924 and the Schultzes built a new one. A son, Gustave, and his wife Gertie took over the place on the father's death, later selling out and moving to Dryden, Ontario.

George Shirliff, a brother of Frederick's built on 80 acres lying between the farms of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Shirliff and Mr. and Mrs. Nick Braun. Bert was told a tale about his Uncle George and the last bear killed in the district.

It took place early in the 1900's on Section 8-10-2W, east of the La Salle River in a heavy grove of oaks. A party was out hunting with shot guns, George among them. They came across the bear but not having any rifle bullets they were afraid - or cautious about getting too close. George and one other man returned home to get their rifles, while the remainder continued taking pot shots from too great a distance to do much harm to the bear. However, one of the party had a small three-cornered file. It was decided to wrap string around the file until it fitted into the gun barrel. This was done and one man walked up closer and shot the bear with the file, killing it instantly, just moments before George and his companion galloped up with their rifles. The grove of oaks is still there but no bears. George Shirliff sold his land to his neighbour G. E. Church about 1904 and moved to Log Valley, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Church had bought his farm on S. E. ¼ 18-10-2W in the 1890's but after ten years he sold it to Wilhelm Brusch, father of Arthur Brusch. The original frame house was incorporated into a new larger one which still stands. There was a high windmill there on a wooden tower which drove a small grain grinder. The mill was two storeys high, built inside the timbers of the upper floor. The grain was carried up in sacks on an outside stairway. The Nick Brauns own this farm today.

One can imagine how fascinating the mill activity must have been to the children of the day. But other interesting events claimed their attention as well. Each Friday those living south of McKinlay's watched for the coming of Mr. L'Esperance with the mail sack. Another weekly visitor was Mr. Marcel Mollot with his butcher wagon. Some of the children read their first words from the printing on the side of the small covered wagon, which was really a type of democrat. The words "Marcel Mollot, Butcher, Fresh Meats, Fannystelle" were printed in an artistic arc. To make their selection, the housewives peered through a small screen door at the meat laid out in rows on wooden shelves along the side. In the summer the butcher's visit was a welcome relief from the salt pork and game birds, their usual fare. The little screen door kept a circulation of cooling air on the meat. It also kept out the flies. (I am sure it would please Mr. Mollot that his son Archie and grandson Rene are continuing in his foot steps with their butcher shop in Starbuck).

In the winter the pioneers frequently butchered their own, using the weather as a refrigerator. Many also had small buildings which were packed with ice blocks between layers of sawdust. The blocks were cut from the deepest part of the river, in the coldest months of the winter. By recovering carefully when a block was removed, the ice often lasted until

the end of August. Home-made ice cream was a grand treat for both children and adults in the summertime.

Another amusement of the children was the constant visiting back and between homes. It was common practice for whole families to go visiting, grandmas and babies included. There was much talk and laughter. After there was music. Albert Dauphinais played the violin at many of these local gatherings.

Or perhaps the children listened in on the tall tales so much a part of the days when books and newspapers were scarce. These tales were often about hunting exploits or experiences with Indians, or even of their own hardships, when first establishing their homes on the prairie. Bert tells one about strange lights that were seen on the prairie in early days.

"On calm summer evenings we would see lights close to the ground. I never saw any closely. Dad said they were marsh gas. Some evenings there would be a number of them at various places, far from any homes. Stories were told about people's experiences with these ghostly lights. This is the one I liked best. Travelling across the plain at night, a man saw a number of lights drifting down on him with the wind. One of the lights hit the wagon wheel, broke into a number of small lights and kept on going. Occasionally these lights would be seen in winter in below zero weather. Nobody had an explanation. As the prairies were drained the lights gradually disappeared."

The homes settled north of the school site were somewhat further apart. A Mr. Otto was the original owner on N. E. ½ 18-10-2W. Later he sold to Herman Brusch. After many years, Herman's health broke down. His wife sold out to a Mr. Nentwig, a brother-in-law. Sometime after 1918 Mr. Wright, father of Raymond and Ben, bought the place. Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Rice own it today, having replaced the old house with a new one.

Just north of Otto's there lived a man by the name of Bartell. He was some kind of a doctor, using herbs, rubbing and magnetism. Whatever his methods they must have been effective for he was said to have saved the life of Susie Rice, Andrew Rice's sister. He moved away to the West Indies to Cuba, some said. For years the Schulz family received letters from him, of the wonders of the islands.

The Rice family had bought a Mr. Ryan's farm. Coming from the United States in 1903, they came in the wave of migration that brought so many Scandinavians to the district around Dacotah.

The land of N. E. ¼ 8-10-2W was owned by Charles Fossay, grandfather of the present owner Don Fossay. In the early 1900's Gunder Lofto came up from Fargo, North Dakota and rented the land. The first year he

broke some land and built a house. The next year the family came to join him.

As always, the years brought good times and bad, heartbreak and happiness. A lovely tree in the field of Hector Shirliff's, marks the grave of Mrs. McKurdy - Burt remembers his mother speaking sympathetically of her long illness. Mr. McKurdy had settled on S. W. ¼ 30-10-2W. After his wife died he sold out to Murdock McKenzie, but when the site was flooded in 1904, McKenzie moved the building farther east to higher ground. This was one of two farms bought by Mr. Shirliff in this area in 1920. The other was to the south, occupied by Mr. Sherlock. It is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Shirliff today.

For many years an early pioneer on N. W. ¼ 30-10-2W was Mr. John Monkhouse. His son John also farmed the land after his father's death but eventually he went into another line of work and now he and his wife live in Ottawa, Ontario. The original frame house was remodelled but now stands empty.

Tom Kelly built the original house on N. E. ¼ 25-10-3W. The Viers were living in it when it burned to the ground, and they built a new one. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Howse were the occupants for some years. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Friesen live there today.

The first record of an owner for S. E. ¼ 35-10-3W was Mr. J. O. Smith. He was one of the first of the large farm operators, having as many as ten or twelve four horse teams in the field at a time. Mr. Smith broke up both sections of land south of the buildings. He kept many hired men and one can appreciate the work of the women-folk, especially at threshing time.

All the stories of the heavy burden of work of the early settlers are valid for the pioneers of Shiperlay too. It is well for the residents today to pause and recall the early struggles of their forefathers. Grain was hauled by sleigh with horses as far away as Winnipeg. Wood, too, could be sold through the streets of the city to meet the always pressing need for ready cash. This meant loading the sleigh boxes the day before to get an early start at daybreak. A long day of plodding travel followed, often over bad roads. Late that night, driver and horses arrived at the city, exhausted. The next morning the load was sold and perhaps supplies to take home bought. If things went well the driver might return to Headingly, stopping overnight to break the long journey home.

Beyond the river farms, several families elected to settle on the open prairie. Most had come from the open land of North Dakota. They sunk wells and gouged out dug-outs for water, John and Swen Swenson bought Section 13-10-3W. John building on the N. W. ¼ and Swen on the S. E. ¼.

The Larson family lived across from John, to the west where the James Valley Hutterite Colony is today. Mr. Laidlaw bought on the same section as Andrew Rice, but on the N. E. quarter. A son, Roy, was on the Elm Bank School Board for many years.

To the south towards Starbuck along the La Salle River, there were scattered the homes of Plourde, Louis Dauphinais, Bill and Jim Murray (sons of Sandy), Mike Page, Walsh and Jean-Baptiste Bouvier. When he was about seven years old Bert recalls going with his father to have Mr. Bouvier make collars for his Dad's team of oxen, for he was a harness maker.

Other residents were Boese, Morin, Maxim Lavallee, Noel Gervais, Lachanee, Falcon, Alfhred Page, Alexis Dauphinais, Pierre Lavallee and Meakin (Fred's father).

Albert Lavallee now residing at St. Frances Xavier, told Bert recently he remembers his father Maxim, Mr. Bouvier and three of the Dauphinais brothers, Pierre, Alexis and Patrise, had all homesteaded their property.

As in all communities, changes were constantly taking place. The first World War brought a rising demand for wheat. By this time most of the virgin soil had been broken by plow, using horses or oxen and later tractors. The Shirliff family now consisted of eight children, and in 1917 Mr. Shirliff built a new frame house with five bedrooms. The Swensons, Fossays and one or two others also built new homes, or remodelled existing ones. But of all the changes none seems quite as complicated as that of the little house erected by Mr. Francis Walsh on the S.W. ¼ of 33-9-2W. The frame house had been built in the early days. Later Mr. Walsh moved to N.W. ¼ 4-10-2W, leaving the house empty. Years later Mr. Mollot, the butcher, bought the house, and moved it to a farm near Dacotah which he had bought. Still later, Earl Fossay bought Mr. Mollot's farm and moved the house to the home farm where it is now part of the remodelled home of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Fossay.

The world's tragedies and joys touched the little community along the La Salle. Just as the pioneers were beginning to prosper, the depression of the 30's came. It was a cruel blow to many of the people in their declining years. Mrs. Jack Lavallee, a daughter-in-law of Pierre, was left a widow with seven sons and four daughters. All seven sons served in the Second World War, and Gus was killed in action.

Not until the late 40's did the countryside begin to recover. This period and the 50's marks the erection of several new homes and the enlarging of various farms by the acquisition of more land, or the break-

ing up of much of the last remnants of treed areas.

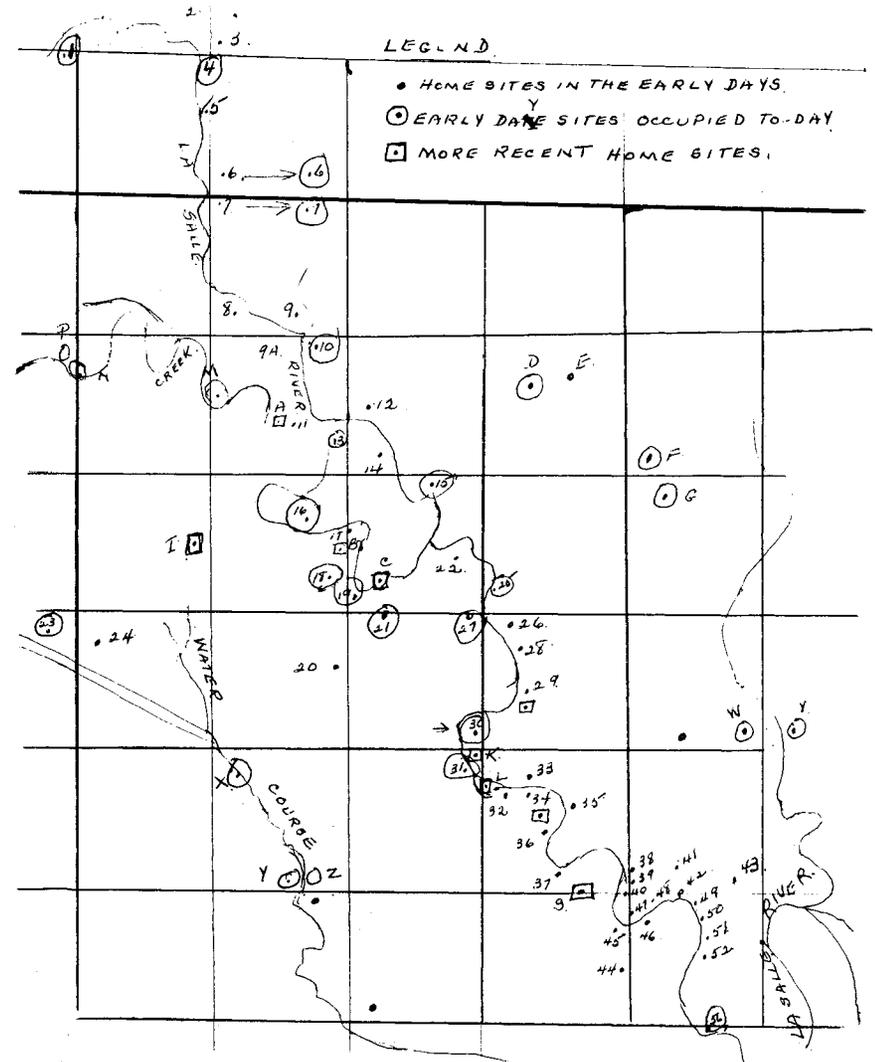
How changed the land would look to those pioneers of yesteryears!

#### MAP OF SITES AND NAMES OF OCCUPANTS

1. J.O. Smith, Benard, Creapeau, L. Girard
2. Lee, Allarie
3. Harry, Bathie
4. Tom Kelly, Viers, Tom Howse, Pete Friesen
5. John Monkhouse
6. McKurdy, Murdoch McKenzie, Hector Shirliff
7. Sherlock, Murdoch McKenzie, Lewis Shirliff
8. Bischoff, about 1918, Joe Tomaschwenski
9. Bartell, Nentwig
- 9A. Jim Ryan had a camp which burned
10. Otto, Herman Brusch, Wright, Irvin Rice
11. George Shirliffe, G.E. Church
12. Believe Emerson Church's place
13. G.E. Church, Brusch, Nick Braun
14. Elm Bank School, closed in 1965
15. Charles Fossay rented to Gunder Lofto, Don Fossay
16. Gilbert Todd, Clara and Dilma Todd, Harold Shirliff
17. Peter Todd
18. J.B. Lagimodiere, Wilhelm Schultz, Gus Schultz, La Chance, Oliver Broten
19. Louis L'Esperance, Ingwall Broten
20. Mederic L'Esperance
21. Fred Shirliff, Alvin Shirliff
22. J. McKinlay, Holland Canute Haddeland, H. Shirliff
23. Cato L'Esperance - built on a small lake, Avila Acquin
24. Allarie, about 1918; a field now
25. Louis Ramstead, leased to Rice, Fletcher, Hollands. Owned by Joe Todd for about 30 years; Mr. Paul
26. Hunter - only cellar hole remains
27. J.S. Cawston, Peter Flodden, Friesen, Alkane, Wuerch, Krause
28. Tabalene L'Esperance, F. Walsh, Vic Johnson, Don Wuerch
29. Only a clearing left
30. Alcide L'Esperance, Baldwin, son Mel, Masonne
31. J.H. (Sandy) Murray, Baldwin, Don Wuerch

32. Ploudre
  33. Bill Murray
  34. Louis Dauphinais
  35. Jim Murray, Earl Fossay
  36. Mike Page, Rose and others, Joe Cekanaskas
  37. Francis Walsh
  38. Jean-Baptiste Bouvier, George Murray
  39. Boise
  40. Morin
  41. Maxim Lavallee, also lived on 42; Kiland
  43. Noel Gervais, now a field
  44. Unknown
  45. Lachance
  46. Falcon, Mrs. Jack Lavallee, Matt Allenboom
  47. Alphred Page, Alex Falcon
  48. Alexis Dauphinais, Bouvier, Albert Dauphinais
  49. Alexis Dauphinais
  50. Pierre Lavalie
  51. Church, Chapel, school home (Fred Meakin remembers attending school here)
  52. Lavallee
  56. Meakin, Ammeter
- A. Fred Shirliff
  - B. Harold Shirliff
  - C. Wilbur Shirliff
  - D. Orville Rice
  - E. Peter Laidlaw, Roy Laidlaw
  - F. Harold Fossay
  - G. Norris Fossay
  - H. Bert Shirliffe
  - I. Archie Todd
  - J. Eli Baldwin
  - K. Russell Baldwin
  - L. Dan Wuerch
  - M. Swen Swenson, Hjlmer Swenson
  - N. John Swenson, Gary and Winfred Swenson, Harold Shirliff
  - P. Larson, James Valley Colony
  - R. Don Kendall
  - S. A. Ammeter
  - W. Joe Cekanaskas

- V. Max Kendall
- X. George Lavallee, formerly Albert Lavallee
- Y. Albert Ammeter, son Albert
- Z. Ed Todd, Walter Schade



## Chapter Twenty

### Allinsons

One of the best known men in the area was "Billy" Allinson. He and his father homesteaded some ten miles south and west of Starbuck. Later he was joined by his nephew Bobbie who is now in his eighties and living in Starbuck.

Billy took a keen interest in municipal affairs. For many years was a councillor and reeve of the Municipality of McDonald. He was also responsible for the building of a school which was named after him. Beside farming, Billie enjoyed the social life of the area and with his fiddle contributed to the enjoyment of the evenings.

Billy and his wife Rachel lived on the farm for many years later moving to Starbuck. Their son Davie still farms with his wife Lois on the original homestead. Chester works in the area, Bernice, now Mrs Fleury, lives in Winnipeg and Phyllis (Mrs. Olson) lives in Starbuck and teaches in Winnipeg. Mrs. Allinson resides in the former Powers house.

## Chapter Twenty-one

### The Baldwin Family

**Information obtained from: Mrs. Eli Baldwin**

Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Baldwin came from Ontario and settled on a farm in the Emerson district in 1877. They farmed for 35 years, then moved to Winnipeg for three years. They were not happy with city life so moved to the country and settled with their nine children on a farm

Northwest of Starbuck in 1915.

The land consisted of prairie and bush. The first summer was spent in a tent while their home was being built. At the time there were few roads and bridges. Most of the hauling was done with horses on a trail through the bush along the river. The old trail can be seen today.

A steam engine was purchased and two breaking plows. Land was broken for themselves and neighbours. Many days were spent picking up roots.

The old steam engine ran for twenty years, threshing for themselves and neighbours with as many as 30 man crew.

Haying was quite a task as it was mowed and hauled from the prairie ten miles to the south.

There were many neighbours, e.g. Dauphinais, Lesperance, Falcon, Albert and Alphie Lavallee, Scramsteads, Ramsteads, Shirliffs, Todds, Lorees, Doc Woodward, Joyces, Billy Morse, Wendell Kelly, Tom Tinkler and the Meakins.

In 1924 Ernie Baldwin gave up farming and ran the elevator in Starbuck for many years. The girls settled in Winnipeg.

From the beginning of nine children of Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Baldwin there are now 27 grandchildren and 75 great-grandchildren.

## Chapter Twenty-two

### Barrs and McRaes

This information was relayed by Mary McRae and Sue Barr.

The Barrs first came to Starbuck from Hoople, North Dakota in 1897. For two seasons they drove over the border with horse teams to their homestead which is now owned by Ronald Fetterman. Mamie and Lucy Barr, who were 16 and 17 years old, accompanied their father and brothers Matt and John to do the cooking. Mary McRae said her mother often spoke of how nervous the girls were out on the bald prairie. She also mentioned how Billy Allinson used to visit them, sometimes bringing his fiddle and playing, especially "Over the Waves."

They would drive back to Hoople in the fall and return in the spring. They did this for two years and then Mary's grandmother, Aunt Annie, Uncle Pat and Barney came. By that time the house in Starbuck was built.

Later this land was acquired by Mary's grandfather (McRae). They farmed for a time. Mr. McRae did a great deal of buying and selling land. As mentioned, Mr. McRae built the house where Leonard Miller now lives. When the McRae's lived by the river Mary's Aunt Agnes McRae met and married Matt Rogers (brother of Hill Rogers). Matt Rogers taught in the Holyrood school. When (Agnes) Dot McRae was born she was named after this Aunt Agnes Rogers.

After the completion of the Barr house in Starbuck they took in boarders. Mr. Hector Torrie (the station agent) stayed there for many years until he married Mamie Blake.

Grandpa Barr often helped people out in obtaining seed for planting especially when they were starting out. Grandmother Barr helped Mrs. Dechene and others to raise money to build the Roman Catholic Church, which they did by having suppers, and sales, etc. As a token of thanks Mr. Dechene gave Mrs. Barr a tea set one Christmas. Mary was given this set by her Aunt Annie.

Besides others the teachers boarded at the Barrs. Sue Barr says that when the people got off the train they were taken to the Barrs until they decided where they were going to settle.

Although the Barrs came to Starbuck from Hoople, N.D. they originally came from Eastern Canada. Mary's mother (Mamie) was born in St. Thomas, Ontario where as Grandmother Barr came from Ireland to Eastern Canada when she was 17.

Mary's uncles, Matt, John, Mark (Pat) later all were employed by the Winnipeg Fire Department starting at the bottom and working up to captains with John becoming a district chief. They all retired from the department and had a good number of years retirement.

Mary's mother married Finlay McRae and they had four children, Mary, Dan, Bill and Agnes (Dot). Mr. McRae was fatally killed at the age of 26 years. During a sudden electric storm he was carrying a plough share and was struck by lightning.

Mary retired from teaching and lives in Winnipeg. Dan and Bill have passed away and Agnes married Bert Morris and lives in Wapella, Saskatchewan. From Mrs. McRae's second marriage to Mr. Foy there were two sons, Earl and Leonard, who have also passed away.

Barney Barr married Sue Cummings and they had eight children,

Marjorie of Winnipeg, Johnnie (still with the Beaver Lumber Co.) in Hagarville, Ontario, Harold (Toughie) in Toronto, Doris (who hit the big league girls' soft ball, and travelled extensively throughout the States) and now lives with her mother in Winnipeg; Ernie of Winnipeg, Belva of St. James, Ronnie (the hockey player, who played many years in England and Germany) of Toronto and Ross of Niagara Falls.

Old timers remember Sue (Cummings) Barr as being a very good pitcher in the Starbuck ladies' baseball team (left handed). No wonder some of her children were sports inclined.

## Chapter Twenty-three

# Cummings

The Cummings came originally from Apple Hill, Ontario to Hammond, Wisconsin. When Mr. Cummings decided to come to Starbuck he stayed at the Barrs for a couple of years. He would go back to Wisconsin in the winter and return in the spring. He established his blacksmith shop and brought his family to Starbuck in 1903. They first stayed with the Stewarts as Mrs. Stewart was Mr. Cumming's sister. The Stewarts lived on the river across from Livingston's where their descendant Wilbur Tinkler still farms. Later they built their own house and had a homestead as well.

The Cummings brought all their children except Alice, who remained in the States. There was Archie, Dwight, Clyde and Sue. Although Archie had only one arm he was very adept at even driving four horses abreast. He sang in the Presbyterian Church choir for many years and later succumbed to sleeping sickness. Clyde and Mabel farmed east and south of Starbuck with their sons Derald and Bill. One remembers this lively family — their love of music and sports. Later they moved to Winnipeg where Derald furthered his love of music, singing in church choirs, etc. From Winnipeg Clyde, Mabel and Derald moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. Bill remained in Winnipeg where he still lives with his family.

We would like to make particular mention of "Sandy" Cummings, the blacksmith. He was much loved by everyone, especially the school

children who had to pass his shop when they were privileged to get a pail of drinking water for the school. One always paused at the open door of the shop to watch horses being shod and the sparks flying from the anvil. Invariably Mr. Cummings would have a bag of candy or a nickel to give you. Then, too, if you went over the bridge to the Cummings' home Mrs. Cummings seemed to have a bottomless cookie jar from which she treated us "hungry kids". Sue Barr married Barney Barr and this is recorded under "Barrs". We would like to mention that Sue was often called on to recite at concerts. If our memory serves us right one of the recitations was "Betty At the Ball Game", very appropriate as Sue was a left handed pitcher.

Although Sue's sister Alice did not come to Canada to live she often came to visit and would give "Elocution Recitals". In fact by putting on a recital she helped raise money for the first organ in the Presbyterian Church.

Clyde and Derald were contestants on the Capital Theatre "Amateur Hour" in Winnipeg. They sang with the Earl Hill Orchestra and were successful in being engaged to sing for two weeks.

## Chapter Twenty-four

# Dechene Family

Mr. G.E. Dechene came originally from St. Roche des Aulnais, Quebec. In 1885 he came with his brother to Saskatchewan. The brother was a surveyor for the federal government. Mr. Dechene returned to Quebec then went to North Dakota as he had a sister in Rollo. He homesteaded there, suffered drought for three years then moved to Manitoba. During his sojourn he worked as a "separator man" at 65 cents per day. He worked as a sales clerk in St. Charles, Manitoba, also in Gretna then came to Starbuck.

When Mr. Dechene built his first store in Starbuck there was no village as such, so he built his store in the middle of what is now known as Main Street, as he couldn't afford to buy land. The families living in the area were Powers, Houstons, Wrixons, Richardsons, and Allin-

sons and some settlers north and west along the river. This first small store provided the bare essentials such as flour, sugar, salt, etc., and usually was paid for by cord wood, and farm supplies.

Another store was built in property procured by Mr. Dechene which later was replaced by a fine tall building built in 1910. On the main floor were the store and post office and the second floor was a hall with a fine hardwood floor, and many dances, concerts and socials were held there. Later it was converted into an apartment. The Dechene's house was built by Mr. Berthiaume and Louise (Lula) was born there. Besides running a store Mr. Dechene made cheese and marketed it for a while.

Mr. Dechene married Margaret Hunter and through the years their hospitality was extended to many people.

The general store consisted of dry goods, hardware, groceries, farm machinery. Some of the clerks employed were Mr. Berthiaume (son of the builder) who died at an early age of a heart attack and is buried in the Starbuck Catholic cemetery. There were also Bessie Blake, Henry Painchaud and perhaps the one most fondly remembered was Ole Gilbertson.

As stated elsewhere, Mr. Dechene was appointed postmaster in 1894.

The Dechenes had three children: Wilfred (Bill), Gustave (Bud) and Louise (Lula). After the First World War, Bill who had served in the Strathcona Horse brought back a bride from Belgium. Bud married Viola Broten and Lulu married Leo Menard.

Bill and Bud both attended St. Boniface College and both had their turns managing the general store. Mr. Dechene and the boys were ardent sportsmen. Bud is particularly remembered for his hard shots in hockey and both played baseball for many years.

Bill was elected secretary treasurer of the Manitoba Branch of the Postmaster's Association and on June 17, 1965 was presented with a plaque from the Hon. Tremblay, Postmaster General of Canada, expressing appreciation for 26 years of service. He was also awarded life membership in the Postmaster's Association.

Mr. Dechene (Sr.) helped to obtain the first telephones and hydro in Starbuck. The first "central exchange" was installed in the store. All the Dechenes took turns operating the switchboard until cousin Horace came from Quebec. They also read the metres and made out and collected the bills.

Bill's wife Mi'Lou became postmistress and Bill continued as assistant postmaster. On Mrs. Dechene's retirement their daughter Armele

became postmistress, making the fourth Dechene to service the mail in the district.

Bud and Viola's daughter, Verona, graduated from university and is a librarian with the University of Manitoba and commutes daily from her home in Starbuck.

#### Chapter Twenty-five

### Demlers — Kaisers

Mary and Jacob Demler, Mary and Louise came to Canada from the Volga River area in Russia in 1907. They came to Winnipeg and stayed for six months then went to Rosenfelt, Manitoba and lived there for three years. They came to Starbuck in 1910 and rented a farm from Captain Beebe (where Ed Rathert now lives). Henry and Pete were born in Rosenfelt. Mollie, Bernice, Laude, Frances, Thelma and Iva arrived after they came to Starbuck. Mr. Demler died in 1919 and in 1921 Mrs. Demler married John Kaiser, and their children are Bill, Theodore, Anne, Erica and Adeline. Mr. Kaiser was killed by one of his animals.

Later the Holmes' farm was purchased and the Kaisers moved south and west of Starbuck where Pete still farms with his wife Bertha (Halstead), a former Prairie View school teacher.

Mrs. Kaiser recalls the days when they lived across the road from Henry Codner, who came from Kentucky. He drove a pair of cream-coloured mules and brought their mail from Starbuck daily. Gunder Westerlund worked for Codner before he purchased a farm of his own and probably used more mules on his farm than any other farmer in the area. Mrs. Kaiser said they had very good neighbours such as the Ratherts, Pfeifers and Fettermans.

Mrs. Kaiser has always been a remarkably active, capable woman, and keenly interested in the community and helping to raise her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. On her next birthday March 12 she will be 89 years old.

#### Chapter Twenty-six

### The Dunlops

One of the best known men of Starbuck is George Dunlop. Just mention baseball and old-timers will recall his prowess in this field.

In talking to the Dunlops we found that the Dunlop farm on Section 39 - 1 West was purchased by William Dunlop from Graham Pomeroy of Forest River, North Dakota. Mr. and Mrs. William Dunlop, Tom, Billie, Margaret and Kathleen (Kitty) came to live in Starbuck in 1901. Due to typhoid fever George followed a year later. The farm was divided among the boys in 1904.

George met his wife Tillie at a birthday party held at the Powers' home. They were married January 18, 1905 and moved to the house which is still occupied on the east side of the La Salle River, Highway No. 2.

George was a natural at baseball and encouraged by Jack Johnson (who later moved to Kenora), George was engaged to play in Keewatin in 1907.

He started as a pitcher and was very successful playing on the Keewatin team. After a year he returned to Starbuck.

He has many chuckles recalling the early ball players on the Starbuck team, which included his brother Tom, McQueen (the C.P.R. station agent), Duke Holt, Dwight Cummings, Pat Kennel, Bob Cochrane (Presbyterian student minister, later Moderator of the United Church), Billie Hushka and many others. He relates how the Carman team came to Starbuck to play on a July 1st tournament and never got to first base.

As stated, George was the pitcher and George McQueen was the catcher. Later umpires were hired for tournaments and one of these was "Bobby" Bend (later provincial Liberal leader).

In later years Starbuck, Sanford and Sperling had scheduled games and such pitchers as Smokey Harris, pitching for Starbuck, and Andy Blair for Sanford (later a hockey player with the Toronto Maple Leafs).

George came back to the farm and stayed until 1912. He then accepted employment with The International Harvester as what was then

termed "an expert" until 1917. His brother Tom was also engaged by the same company. He continued playing baseball for the International Harvester. Tom continued working for the company until his retirement. A daughter Muriel (Mrs. Pollock) resides in Winnipeg.

Tillie Dunlop's parents built the Starbuck Hotel which still stands with some alterations and additions. There were many young bachelors staying at the hotel. Naturally Tillie and her sister helped generally around the hotel. The hotel was built by Gunder Johnson and sold four years later to the Blakes.

George's parents built a general store and machinery shop which is presently occupied by Jack Stewart. After a time the senior Dunlops sold out to the Stenbergs and retired to live in Glenboro.

In 1970 George and Tillie celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. Their daughter Vivian (Mrs. Gordon Wrixon) resides in Winnipeg. A son Ernest was killed during the Second World War while serving in the R.C.A.F. They have three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. They were the recipients of congratulations including Queen Elizabeth and members of the provincial and municipal governments.

They have always interested themselves in Starbuck and the community and the farm. George takes a keen interest in sports of all kinds, especially baseball.

## Chapter Twenty-seven

### Fettermans

Ben and Ida Fetterman came from Dubuque, Iowa to Starbuck on March 1, 1907. They and their family Pansy, Blanche, Laude, Fred and Iva stayed with the Millers, who had come in 1905. Mr. Fetterman bought a house on the river from Mr. Bob Burns (where Leonard Miller now lives). This house was built by Finlay McRae or his father. The Burns' moved temporarily to the manse beside Blakes while their house in Starbuck was being completed. Their house in Starbuck still stands and is the teacherage beside the United Church.

The Fettermans first went to Holyrood School, then to Starbuck. Their neighbours were the Blakes, Houstons, Livingstons, Wrixons and of course, the Millers. Mr. Fetterman bought farm land some five miles south and east of Starbuck which consisted of 1,100 acres. Ronald and Raymond Fetterman and Leonard Miller are still farming this land.

Laude and Fred Fetterman worked with their father on the farm. Fred attended the University of Manitoba and graduated in agriculture and later bought a farm in Gros Isle and there he and his wife Jane raised four sons to carry on the Fetterman name. Pansy graduated as a teacher from Normal School and taught at Carroll, Manitoba, marrying Bob Harding. Blanche married her school chum, Ray Miller from Dubuque, Iowa, and Iva married Nels Brynelson. Laude married Hesper Olsen and they had six children: Bud in Sioux Ste. Marie, Raymond and Ronald on the farm, Phyllis (deceased), Beth (Mrs. Doug Hallick) and Nelma (teaching at the University of Alberta in Edmonton).

As stated elsewhere, Mr. Ben Fetterman took a very active part in the community, e.g., pool elevators, Farmer's Store, school boards, etc., and his sons and grandsons have followed in his footsteps.

## Chapter Twenty-eight

### Frantz

In talking to Clark Frantz we find that George and Letitia Frantz arrived in Starbuck on April 7, 1908 with their three boys, Donald, Clark and Allen. Later Mary and Lois were born. The Frantz's came from Dakota, Illinois

Mr. Frantz purchased two 240-acre farms at W½ 2-9-2W and 14-9-2W. One of the farms was later sold and is now owned by Wilfred Masse. The other farm where Clark still lives was on the edge of the "swamp". Clark recalls the tremendous number of wild life in that swamp and later in the summer how the area was dotted with hay stacks. The hay was "bucked" up to the stacks by horses and it was quite an art building a stack that would be water proof. He also commented on a neighbour, Mr. Curzy who had oxen and even hitched up a horse and oxen on a

wagon. Mention was made of the Graf family and how during a severe snow storm Mr. Graf tied a ball of twine to house and barn to guide him. Otherwise he would likely have been lost. He was often amazed later how the Olsen brothers could "strike out a furrow" so straight — a mile long.

The house in which Clark and Eva live was built in 1911 and with some alterations has been well preserved. Here their children Alvin, Verne, Patricia and Neil grew up, and are now all married. Alvin lives in Steinbach, Verne and Patricia in Winnipeg and Neil in Starbuck.

The Frantzs were keenly interested in good farming, gardening and planting trees. Visitors were always welcome. George Frantz and Ben Fetterman were great friends. However, we used to feel a little cheated when we listened in on the telephone and couldn't understand them because they were talking what we referred to as "Pennsylvania Dutch".

Donald and Allen moved to the United States. Donald has since died and Allen lives in Alton, Missouri. Mr. Phineas Cole, a neighbour, nicknamed Allen "Buckshot". Mary married Jim Tanner and they live in Brunkild and their daughter is a medical secretary. Lois married Harold Lake and they live in St. Vital; their son works in the Federal Department of Fisheries.

## Chapter Twenty-nine

# Goldsboroughs

The following information was obtained from Laura (Goldsborough) Hinks. 1845

In ~~1871~~ the first white baby girl was born in the Blythe field area. At present the McDowells reside here. This honour belonged to Emma Mellow. Later in life she married John Fletcher Goldsborough. The marriage took place on July 30, 1894 and was performed by Rev. Flatt.

Mr. Goldsborough came originally from England. He took a very active part in the community of Ferndale. He was secretary-treasurer of the school for 29 years and served as councillor and reeve of the

municipality. His son Joe was a councillor for many years.

The Goldsboroughs were blessed with six children: Laura, Joseph, Arthur, Hattie, Ralph and Grace. Mrs. Goldsborough did not have the assistance of a doctor with any of the births, until Grace was born. Mrs. Bob Burns often acted as a midwife to women in the area.

Early settlers living in this era were the Bodys, McCalls, Warrens, Burns, Frasers, Friars (Bill Friar went to Japan as a missionary), McIntyres, Ross' and Greenways.

There was a medical preacher by the name of Dr. Morrison who held Methodist services in the school house. He owned a farm now owned by Jim Poor. The Friars helped build the first church. Speaking of churches — the present United Ferndale Church was financed by the ladies in the area selling hot dogs at E.D. Morse's auction sales.

Some of the ministers occupying the pulpit were: Flatt, Switzer, Carson and Chapman, besides student ministers, the latter usually stayed at the Goldsboroughs. Many people from Sanford and Golden Valley attended the services.

Mr. Mellow was superintendent of the Sunday school and was succeeded by Mr. Goldsborough.

The first teacher in Ferndale was Miss Annie McKinnon who later married Leon McCall.

The house in which Laura and George Hinks now reside was moved to this location in 1903 by the Goldsboroughs. This was a heavily wooded area and trees had to be cut down to move the house in. The saskatoons and wild plum trees were laden with fruit.

During the 1882 flood many people had to move to higher ground. During the 1904 flood Laura remembers that the La Salle River was so high their boat was tied to the house.

In this still beautifully wooded area the Goldsboroughs live in what could be termed "The Goldsborough Commune" and they still take an active part in the community affairs.

## Halland and Corneliusen

These names are still used together when people talk of the "old times". What a store they had! Here you could purchase anything from coffins to lute-fiske.

Although neither of these families are now living in Starbuck, the Hallands and Haddelands own considerable land.

Both families came to Starbuck from Kindred, North Dakota. From a brief visit with Hilding (Spike) Corneliusen this past summer we reminisced and the following information is recorded:

Martinus and Nellis Corneliusen and their daughter Thelma came to Starbuck in 1902. Hilding was born in Starbuck and he thinks Mrs. Rice assisted at his birth.

He remembers when they employed as many as five clerks and a bookkeeper in the store and recalls such employees as Knute Haddeland, Stein Sanderson, Johnnie, Oscar and Nels Brynelson, Plourde, Edwin Johnson, etc.

There was a great variety of merchandise sold such as machinery, oil, caskets, furniture, flour, sugar, fruit, lute fiske (by the barrel), cheese from Ontario shipped in by the car load, apples by the barrel, dry goods, etc.

Hilding was always fascinated by anything mechanical and remembers being "bawled out" for driving a car when he was only 10 years old. Once Mr. Halland offered \$5 to anyone who could get his big engine started and after many tries Hilding succeeded and won the \$5.

Mr. Halland later sold out to Mr. Herbert, later in 1920 Corneliusen sold out to a Jewish fellow, who was followed by Sundin, Buhr brothers and Molgat.

Hilding left Starbuck to work for the Manitoba Good Roads, then went to the International Harvester, was transferred to Vancouver and retired from there. While still in Starbuck he married Noella Cardinal and they now live in Pitt Meadows, B.C.

In contacting Sarah Haddeland and Selina Halland by mail we have obtained further information regarding Hallands coming to Starbuck.

They came from Kindred, North Dakota in 1901, about the same time as many other Scandinavians found North Dakota was becoming too settled. Mr. Halland had a lumber yard in Kindred which he sold and took a trip to Norway before coming to Starbuck.

Mr. Halland came to Starbuck to get settled more or less before bringing his family. Selina relates that they spent the first winter in Winnipeg and arrived in Starbuck in early spring. The store and lumber yard were there. They moved into the hall above the store and lived there while their house was being built. They had the hall partitioned off with blankets. Besides making meals for her family Mrs. Halland also cooked for Gundar Johnson and the other carpenters building their house.

At that time Selina remembers Dechene's old store with a cowbell on the door, Cummings' blacksmith shop, McColls' little store, the Presbyterian Church. Hallands' was the first house to be built on the street. It was heavily wooded, on the banks of the La Salle and many trees had to be cut. There was a one-room school, and Chris Stenberg's butcher shop and the station was an old box car.

On their first night in Starbuck they slept in what is now Signe Johnson's house but they moved from there to Barrs (which was a new house). During the flood Selina remembers going to Winnipeg with a hired girl and they had to get off the train and walk on the track with water all around to another train a short distance away.

As mentioned the area where they built their house was heavily wooded. As Selina says there were all kinds of fruit trees, hazel nuts, wild plum, chokecherries, pin cherries, high bush cranberries, nannyberries, saskatoons, strawberries and raspberries. Sometimes they would pick them in milk pails and dump them in a tub — too many to can but their mother would extract the juices. Later Mr. Halland had a nice little orchard near the sidewalk — handy for snitching fruit by school kids.

From Sarah we learn that Mr. Halland bought about 2,000 acres of land ranging from \$7 per acre to \$15 and \$20. Knute Haddeland came to Starbuck from Norway in 1905 and later married Sarah.

The members of the Halland family were Sarah, Axel, Selina and Hendrick (Hank). Axel married Margaret Trick (teacher) and had a garage

for years and then moved to California. Axel's widow and two children still reside in California. Selina taught for many years at Success Business College, then moved to the States and now lives in Vancouver. "Hank" graduated in engineering from the University of Manitoba and designed a number of bridges and subways in Winnipeg and his work even took him as far as India. He finally passed away at his home in Vancouver.

Sarah and Knute Haddeland lived a number of years in the United States and then came back to Starbuck to live. Knute was one of the founders of the Starbuck Credit Union. Knute passed away in Starbuck and Sarah now lives in Vancouver. They had two children, both university graduates, George living in California and Maureen (Mrs. Roy Stenberg) in Vancouver.

We mentioned that Halland and Corneliusens had a bookkeeper. He was kept very busy as there were so many charge accounts. Some were as high as \$2,000. They were usually paid after harvesting, in appreciation the customer was often given a gift, e.g. "yard goods" for a dress for his wife. Farm produce was taken in exchange for goods, such as eggs (by the crate) or butter. Often people would come out by train from Winnipeg to buy this produce as it was so much cheaper. Another point of interest was taking the kerosene (coal oil) can in to be filled and when filled a huge gum drop candy was put on the spout. On reaching home, regardless of the taste, there was a scramble amongst the children for this candy.

### Chapter Thirty-one

## Alexander Houston

Along with his brother Robert, Alex was one of the oldest pioneers of Starbuck. He was born in Lesmahagou, Scotland in 1844. He came to Canada with his parents at the age of 16 and settled in Bruce County, Ontario. There he married Isabella Dempsey.

In 1879 Mr. and Mrs. Houston moved to Starbuck where he farmed until shortly before his death in his 88th year. They had six children:

David, Robbie, John, Lowry, Nettie and Minnie. David married Laura Rice and farmed for years in the area as well as running the butcher shop. Robbie married his brother John's widow Iris and they lived for years on the home farm and their daughter Vera later married "Bud" Mills. John who was a medical doctor died at a very early age and his son John graduated from university and is now living in Minneapolis.

Lowry married Edna Myers and their son Harry is the only descendant (grandson) of Alex Houston living in the area. Nettie married Chris Brynelson and moved to Winnipeg. Chris was employed by the C.P.R. Minnie married Tom Howse and lived at both Springstein and Elie. Brian Norton is at present living on the original site on No. 2 Highway, a mile or so east of Starbuck.

This Houston family took an active part in the community and old-timers remember Lowry donning a kilt and singing Scottish songs, especially "Harry Lauder" songs.

We regret to say that all the sons and daughters of Alex and Isabella Houston have passed away but there are many of their descendants to carry on.

### Chapter Thirty-two

## Robert Houston

Mr. Robert Houston was born in Lesmahagou, Scotland on February 7, 1849. When thirteen years of age, he came to Canada with his parents who settled in Bruce County, Ontario.

He assisted his parents at home for some time and then went into the saw mill business. He continued in this work for several years. At the age of 29 he sold out his interests with the intention of going west.

On June 19, 1878 he married Margaret McBurney of Teeswater, Ontario. They spent their honeymoon on a westward journey in search of a new home.

They travelled by rail to Fisher's Landing, then by stage to Grand Forks. They were undecided whether to locate near Grand Forks or go on but their decision was soon made after spending one Sunday in that

town. They were awakened on Sunday morning by the ringing of anvils in a nearby blacksmith's shop, where business was going on as usual. They decided to board a boat and come up the Red River to Winnipeg. After a year of searching they finally settled near the present village of Starbuck. Their only means of travelling at that time was with an ox and cart.

Here they settled down where their five girls and four boys were born and raised: Mary (Mrs. Jim Robinson), Margaret (Mrs. Harold Curll), Davie, Jack, Russell, Euphemia, Edith (Mrs. Ed Johnsen), Lillian (Mrs. Geo. Blackwell) and Clifford.

Mr. Houston took a very active interest in the public life of the St. Francis Xavier Municipal Council for seven years. He was elected to the school board in 1883 and served almost continuously as secretary-treasurer.

He was greatly interested in the Manitoba Trustee Association and attended 19 of the 21 conventions and was auditor of the Association for seven years.

Realizing the benefits of the consolidation of schools, he accepted an invitation from the Board of Education to assist in an educational campaign to bring consolidation to the attention of the ratepayers.

He took a prominent part in the United Farmers Movement, being chairman of the local association for several years. His activity in helping to establish the pool system of marketing is recorded under "Pool Elevator".

Both Mr. and Mrs. Houston were active church members, first with the local Presbyterian Church since 1882. Mr. Houston served on the church managing board and was superintendent of the local Sunday school for some 40 years, while Mrs. Houston taught Sunday school for as many years and was president of the first Ladies' Aid Society and was awarded a life membership pin by her esteemed fellow members in 1928.

On June 19, 1928, with a host of friends and relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Houston celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Of the nine children born to the Houstons only Euphemia is still living. A grandson, Ernest Houston, farms in the area.

## Chapter Thirty-three

### Livingstons

William and Margaret Livingston came to Starbuck from Perth, Ontario in 1901. They intended to buy land and settle north of Starbuck but it was all under water so they purchased land south and east of Starbuck where Roy now lives.

They had five children: Howard, Bert, Lily, Bob and Gordon (the latter died at an early age). Howard, Bert and Bob farmed in the area for many years. Howard married Isabel Larson and Isabel still lives on their farm. Bert married Carrie Miller (who also originally came from Perth, Ontario) and Bob married Ellen Larson and Ellen still has a home on the original Livingston farmstead.

Carrie and Bert's son Gordon graduated in agriculture from the University of Manitoba and operates the farm and takes an active part in agricultural affairs. Ellen and Bob's sons, Roy and Billie, run their farms as well as farming rented lands and both are active community men. Isabel and David Livingston reside on their farm.

## Chapter Thirty-four

### Millers

William and Emma Miller came to Starbuck from Dubuque, Iowa in 1905. Their children were Maggie, Elias, Emmett, Roy, Earl, Ruth and Clyde. Their farm is now occupied by the Hutterites.

Mr. Miller was always interested in available land and he bought another farm and built the house where Florence Masse now lives. Later he bought 80 acres of land and built a house and barn where Fritz

Ammeter and family now live. This 80 acres was seeded to wheat and in 1915 (the year of the big crop) it yielded 50 bushels to the acre. At the time the house was built we thought it was one of the nicest in the area with its oak floors and staircase. Many enjoyable parties were held there.

Maggie was a "natural" nurse and assisted at the births of many babies in the area including some of the Miller and Fetterman babies. Elias married his neighbour, Edie Wrixon; they later lived in Humbolt, Saskatchewan. Earl (the only one now living) married a girl in South Dakota. Ruth married Harry Mills and raised a large family. Clyde married Annie Lenchuk and moved to live in Gimli. Their daughter Irene, although a paraplegic, has attained much publicity and received many medals in local and international Olympic competitions. Clyde is fondly remembered as an ardent baseball and hockey player and his generosity in transporting players to games via horse and car. In Gimli he took an active part in coaching in sports. Ray married Blanche Fetterman and their daughter Marguerite is minister of the United Church at High Bluff. As mentioned, Leonard farms in the Starbuck area; Gilbert is manager of a lumber company in Brampton, Ontario; Alvin is a grain buyer in Sanford and Claire is vice-president of marketing for one of the largest insurance companies in Canada and resides in Winnipeg.

## Chapter Thirty-five

### Meakins

In talking to Fred Meakin we learned that Fred was born at Headingley and at two years of age came to Starbuck with his family in 1891. Fred's father came originally from England and married a Canadian girl, Miss Tait.

Mr. Meakin first bought a quarter section of land and paid \$356 for it. He had to build a bridge to get across to the land on the south side. Fred stated they used to get lost coming from Headingley on the bush trails. He also remembers that one of the Ryan girls and one of Smithy Worth's daughters died of diphtheria. Then too, Fred tells of a

little Catholic log chapel west of Starbuck and the priest holding a service there on St. John Baptiste Day.

Fred said there were muskrats all over the swamp to the south and west. He remembers an old man from Fannystelle coming down to shoot them in a hollowed-out log for a boat.

Fred went to the Kinlough School and shared a seat with Elmore Arnelle. He recalls how they had their plough shares sharpened by Harry Fraser who lived where Billie Johnson now lives and he married Ida Body. He also recalls such names as Paul Cote, La Chance, Noel Gervais (Albert Dauphinais married one of his daughters), Ryans, Boucher, Blacks, Plourdes, Dan McKellar (a staunch conservative) and his son Billie, Falcons and how Mr. Milne Sr. worked for Hinch and hired "democrats" to drive prospective colonists around the country to see the land available.

The Meakins — Valendine, Fred, Nellie, Fannie, Vincent, Elsie, John, Gertrude and Joe had many friends and when they built their "new" house it was greatly admired by all, especially the murals on the walls. Later they built a new barn and it afforded a grand opportunity to have a bang-up "barn dance". The original home of the Meakins is now owned by the Ammeters and Fred still farms to the south and west.

## Chapter Thirty-six

### E. D. Morse

A name long to be remembered in the area and one of the most colourful farmers was Everette (E.D.) Morse. He was known for miles around as "the auctioneer", conducting auction sales for 50 years.

His ability to entertain was widely appreciated, particularly his art of telling stories and cutting characters from paper simultaneously.

The Morse family came to the Starbuck-Ferndale area about 1909 from Wichita, Kansas.

Everette married Aleda Melsness and they had four sons and four daughters: Milton (Tip) who died in 1942, Eugene (Zach) of Edmonton,

Leroy (Buck) in Toronto, Marvin (Joe) at Starbuck, Mrs. A. (Lillian) Burns of Starbuck, Mrs. R. (Cindy) Burns of Toronto, Mrs. H.J. (Maisie) Shirliff of Starbuck and Mrs. O. (Doreen) Duesoy of Fort Whyte.

## Chapter Thirty-seven

### Olsens

Mr. Otis Olsen came to Starbuck in 1900 and purchased 240 acres of land two miles south of Starbuck at approximately \$2 per acre. Mrs. (Orpha) Olsen and the children, Henry, Mildred, Cecil, Hesper and Carroll came up from Portland, North Dakota in 1901. They lived in a little log cabin just south of Robert Houston's house while Mr. Olsen built their house on the bald prairie. Floris was born in the newly constructed house, with the kind assistance of Mrs. Powers. There were no doctors in the area.

Neighbours were always willing to help. Mr. Livingston and his family were going to Perth, Ontario for the winter so it was arranged that the Olsens live in the Livingston house for the winter. There was room for the combined stock in the stable. It was a bitterly cold March when the Olsens moved back to their partially completed house. To keep from freezing Mr. Olsen put blankets around the stove in the living room and the family huddled there.

Gradually the land was prepared for seeding and more stock was acquired. Around 1915 Mr. Olsen put a down payment on a section of land five miles to the south and west. This was farmed by Henry and Cecil. In the interim on the home farm Mr. Olsen hired Gundar Johnson to build a huge barn which accommodated some 20 horses or more, and cattle.

Mr. Olsen was always interested in gardening and trees, and planted thousands of trees as a wind break and also as a "joy to behold". There were willows, ash, maple, cotton woods and choke cherries as well as goodly number of fruit trees. Strawberries were also planted and produced bushel baskets full of berries.

Before marriage, Mrs. Olsen was a school teacher and had taken up music. In her spare time she gave music lessons. She took a very active part in church work and is remembered by some as "the best Sunday school teacher they ever had".

During the depression the Olsens had to let their section of land go back to the former owner in Nebraska. After paying thousands of dollars it was difficult to give the farm back but such were the "dirty thirties". Cecil Olsen continued to work the home farm and then sold it to Walter Schrof.

Henry Olsen was one of the first bank tellers in The Merchants Bank in Starbuck. Mildred and Floris became teachers (Hesper taught for a short while, then married Laude Fetterman). At a very young age Carroll left with Harry Whitmore to join the U.S. Navy in the First World War. He later returned and married Ida Polton and farmed in the area as well as being caretaker of the school. Later they moved to Winnipeg and until his retirement he was employed by T.C.A. Carroll and Ida's three sons, Don, Tom and Cliff, have sons of their own to carry on the Olsen name. Mildred married Bill Wright of Myrtle and has two daughters. Mildred now lives in Winnipeg. Cecil married Alice Wrixon and they reside in Transcona. After teaching, Floris attended United College, did church work in Calgary, then returned to Winnipeg and worked for the federal government for 30 years.

## Chapter Thirty-eight

### Powers

Mr. John Powers came originally from Ontario and was the first postmaster in Starbuck. He owned various farms in the area. One of the farms is still being farmed by a grandson, Johnnie Norton.

Mr. and Mrs. Powers' home was open house to many friends and newcomers. Mrs. Powers was a very kindly person and assisted in the births of many a baby in the neighbourhood as well as taking an active

part in church work. The Powers' family, besides being hard working, also enjoyed social events, particularly dancing. John and Willie were exceptionally good dancers and John also took his turn with Beechie Wrixon at "calling off" square dances.

Mr. and Mrs. Powers had a large family: Millie, Belle, Jennie, Pearl, John, Carrie, Lena and Willie. Millie married Wilbur Wright and moved to Winnipeg to live. Belle married Art Norton who was the grain buyer for Ogilvie Flour Elevators in Starbuck. They had five sons and one daughter: Lyall, Ernie, Johnnie, Billie and "Vi". Johnnie and his wife, Thelma, still live in the Norton house.

John Powers (Jr.) left Starbuck to work in Winnipeg until his demise. Carrie died at an early age. Lena married Marion Rynhard and moved to Winnipeg. Pearl married Mr. McLaren, a bank manager, and lived in various localities and later in Winnipeg. Willie moved to Edmonton to live. Willie is the only surviving member of this pioneer family.

## Appreciation

We would like to extend sincere thanks to Floris Olsen and 'Bill' Dechene for the time and effort they have so willingly given in compiling this book.

We would also like to thank Patricia (Frantz) Spakowski for the time she has so willingly given in typing this book.

When good friends walk beside us,  
On the trails that we must keep,  
Our burdens seem less heavy  
And the hills are not so steep.  
The weary miles pass swiftly  
Taken in a joyous stride,  
And all the world seems brighter  
When friends walk by our side.

Starview Manor Society.