

EARLY HISTORY

of

CAMROSE

ALBERTA

and

DISTRICT

112427



1947



A PORTION OF THE TOWN OF CAMROSE, JULY 15th, 1947 — TAKEN FROM THE TOP OF THE NORMAL SCHOOL BUILDING

—Photo by Langbell

Foreword

CAMROSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY presents souvenir of the Fortieth Anniversary of Camrose.

It is anticipated that this little souvenir will serve as a lasting memento of a milestone in the life of our community.

Camrose Historical Society is one of the very few organizations of the kind in Alberta—perhaps it is safe to say the only one in the centres outside of the cities. It was instituted in 1933.

As a direct result of the Society's activities the nucleus of a district museum was established. It has been added to through the years and contains many mementoes of the earliest days of settlement in this region of which Camrose is the centre.

The president and originator of the Society and museum, Frank L. Farley, has served continuously as its chief officer; it was his idea that the stories gathered within a year or two after the formation of the Society might be made into an appropriate souvenir of the Fortieth Anniversary. His suggestion met with the approval of the Anniversary Executive and thus it comes about that the material assembled at the expenditure of some time and effort was ready to hand for this special occasion.

The world's museums house many ancient relics and writings saved from destructive invasions and other disasters. These give proof of the conditions and culture of those peoples and are deeply treasured. And still the quest goes on among the ruins of buried cities, and elsewhere, to uncover evidences of the life lived by Homo Sapiens in the first dim ages, and in later periods.

And in this corner of the globe The Camrose Historical Society has committed to posterity something of the past of our community and the quest goes on for further material.

Stephen Leacock, noted Canadian writer and humorist, said in his introduction to the recently published book, "Canada—Foundations of Its Future", the following: "The large canvas of our Canadian history carries a wonderful wealth of light and color, in the romance of exploration and adventure it has already in places its 'long, long ago'. With this are the annals of three centuries of history unrivalled in its varied and picturesque interest".

And Camrose district, less than a half century ago a lovely, untravelled parkland, is one of later designs woven into that ever changing 300-year-old tapestry.

The Camrose Historical Society deems it fortunate that through action taken soon after its formation, material for a suitable souvenir is at hand. When all that is fleeting about the coming Fortieth Celebration has vanished, the booklet here presented may serve as a lasting expression of this important event.

—I. D. S.

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY HISTORY OF CAMROSE

By Frank Perley Layton

Twenty-five Miles of Railway Grade

HISTORY was made on a fine summer morning in 1904 when an outfit of men, mules and machinery pushed eastward from Wetaskiwin through a pretty parkland region. The outfit, owned by Phalen and Shirley, railroad contractors, were under contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to grade 25 miles of new railway line from Wetaskiwin to Winnipeg via Saskatoon.

Work started at the limits of Wetaskiwin to the accompaniment of much cussing on the part of the mule drivers and high hopes on the part of the contractors and the settlers.

The engineers had been over the route and the townsites had been surveyed.

Among these future centres of population was Sparling, named after Rev. Dr. Sparling of Winnipeg. This townsite was beautifully situated on the banks of Stoney Creek on the S. W. Quarter of Section 2, Township 47, Range 20, west of the 4th meridian.

The land was the homestead of Ole Bakken, who, after the visit of the engineers, sold a one-third interest to Edmund Thompson, an old settler and land guide, and a one-third interest to John Paulson, newcomer from the United States, who opened a real estate office with a view to selling the townsite lots.

The Ole Bakken Legend

Of this Ole Bakken, legend has it that either through a dream he had while living in his native Norway, or from a fortune teller in the U.S.A., he was foretold he would move to Canada, take up a homestead with a stream running through it, and that on his farm a city would arise. However true the legend may be, Ole did come to Canada, his homestead was the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 2, Twp. 47, Rge. 20, W 4th, with Stoney Creek running through the south-west corner and on his farm a city is in the making.

Ole's modest home was a centre of hospitality any many a wayfarer partook of his home made bread.

Modest Beginning of Eight Blocks

This townsite of Sparling had a modest beginning of eight blocks, but by 1911 a real estate boom had brought about a surveyed area of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north and south and 3 miles east and west.

While several townsites were surveyed along this railway line at this time Sparling seemed to outstrip all the others in building up. Possibly this was due to the fact that the first business men were young, filled with optimism and vigor and lived together in marked harmony.

The First Merchants

The First Hotels and other Buildings

The first merchant was Duncan Sampson who came from Little Current on the Manitoulan Island, Ontario. In May, 1904 Mr. Sampson erected a small store with dwelling upstairs on the road allowance on the west side of the townsite. The townsite, while surveyed, was not thrown open for sale until October, 1904, when Mr. Sampson who had been promised "first pick" of the lots bought Lot 4, Blk. 2, for \$200.00 and moved his store building to that location.

Before postal facilities were organized, arrangements were made with Joe Cowan, who drove a mail coach from Wetaskiwin to Heather Brae, to leave the mail for Sparling settlers in a soap box in Sampson's store. There being no postmaster, each settler picked out his own mail meanwhile reading the postmarks and post cards of others. In a few months time a regular post office was opened with Harry Foucar in charge.

Other squatters on the road allowance with Mr. Sampson were K. O. Eggen, harness shop; John Gallagher, foreman for Phalen & Shirley, office and building; Stoney Creek Lumber Company.

During the fall and winter of 1904-05 building in Sparling was brisk. Two hotels were erected, the Windsor and the Arlington. The Windsor, owned by Camille Miquelon and his brother P. A. Miquelon, was built on Lots 18-19-20, Block 2. It had a bar and rumor says this bar was very well patronized in the early days, and nights. The Arlington was built on Lots 17 and 18, Block 3, by Ole Bakken who sold the hostel to V. Matejka and his wife Teresa in 1905. This hotel was conducted by the Matejkas until 1928 when they built the Alice Hotel. It was erected on the site of the Windsor, which had been lost by fire.

A. Tretvold built a "Stopping House" on Lot 27, Block 2, in the early autumn of 1904. Prior to this, carpenters and others in the town boarded at the farm of Charles Erickson on the west side of Stoney Creek which was crossed on a log bridge three logs in width. Some of the men slept in a bunk house, some in a hay loft at Erickson's.

First Store on Main

The first store building erected on the east side of the first block of Main Street was built by Andrew Carruthers, who had been operating a store and "Stopping Place" a mile north of the townsite. Mr. Carruthers sold out to G. W. Wells, a Manitoulan Islander. This structure, on Lot 21, Block 3, was followed by one on Lots 18-19, Block 3, erected by Hiram Burgar and Geo. Wallace, as a hardware store.

Other buildings erected at this period were: General Store by R. Bud Price, Lots 30-31, Blk. 3. Mr. Price was joined in 1905 by Geo. P. Smith and Norman Smith as Smith Bros. & Price. Smith Bros. built in 1906 on Lots 11-12, Blk. 2, and sold out to J. Watson Younge and J. Adair Younge in 1907.

Hardware and Tinsmith Shop, Harry Foucar, Lot 22, Blk. 2.

Harness Shop and Hall, Lars Larson, Lot 19, Blk. 2.

Farm Implements, W. G. Billy Duggan, Lot 24, Blk. 3.

In the fall of 1905, W. G. Duggan and Dennis Twomey bought Harry Foucar's hardware business; George Keeble and David Dufferin McLaren built a fancy goods and jeweler's store on Lot 21, Blk. 3; Humphrey L. Higgs built a drug store on Lots 29 and 30, Blk. 6; Francois Adam had an insurance office on Lot 20, Blk. 2.

Logs in First Building, West Side of "Main"

The first building on the west side of the second block, Main Street, was constructed of logs, by A. Haspel, an old settler to the north-east.

During this first fall the remark was frequently made: "This town will never amount to anything until we get a livery barn, so people can stop here". Joe Cowan built a livery barn on Lots 23-24, Blk. 4, and Charles Peterson built one on Lot 17, Blk. 3. The hay loft in the Peterson barn was used as a dance hall during the first winter, and music was dispensed by "Bill" McWhirter, a fiddler of no mean ability.

Lumber Yards and Elevators

Two lumber yards opened for business in 1904. The Rushton Lumber, Grain and Implement Company, owned by R. L. Rushton and Crow's Nest Pass Lumber interests was located on Lots 6-7-8-9-10, Blk. 1. Mr. Rushton also built an elevator now owned by the United Grain Growers.

A man named Corey built the "farmers" elevator, now operated by the Alberta Pacific Grain Company. Capital for this "farmers" elevator was raised through notes obtained from a large number of farmers in the district. A famous lawsuit was the outcome of this venture.

The Stoney Creek Lumber Company, owned by Francois Adam, Francois Long and F. P. Layton, which had "squatted" on the road allowances near Sampson's store, opened their yard on Lots 1-2, Blk. 2, site of the present Masonic Temple Building.

Physicians — Newspaper

Dr. G. G. Stewart began medical practice in 1904, coming over from Bittern Lake. In 1905, Dr. W. V. Lamb moved his medical practice from Duhamel to Sparling.

First newspaper, The Camrose Mail, was published by Capt. T. Berville Thomas, with first issue on July 27, 1906. The Mail was purchased by Geo. P. Smith, and first issue of the Camrose Canadian was published in the fall of 1909.

First Justice of the Peace was Francois Adam, followed in turn by Capt. Thomas, R. D. Fleming, Frank P. Layton and Harry Foucar.

First Train — "The Blue Flea"

By June, 1905 the railway grade had been completed. A bridge had been built over Stoney Creek and the rails laid as far as Sparling. A mixed train came out in the afternoon, three times a week, turned on the "Y" and returned to Wetaskiwin.

In the late fall of 1906, track had been laid to Daysland and a daily passenger service on a local train dubbed "The Blue Flea Special" was inaugurated between Wetaskiwin and Daysland. This was extended to Hardisty early in 1907.

Municipal Organization

Municipal organization began in May, 1905, when citizens of Sparling hamlet made application to the government of the North West Territories at Regina (autonomy not having been granted to the Province of Alberta until the fall of 1905) for incorporation as a village. Application was granted and F. P. Layton was appointed returning officer for the election of a village overseer, this being the only executive office under the village act of that time.

R. O. Declares Himself Elected Overseer

Nomination for overseer was held in Lars Larson's hall at 7:00 p.m. An hour was allowed to receive nominations. An amusing incident then occurred. The name of the returning officer was the only one placed in nomination for the position and so, after waiting the prescribed time, he declared himself elected by a very large majority.

Modernize Main Street

The Village Act then permitted the overseer to borrow on the credit of the village a sum not exceeding \$100.00 without a vote of the rate-payers. This amount was borrowed the very next morning from the Merchants Bank and public works began by plowing deep furrows on each side of Main street to carry off the slough water from the townsite and into Stoney Creek.

Name Changed to Camrose

By the time of the first election of a Town Council the Village of Sparling had four overseers in turn as follows: Frank P. Layton, Francois Adam, Duncan Sampson and Thomas Dahl.

The name of Sparling became so frequently confused with that of Sperling in Manitoba and Stirling in Alberta that the name was changed to Camrose and on January 16th, 1907, the village was raised to the dignity and status of a town.

The First Town Council

At the first town election R. D. Fleming was returning officer. Thomas Dahl was elected mayor by acclamation.

The following were elected to the first town council: Abraham Code, Real Estate Agent; George P. Smith, Merchant; R. B. Price, Merchant; Dennis Twomey, Hardware; Albert Foucar, Tinsmith and Edward R. Hjelm, Butcher.

During the summer, Messrs. Foucar and Hjelm resigned, and their places were filled by the election by acclamation of Frank L. Farley, Real Estate Agent and Jabez Harris, Creamery Operator.

Munificent Salaries

At the first meeting of the town council R. D. Fleming was appointed Secretary-Treasurer at a salary of ten dollars per month.

Some of the first appointments made by the first town council were as follows: Dr. W. V. Lamb, Medical Officer of Health (salary \$65.00 per year); F. P. Layton, Auditor (salary \$50.00 per year); George Keeble, Assessor (salary \$25.00 per year); Charles E. Asp, Town Constable (salary \$50.00 per month); George E. Hallet, Night Watchman (salary \$35.00 per month); Sidney Lambert, Bell Ringer (salary \$5.00 per month) and Tom B. Olson, Pound Keeper.

Town Fire Hall — Fire Brigade

In March, 1907, a contract was let to Henry Nelson of Wetaskiwin for the erection of a town fire hall on Lots 1 and 2, Blk. 6. A contract was let to William Bonnyman for the under ground water tanks for fire protection purposes. These were placed, one near the C.P.R. station, one at the fire hall and one on Government road, one block east of Main street.

With the purchase of a Waterous gasoline fire engine in 1907, a vol-

unteer fire brigade was formed with F. P. Layton, chief; Thomas C. Battram, engineer; Dr. W. V. Lamb, captain in charge of the ladder truck and "Tiny" Barnwell, captain of the hose reel.

Fair Grounds — School Board

First School in July, 1905

In June, 1907 the Fair Grounds property was purchased from W. J. McNamara for \$4,000.00. This purchase was financed by a bank loan secured by a note signed by several of the business men about town.

In June, 1905, the election of the first board of trustees of School District No. 1315, was held in the Presbyterian Church building. The returning officer was F. P. Layton and the trustees elected were Dr. G. G. Stewart, Duncan Sampson and John Kubbernus. At the first meeting of the new board, Dr. G. G. Stewart was elected chairman and Duncan Sampson secretary.

On July 31st, 1905, the first school was opened in the Presbyterian Church building with Miss Signe E. Spokkeli (Mrs. I. Z. Hills) in charge of about 20 pupils. Miss Spokkeli resigned her position as teacher in December, 1905, and was succeeded by R. D. Fleming who had just arrived from Ontario.

By May of 1906 the school had outgrown the small church building it had occupied and a move was made to the Lutheran Church building. At the opening of the fall term in 1906 the register showed an enrollment of 90. A second teacher, Miss Alexes McLennan, of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, was then engaged and classes divided between the Lutheran Church building and Presbyterian Church building with R. D. Fleming principal.

New Four Room Brick School

In June, 1906, a contract for a four roomed brick veneer school building was let to W. E. Allen and erection began on the south half of Blk. 12. This building, which later formed the south part of the "John W. Russell School" was formally opened on the 24th day of May, 1907, with Dr. Wilbert McIntyre, M.P., Strathcona, and Hon. Frank Oliver as principal speakers.

In the fall of 1907 Mr. John W. Russell of Olds, Alberta, became principal of the Camrose School and high school classes were begun.

First Sacred Services — Early Church Buildings

The first church service held in Sparling was conducted by Rev. Thomas Philips, a Methodist minister, located at Dried Meat Lake. This service was held in the tar papered shack of Charles Asp and the text for the sermon was: "I will stand upon my watch."

The first church building to be erected on the townsite was the Lutheran Church on Lots 19 and 20, Blk. 12. John E. Spokkeli and Lars Bjaaland were active in this work. A Presbyterian church building was erected on Lot 21, Blk. 6; the Scandinavian Baptist church on Lot 10, Blk. 8; and the Methodist church on Lot 1, Blk. 8.

In the early days the members of the Catholic faith in Sparling attended church at Duhamel ministered unto by the late Rev. Father Bellevaire who served the Duhamel community for more than 50 years. Later on a Catholic church building was erected on Lot 4, Blk. 17, Bakken Addition.

Although Sparling was a most law-abiding place, Mr. James Kennedy

Burgess, formerly of Bala, Ontario, opened a law practice here in the summer of 1905, moving his family from Wetaskiwin and taking up permanent residence in 1907.

Prior to the advent of a train service, lumber and all other freight was hauled from Wetaskiwin by horses and tractors over roads that often left much to be desired. The haulage for lumber was four dollars per thousand feet.

Bakken's Homestead Shack

The homestead shack of Ole Bakken, dug into the hillside, was made of prairie sod. While the exact site of this shack has been obliterated by the grading of streets, its memorial location within a few rods of the original site, may be given as Lot 18, Blk. 13A, Plan 6778 AB.

Excellent wells of water were obtained at Peterson's livery barn and A. Tretvold's boarding house.

Until these were drilled, the late Mr. Jacob Elness delivered water from his farm south of town to the settlers, delivery being made by a barrel on a stone boat drawn by a cayuse.

Some of the homesteaders adjoining the townsite were Jacob Elness, Ole Spiedahl, Chas. G. Erickson, John Kubbernus, Lars Larson, John E. Spokkeli, Trone Myers, John B. Larson, William and Al. Knox. Mr. Nels Monson homesteaded the S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ 2-47-20-4, but did not live on it, having a farm four and a half miles west.

PROGRESSIVE EARLY DAYS IN THE CAMROSE DISTRICT

as told by Rev. Thomas Phillips, Methodist Church Minister

IT WAS a wanderer's life indeed to be a clergyman in rural Alberta in the early days.

A day in late autumn, 1904, saw the writer, seated in a light buggy and driving a team of western cayuses, arrive at Rosenroll, a hamlet on the south end of Bittern Lake. The journey had been made over 250 miles of winding, sticky, muddy trails.

My coming to this homesteading district, now rapidly filling up, was a reluctant response to the call of the church.

After more than four months spent in organization work in the Athabasca Landing area, a hundred or more miles north of Edmonton, my marching orders were: "Eastward from Wetaskiwin along the new C.P.R. grade to the uttermost settlements beyond". My instructions were to organize circuits and preaching appointments.

As yet no steel rails had been laid, nor any townsites decided upon or surveyed. Scores of settlers were pouring into this district on the way from Wetaskiwin.

I passed many loads of settlers' effects and great loads of lumber pulled by oxen, wearily winding their way over trails often knee deep in mud.

It was a common sight to see loads stuck fast in mudholes, with me assisting to unload in order that the wagons could be extracted. Travelling by my lonesome, with but few personal effects in my buggy, I had

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no such difficulties. But others' troubles were my troubles, and I took many an opportunity to lend a helping hand. It was a great period, those days, to see the Divine Law of "bearing one another's burdens" working out in a practical way. No travellers were in too much of a rush to help another in need.

The itinerant nature of my work very often necessitated partaking of the cordial hospitality of the people among whom I worked. This hospitality, so freely and generously given, made a lasting impression upon one so dependent upon the kindness and good will of folks of varied creeds and nationalities. It was cheerfully given by the lone bachelor in his log or sod shack and by the adventurous young married couple who were beginning the art of home-making under those difficult pioneer conditions.

Around the eastern end of Bittern Lake, a fine group of new settlers had preceded me. Among these I sought a place to rest my head and set up temporary headquarters. I found a haven of rest with Mrs. Hoover, a mother in Israel indeed, and her son Clarke, and later a permanent boarding place with Mrs. T. Fowler, Mrs. Hoover's daughter.

Mr. Fowler was a homesteader and community blacksmith under the spreading 'poplar' tree.

My first preaching appointments were: on October 16th, 1904: Heather Brae, New Salem (Skafse), Rosenroll; October 23rd: Roseland, Rosenroll, Sifton.

On October 30th, the first church service was held on the new town-site called Stoney Creek (Camrose), in a carpenter's shack, about 12 feet by 14 feet, crowded to the door with men. There was a lone feminine member, Mrs. Foucar. There were borrowed kitchen chairs, some nail kegs and planks, providing the classy seating arrangements for my first congregation in the new town.

But records provide the fact that on November 13th, 1904 a new name emerged for this busy town, namely Sparling. But on May 19th, 1905, again my church records call this thriving place, 25 miles east of Wet-skiwin, by the beautiful name of Camrose.

Henceforth the slogan of the citizens was "Watch Camrose Grow". Carpenters, skilled and otherwise, rushed the erection of stores and residences.

The citizens of all creeds and nationalities were so minded that the spiritual interests of the community were not forgotten. Consequently, for several months, under the leadership of the writer, a church was in the building.

Such was made possible by the writer, the only preacher in the community, catching the optimistic spirit, the common faith and persistent hope of the new citizens, and by the generous contributions of money and free labor of the citizens and carpenters of all creeds and nationalities.

For example, a Belgian lumber merchant and real estate agent made a generous cash donation, and lumber was supplied at wholesale price, and he said, "Your credit is good, just pay when you can".

When the time came for the chimney to be built on the new church, the minister tackled a homesteader, Clarke Hoover, to do the job with free labor. "Alright", he said, "you mix the mortar and carry the bricks and I'll do the job". "I'm game", I said, and the chimney was duly constructed.

The foundation was strongly made of stone, taken from the bed of

Stoney Creek after which the town was first named. Nearby farmers, with characteristically generous hearts, hauled the stones. Mr. Chapman of Sifton district was the stone mason and the parson was his assistant.

All pioneers will recall "Dad" Mills, one of a crew of C.P.R. carpenters, who, charmed by the good spirit of Camrose citizens, tarried behind and worked for himself during an eight-hour day, but after hours generously aided in the construction of the church and frequently preached from the Good Book on Sunday, when the writer was absent on district duty, or when he thought the people needed good sermons. "Dad" could knit socks as well as he could saw boards, and often spent evenings at the parsonage with his knitting needles clicking industriously. "Rest to his ashes" for I believe he has passed on to a great reward.

If space permitted, many other open hearted souls could kindly be mentioned.

On July 2nd, 1905, Rev. C. G. Corneille of Wetaskiwin was the special speaker for the opening and dedication of the Methodist church. Soon other religious denominations opened services and erected churches.

Under direction of the writer, New Salem Methodist church was built in Skafse community, just south of the town of Camrose. It was dedicated on February 25th, 1906, Rev. R. E. Finlay officiating.

As for the worth of the settlers, the beauty and charm of the young ladies, and the excellency of the scenery, I would refer you to Harry Foucar, who often, with the parson's ponies went that way for an outing. It was good for the ponies, for he taught them to walk, whereas the owner always kept them on a swinging trot along the crooked trails.

For nearly two years, bachelors were in too great a majority for the social welfare of Camrose and community, but any hint to them of that by the parson was met by the rejoinder: "Example is better than precept". It was in my heart to teach them, by example, and gentle hint to the church board led to the project of a parsonage building, early in 1906.

When the writer returned from Belbowme, Onario with his bride in late summer, the parsonage was almost ready for occupancy. The bride still has a vivid recollection of a terrific dust storm that was raging on our arrival at Camrose; it concealed the bonny beauty of the now splendid town.

But the example in the matrimonial adventure did not produce a jam at the license bureau, nor unduly tax the minister. Yet a steady decline in the bachelor majority took place, and many fine homes were erected. Still, our well-known friend, Trevelyan Solfleet, seemed impervious to the wiles and charms of the young ladies all through those pioneer days although he finally surrendered to the "right one" so the Camrose Canadian informed me.

I must tell one unique matrimonial episode. A young man, slightly known to the writer, arranged for his marriage at the parsonage. He came the preceding evening to say his bride-elect desired to be married in a town some twelve miles distant, and asked me to drive over there and tie the knot. I reluctantly agreed. When the day came, the temperature was much below zero and snow a foot and a half deep with trails badly drifted. Yet the wife and I made the journey in a cutter drawn by my faithful ponies. The ceremony took place in a new hotel dining room in the presence of the bride's mother, as I had stipulated, and the register was duly signed. The wedding supper was served in

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All pioneers will recall "Dad" Mills, one of a crew of C.P.R. carpenters, who, charmed by the good spirit of Camrose citizens, tarried behind and worked for himself during an eight-hour day, but after hours generously aided in the construction of the church and frequently preached from the Good Book on Sunday, when the writer was absent on district duty, or when he thought the people needed good sermons. "Dad" could knit socks as well as he could saw boards, and often spent evenings at the parsonage with his knitting needles clicking industriously. "Rest to his ashes" for I believe he has passed on to a great reward.

If space permitted, many other open hearted souls could kindly be mentioned.

On July 2nd, 1905, Rev. C. G. Corneille of Wetaskiwin was the special speaker for the opening and dedication of the Methodist church. Soon other religious denominations opened services and erected churches.

Under direction of the writer, New Salem Methodist church was built in Skafse community, just south of the town of Camrose. It was dedicated on February 25th, 1906, Rev. R. E. Finlay officiating.

As for the worth of the settlers, the beauty and charm of the young ladies, and the excellency of the scenery, I would refer you to Harry Foucar, who often, with the parson's ponies went that way for an outing. It was good for the ponies, for he taught them to walk, whereas the owner always kept them on a swinging trot along the crooked trails.

For nearly two years, bachelors were in too great a majority for the social welfare of Camrose and community, but any hint to them of that by the parson was met by the rejoinder: "Example is better than precept". It was in my heart to teach them, by example, and gentle hint to the church board led to the project of a parsonage building, early in 1906.

When the writer returned from Belbowme, Onario with his bride in late summer, the parsonage was almost ready for occupancy. The bride still has a vivid recollection of a terrific dust storm that was raging on our arrival at Camrose; it concealed the bonny beauty of the now splendid town.

But the example in the matrimonial adventure did not produce a jam at the license bureau, nor unduly tax the minister. Yet a steady decline in the bachelor majority took place, and many fine homes were erected. Still, our well-known friend, Trevelyan Solfleet, seemed impervious to the wiles and charms of the young ladies all through those pioneer days although he finally surrendered to the "right one" so the Camrose Canadian informed me.

I must tell one unique matrimonial episode. A young man, slightly known to the writer, arranged for his marriage at the parsonage. He came the preceding evening to say his bride-elect desired to be married in a town some twelve miles distant, and asked me to drive over there and tie the knot. I reluctantly agreed. When the day came, the temperature was much below zero and snow a foot and a half deep with trails badly drifted. Yet the wife and I made the journey in a cutter drawn by my faithful ponies. The ceremony took place in a new hotel dining room in the presence of the bride's mother, as I had stipulated, and the register was duly signed. The wedding supper was served in

the same room.

The groom made the usual promises in the ceremony and he went on promising as I overheard him promising to pay for the wedding supper soon. I then surmised what might be the likely lot of the parson. The groom accompanied me to the livery stable to help in hitching up the ponies, and on the side I overheard him promise to pay for the ponies' supper. Then he handed me fifty cents and promised to pay a little more some time. I paid fifty cents to the livery man and broke even on the deal.

Then for home in the face of a bitter wind which had drifted the trails full. But instead of using the trail I turned in on the railroad track between the shining rails, and put the ponies to a gallop in a straight line for home. With the wife watching for trains behind us, the while I urged the ponies to their best run, with my eyes wide open to catch the first glimpse of the headlight of a possible approaching engine. Within half a mile of Camrose the ponies swung off on a familiar trail and we slowed down and tried to recover normal breathing. Time, about three miles to the minute, and I did not tell the section boss next morning I had been over his beat and all was well. When I think or speak of this exciting incident, my heart beats faster.

In thinking of those crude pioneer days, I am strangely impressed with the rapidity with which they gave way to orderly established and permanent improvements in town and community. It was hustle and bustle; it was bang and rush to get places of business and homes erected. Shacks and sod huts were replaced by substantial homes.

Planting trees, making lawns, and laying sidewalks became the order in Camrose, and one is not surprised the citizens manifest much pride in "Watching Camrose Grow". The aggressive zeal with which the homesteaders broke the virgin soil, fenced their claims, made roads and established farmsteads, indicated they were there to stay and make permanent homes.

An incident of the rapid development in rural life. We had gone to the country to make some pastoral calls and were returning just after dusk. The ponies were making for home at a fast trot on a well beaten and familiar trail, which at points cut across farms. Suddenly they stopped, spilling us over the dash board of the buggy. Scrambling out in the dark I discovered an enterprising farmer had that very afternoon, without notice, run a barbed wire fence across the trail, reminding us to adhere to the road allowance.

Even with old-time western optimism no one could have foretold that thirty-two years later, virgin conditions could have changed to such good farms, good homes and well cultivated fields.

It was most interesting to watch the spirit of ready and lavish investment in the various enterprises in both urban and rural life. It was profitable for me to observe the way these settlers threw themselves, body and soul, into life's purposes.

Herein was inspiration for me. When the flesh was weary, optimism lacking, zeal lagging and faith in my own work weakening, I took a stroll around the town and got the true state of high finance at the bank from the manager, Frank Pike; dropped into the real estate offices and observed Frank Layton or Frank Farley enthusiastically push the sale of lots and farms with ardent faith in the future; loafed awhile at Foucar's hardware store and noted Harry's patience and cheerfulness; dallied for a space with Duncan Sampson, observing his glad smiles as

he parcelled his groceries; Chatted with Bud Price on the ready sale of all his wares and the price of raw furs and so on along the busy thoroughfare of Camrose main street. At none of these business places did I see a sign: "No parking here".

What parson, after these observations, would not hie away back to his work with new vigor of body, quickened optimism, greater zeal in good works, and renewed faith, knowing he possessed the greatest thing in the world to offer to humanity, the eternal riches of God's wondrous love.

CAMROSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized January 18th, 1933

Based on Minutes as recorded by Hugh A. MacGregor, Secretary

THE advisability of forming a Camrose Historical Society for town and district was considered at a meeting held in the town hall on January 18th, 1933.

Present at this meeting were: Frank L. Farley, Vernon Craig, Dennis Twomey, Harold Ronning, Frank P. Layton, Rev. M. S. Kerr, C. G. Corneille, K.C., Thos. Fowler, Jas. A. Heighington, J. Sten, Jno. Wilkin-son, Hugh A. MacGregor.

Mr. Farley was appointed chairman, Mr. MacGregor acted as Secretary.

Mr. Farley briefly outlined the need for such an organization, namely, to gather and preserve narratives relating to the early settlement of the town and country.

Already, he said, some of the first settlers, from whom interesting stories and anecdotes might have been obtained, had passed on to their reward.

Many articles of historical record and value should be assembled and placed in safe-keeping, he thought, and these could form the nucleus of a museum.

It was proposed by Mr. Corneille, seconded by Rev. M. S. Kerr, that the Camrose Historical Society be formed for the following purposes:

A. To gather and keep records of historical interest and importance relating to Camrose and its constituency.

B. To provide safe-keeping repositories for such records and material as may be presented or loaned by individuals.

C. To foster an interest in local history at various points within the Camrose district.

Motion carried unanimously.

Society's Officers: President—Frank L. Farley (who has been continuously president 1933-1947.); Secretary—Hugh A. MacGregor; Executive—Dennis Twomey, C. G. Corneille, K.C., F. P. Layton.

It was decided individual members should interview certain pioneers and report with papers at subsequent meetings.

Rev. Mr. Kerr said he would interview Mr. Z. H. Hills, Mr. Farley would see Mr. Heighington, Mr. Layton agreed to prepare a paper on the early days of Camrose and subsequent events of historical impor-

tance

Thus the Society was established.

MAJOR CHANGES IN THE WORLD SINCE CAMROSE PIONEER WAS A CHILD

Adapted from a paper prepared and read by Rev. M. S. Kerr, B.A., B.D. at a meeting of the Camrose Historical Society

AT A recent meeting of Camrose Historical Society a paper read by Rev. M. S. Kerr, B.A., B.D. briefly pictured the world during the childhood of a pioneer Camrose citizen on whose life history the paper was based. This citizen is Mr. Z. H. Hills, and the following interesting extracts are taken from the article.

We have here in Camrose at this date, March 8th; 1933, an interesting citizen, Mr. Zilbert Herbert Hills. He will be ninety years old this year.

It is intriguing to recall the state of the world when Mr. Hills was a small child. Queen Victoria had completed six years of her long reign, Louis Phillipe was on the throne of France. The German empire had not then been formed and Austria and Italy were in a state of revolt. Europe was in the midst of a revolution. Great as were the changes in Europe then, no one then could have imagined the changes the following ninety years were to witness.

When Mr. Hills was a baby the poet, Wordsworth, was alive. During his teens the famous essayist, Macaulay, was writing. Charles Dickens published "David Copperfield". Carlyle's "French Revolution" was printed, and Browning and Tennyson were writing such poetry as we have never had since.

Western Canada was "terra incognita" except to the Hudson Bay traders and a few privileged whites.

John Blue in his history of the west tells us it was not until 1860 that Canada learned about the fertile belt of the west. It was in 1857 that Dawson and Hind, sent out by the Canadian government, reported in due course the west was suitable for colonization and agriculture. Before that people generally had thought it similar to the barren regions of the North American desert. So Mr. Hills would be a lad of seventeen before Western Canada was really discovered.

It was then that Pallister discovered the mountain passes through which the C. P. R. now runs. He reported his knowledge of the country would never lead him to advise a railway line from eastern Canada to the Pacific. At this time Canada had no claim on these western plains. They were under complete control of the Hudson's Bay Company. But with Confederation, Canada laid claim to them. Mr. Hills was now a young man of twenty-four.

Despite Pallister's opinion, the C. P. R. was built and reached Calgary in September, 1883. The population of Calgary was 300. In 1891 the railway was completed from Calgary to Edmonton. Alberta's population was 25,277. Mr. Hills came west in 1895. He spent his boyhood on a Quebec farm and at one time operated a grist mill in Vermont.

In 1892 there were 406 homestead entries at Red Deer. In 1892 thirty-five German families settled at Wetaskiwin. In all, 3,134 settlers

took up land between Edmonton and Calgary in 1892.

Mr. Hills chose the north-east of 4-46-20. On returning to Quebec for his family he found great interest in Alberta, and in reply to fears expressed by some that all the land would be taken, Mr. Hills said: "Do you think there is enough water in the Atlantic to float the ships?"

From Murdock McKenzie, living three miles north-east of the Hills place, he bought cut poplar logs which had been prepared by the Scotsman to be used in a house for himself. The building still stands and is part of the present day farm house.

The first two years were dry and wheat raised was small in quantity so that it could be treaded out with horses. Later conditions permitted raising enough so that some could be marketed. It was hauled to Edmonton and exchanged for flour. The wheat sold for fifty-six cents per bushel. Money was scarce. Potatoes were fifteen cents and butter ten cents in Wetaskiwin.

The low prices discouraged many settlers, and in the first years as many homesteaders moved out as moved in. The Michael George Kehoe homestead sold for \$50.00. It was proved up by Irving Hills.

The first winter was one of deep snow and little travel. Flour ran short and it was necessary to grind wheat in the coffee mill. There was always ample meat as animals were slaughtered, and meat cured and stored in large quantities.

The nearest doctor was located at Duhamel, and the post office there was conducted by Francois Adam in his store six miles from the Hill's place.

In the two years following Mr. Hill's arrival he found the surrounding land being taken up rapidly. Cattle grazing range was becoming restricted and Mr. Hills moved his cattle to Daysland where open range was still to be had. Feed was abundant but the forest fires were a great danger. Sometimes a fire had to be fought for a week at a stretch. In the dry falls the fire lingered in tree stumps or in the muskegs and constituted a constant danger.

In the year Mr. Hills came west, 1895, the cattle output from Alberta had already assumed remarkable proportions, 12,600 head having been shipped from the province that year. Mr. Hills and his sons raised 100 calves each year and sold 40 head of horses.

Severe as the winter of 1896-97 was, it was not so trying on cattle as the winter of ten years previous, old timers had stated. The winter of 1906-07 was very cold and hard on livestock. Prices ranged from \$40.00 to \$42.00 for 4-year-old steers. The Hills' cattle were sold at Wetaskiwin, and two days were needed to drive them from Daysland.

The nearest Protestant church (about 1895) was at Wetaskiwin. After a time a church was built at Scafse, in 1903. Later it was moved to Ohaton. In May, 1906, Rev. Phillips moved to Camrose and preached at Scafse, Rosenroll school and Stearns school.

During the thirty-eight years of his residence in Alberta, Mr. Hills has seen many changes, and perhaps witnessed the most rapid development of any new country within living memory.

First Municipal Council, Town of Camrose, 1907

Election Held January 16th, 1907.

Mayor—Thomas Dahl, merchant.

Councillors—Abraham Code, Broker; Albert Foucar, Tinsmith, resigned in July and vacancy filled by Jabez Harris, Creamery Operator; Edward R. Hjelm, Butcher, resigned in July, and vacancy filled by Frank L. Farley, Real Estate Agent; Reuben B. Price, General Merchant; George P. Smith, General Merchant; Dennis Twomey, Hardware Merchant.

Mayors of Camrose

Thomas Dahl	1907
Abraham Code	1908
Dennis Twomey	1909-1910-1914
Frank Perley Layton	1911-1912-1913
David Sutherland	1915-1916
Ole B. Olson	1917-1918
Victor E. Forster	1919-1920-1921-1922
George Lowry	1923-1924
John Douglas	1925-1926-1927-1928
H. P. Curtiss	1929-1930
James A. Code	1931-1932-1933-1934
Clarence Pearson	1935-1936-1937-1938
Percy A. East	1939-1940-1941-1942-1943-1944
Robert H. Hume	1945-1946-1947



FRANCOIS LABOUCAN

Our "Oldest Old Timer"

Francois Laboucan was born in 1858 at Fort Garry, Manitoba and came to Duhamel in 1881 and recently moved to Camrose where he is living at present.

He was married at the age of thirty years and had six children, none of whom are living today.

One of the last buffalo hunts he was engaged in was in July, 1883, when he, Peter Dumont and Baptiste Whitefish (grandfather of Mrs. Joe Descheneau) killed five buffalo in the horseshoe at the north end of Sullivan Lake, south-west of the present town of Castor.



THOS. DAHL, Merchant

First mayor of the Town of Camrose



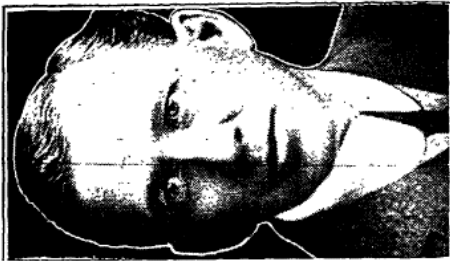
FRANK PERLEY LAYTON

First overseer of the Hamlet of Sparling (Camrose)



FRANCOIS ADAM

A first citizen and ever a generous contributor to all community enterprises.



Hon. GEORGE P. SMITH

For many years a member of the Alberta Legislature for Camrose constituency, holding the portfolios of Provincial Secretary and later Minister of Education. A member responsible for many outstanding achievements on behalf of the town and constituency, and in the Province at large.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE 17th OF MARCH DANCE IN CAMROSE TOWN HALL, 1908, BY C. L. LANCELL.

1. Constable "Blue" Smith, R.N.W.M.P.; 2. Dr. W. A. Shea; 3. Miss Rowsell, R.N.; 4. Leslie C. M. Wise; 5. Miss Nellie Rowsell; 6. J. W. E. Farrell; 7. Miss Celia Christensen; 8. Sidney Large; 9 and 10. Mr. and Mrs. Botterill; 11. Miss Florence Allen; 12. Albert Sanders; 13. Miss Mae Cole; 14 and 15. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Darling; 16. Mrs. "Blue" Smith; 17. Jimmy McNulty; 18 and 19. Mrs. and Mr. F. L. Farley; 20. Mrs. R. L. Rushton; 21. D. D. McLaren; 22. Mrs. Ben Dyer; 23. Mr. Taylor; 24. Miss McLaren; 25. H. C. "Kid" McLean; 26. Miss Edith Allen; 27. Ben Dyer; 28. Wm. (Billy) Duggan; 30. Geo. Harrower; 31. Mrs. L. Rowe; 32. Mrs. Frank Pike; 33. Mrs. W. V. Lamb; 34. Mrs. Hiram Burgar; 35. Mrs. Allen; 36. Miss Gladys Currie, R.N.; 37. Miss A. Christensen; 38. Miss McLeod, R.N.; 39. Mrs. Brodie; 40. Mrs. R. B. Price; 41. Rev. K. C. McLeod; 42. Adair Younge; 43. Mrs. W. G. Duggan; 44. Miss M. Donald, Strathcona; 46. L. V. Rowe; 46. Frank Pike; 47. Dr. Lamb; 48. Hiram Burgar; 49. E. C. Barnwell; 50. R. J. Dinning; 51. M. A. (Alf) Price; 52. R. B. "Bud" Price; 53. Watson Younge; 54. Fred S. Rowsell; 55. Geo. Keeble; 56. R. L. Rushton.

CHAPTER TWO

CREE INDIANS PASSED OVER CAMROSE AREA TO FIGHT ANCIENT FOE THE BLACKFEET TRIBE

Based on a paper "Early Days at Tofield" prepared by A. J. McCauley and given before the Board of Trade there on October 4th, 1922. (Tofield is 35 miles north of Camrose).

FOR hundreds of years our part of the north-west was truly the happy hunting ground of the Indians. Beaver Hills Lake and Beaver Hills, at Tofield, were so named because of the large number of beaver inhabitants. Amisk is the Cree name for beaver and so Amisk Creek got its name.

The surrounding woodlands contained jackpine, spruce and tamarac and in them were found buffalo, bear, moose, deer and on the lake (Cooking Lake) were swans, geese, ducks, pelicans and other waterfowl by the thousands. In the early nineties fire destroyed the Beaver Hills forests.

Fur trading companies pushed up the rivers from Hudson's Bay, and in time trading posts were established on the banks of the North Saskatchewan river at Victoria (Pakan) and at Edmonton.

The usual fighting ground of the Blackfeet and Cree Indians was along the Battle river for about 20 miles on either side, between Ponoka and Wainwright. The Blackfeet, who had their main camp at Sarcee, outside Calgary, were troubling the Crees and had made raids around the south end of Beaver Hills.

Desiring to hold this great hunting area, the Crees in 1860 or 1862 persuaded Chief Ketchamoot to come with 400 braves from Fort Pitt. They were joined by the Indians around Beaver Hills Lake, and secured a supply of food by killing twelve buffalo.

They travelled south-west, passing near Camrose, and met the Blackfeet in conflict south of Wetaskiwin. The Blackfeet were routed and the Crees captured much booty, including many ponies and twenty squaws. The Chief afterwards traded the squaw he had chosen for a horse. Chief Ketchamoot spent his last days at Tofield and his body rests in a grave on the banks of Ketchamoot Creek, north of the town.

In May, 1868, the half-breed buffalo hunters from Edmonton, St. Albert and Lac Ste. Anne, Victoria, White Fish Lake and Lac La Biche camped at Tofield to plan for hunting during the summer. They had to travel in large parties, otherwise running the risk of being mistaken for Crees by the Blackfeet. Chief Factor Hardisty, Edmonton, and Chief Factor Tate of Victoria, acting for the Hudson's Bay Company, attended the conclave to trade with the Indians for furs. Rev. George McDougall, pioneer Methodist minister, who later lost his life in a blizzard also attended.

Augustine Gladue and Jeremi Gladue, Sr. killed many bison in hunts all the way from Beaver Hills to the U. S. boundary.

Sometimes if meat supplies were low, the buffalo would be driven into a specially constructed pound, made of heavy logs, with a y-shaped lane of brush leading into the corral. Several of these pounds were built in Tofield territory.

By 1870 the buffalo herds were noticeably diminishing and by 1876 very few were left in the country.

In 1874 the N. W. M. P. were organized and sent out west. A post was established at Ft. Saskatchewan.

Peace was declared between the Blackfeet and the Crees at Peace Hills, near present day Wetaskiwin. (A cairn marks the spot).

Freighting from Winnipeg to Edmonton went forward on a regular schedule, and the writer's father, Matthew McCauley, first mayor of Edmonton, drove with oxen from Winnipeg to Ft. Saskatchewan in 1879.

One of the most widely known groups of early settlers was that headed by Peter B. Anderson, a Norwegian group which settled in the Bardo district, south of Tofield and north of Camrose.

CHAPTER THREE

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY LYING EAST OF WETASKIWIN

As told by James H. Heighington to P. L. Farley, President of the Camrose Historical Society. A story about the aged Indian Pe-O-Kis.

JAMES H. HEIGHINGTON was born in Halifax, Yorkshire, England, in 1862, and in April, 1886, emigrated to Nova Scotia, and the following September moved to Toronto. There he saw many soldiers returning from the west where they had served in the Riel Rebellion.

After a few years in Ontario he decided to try his fortunes in western Canada, at that time being much publicized. In August, 1892, he arrived in Wetaskiwin and took up land on the south-east side of Bittern Lake.

Half-breeds told him he was the first settler and that no white men lived in all the country between his claim and the settlement that existed around Battleford, some hundreds of miles to the east.

At Duhamel there was a settlement of about fifteen families of half-breeds.

In 1893 E. Bosmans arrived and took up a homestead north and east of his land. This quarter later became the property of W. J. Hoover.

In 1898 Ernest Roper settled on the east side of Bittern Lake and for some years conducted a store. Mr. Rodberg opened a store in the Pipestone Creek valley in 1895. In 1893 Francois Adam had a store at the top of the hill on the south side of the Battle river, close to Jean Baptiste Laboucan's home. Shortly after Mr. Adam moved his store into the valley below the old site.

In 1892 Wetaskiwin came into being, and made growth that summer when the railway was completed into Strathcona. There was a well marked trail around the south end of Bittern Lake which passed on to the north-east beyond Pretty Hill. Some work was done in 1901 on the government road running east from Bittern Lake to the present town of Camrose.

August Snyder and his brother, Carl, and John Schultz, settled east of Heather Brae, about 1894. Wm. McDonald also took land there in 1894, as well as a man, Miller, by name. From 1900 to 1903, Mr. Heighington ranched on Iron Creek, near the present C. P. R. town of Killam. At that time many settlers were arriving from the United States to inspect the lands lying to the east of Bittern Lake.

Story About Pe-O-Kis

Mr. Heighington spoke about the probable age of a very aged Indian, Pe-O-Kis, a familiar figure in Camrose for 27 years. Friends and relatives of this patriarch of the plains claim him to be the oldest living inhabitant in our immediate part of the west, some insisting he is well on to 150 years of age, but no official data is available.

Francois Adam once told Mr. Heighington a story about Pe-O-Kis: "Shortly after arriving in this country I proposed to make some long trips into remote parts to trade with the Indians. To accompany me, I chose Jean Baptiste Laboucan and Pe-O-Kis. One morning when Jean was preparing breakfast, he remarked, 'Pe-O-Kis very old man now. I know him since I was a boy six years old and he was then quite old man'. This incident occurred when Jean was a man of middle age and I believe this grand old representative of the Crees to be between 125 and 150 years of age."

PROBABLE LAST KILLING OF MONARCHS OF THE PLAINS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA

By Frank L. Farley

This story was told to me early in March, 1936, by the old Indian, Pe-O-Kis, more than 125 years old, as he lay ill on his slab bed in a little cabin on the north side of the C. P. R. tracks in Camrose.

It was interpreted for me by Louie La Point, a son of Pe-O-Kis, at that time about 64 years of age. I knew Pe-O-Kis's time was short as he had been unable to leave his house for some time. He died two months later. I asked Louie the questions and he in turn put them to his father and there were many squabbles between the two in getting the patriarch to verify what he thought to be correct answers.

PE-O-KIS was born south of Fort Pitt, at Yellow Hill, about two miles north of Battle River, but it was not possible to arrive at the year of his birth.

His son, Louie, was born on the west side of Salt Lake, about 26 miles north-east of Camrose. In making application for old age pension, he received from the church at St. Albert, a copy of his birth certificate. It read: "Louis La Point, born 1872, out on the prairie". Apparently his people were camped near Salt Lake at the time.

The last buffalo killed by Pe-O-Kis was during a trip by cart to Winnipeg with freight from Edmonton. It was the twentieth day out. The return trip took about six months and he probably stayed for a space with friends on the way.

While camped along the trail to the south and east of Nose Hill, eastward from Coronation, they spied some buffalo to the east—near where there is a winding coulee, likely that traversed by today's C. P. R.

The time was April, with a little snow still in the coulees. Some antelope had been killed along the trail. A number of the carts were oxen-drawn, a good reason for the slow progress. Pe-O-Kis thought he would be about fifty years old at the time.

Members of the party he remembered were Don McLeod, Joe McDonand, Jack Norrish (father of Jack Norrish who later kept store at Wolf Creek—north Lacombe), and Ed. McPherson.

Pe-O-Kis and McPherson went after the buffalo and killed the group, four old bulls and a two-year-old. They were in fair condition. Asked what was done with the meat, Pe-O-Kis said they camped at the spot for several days and dried much of it, and ate their fill of fresh meat.

Asked as to the disposition of the dried meat, he said it was loaded on their carts and when they reached The Forks—where the Red Deer and

Some members of the party had flint-lock guns, others, bows and arrows.

They crossed several large streams and finally came to one where they saw a group of tepees down on the river flats. But they could detect no movement of any kind, no men, no dogs, no horses.

Two days were spent in hiding in the coulee while a watch was kept day and night to see if the campers would return but there was no movement; all was silence. The raiders were about two miles distant from the encampment. At last it was decided to steal down to the flat in the hope of ascertaining an explanation for the absence of the owners.

This they did, and were startled to find dead men, women and children lying in their blankets. But there were no horses or dogs to be found. They quickly rolled the bodies off the blankets, which they baled, declaring they would have something to take back home. They ran a good many miles before making camp for the night.

While resting one of the young men made a frightening suggestion. Perhaps the dread disease, Smallpox, might have killed the band, and their horses and dogs had pulled out for other regions.

Immediately the would-be raiders tossed away the blankets and started homewards, travelling all through the night, fearful they might have contracted the dread disease. One of the men fell ill the third day.

As they neared home a number of tepees came into view at "White Grass Slough" (Kow-wap-is-cot), which is east of Nose Hill. Were the tepee inhabitants friend or foe? They could see three of the strangers fixing up their horses, tying up their tails, and presently the trio started riding towards Pe-O-Kis and his companions. They stood still and the riders approached, turning out to be friends who were preparing to go in search of the raiders, who had been ten days on the return trip.

The riders were warned to keep to windward because the home-coming party were afraid they might give them a sickness, likely smallpox, and they were told to return to camp and tell the rest of their fears. They then walked into camp and next day a pow-wow was held to celebrate their safe return. A dancing pavilion was built by arranging the tepees in a circle.

But the jollification was short lived. The next day Pe-O-Kis fell ill. Only two of the thirteen escaped the disease, and of the eleven who were victims, Pe-O-Kis and one other survived.

After a few days in camp Pe-O-Kis and about twenty others journeyed to Brousseau on the North Saskatchewan river to see Father Lacombe. Here they were all baptized.

No smallpox had appeared there up to that time but shortly after an epidemic broke out and many Indians died, two or three daily. The following year the disease was prevalent among the breeds and Indians. A large band from St. Albert, enroute to hunt buffalo in the east country, became ill while camped at Pretty Hill, north-west of the present town of Camrose. Another camp on the south side of Lake Demay contracted the complaint and there were many deaths at both places. A large cross marked the burial place at the latter camp and it remained there until the early settlers came into the country.

Bow rivers meet—near Empress, it was traded to the half-breeds who lived there for flour, tea, sugar and other things needed for the trip. These items had been brought from Winnipeg by the breeds. He made in all, four trips to Winnipeg with freight.

When he was young he shot many wild pigeons with bow and arrows. The Saskatoon wood was the best, he said, for making bows, and cherry and Saskatoon for making arrows. Bow strings were of sinew of buffalo back. The arrows were pointed with bone, tied with sinews, and sharpened. Arrows were about thirty inches long, the top with six inches of feathers, preferably from wild geese. Files were used to sharpen the bone, or sometimes iron.

Pe-O-Kis remembered having seen many white cranes, but had never found any nests. He had, however, found nests of the brown cranes, sandhills, no doubt.

Louie remarked he saw no gophers at Duhamel when he went there in 1887.

When the writer came to Red Deer in 1892, he was told no gophers had been seen north of the Red Deer river.

Louie also said the Blackfeet Indians came north as far as the Battle river to get their tepee poles.

He had seen antelope north of the Battle river, near Flag Hills, now called Flagstaff.

That was the gist of my interview and it took more than an hour to get this story. The next day I called to see Pe-O-Kis and found him weak, but I persuaded him to recount some other adventures, and one in which he figured as a party in a horse stealing trip to the south, was interesting, and I believe true. It will be found in another article.

PE-O-KIS ON A HORSE RAIDING TRIP WHICH HAD TRAGIC RESULTS

As told by the aged Indian, Pe-O-Kis, long a Camrose resident, interpreted by his son, Louis, to Frank L. Farley.

A PARTY of thirteen half-breeds, including Pe-O-Kis, left their camp near Nose Hill and started south on a horse raiding expedition. Passing about ten miles west of the Hand Hills (likely near the present town of Drumheller), they crossed the Red Deer river.

Asked how they travelled, by cart or on horseback, the old Indian shot back the answer: "We walked, we were after horses and would have to walk until we found some".

Queried as to how they got across the rivers without wetting guns and powder, Pe-O-Kis said they chose easy rapids for crossing, always holding guns and powder high in one hand, using a pole in the other hand to steady themselves.

This trip was made early in July as he recounted having eaten Saskatoon berries which were just ripening; they secured antelope for meat.

Moccasins comprised their only footwear; they had no blankets and no food, leaving shelter and the wherewithal to satisfy the inner man to the whims of chance.

CHAPTER FOUR

HISTORY OF DUHAMEL SETTLEMENT

By Mrs. Lew Hutchinson

NOTE—Mrs. Hutchinson's paper contains much else of deep interest but space has made necessary its abridgement. Duhamel is ten miles south of Camrose. This Article was written in 1934.

The Earliest Settlers

AMONG the first, if not the earliest, settlers to come to the district now called Duhamel, were: Francois Dumont, native Albertan and his brother-in-law, Abraham Salvis, and their families. They moved from Lac Ste. Anne in 1875.

As recounted by Pascal, son of Francois, who was a small boy at the time, the Dumonts settled on land now owned by John Congdon (River lot 46), while the Salvis' took up land just east of that, owned by Cedric Congdon, R.L. 47.

In 1878, the Laboucan brothers, six in number, with two married sisters, and their aged mother, came from White Horse Plains, near Fort Garry (now St. Boniface, across the river from Winnipeg) and settled along the Battle river. Three of the brothers, Jean, Gabriel and Guillem, located on the north side of the river, While Jerome, Pierre and Elzear took up land on the south side.

Charles St. Germaine and Maxine Poitras (Mrs. Mulcahy's father) died on the trip out.

At that time the community was known as the Laboucan Settlement. three of the brothers had stores—Jean on the present Bush farm (R.L. 9); Elzear on the present Ruttle farm (R.L. 38); and Jerome on the land now owned by Alex Ross (R.L. 40).

Trapping — Fur Buying

During the winter the men traveled over the country, engaging in trapping and buying furs from the Indians and Metis (half-breeds). In summer they journeyed over the long, long trail to Winnipeg, taking furs and returning with goods required in the settlement. The families stayed at home and grew crops of grains and vegetables.

Missionaries — New Plow

When the Catholic Mission was established at St. Albert, it was the first in the Province of Alberta, although Pascal Dumont remembers his mother telling him Protestant missionaries were here before that.

Francois Dumont made a trip to Winnipeg by Red River cart and brought the first priests in for the St. Albert mission. On that trip he bought a plow, the first to be used in the Duhamel settlement.

Land of "Milk and Honey"

After one season's sojourn at Duhamel, the party decided the land along the Battle river was good. They found the building timber was satisfactory, fuel wood was plentiful, and there were many natural hay meadows and good pastures. In addition many kinds of berries grew in abundance, and good fish were plentiful in the river and Dried Meat Lake. So it was agreed this would be their permanent home, and in due course their effects were brought from the north in carts, oxen drawn.

Foodstuffs of the Time

Meat, fish, vegetables and berries formed the diet of these early settlers. Flour was a luxury but a coarse grade could occasionally be secured at St. Albert. Yeast was made from home-grown hops. Dried fruits could be had but fresh fruits were unknown other than the native berries. Mrs. Laboucan was a big girl, she states, when she saw her first orange, which had been brought from Calgary by her father.

Buffalo Were Few

Pascal Dumont said he well remembered seeing a few buffalo on the east side of Dried Meat Lake, but even in his youthful days these animals had practically all disappeared from this section of the country. They roamed in fair numbers further to the south.

Moose, deer, elk and bear were plentiful, as well as many kinds of wild fowl.

Father Bellevaire, First Priest

For some years there was no church at Duhamel, and for ceremonies of baptism or marriage, the settlers went to St. Albert. Father Bellevaire, then a young priest out from France, was stationed at St. Albert. Later he went to Hobbema, and the settlers journeyed there to receive the ministrations of the church.

On one of these visits, about 1881, Jerome Laboucan asked that a priest be sent to Duhamel to establish a mission, with the result that Father Bellevaire took up residence in the new settlement in a service that was to last more than fifty years.

Two years after his arrival the church was built. In 1884, Bishop Grandin visited the little priest and his parishioners, and found a class of twenty-eight children ready for confirmation.

Duhamel Gets Name

The bishop, greatly pleased with the work commended it to Archbishop Duhamel of Ottawa. He in turn was so gratified with the successful services of the Reverend Father that he presented the church with a bell.

The name of the new settlement was then changed to Duhamel in compliment to the archbishop.

In 1922, Father Bellevaire celebrated his fiftieth year as priest of the settlement, and many dignitaries assembled to do him honor.

Mr. and Mrs. Adam's Wedding Dinner—Turnips, Prairie Chicken

Linked inseparably with the development of Duhamel in the 1890s is the name of Francois Adam, who came to Canada from Belgium, and spent the first three years in the country north of the Peace River, buying furs at Carcajou Point. It was on his third trip to London with furs

that he met the future Mrs. Adam. In 1891 she came to the west and they were married by Father Bellevaire.

Two turnips from the Salvis garden and two prairie chickens shot by the bridegroom appeared on the wedding day menu. The dinner was enjoyed on the banks of Stoney Creek, close to the present site of Camrose.

Mr. and Mrs. Adam spent the winter of 1891-92 at the home of Fr. Bellevaire. Mr. Adam started a ranch at Crooked Lake, near the present village of Gwynne, and opened a store at Duhamel, originally on the north bank of the Battle River, and later on the south side.

First White Settlers

The first white settlers came into the country in 1892. Wm. Heighington and his brother-in-law, and E. Bosmans settled at Bittern Lake. The same year settlers of Norwegian origin arrived, among them were Mr. Iverson, the Olstad brothers and P. O. Haukedahl, who took up land a short distance from the present village of New Norway. The next year some German folks settled in the area east of Dried Meat Lake.

Her Majesty's Mail

A post office was opened in the Adam store at Duhamel in 1892, with Mr. Adam as postmaster. Previous to this all mail was carried to and from Edmonton by settlers who had business there.

In 1901 the hamlet of Duhamel—R.L. 39, comprised a store, a frame 18-room hotel (built and conducted by Thos. Shea and C. Miquelon), a creamery, blacksmith shop, livery barn and three dwellings.

When the C. P. R. built their line east from Wetaskiwin in 1906, most of the business men moved to Camrose and continued their enterprises there.

The Wooden Trestle

In 1909 the "G. T. P." railway built a branch from Tofield to Calgary. The outstanding feature of this piece of construction was the huge half-mile long wooden trestle built to span the Battle River at Duhamel. It was certainly the largest wooden bridge in western Canada, and one of the largest in the world. Huge quantities of timber and many tons of bolts were used in the building of this impressive trestle.

Over Bridge 3,500 Times

For eleven years Jas. F. Ross, owner of the land on the south side of the river was watchman of the bridge. He walked over it after every train had crossed as a precautionary measure against fire. Mr. Ross' son, Alex, estimates his father made the round trip more than 3,500 times in eleven years.

Bridge Falls Into Disuse

With the amalgamation of the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific railways in 1920, the huge structure fell into disuse. The 'show place' of the area for many years, it was the custom for Camrosians and others to take visitors to the viewpoint overlooking the charming valley, distinguished by the "Duhamel" bridge. It was finally dismantled.

Fine Farming District

The original Duhamel, so long an outpost in the settlement of the rich lands of the Battle River, no longer had a place due to the changed con-

ditions from the early days of this century, and nothing remains today but a few caved-in cellars.

About two miles south of "The Deserted Village" a new Duhamel emerged. It is set in the midst of one of the finest mixed farming sections of western Canada, surrounded by well cultivated farms, with modern homes, and the livestock includes the highest type of cattle and swine in the Province.

EARLY DAYS AT DUHAMEL

as told by Mrs. Clemence Breland through her son, Michael, to Frank L. Farley, president of the Camrose Historical Society, and Hugh A. MacGregor, secretary.

This Article was prepared in 1934.

Hand made horse collar and hames, made in the summer of 1881 by Sampson Breland, Mrs. Breland's husband, now among objects in the Society's museum.

Mrs. Breland's tiny sewing machine, bought in Fort Garry in 1881 for thirty dollars, an outstanding exhibit in the museum.

34 Carts in West-bound Brigade—3 Months Trip

SAMPSON BRELAND was born at White Horse Plains, St. Francis Xavier parish, Manitoba, in 1844. Early in life he went to Fort Garry and there married Clemence Bellehumer, eight years his junior. Seven of their eleven children survived. Four were born in Manitoba and three on the home farm south of Camrose.

As a young man, Sampson farmed in Manitoba, and at times did freighting.

The Westward Journey

In May, 1881, with five other families, Mr. Breland and his household set out for the far west. They started with twelve Red River carts, each containing about a half-ton of freight for delivery at Edmonton at a charge of \$5.00 per 100 pounds. The carts were drawn by cayuses and the loads were made up principally of flour, tea, sugar, tobacco and dry goods.

The Breland family travelled in a light wagon drawn by a team of horses. Thomas House, neighbor of the Brelands and brother of the Jim House who in 1893 lived at Tail Creek, had five carts and in all there were 34 carts in the brigade.

The route traversed lay via the present city of Moose Jaw (then known by this name, but at that period only a railway camp) and thence to the confluence of the Red-Deer and South-Saskatchewan rivers, commonly called "The Forks." Here were located Pierre and Gabriel Levey and three Poytras brothers, all of whom owned stopping houses. Mrs. Breland recalled the good gardens seen at this point. From "The Forks" to the Duhamel settlement no other settlers were encountered.

Crossing The River

At "The Forks" the party had made a dug-out canoe from a large Balm of Gilead log, with which to convey the freight and passengers across the stream; the carts were tipped upside down, and then tied to the horses' tails for towing across the river.

Collar and Hames de Luxe

Here Sampson Breland found it necessary to fashion a new horse

collar and hames. The hames were cut out of birch and padded with native hay contained in canvas, which in turn was sewn with sinews.

This interesting set was recently unearthed by Mrs. Breland's son-in-law, Edw. Busness, from one of the old log barns on the homestead, south bank of the Battle River valley.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Busness, grandson of Sampson Breland, the collar and hames are now the property of the Camrose Historical Society.

During the entire trip the party had ample pemican, previously prepared for the journey, and the menu was often varied with prairie chicken, wild ducks and geese and antelope. Buffalo were already quite scarce and none of these 'monarchs of the plains' were seen.

The caravan spent sixty days in actual travel. Sundays and wet days were excepted with the result that more than three months passed enroute.

In August, 1881, the travellers reached the final leg of the long 800-mile trek, the Big Bend of the Battle River, following along its south side and Dried Meat Lake's shore to the Duhamel settlement where Father Bellevaire awaited them.

Continuing to Edmonton to discharge their loads of freight, the carts crossed the Battle at the then Dumont's Crossing, located on the river lot now owned and occupied by John Congdon.

The trail from this crossing followed the Battle Valley on the north side of the river as far as the Pipestone Creek, thence up that stream to the north and west until the Calgary-Edmonton trail was reached at a point south of the present village of Millet.

Mr. Breland and family took up residence on the N.E. of Sec. 6-46-20-4 for two years. This land is now owned by W. W. Russell as a farmstead.

Primitive Threshing

The summer of 1882 was excessively wet, and the river valley was covered from bank to bank with water. That year Mr. Breland broke ten acres and raised a good crop of barley and wheat.

At threshing time two small corrals were built and these were connected with a short and narrow lane. Several horses were driven by a mounted rider from one enclosure to the other, their hoofs trampling out the grain from the straw. When the separation of grain and straw was thought sufficient, the chaff was separated from the grain by the tedious process of winnowing.

Settlement Families

The Duhamel settlement other than the Brelands comprised: Touwent Solway and six Laboucan brothers; Gabriel, Jean Baptiste, Deon, Elzear, Jerome and Pierre. Other members of this outpost were Francois Dumont and Abraham Solway, in whose house a Hudson Bay store was operated by a Mr. Fortin. This store was situated on land now owned and occupied by Cedric Congdon.

Flour at the time was worth \$10.00 per 100 pounds, and this was obtained at first in Calgary, and latterly at Edmonton, from wheat taken from home. Mrs. Breland could not recollect prices of other commodities.

Fr. Bellevaire was the mail courier to the settlement two or three times a year. Ten years later the Calgary-Edmonton railway provided a more frequent service. Hobbema was the nearest post office. The

mails had been previously brought west to Calgary over the newly built C. P. R. and then irregularly carried north by freighters.

Old Gray Mare Pays For Parcel of Land

In 1883, two years after arriving in the district, Mr. Breland purchased the squatter's rights from Mr. Solway to the parcel of land on which he lived until his death in 1923; the widow still resides there with her daughter and son-in-law, Edw. Busnes.

The medium of exchange was an old gray mare. Solway apparently coveted a means of locomotion more than a partially improved homestead. Solway's log house was erected in 1880. It was added to by the Brelands who hewed out joists and added logs to make it into a two-storey structure.

The home is still occupied, and for all its 53 years shows but little wear and tear as it was regularly painted with white mud secured from F. Dumont's homestead a few miles up the valley.

Deer were plentiful and Mrs. Breland frequently saw black bears in the timber just below her house. Moose were often killed in the vicinity of Dried Meat Hill, not far to the eastward, across the valley. A large timber wolf, first observed rummaging in the garbage pile near the house, was later tracked beyond Silver Creek and there shot by Frank Laboucan. Fish were caught in a weir set in the river right below the Breland residence—pike, pickerel and suckers—and the people helped themselves.

Coal oil was then unknown in the settlement and home-made tallow candles provided light. If the supply failed temporarily, the pitch light was brought into use, the only other means of illuminating the houses.

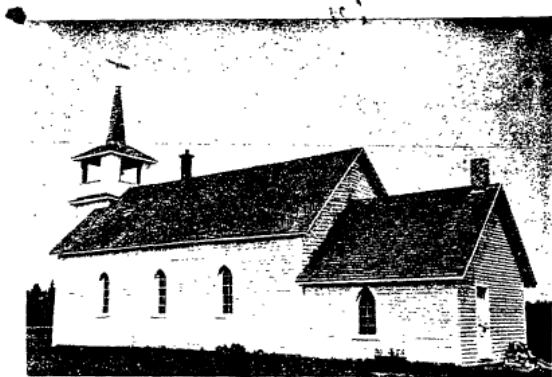
The Church is Built

The Roman Catholic church was built in the same year that the Brelands first occupied their permanent home, 1883, and Fr. Bellevaire was in charge. The hewn logs were supplied by the half-breed parishioners. Mr. Breland secured his quota in the coulee of Silver Creek, hewing and hauling them to the church site. After the erection of walls, the women met at the new building and plastered the chinks between the logs with a mixture of hay and mud. They also whitewashed the edifice within and without with "pitch"—in this case with white mud from the F. Dumont homestead. This same white mud was later employed by many of the early settlers to white-wash the interiors and exteriors of their own homes. The resulting color and preservation was quite similar to that obtained from today's white lead paints.

The Little Sewing Machine

A small hand sewing machine was brought from Fort Garry in 1881 by Mrs. Breland, and she used it for many years. It is still capable of doing good work. This labor saving piece of household equipment was bought at a cost of \$30.00 Clara Breland, grand-daughter of the original purchaser, has presented the machine to the C. H. S. museum, housed in the Camrose Library.

Although she has lived nearly four score years, Mrs. Breland possesses a vivid recollection of events of sixty years ago, and through her interpreter son, Michael, gave ready and comprehensive replies to various queries.



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, DUHAMEL

Built in 1883, under the direction of Fr. Bellevaire. The hewn logs were supplied by the half-breed parishioners. After the erection of the walls, the women of the settlement gathered at the new building and chinked and plastered it, using plaster made of clay and chopped hay. They also white-washed the church, both interior and exterior, using white clay procured on the homestead of Francois Dumont. This same material was used by many of the early settlers for the same purpose. The resulting color and preservation was quite similar to that obtained from to-day's white lead paints.

In 1884, Bishop Grandin visited Fr. Bellevaire at Duhamel, and was so greatly pleased with the success of the work that he commended it to Archbishop Duhamel of Ottawa, who later presented the parish with a bell. As a result the name of the settlement was changed to Duhamel. In 1922, Fr. Bellevaire celebrated his fiftieth year as resident priest.

CHAPTER FIVE

HISTORY OF ARMENA LOCALITY

by Mrs. Robert Lyseng

ONE OF the many well developed districts, of which our pretty town of Camrose is the centre, is Armena, lying about ten miles north-west on the C. N. R.

Many took part in the development of the Armena district, but a brief history of the Grues, Movalds and Lysengs serves to cover all necessary ground, as today it is quite difficult to find anyone in the locality who is not related or connected by marriage to one or more of these prominent families.

Prior to 1894 a handful of homesteaders and squatters had appeared, but real development began in 1894 when Thore Grue and Ole Movald moved in from Minnesota with their families, the former on the present Carl Lyseng farm, and the latter on the present Tommy Movald farm.

Both families, of Norwegian birth, were endowed with the true pioneer spirit, as will be seen by their acceptance and overcoming of difficulties arising from lack of stores, schools, churches, railroads or to be precise, any roads.

Wetaskiwin was the nearest point for some years and a trip to town meant days of travel in wagons drawn by oxen, or on horseback or on foot over the rough prairie trails.

In 1898 a post office was set up at Pretty Hill, the name of the area extending much further than Armena district, but of which the latter was a part. The name is still retained in the Pretty Hill school district north of Dipant.

Need For a School

Mr. Grue and Mr. Movald had large families, so with the aid of other settlers: J. Moe, E. Thompson, Bronken and J. Boa, in 1897, they set about planning a school. Logs were hauled from White Water Lake and sawed into rough lumber on T. Grue's mill, and this material formed the first building (as well as the furniture, all made by Mr. Grue; many pieces may still be seen around the district.)

In 1898, classes were held in the new school house, said to have been the first rural school in Sutherland territory. Mr. Atcheson was the first teacher, and his salary was \$45.00 a month. No register is extant for that first year. In 1899, school was open from January to July, 126 days, with W. T. Gemmell in charge. There were 29 pupils, from seven to seventeen years of age. The school was given a weighty name—Thordenskjold—Thor-den-shold—in memory of the great Norwegian sailor.

In 1914 a good frame building was put up and today the school is well equipped with modern type furniture and furnace and there is a large library.

1901 and 1902 saw the greatest influx of settlers to Armena: G. O.

Hendrickson and H. B. Lomnes led the wave, with Henry Hendrickson coming a year later. The Hendricksons came from South Dakota and Lomnes' from North Dakota. It was in 1902 that the three Lyseng brothers, Eric, Albert and Knut moved in from Bigstone County, Minn., with their families. Knut, more generally known as K. K. Lyseng, had been operating a saw mill in the States, and he brought all materials with him, even plaster, with which to construct his house, a very large one, which has since been added to.

The Church Foremost

The Hendricksons, Lomnes' and Lysengs were all active in community life, but were particularly instrumental in development of the church. Three denominations were represented: Swedish Lutheran, Norwegian Lutheran and the Free church. A Swedish Lutheran church was built three miles east of Armena, and a Free church a mile south. For some years the Norwegian Lutherans worshipped in Thordenskjold school but in 1908 the Norwegian Lutherans and Free churches united under the name of the former; the Free church building was moved to its present location, a mile north of Armena, and was renamed Scandia by T. Grue.

Knut Lyseng donated land for church and cemetery, and continued throughout his life to give freely of time and money in the cause of the church. Much good, at home and abroad, is achieved by its various organizations: Sunday School, Y. P. S., Sunshine Club and Ladies' Aid.

In 1916 the Y. P. S. in convention organized a Central Alberta Luther League. The leaders of the movement evinced great enthusiasm, as did the young people. Rev. A. H. Solheim was active in the C. A. L. L.

Delegates came from as far south as Cereal, Alberta. There are three Alberta circuits: Camrose, Provost and Viking. In 1926 the tenth anniversary of the league was held here.

The building of the C. N. R. from Edmonton to Camrose in 1911 was a great boom to our settlers. The railroad passed through the quarter section lying directly south of that on which T. Grue had settled and it was here in 1914 the U. G. G. built a grain elevator, thus giving Armena its beginning.

A store was built and operated by a Mr. Carter in 1918 (a little later a postal service was given at the store). Alfred Anderson, T. Walckemeyer and Mr. Gurley were subsequent owners. In 1922 the store was lost by fire and in 1923 John Walker, the present merchant, rebuilt and has successfully conducted grocery store, post office and oil business.

In 1927 and 1928 Searle and the Pool built grain elevators in Armena. Since it is located on the main line of the C. N. R. (Edmonton-Calgary), mail and passenger services are excellent. Few rural points can boast of better service.

The contrast is sharp between the daily service of today, and the almost utter absence of service of any kind in the 90s and early 1900s.

District's Lost Child

Many are the records in Alberta of young children becoming lost through wandering away from home. Armena district records one such case. The ending was happy although this has not always been the case with kiddies lost in the brush of our parkland belt.

The story concerns Illeen, eldest daughter of Ole Movald's eldest son, Tommy. Mrs. Movald had gone to pick berries one afternoon leaving two-year-old Illeen with her father. The little girl started after her

mother and Mr. Movald thought she had found her. It was growing dusk when Mrs. Movald returned, without the child.

The alarmed parents solicited aid and a ready response was made by neighbors. Late at night Mr. Farley in Camrose was notified and he, together with all the Boy Scouts at hand and numerous other town volunteers hastened to the scene, arriving towards morning. Many weary searchers were resting in the Movald yard.

In spite of the darkness Mr. Farley organized a search party of between 150 and 200 men and lads. Joining hands the searchers started off to cover every foot of ground. About daybreak the tot was found, unharmed and sound asleep, and in an altogether different direction to that the parents had in mind.

A brief story illustrates the grit with which the pioneers were endowed, and concerns Mrs. Thore Grue's mother. At the age of 85 years she walked, when no ride offered, a distance of six or more miles to attend Ladies' Aid at the home of a relative. It is reported she arrived in time for lunch, a bit weary, but otherwise none the worse for her journey by shank's mare.

CHAPTER SIX

OBSERVATIONS ON EARLY DAYS IN NORBO (DONALDA) DISTRICT

By O. A. Broughton

NORBO district, north-east of today's town of Donalda, comprised in the first days Tps. 42 and 43.

Actual settlement began in 1901 and names on the record are Gunder Olson and sons, Oscar, Peter, Hegbert and Generius. In 1902 homesteading began in earnest. Among the new settlers were Iver E. Bjorge and a large family; A. Blomgwen and family; Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Stolee and daughter, Amalia and son-in-law, Jacob T. Vikse and family; Sam Akland and C. Haugstad. It was a compact settlement.

Bjorge came from Minnesota, and the others from the dry areas of South Dakota.

Rain was copious and growth luxuriant. The settlers new home seemed like a Goshen in Egypt.

Ovide Blouin began stock raising in 1896 and there were ten cows in his original herd. It is said that after some of the settlers named came in with poultry and other stock, he would visit his neighbors just to hear the roosters crow.

S. A. Hilde arrived in 1901, and in 1902 Nels and Thor Eikeland, Sam Hanson and T. T. Vikse and their families came in to homestead.

In 1903 Rosenburg Stolee and family, and his father-in-law, Mr. Solomonson and family joined the population. The latter was accompanied by sons Tom and Hans. Peter N. Johnson and A. Jerstad and families, and Ike Smith, a bachelor, also located.

In 1904, 1905 and 1906 land in the district was chosen by Ole Jacobson; Ole, Peter and Matt Stanvik; Mrs. Tuesseth and sons, Einar, Olaf and George; C. D. Canblar; O. A. Broughton; S. J. Broughton; E. Knudston; Oscar C. Olson; J. N. Banta; Casper Hendel and Patrick Sweeney.

Heavy rains fell in the summers of 1902-03, making travel difficult over soft and boggy trails, which were innocent of bridges or fords over creeks and streams.

Wetaskiwin was the trading post in the first years and from this centre the settlers carted their effects and supplies a distance of between 40 and 60 miles. Where oxen were used as motive power the trip occupied a full week.

Horses were brought in by most of the settlers but many of them died of swamp fever and other climatic diseases.

B. J. Stolee bought lumber in Wetaskiwin, loaded it on a barge and floated it down Pipestone Creek to its confluence with Battle River, thence to Ferry Point landing. His home was a stopping place for homesteaders from as far east as Coronation and across the Saskatchewan border.

The nearest post office was at Duhamel. Later Thos. Thirsk established a store and post office at Ferry Point.

It was the practice for families to come along with the head of the household and frequently shelter was urgently needed from rain and insect pests. There was a housing shortage. Tents were at a premium and sometimes a hastily constructed brush shelter had to serve until a log cabin could be erected.

Cooking had often to be done picnic style in the open with rocks for a fire place. It is said some attempts to bake pancakes over the open fire came to grief either through a sudden downpour of rain, or an equally sudden onslaught by myriads of mosquitoes which would disappear into the batter.

Hopes were high, health good and hard work sharpened appetites, and minor inconveniences were tolerated with good humor.

There were no fences and livestock had a distressing tendency to roam, so much time was lost rounding up milch cows. During the wet seasons swarms of mosquitoes made the lives of man and beast most miserable.

In 1904 "Bethany" church was organized by the Norwegian Lutheran church congregation. First pastor was Rev. C. M. Nodtvedt. He travelled on foot in the summer, on skis in the winter.

Norbo school district came into being in 1904. First school board: B. J. Stolee, S. L. Akland, Oscar E. Olson. School opened in 1906 with Miss Clara Knipps the teacher.

B. J. Stolee was the first councillor for Tp. 43-18-4 in the Local Improvement District erected in 1905. His brother, R. J. Stolee, was councillor for Tp. 42-18-4.

In 1906, Sharon congregation, Lutheran Free Church, was organized. First pastor was Rev. J. A. Stavney.

Ibsen school district was set up in 1910. First trustees: P. N. Johnson, J. R. Stolee and O. A. Broughton, secretary. Miss J. Hendrickson was the first teacher.

A strong local of the Alberta Farmers' Association was formed in March, 1908, with the assistance of the provincial secretary, W. F. Stevens. O. A. Broughton was secretary-treasurer for some years.

Normana male chorus was organized in 1908 with E. O. Tuesseth the leader. Their singing added cheer to many a festive occasion. Later Mr. Tuesseth moved to Washington and his departure was greatly regretted.

Of those moving here in 1901-02-03, Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Stolee and Oscar E. Olsen are the sole ones on the original homesteads where they have continually resided.

Winter of 1906-07 was excessively long, with bitter cold and deep snows. The November snows stayed until June and delayed seeding. Wild life was abundant and helped augment the fare of the settlers. Deer and antelope were shot occasionally, and prairie chicken, partridge, ducks and geese graced many a meal. The meat course on our first Christmas dinner was prairie chicken and jack rabbit delectable viands.

Coyote, lynx and muskrat pelts in season were traded for family needs. The first two marauders depleted many a poultry flock.

Our region is, and has long been, popular with summer song birds. Mornings are made musical with warblings from throats of the song-

sters, nesting around the farm buildings or in nearby groves.

In winter the arrival of flocks of chickadees would signal severe weather farther north, or herald an approaching storm. Numerous flocks of the common redpoll could be seen unconcernedly feeding on weed seeds in the cold weather, unmindful of drifting snow.

Sharp-tailed grouse would gather on their favorite knolls late in February or in March, the cocks aggressive and combative, industriously speeding their courting. This useful and interesting species is now scarce.

A colony of beaver started operations on a quarter adjoining mine. It was a thrill to watch these foremost of nature's engineers build their dams and to note the skill of their planning. Unfortunately poachers hunted them for their pelts and the colony was destroyed. We were sad over the disappearance of these busy, friendly creatures.

A spirit of good fellowship, hospitality and co-operation marked the early settlements in the west, I may say in closing. Episodes, some humorous, some otherwise, could be recounted, but I understand space is at a premium.