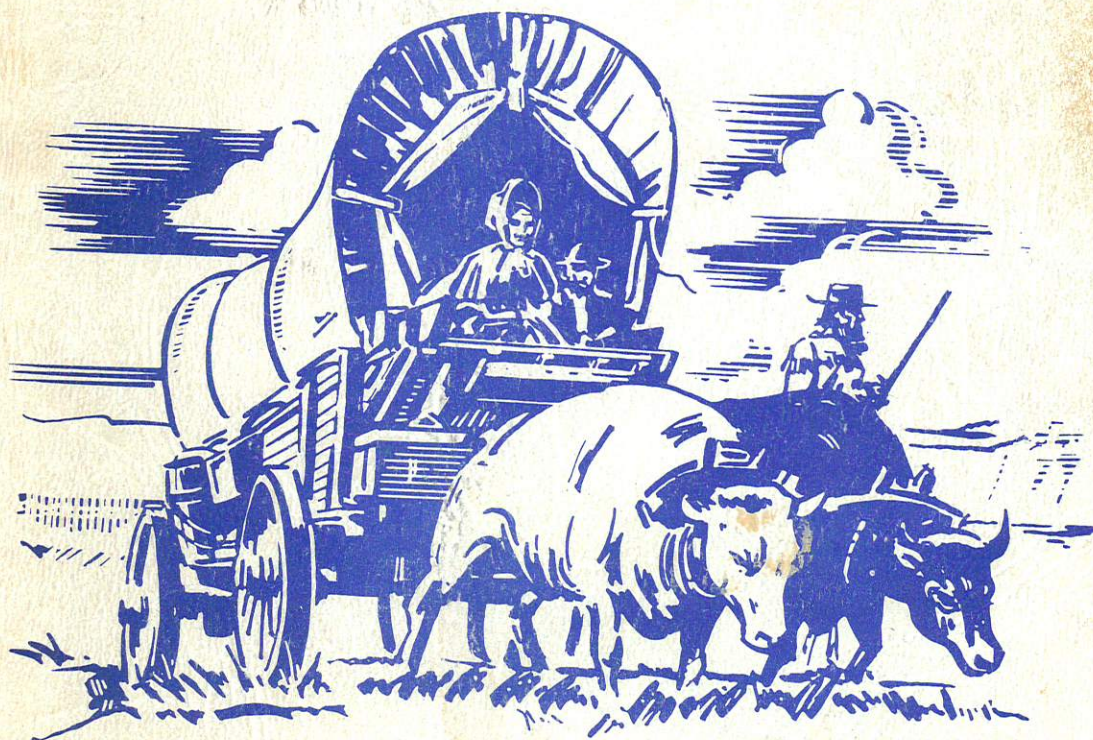


Memories of  
**North  
Portal**  
and Districts



*Published by North Portal 75th Anniversary Committee*  
**1904-1979**



*Murray & Betty & Lindsay*

## **Foreword**

*These are the memories of the pioneers, homesteaders, early settlers of the community up to 1920.*

*The Village of North Portal is located on the 49th parallel on the Canadian Pacific and Soo Line railways.*

*We realize the possibility of unintentionally omitting incidents or experiences associated with pioneer living. If it should happen that important events are left out in the telling, or more detail is shown in dealing with certain happenings, it will be through lack of knowledge, rather than a desire to over-emphasize other occurrences.*

*We, the committee of the 75th Anniversary, wish to express our gratitude to all who contributed information and pictures.*

# Dedication

*We respectfully dedicate this book to the pioneers and early settlers of the North Portal, Forbes, Britannia, Russelldale and McColl Districts.*

*They faced the hardships of all descriptions and surmounted them. They laid the firm foundation, that those who followed built upon.*

*Through the recordings of these achievements, we keep fresh the memories of our forefathers. Without the foresight of these hardy Pioneers we would not have the good life we enjoy today.*

ABOOD	CURTIS	HILL	McGREGOR	PUKAS
ABRAHAM	DALEY	HINES	McLEAN	RABSKI
ADAM	DAVIS	HORNIBROOK	McMILLAN	RAGAZINSKAS
ALLEN	DICKSON	INGLE	McPHEE	RANDALL
ALLISOP	DOAN	IRVINE	McKENZIE	RICHARDSON
ASPINALL	DORSEY	JOHNSON	McKERSIE	ROBINSON
AULD	DOUGLAS	JOHNSTON	McRAE	ROGERS
BAKER	DRONSFIELD	KAY	MEAD	ROUGHTON
BALISON	DUNBAR	KELLINGTON	MEGUIRE	SARGENT
BANKS	EARL	KEMP	MELLOM	SCOTT
BASTABLE	ELLIOTT	KIHL	MELVIN	SEARLE
BATTERSLEY	EMERSON	KIRK	MENZIES	SHAND
BENNETT	ENGLEHART	KLIEN	MILLER	SHOEBRIDGE
BERDAY	FAIR	KNIGHT	MILNE	SLOAN
BEST	FLAVELLE	KURTH	MITCHELL	SMITH
BJORK	FORD	KUSTER	MOORE	SOKOLOSKI
BRIERS	FOX	LEE	MORMON	SKINNER
BRINKWORTH	FRASER	LEES	MOSSOP	SKOCZYLAS
BROWN	FRAYNE	LEONARD	NEAL	STRINGER
CAMM	FROST	LIGHT	NEILSON	SWEMENNSON
CARNS	GERRY	LONG	NEVILLE	TAYLOR
CARR	GILPIN	LONGNEY	NORRIS	THOMPSON
CARTER	GLOSSER	LYALL	NORTH	TURNER
CASS	GODSON	MacKENZIE	O'BRIEN	UPPER
CHADWICK	GRANT	MANN	OLSEN	WADDINGTON
CHARLTON	HALEY	MARTEN	PATERSON	WADDY
CLARK	HAMILTON	MATSON	PATTERSON	WATSON
COLLER	HANSON	MAUNDER	PICKARD	WICKS
COLLISON	HARRINGTON	McALLISTER	PILANTZ	WOOD
COTTER	HARRIS	McCLELLAND	POMEROY	WRIGHT
CRATE	HAUPT	McDONALD	POTVIN	WYNNE-JONES
CROYMANS	HARVEY	McGINNIS	PRANKY	ZION

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# Pre-Settlement History

## Geography of North Portal Area:

The main feature of this area is the Souris River and valley which roughly parallels the International Boundary at a distance of about six miles to the north. The land is fairly flat plains draining in a northeasterly direction. Cultivated land extends north four miles from the boundary. The remaining land is rocky and cut by ravines, so its primary use is for livestock grazing. The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act operates community pastures on most of this land. Oil wells are scattered throughout.

The soils range from dark brown, rather sandy soils grading into darker valley soils near the river. Rainfall averages 15 inches (37½ cm.). Mean temperature during January is -15C and in July plus 18C.

## Early Explorers:

Probably the first known white men to explore our area were the two sons of Pierre La Verendrye in 1742 on their way west in search of the western sea. They followed the Souris River until they came opposite the headwaters of the Missouri. In 1805 the Lewis and Clark expedition was exploring along the Missouri and its tributaries when some of their party made an excursion north to see Roche Percee. In 1849 John Palliser most likely made his first visit to the southeast corner of the province, near the 20th Century border crossing point, Portal. This information is from the book "Solitary Rambles of a Hunter on the Prairie." Later, when he headed the British North American Exploration Expedition, he came from the north to Roche Percee with Dr. James Hector, a naturalist.

## Indian Territories Before Settlement:

This area was inhabited by the Assiniboine Indians in early years, but they moved west as the

buffalo became scarcer and the Chipewans and Crees came from the northeast into the area. The Indian Treaty No. 4 signed in September 1874 "extinguished the title of the Crees and Chipewans of the plains to the highly desirable agriculture area comprising chiefly what is southern Sask."

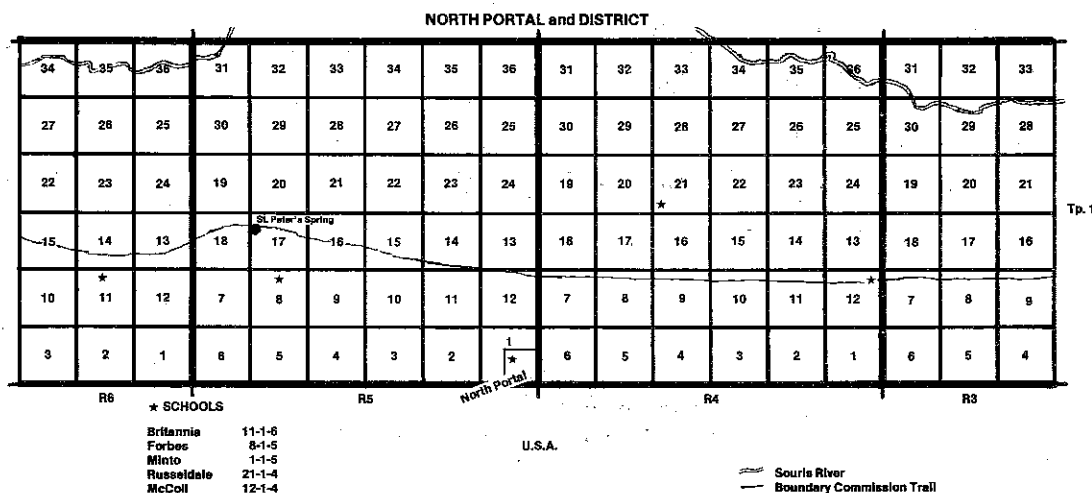
## Rupert's Land:

Prior to 1869 the Hudson's Bay Co. charter included all lands that drained into Hudson Bay, so this area was their territory. When Canada purchased this from Britain we became part of the North West Territories. The Territorial Council met first in Winnipeg, then at Fort Livingstone, near Pelly, in 1877. From 1878 until 1882 the Council met at Battleford when Regina was chosen Capital. In 1882 this part of the Territories was divided into districts of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan. The first elected Territorial Assembly met in 1888.

Settlement under free (\$10.00) land grant system was established in 1871 by Order in Council. Later Dominion Lands Act made changes. Pre-emptions were permitted to suitable homesteaders for fees that varied from \$1.00 to \$3.00 per acre in later years.

## The Boundary Commission:

In 1873 the Boundary Commission, composed of men from Britain, the United States and Canada, began marking the prairie section of the 49th Parallel. This Joint Commission is still in existence, deciding on many factors affecting both countries. In the journals of some of the commissioners we find interesting comments on our area. References to the "Hill of the Murdered Scout", "St. Peter's Springs" and coal outcroppings near Roche Percee locate North Portal at their centre. G. W. Dawson, a geologist, describes soil types, absence of wood as prairie fires were frequent and no water between Lake du Lac and St. Peter's Springs.





guards. These fire districts later became Statute Work Districts in which each settler was responsible for work relative to his land holdings for fire guards and road work. These districts usually had an overseer and secretary, elected at an annual meeting where plans were made for the year. These Work Districts were later enlarged by the "Local Improvement Ordinance of 1898."

From an early rural minute book, 1898, this rural area was divided into districts: L.I.D. No. 185,

1.b,2 and 1,c,2. There were councillors for each district who met about six times a year, in various homes and schools, to plan projects for the whole area, yet the funds were kept separate in different banks. In 1898 the taxes were set at \$2.50 per quarter. Later it was raised to \$4.00 and by 1909 it was increased to \$6.00 per quarter.

In 1913 the Rural Municipality of Coalfields No.4 was formed, comprising nine townships, with office in Bienfait.

## The Village of North Portal

The first By-law governing procedures with respect to the village was that of adopting a Common Seal for the Village of North Portal. The seal bears the inscription "*Village of North Portal, Saskatchewan, Incorporated 1904.*" The said by-law was done and passed in council assembled at the Village of North Portal on the sixth day of August A.D. 1912. Overseer presiding T.R. Waddington and Secretary Treasurer G. H. Wicks.

The preface outlines the bylaw incorporating the village seal, but of much interest are the Orders in Council published in the North West Territories Gazette, dated Regina, Monday, November 30, 1904 and headed "Establishment of Villages", and we quote: "Under the provisions of The Village Ordinance, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, by and with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to order the establishment of the whole of Section 1, Township 1, Range 5, West of the Second meridian as a village under the name of North Portal; that Monday, the Fourteenth day of December, 1904 be the day fixed for the election of an Overseer of the said Village, and that Horace Prairie of North Portal, Assiniboia be appointed to act as Returning Officer at the said election", end of quote.

Elections held resulted in E.R. MacPhee being elected the first overseer of the Village of North Portal. The First Annual Return prepared, and for the year 1904, the financial statement showed an Income of \$241.26 with Expenditures of \$241.26. The Secretary-Treasurer was W.H. Dorsey, and the records available show a population of 52 in 1901; 176 in 1911; and 191 in 1921. Between 1944 and 1979 the population of the Village of North Portal show varied figures ranging between 144 and 200, with the 1976 Census indicating a population of 155 persons.

Accounts for the Village of North Portal, our records show, at the beginning were held in the First International Bank and the Portal State Bank of North Dakota, and in the Bank of Montreal in Estevan, Sask. Records also indicate that there was a consistent excess of Revenue over Expenditure each year, even during the thirties and forties.

Overseers and Secretary-Treasurers from 1904 to 1979:

1904— E. R. MacPhee

1905— E. R. MacPhee

1906-07— G. S. Richardson

1908-09— E. R. MacPhee, W.H. Dorsey

1910-11— E. R. MacPhee, W. H. Dorsey

1912— G. S. Richardson, W. H. Dorsey

1913— T. R. Waddington, G. H. Wicks

1914-16— C. W. Jones, G. H. Wicks

1917— W.H. Dorsey, G. H. Wicks

1918— Wm. Menzies, G. H. Wicks

1919-24— *No Records Available*

1925-31— William Shand, A. F. Smith

1932— J. G. MacKenzie, Ray Smith

1933-44— J. G. MacKenzie, G. H. Wicks

1945-46— A. R. Lyall, J. A. Green

1947— G. E. Gunn, Edward Werry

1948-49— G. H. Wicks, Edward Werry

1950-63— P. H. Davis, Edward Werry

1964-65— P. H. Davis, R. A. Marcotte

1966-68— W. E. Miles, R. A. Marcotte

1969— W. E. Miles, Cal Mitchell

1970-72— Mayor W. B. Arnold, Cal Mitchell

1973-74— Mayor H. A. Davis, Cal Mitchell

1974-79— Mayor Edward Werry, Cal Mitchell

Miss Eva Harris, one of the early residents of North Portal district recalls that the first store she was in was a big tent south of the cenotaph in 1893.

Several of the early residences, stores, etc. were built by Mr. E. R. MacPhee. There were several businesses at one time, namely: two hotels, two lumber yards, Chinese laundry, butcher shop, Massey Harris machine shop, barber shop, four stores, photograph studio, Methodist church, Presbyterian church, Anglican church, Doctor (Doctor Douglas—he lived in the house now owned by Cliff Earl), Immigration Hall, CPR Depot, and elevator, Quarantine barns, Veterinarian—Dr. Cass, Elite Hall.

A man by the name of Prairie was station agent in early days. He was an Irishman and was responsible for naming the streets, Belfast (city in Ireland), Clair, Ulster and Antrim (counties in Ireland). Where the Rabski house is now was the first store of W. H. Dorsey. Kay Dorsey was born there and being the first baby born in the hamlet, was given a lot where the new store was built, with living quarters upstairs. It housed other families in later years and other businesses.

The Union Hotel was built by Mr. Black and Mr. White, south east of the new Dorsey store and the Grandview Hotel was built by Mr. Harry Mead.

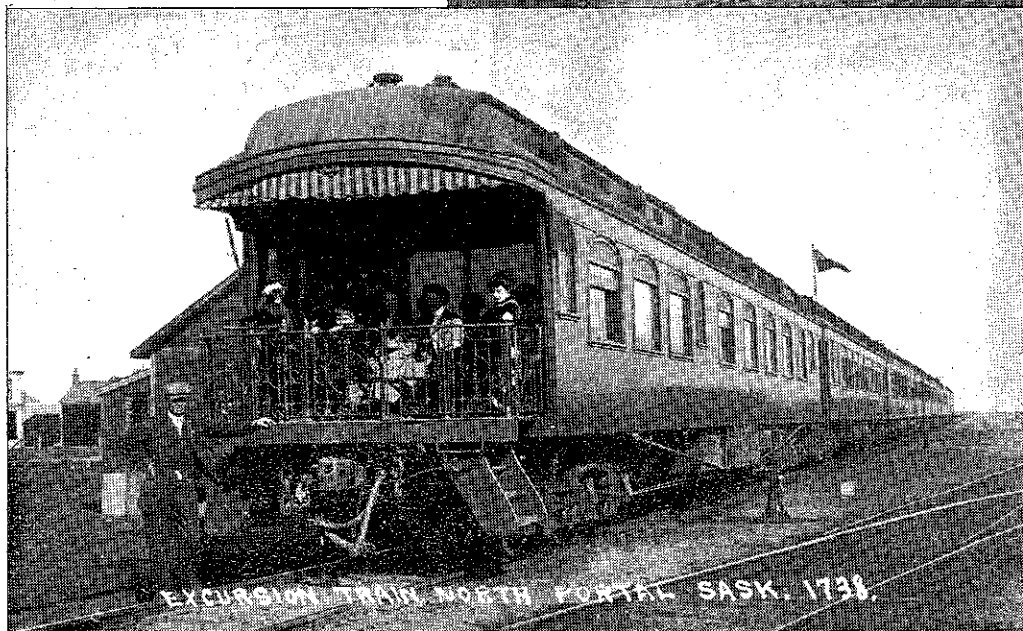
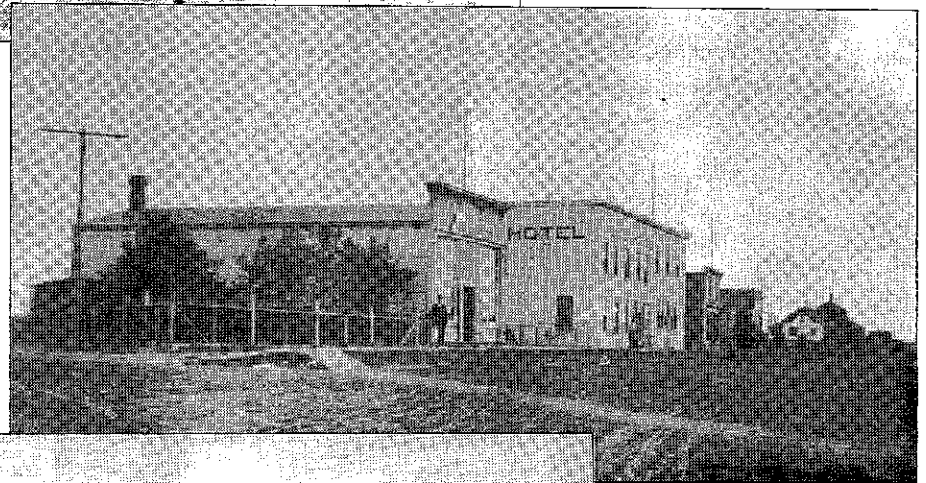


Post Office, Oliver Harris residence, and school. Background: Elite Hall.



Canadian Government Quarantine Barns at North Portal.

A very early street scene.



An excursion train.

# The Rural Municipality of Coalfields No. 4

The Rural Municipality of Coalfields No. 4 came into existence in the year 1913. It comprised of 9 townships with the south extremity, the 49th parallel— or the border between Saskatchewan and North Dakota.

The head office where most council meetings are held is in the Town of Bienfait, which is situated on the west boundary line of the municipality. The present office was built in the thirties. Previous to that the office was in a house. In the early days the council would have an occasional meeting in the Hotel in Frobisher.

Coalfields is unique in that it has the Souris River that divides the municipality from west to east approximately six miles from the south border. On each side of the river is submarginal land that is too stony for agriculture and at present comprises the P.F.R.A. pasture of which there are 33,000 acres. The pasture is divided by the river and no river bottom is used for pasture, therefore the stock cannot contaminate the water.

As well as the river there is an abundance of lignite coal— at present a new tippie is being built near Bienfait to accommodate continuous loading. 100 car trains will be used to transport the coal to Ontario.

Also in Coalfields there are quite a few oil wells. These two natural resources help tremendously to boost the tax base of the municipality.

All the land other than the submarginal is good for agriculture. All types of crops are grown. Sunflowers, one of the latest to be tried, is due to our area having one hundred heat units more than the area to the north of us.

Coalfields boasts one of the nicest roadside parks along Highway 39. It is situated just off the highway on the river flats east of Roche Percee.

No farmer in Coalfields has to drive on dirt roads to get to market. He either drives on gravel or pavement. Gravel had been in good supply, but no new sources have been found the last few years and we now bring gravel in from outside the area.

---

A special cairn is situated on the hill at Roche Percee. It was constructed and dedicated in 1967. It reads:

1867-1967

*Centennial of Confederation  
of Coalfield Roche Percee  
Cairn*

*Erected by R.M. of Coalfield and  
Village of Roche Percee  
in permanent commemoration of the  
Centennial of Confederation in Canada  
in 1967.*

*Construction made possible through co-operation  
through Province of Saskatchewan and Govern-  
ment of Canada in honour of our pioneers.*

---

Coalfields has always had good government and you will see the long list of citizens who have given of their time for the betterment of the people and the area.

## Division 1

William H. Wallace, 1913-15  
William F. Harris, 1914  
Sam A. Lee, 1916-17  
George S. Richardson, 1918-20, 25-36  
John W. Kellington, 1921-24  
W. Lee Roughton, 1937-52  
James Milne, 1953-59  
Frank Abraham, 1959-68  
Stanley Holmes, 1969—

## Division 2

Joseph Hill, 1913-15  
Amos D. McRae, 1916  
James K. MacKenzie, 1916-51  
Albert S. Harris, 1952-53  
Kenneth J. MacKenzie, 1954-69  
Jerry J. Daley, 1970-75  
E. J. Aspinall, 1976—

## Division 3

Joseph E. Brinkworth, 1913-17  
John T. Dunbar, 1918-20  
George S. Robinson, 1921-30  
Arron Molyneux, 1931-42  
Ernest F. Leonard, 1943-50  
John H. Dunbar, 1951-59  
Frank Zieglgansberger, 1959-74  
Alex Olson, 1975—

## Division 4

John E. Messham, 1913  
David J. McKnight, 1914-41  
Carl Timlin, 1942-43  
John L. Ward, 1944-45  
R. Fred Quinn, 1946-47  
J. Wilber Sherwin, 1948-59  
Stanley Stobart, 1960-69  
Robert Ewan, 1970-77  
Joe Gonos, 1978—

## Division 5

Joseph Ryson, 1913  
Isaac Fishtrom, 1914-15  
Archie Woodrow, 1916-17; 1919-30  
Louis Zelickson, 1918  
William Yeates, 1931-34  
Fred Billington, 1935-36  
Lester H. Billington, 1937-47  
Nels Backman, 1948-50  
V. H. Henderson, 1951-54  
Ronald W. Steiger, 1955-59  
Lloyd H. Olson, 1960-66  
John Walliser, 1967-68  
Ronald G. Johnson, 1969—

Nick Lafrentz, 1913-27  
 Fred A. Cleophas, 1928-37  
 William Lafrentz, 1938-47  
 Jake Miller, 1948-56  
 James Lainton, 1957-68  
 John Dillman, 1969-75  
 Mike Kazuik, 1976—

### Reeves

Robert Dunbar, 1913-15  
 Joseph Hill, 1916-41  
 Garfield H. McKechney, 1942-53  
 Gordon W. MacKenzie, 1954-56  
 V. H. Henderson, 1957-68  
 James Lamton, 1969-74  
 Frank Abraham, 1975—

A. J. Milligan, 1913-17; 18-22  
 A. B. Stuart, 1917-18  
 D. Archie Wynne-Jones, 1923-41  
 James A. Cooper, 1942-62  
 Wilfred Geber, 1962  
 Alvin B. Vinge, 1962-65  
 Vernon Ross, 1965-71  
 Henry Kostuik, 1971—

A very important industry that holds the distinction of being the only one of its kind in Saskatchewan is the Briquette plant which has been in operation for over one-half century. The briquettes are shipped over a wide area. One bi-product of the process is creosote, which is used as a wood preservative.

The plant is situated between the original sites of the M & S and Taylorton coal mines, that were underground mines. The plant is served by a spur track built from Bienfait to M & S and extended to the Briquette plant.

## The North Portal Post Office, No. 7188

The Post Office in North Portal was opened in 1894 in the section foreman's house. The homesteaders had been getting their mail at Coalfields before the railway was in service. J. A. Wood was section foreman at the time and the main duties for him was receiving and dispatching mail and selling stamps as it was still listed as a non-accounting office in 1899. That year the revenue was \$150.76, Salary \$70.00, night allowance \$16.37 per annum. (Postal Guide 1899)

From the section-house the office was moved to McPhee's store then to the dining room of Lottie Waddington house (now Sadler's) on Antrim St. when Miss Lucy Harris became postmistress in 1902. A few years later a separate office was built on the next lot to the south. As business grew it became an accounting office with long hours on the job as there were three trains a day, two at night, bringing mail and local mail to dispatch to the mail car on each train. Once the mail was to a railway post office on each train it was sorted, and if a piece

of mail was addressed to the next town it would be part of that office's mail and received in a matter of hours after being posted. Letter postage at that time was only two cents. Are we getting more efficient?

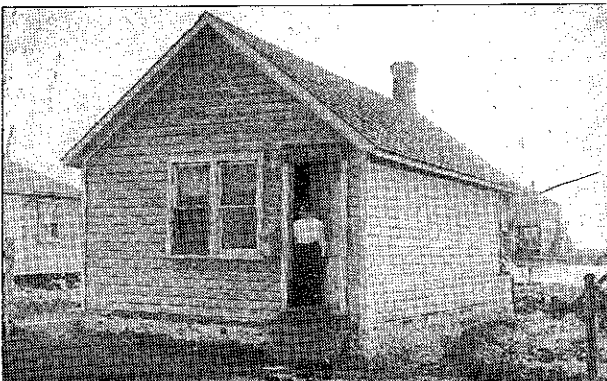
The mail bags for our Post Office were carried from the Canadian and American rail stations or if too heavy for a man's back a wheel barrow borrowed from Douglas's store was put to use. Two faithful mail carriers many will remember were L.M. Skoczylas and G. H. Wicks. Mr. Art Best was carrier for midnight and early morning trains for several years.

Miss Eva Harris became assistant in 1908 as work load increased as population of both village and rural area grew. (The village population in 1901 was 52; in 1911—176.) She continued as assistant until the passing of Miss Lucy Harris in 1930, when she became postmistress until her retirement in 1944. The salary never exceeded \$100.00 a month until the Tractor Lug Co. started dispatching parcels in the late nineteen thirties.

One very busy afternoon that Eva Harris recalls was when North portal was chosen to receive and dispatch air mail before it was in operation anywhere in Canada. A 'plane carried mail here from Edmonton and you could send special envelopes to yourself or friends with special stamps which made prized souvenirs. This test was made a few years before air mail was used across the country.

In the early fifties the office was moved to a new more spacious building on Railway Ave. and continued there until it was moved to the residence of R. MacKenzie on Belfast St. in 1977.

In 1944 Mrs. E. A. MacKenzie was appointed postmistress, a position she held for twenty one



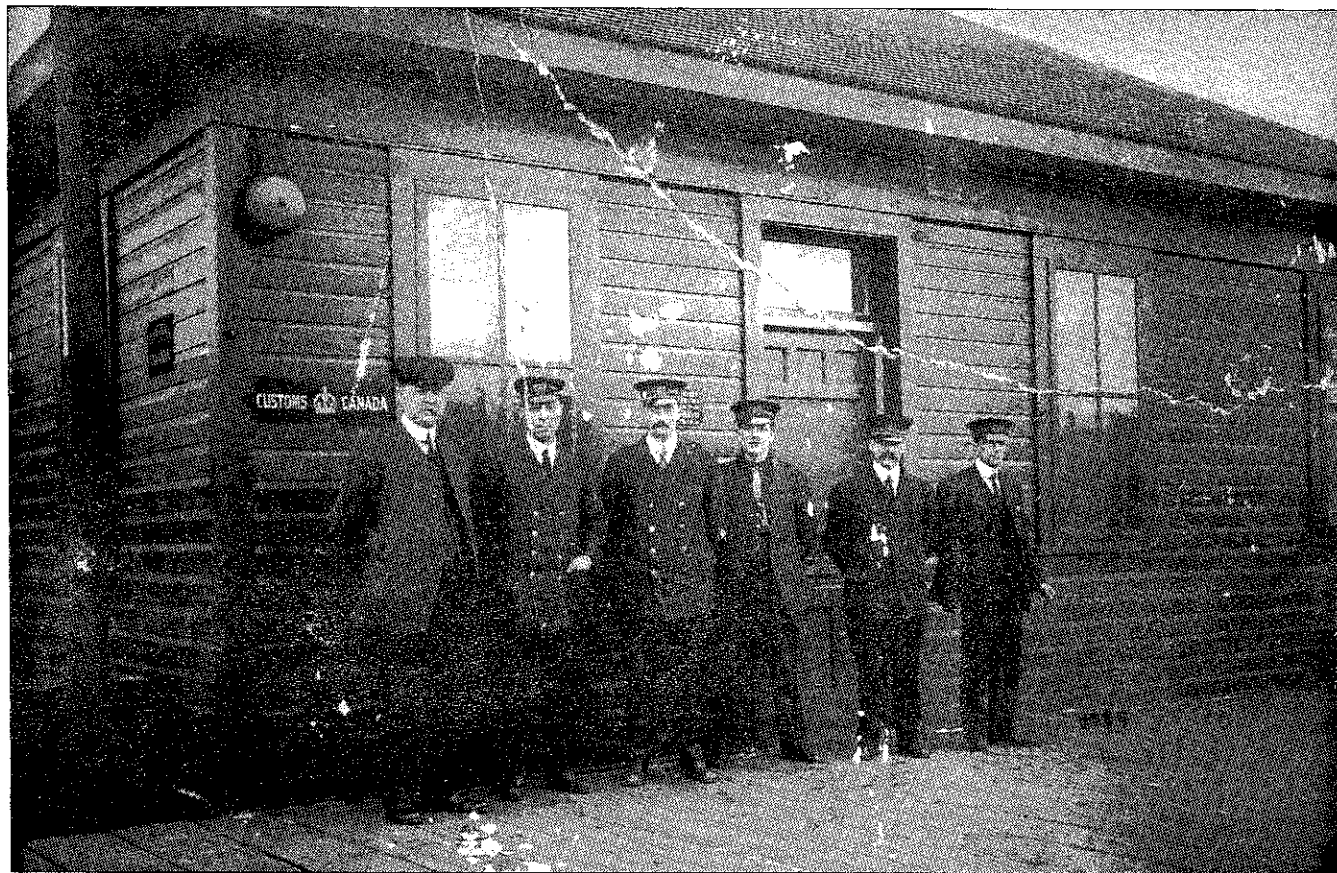
North Portal Post Office, with Postmistress Lucy M. Harris.



years. In 1965 Mr. Munro Dunbar took over as postmaster but due to his untimely death he was succeeded by Mrs. Florance MacKenzie in 1967.

She held the position until her retirement in 1977 when Mrs. Elinor MacKenzie was appointed with reduced hours.

## Customs and Immigration



Customs Staff at North Portal about 1912

### Customs

The North Portal Customs, designated at that time as a Preventative Stations, opened in June, 1893, possibly at the time the Canadian Pacific and Minneapolis, St. Paul and Saulte Ste. Marie Railways connected across the International Boundary, while the railway was not officially opened until Sept. 24th, 1893. Mr. A. C. Paterson was the first Sub-Collector and the port was raised to the status of an Outport of Customs and Warehousing Port on July 1st, 1895, under the survey of the Port of Winnipeg, Man., with Mr. Paterson receiving his permanent appointment as Sub-Collector at an annual salary of \$800.00. For some unknown reason the Outport of North Portal was detached from the Port of Winnipeg, Man., and placed under the Port of Calgary, N.W.T., on Jan. 1st, 1896. One possible reason being that the Province of Manitoba had been formed and the North Portal office was to remain within the North West Territory. At this time Regina was also an Outport under the jurisdiction of the Port of Calgary but was raised to Port status on July 1st, 1902, taking over the jurisdiction the Outport of

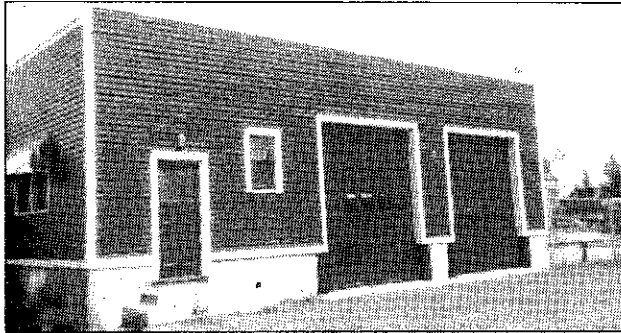
North Portal until July 1st, 1904, when North Portal was erected into a Customs Port of Entry and Warehousing Port. It is interesting to note that the first year's collections was \$58,328.33 while today it runs in excess of nine million dollars.

The first Customs Office was located in the C.P.R. Depot, but this space was apparently required for other purposes such as a church, dance hall, concert hall and for meetings of all kinds, with the result the C.P.R. provided a separate building on their right-of-way. This was fortunate for in 1908 the depot was destroyed by fire.

Mr. Paterson while Collector also acted in the capacity of the first Immigration Officer. However, he was promoted to District Inspector and transferred to the Port of Calgary in 1912 and a few years later transferred to the same position at the Port of Regina where he remained until his retirement in 1926. Two other Collectors, Mr. J. S. Hornibrook and Mr. W. R. Davis remained at the Port for a couple of years with Mr. C. P. Wright receiving the appointment in 1914 and remained in that position until retirement in 1946. A. R. Lyall then assumed the Collectorship until retirement in 1971, being followed by H. A. Gardiner, 1971-74,

Earl Clarkson, 1974-76 and the position now known as Area Manager taken over by D. W. Marshall.

During the early years, for people to have to report to Customs was considered an infringement upon their rights. Many were reluctant to do so, and in some respects, owing to the location of the office, they cannot be blamed. However, this was made easier with the construction of Highways 52 and 39 joining in the same manner as the railways, with facilities being provided on both sides of the junction. The first Canadian office, intended for handling highway traffic only, consisted of one room for office space, a coal bin and very primitive facilities. To heat this building it required two space heaters during the severe winter weather. A few years later improvements being made to Highway 39 resulted in the road surface being higher than the office with the result it was difficult to keep rain and melting snow from entering the building. This was overcome by raising the office and provided a full-sized basement with a

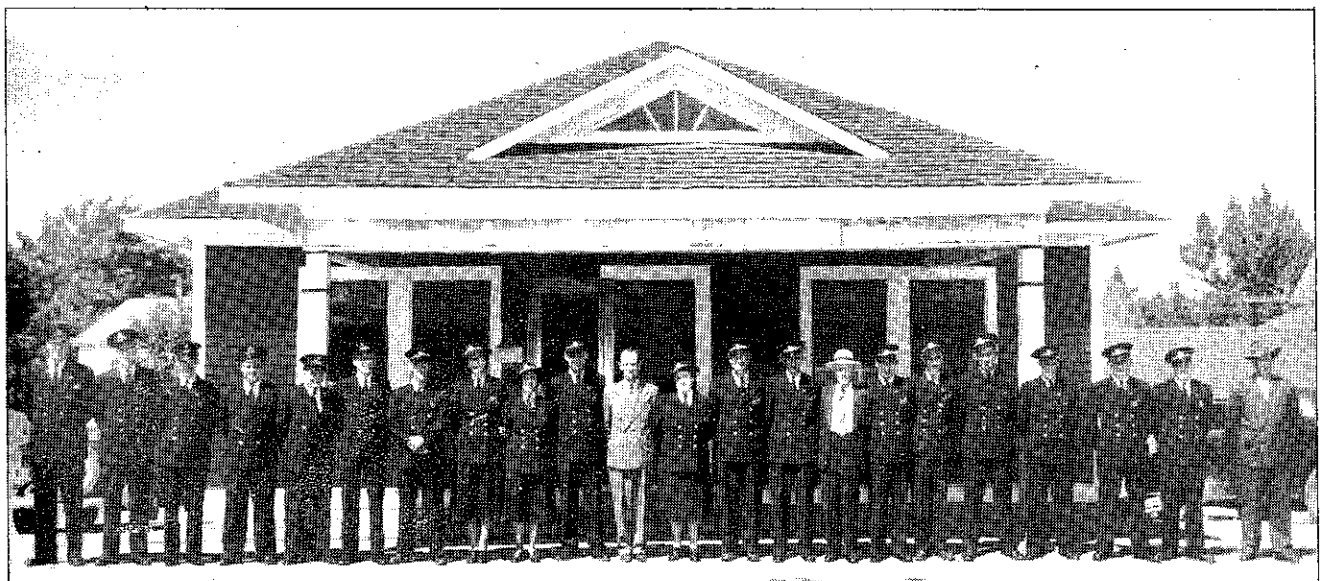


**Customs Warehouse**

pipeless furnace installed. The primitive facilities were then moved to the basement, which had to be enlarged upon, with the appointment of female officers to the staff. The small coal bin was then remade and converted into office space for the Collector and all other duties formerly performed in the railway office being done in the highway office. This proved too congested and with the in-

crease in truck traffic a separate warehouse was constructed providing additional office space as well as two bays for the checking of freight. Later, this building being too cold and inadequate was replaced by the present warehouse. However, with the construction of the present quarters in 1954 working conditions were very much improved.

Undoubtedly with the connecting of the railways the main traffic would be train loads of settlers and their effects destined to many points in Western Canada. However, it later developed into a main freight and passenger train point. In the earlier years all less carloads of freight was checked and transferred to cars for various destinations in bond for Customs clearance. Over the weekend this could entail, at times, fifteen carloads. Not a very pleasant job working inside a steel box car during the winter months, then returning to the office with nearly frozen fingers to do all the paper work in connection with the freight. Passenger traffic also developed very rapidly and at one time a train known as the Spokane Flyer entered daily en route to Spokane, Washington. How long this operated is not known but was replaced by a train known as the Mountaineer which operated between Chicago and Vancouver. As well as this daily train numerous special trains would enter or depart from Canada at this port, travelling on a twenty minute block, which didn't allow much time for Customs and Immigration examination. Each train would carry approximately two hundred passengers, about half of what can be put aboard a jumbo jet at the present time. The C.P.R. also operated a local passenger train making a return trip between Moose Jaw and North Portal six days a week. The Mountaineer which I have mentioned arrived at 5:20 a.m. and all work in connection with checking express and passengers baggage was done enroute to Weyburn with the officers returning on the local in the afternoon. Sometimes this could not be accomplished and it was necessary to travel to Moose Jaw to complete the examination. Due to the early arrival of the train it was often necessary to awaken the passengers to examine their



**Customs and Immigration staff at North Portal in the early 1950's.**

baggage. At that hour of the morning some of the passengers were very scantily dressed. I recall of one occasion of an officer going to examine the baggage of a passenger in an upper berth who turned out to be a beautiful girl dressed in her birthday suit. This caused the officer to stare for a few moments, to which she asked if he wanted to examine her or her baggage.

No mention has been made as to seizures but from an old register the first recorded seizure was made on July 13th, 1904, by Mr. A. C. Paterson and consisted of horses, wagon, harness, saddles and trunks at an estimated value of \$550.00 which was released by payment of double duty on one horse in the amount of \$46.00. While all types of goods and materials are mentioned in the register, the most interesting are the seizures made during the rum running days, covering automobiles of types no longer made, from all over the Northern States.\*

So far no mention has been made as to how and when the service became known as Customs and Excise. This was during the First World War when the Special War Revenue Act was passed. Under



**Customs Office**

this act, Excise Tax was collected on certain imported goods and like goods made in Canada, as well as the Income Tax. I understand this was to be a temporary measure but instead became two acts now known as the Excise Tax Act and the Income Tax Act.

*-Submitted by A. R. Lyall.*

\*Book Entitled *Booze*— James H. Grey.

## Immigration

Full time Immigration Officers were not stationed at North Portal until 1908. Up until that time the Customs Inspectors were handling the Immigration examination.

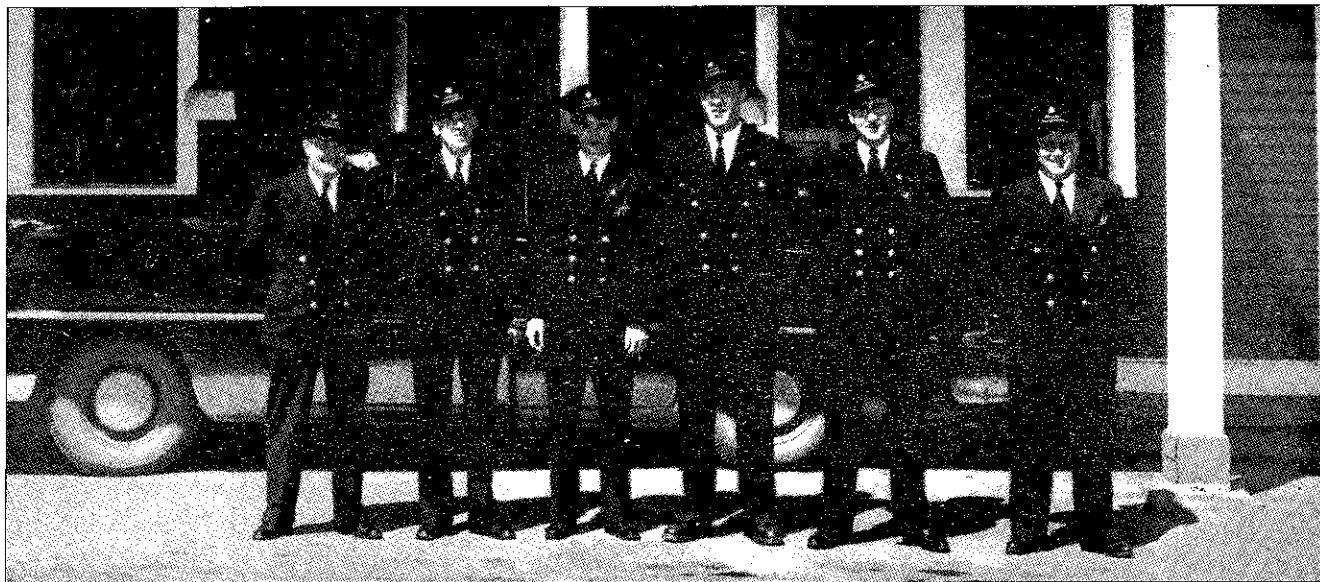
In 1908 the Immigration operated under the Department of Interior and was administered by three customs officers, namely Mr. A. C. Patterson, Mr. Potvin and Mr. McIntyre. Later with the port being serviced by the Soo Line and C.P.R., having three trains a day it was handled by two Immigration officers.

The work was arduous and the hours long. The officers met the trains at the boundary line and in order not to detain them the officers accompanied the trains to Moose Jaw conducting the examination on the way. Should an undesirable person be encountered it was necessary to accompany them to the inland point and then return them by the first available train. It was decided some other alternatives would have to be found and it was decided to send the Immigration officers down into the U.S.A. some fifty miles or so and board the train conducting the inspection on the way to the border. Undesirables would be taken from the train at Portal, North Dakota and return to their homes in the U.S.A. The train from St. Paul arrived at Portal at 3:30 a.m.

In the fall of 1908 the traffic over the Soo Line railroad to Canada was very heavy and the C.P.R. was requested to provide adequate accommodation for examining passengers in their new station.

The influx of settlers continued throughout 1909 and 1910. A normal day in March 1910 revealed 288 settlers for the Canadian West. At three regular passenger trains a day it is obvious that western Canada was acquiring immigrants at a tremendous rate.

Between 1908 and 1919 the administration of Immigration was handled by a commissioner in Ottawa. It then came under the Department of Immigration and Colonization, and the Port of



**Inspectors Coxford, Dorsey, Russ Earl, Jim Mitchell, Pephodge, W. Enmark at North Portal.**



North Portal was administered through a Commissioner of Immigration, Western Division, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In August of 1917 it was noted in the records that North Portal was the most important Port in Saskatchewan and in so far as bringing in of stock and effects is concerned, the most important point in the west. Inspector in Charge at that time was W. H. Dorsey with inspectors M.A. Kemp and H. Watson.

In 1910 a new Immigration building was completed in North Portal for the Immigration officers and detention quarters for undesirables. This

building was rented from the C.P.R. at \$1.00 per year. This building was the "Immigration Hall".

The staff of the Immigration in February of 1928 was comprised of Mr. W. H. Dorsey, Inspector in Charge, Mr. Aylward and Mr. Davis. Mr. Dorsey was succeeded by Mr. Stan Gunn as Inspector in Charge and Mr. Gunn by Mr. W. I. Dorsey and presently holding the position is Mr. R. Howe.

It is interesting to note that March 31st, 1925 the furniture of Immigration Hall sold for the following prices. 2 cots-\$1.00, 4 single blankets-\$5.00, 1 kitchen range-\$12.00, 3 beds with springs-\$2.00, 3 lamps-.25, 1 table-.80

*Old Customs - Torn Down - 1988*

## Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The North Portal detachment was opened in September of 1893 as part of Dept. Division. The force assisted the customs department at North Portal at the opening of the railway.



Early R.C.M.P. office was located in rear of Customs building.

It is reported that with the patrols of early days it had a restraining effect so that there was not too great an infringement of Custom Laws, Quarantine Regulations, and no crime attributable to the

proximity of the border.

In 1933 the detachment was housed in one room on the east side of the Customs building, and it is thought it had probably been there for some time. On February 2nd, 1934 the force moved into the new quarters situated on Lot 1, Block 4. This was a stucco frame building consisting of nine rooms. A new site was found for the building in 1953, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Thomas.

The North Portal detachment remained open until January 5th, 1972.

Some of the members of the North Portal Detachment:

Cpl. Kirby, Cpl. Fryett, Sgt. F. Camm, Sgt. W. J. Bradley, Cst. J. Wilson, Cst. E. M. Jacques, Cst. H. E. P. Mann, Cst. W. W. McLeod, Cpl. L. J. Kiggins, Cst. Ken Pedenson, Cst. A. K. McEwen, Cst. A. E. McAuley, Cst. Bob Schrader, Cst. E. F. N. Reed, Cst. Jeff Bracegirdle, Cst. Gordon Spring, Cst. S. Onderko, Cst. Guster, Cst. Bruce Roberts, Cst. Ken Plump.

Evidently there were other members who served at North Portal but we have no available information.

## Anglican Church of St. James, The Apostle

The Church was built at the cost of about \$1,00 on the site where the north parking lot and fence of the present Customs and Immigration building is situated. On the corner, near the present road into town, the R.N.W.M. Police barracks stood, and the church was the next building south-east of the barracks. Beyond the church was the Harry Briers residence. From there, looking toward the present site of the Ed. Werry store, was the livery stable.

This is an excerpt from a letter to Mr. Krauss in Estevan from J. Williams on July 30, 1907:

"...The new Church at North Portal, opened and consecrated by our Bishop on St. James's Day. Several valuable gifts were made by a generous donor in England, a clergyman, as is often the case, Rev. C. H. Williams, of Exeter, 290 dollars in money, a beautiful and complete set of Holy Vessels in oak case, red burse veil and linen, surplice, and an oak Altar cross, which latter, unfortunately, did not arrive in time for the consecration day. Clergy present: Rev. F. E. Pratt, Rural Dean, Revs. Parker Oxbow, Lackey Hill Hall, G. P. Terry, and myself.

"We robed in the police barracks close by, and arriving at the Church door the petition for consecration was read and the Bishop assenting, the procession moved up the little Church chanting the Psalm 'Domini est terra.' The usual form of Consecration Service was followed, copies being supplied, and the hymns 166, 395, 215, and 448 were very heartily sung. The Bishop in the usual terms, solemnly pronounced the Church consecrated to the glory of God and dedicated to St. James the Apostle. He then delivered a very beautiful sermon on the text 'Worship the Lord in beauty of holiness.'

"The Church was fittingly adorned with flowers, both garden and wild, and also lovely plants. Although small, holding about sixty, it is sufficient for our needs, and it was well filled. Size 26 by 16 feet, with small porch. Two fine crosses adorn the west end and exterior of porch, and the Church is painted and furnished complete with organ, &c., but minus font, for about 960 dollars. A member of the flock entertained us to afternoon tea, after which the Bishop and Mr. Parker returned by train to Estevan. Evensong was at 8 p.m., when we again had a very bright service. Tallis festal responses were sung for the first time, the Vicar taking the office, Mr. Lackey the lessons, and the Rural Dean preaching a very practical discourse from 2 Cor., vi., I. Mr. Pratt, ten years ago, held services in the

waiting room of the C. P. Railway. The total offerings were dols. 36.70, and with numerous subscriptions and the substantial help from England previously mentioned, and 20 pounds promptly granted by S.P.C.K., leaves us entirely free of debt. We owe the Divine Head of the Church humble and hearty thanks, and pray that this new House of God may yield abundant fruit in the souls built up in His true faith and fear."

Before the building of the church in 1907, the mission of North Portal had been opened as an outstation of Estevan on May 26, 1895 by Mr. H. Winter, lay reader in charge of the Estevan district. Previous to this time, occasional services had been held by the Rev. G. P. Terry, who was in charge of the Souris mission, which covered the whole district. The services were often held in a boarding house or hotel in Portal, North Dakota.

After a lapse of some years, a service was held on March 21st, 1905 in the Presbyterian church by Rev. Jas. Williams of Estevan and 20 persons were present. To help with the building of a church in 1907, the Rev. C. H. Williams of Exeter, Devon, England, subscribed \$291 and gave a set of communion vessels and linens as well as an oak Altar cross.

The church was opened and consecrated on St. James Day, July 25th, 1907, and the consecrating bishop was Bishop Grisdale of Qu'Appelle. The robing took place at the police barracks and there were five clergy present: Rev. F. E. Pratt, Rural Dean and Revs. Parker, Oxbow, Lackey, G. P., Terry and J. Williams.

Around 1914, North Portal became a separate mission with Rev. Loweth as incumbent. When he

left to take up work in the United States, Mr. A. Stanley of St. Chad's College became student in charge, but enlisted in the Great War, and North Portal, with the outside stations, Britannia and Roche Percee, became attached to Estevan for occasional services. In 1928-29, it went into the newly formed parish of Bienfait, and when in 1932 the parish of Bienfait and Oxbow were combined, it passed again to the parish of Estevan.

Not many of those original settlers and parishioners are alive or living in the district now. From the Britannia area there were the Brinkworth families, the G. S. Robinson family, the Leonards, Wynne-Jones, Bakers, Dronsfields, Longs, Longleys and Percy Moore, who left for overseas in 1914 or early 1915.

From the North Portal area those in attendance were the Arthur MacKenzie family and Mrs. MacKenzie's sisters, the Holmes-Orr, the Harry Briess family and Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Neal and Dorothy. Mr. Neal played the organ. Later Miss Chadwick and Mrs. G. Robinson took over. Also there were the C. P. Wrights, the George Wicks, the George Richardsons, George Robinson, Jos. Hill, Harry Hilton, and Wynne-Jones families. Mr. and Mrs. Ingle often came to Portal, North Dakota for the services. Richard Collier was a regular and many of the R.N.W.M. Police families, in those early days, attended.

During the 20 years (1914-35) many of the original settlers left the district, and left the church considerably weakened.

## The Church of God

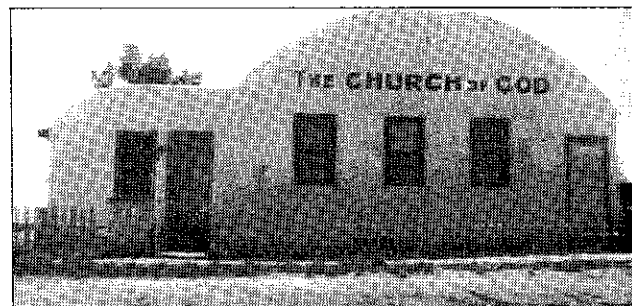
The Church of God came to North Portal with Rev. D.C. Boatright holding two weeks of special meetings. Rev. D.C. Boatright and Rev. J. Andy Rafferty, pastor of the Lignite North Dakota Church of God, with the wishes of the people organized the Church of God in North Portal. On December 16th, 1939, when organized, the Charter Members were:

Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Fox	December 16, 1939
Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fox	December 16, 1939
Mrs. Ida Olsen	December 16, 1939
Frank Allen	December 16, 1939
Fred North	December 16, 1939
Mr. & Mrs. Archie C. MacKenzie	December 16, 1939
Mr. & Mrs. James K. MacKenzie	December 16, 1939

The Pastors were the Reverends: J. Andy Rafferty, James Rusor, Glen Pettyjohn, Courtney Emerson, Harold Bjorgan, Oscar Roset, Wallace Rampey, Chester Roset, Hervin Gordon, Ernest Pennington, Jacob Froese, Jack Bailey, Wilfred Thurier, Dennis Hall, Phil Goodwil and Teddy Durpaul.

Andy Rafferty was an Irishman with a lot of get-up-and-go, that had been a carpenter before his conversion and he became a minister of the Gospel. We donated the two lots and the Massey Harris machine shed to the Church of God, and in January of 1940 we raised it up and rolled it back off the street twelve feet and set it on a rock foundation.

Rocks were hauled from the farms without any snow on them, and with Andy Rafferty as boss, and a lot of farmers and friends that were willing to work. We had it ready for dedication on Easter Sunday, and it was debt free, still having to be stuccoed.



The Church of God

But when time came to stucco it, in the warmer weather, it did not take long to complete the stucco job, as Andy Rafferty was a real professional at it, giving orders and wielding the trowel himself. God bless him, he didn't get much money, but I am sure his reward will be great in Heaven.

Another family that deserves credit where credit is due is Louis Sigglekow and his boys, who drove back and forth to their farm at least 20 miles a trip, and nearly every day, while we worked on



the Church to get it ready for Easter.

Aunt Lottie's house was sold to uncle John Waddington, and when we needed a parsonage, Uncle John sold it to the Church of God in 1940. We took off three verandahs, closed some outside doors and stuccoed it, making it a lot warmer.

Rev. Phil Goodwill was the last pastor to live in the parsonage as Rev. Teddy Durpaul has his own home in Estevan and drives back and forth. The parsonage was standing vacant, so we advertized it and sold it to Mr. Sadler.

*Torn Down 1988* Submitted by Archie MacKenzie

## The Knox United Church

Knox United Church building was built in 1898 by the Presbyterian congregation. It was dedicated by Rev. George Roddick of Brandon who donated the pulpit. Previous to the erection of this building it is on record that services were held in pioneer homes and the railway waiting room. The Presbyterian Church had a missionary in each construction camp as the Soo Line was being built so likely one would be an early clergyman in this part of the District of Assiniboia.

In 1893 a sod church two miles north of North Portal on S.W. 18/1/4 W2nd was put into use by the Methodist parishioners. In this sod building only the door was made of lumber. Rev. Barnes was the first of many student ministers to serve here. Later this congregation held their services in the newly erected Presbyterian Church until their own was built in 1903. Later this was used for a Church Hall and also a classroom for a year when Minto school burned in November of 1929.

The building that is still in use served both Canadian and American families as a few U.S. residents are mentioned as elders in the early years. Throughout the years many ministers served both sides of the border. In 1906 the American Presbyterians built their own sanctuary but Canadian ministers served them until 1913 and again in 1921 until 1932.

At the outbreak of World War I many changes occurred. A serious shortage of clergymen throughout the west as they answered the call for duty overseas, resulted in combined services for Presbyterians and Methodist families of North Portal. Then in 1921 when Rev. S. A. Kennedy was here the communicants roll was combined. Thus it was a union church before The United Church of Canada formalized it in 1925.

A manse was built by the Presbyterians in 1903. Before a minister was resident here a few weddings were performed "between trains" by ministers from Estevan who could come by train and return the same day. For regular Sunday services the minister had a good horse and buggy to drive from Estevan. He also made many pastoral visits on horseback.

A new manse was built in 1957 and in 1965 the pastoral charge, which by then included Trinity, Bienfait, was enlarged to once again include First Presbyterian congregation of Portal, North Dakota. The "International Pastoral Charge" is working well as God's message of redeeming love is the same for all.



**Methodist Ladies Aid at Harris', 1910**

Back row, left to right: Elsie Waddington, L. Harris, Kate McClelland, Lily Hill and Frank?, Mrs. Dorsey, Mrs. Fred Harris and Oliver, Mrs. Arthur Johnston and Harry. Middle: Grandma Harris, Lottie Waddington, Mrs. John Kellington, Ethel MacKenzie. Front: Anne Waddington, Mrs. John Waddington, Laura, Eva Harris, Mrs. Dr. Douglas, Nellie Kellington, Clare Johnston and Harold Johnston.



**Rev. Fred Norris, Methodist Minister.**



**Mr. R. H. Douglas's Sunday School Class**

Back, left to right: Dick Dunbar, Nelson Harris, Howard Dunbar, Bill Glosser, J. D. Dunbar, George Hansen, George Dunbar, Melfort McRae, George Richardson. Front: Stanley Harris, Stewart MacKenzie, R. H. Douglas, Austen Frazer, Frank Harris, Archie Fox, Bill Fox.



### Ministers That Served at North Portal:

<i>Methodist</i>	<i>Local Union/United</i>	<i>Knox Presbyterian</i>
1893 Mr. Barnes		Mr. McIvor
1894 Mr. Taylor		Rev. A.H. Cameron
1895 Mr. Riddell		
1896 Mr. Tate		Mr. Jamieson
1897 Mr. Scott		
1898		Rev. Geo. Yule
1899		Rev. W. Brokenshire
1900 Mr. Jesse Arnup		Rev. James Lang
1902 Mr. Heinz		Rev. J. Knox Clark
1903 Rev. C. Endicott		
1905 Mr. Davis		
1906		
1907 Mr. E. R. Hine		Rev. J. R. Coffin
1907 Rev. F. Martin		
1909		
1910 Rev. Eb. holt		Rev. W. H. McEwen
1911 Rev. H. Harrison		
1912 Rev. H. Maunder		Rev. J. Jackson
1913 Rev. F. G. Norris		Rev. Hugh Neville
1914 Rev. C. W. Light		
1915	Rev. E. Thistlewaite	
1916	Rev. F. W. Ruddell	
1917	Rev. Thomas Oliver	
	Mr. Clem Davies	
1919		
1921	Rev. S.A. Kennedy	
<i>The United Church of Canada</i>		
1925	Rev. J. Hamilton	
1927	Rev. Fred Waite	
1930	Rev. F. Yates	
1932	Rev. Frank Meyers Sr	
<i>Britannia-North Portal-Bienfait United Church</i>		
1935	Rev. Frank Meyers Sr	
1940	Rev. J. G. Bitcon	
1944	Rev. Walter Cooke	
1948	Mr. David J. H. Cook	
1949	Mr. R.L. Norman	
1950	Rev. Harvey H. Moats	
1953	Rev. Robert Bater	
1955	Rev. Earl Grigg	
1957	Rev. Harold MacKay	
1960	Rev. L. Heffelfinger	
1962	Rev. Wes. Warren	
1967	Rev. David Petrie	
1970	Rev. Douglas Miller	
1974	Rev. Bill Corkum	
1978	Rev. D. McGuinness	



**Methodist Church**



**The Junior Choir**

Back row, left to right: Jean Taylor, Ione Swensen, Fay Thompson, Shirley Davis. Middle: Shiela Lyall, Gail Dunbar, Sherry MacKenzie, Kay Thomas, Gerry Hill. Front: Willie Werry, Shirley Green, Bobby Hill.



**North portal United Church prior to renovations.**

## The Gateway Cities Golf Club Inc.

The gateway cities golf course is unique in that it begins in one country and ends up with the final hole in another country. Also the ninth hole is one of the longest playing holes as it takes one hour for the ball that is played off the tee in Canada to land on the fairway or green on the United States due to the ball passing through a time change.

The original course was an international course, located on the west side of town. The number one hole was on the United States side of the border to the location of the now Soo Security in what was then called Dorsey's pasture and extended on over to the C.P.R. tracks. Besides being a golf course it was also a pasture for livestock. The greens were fixed with a gate and on each one of the gates a sign read, "PLEASE KEEP THE GATES CLOSED SO THAT LIVESTOCK CANNOT GET ON THE GREENS."

The present course originated in 1928 and to build the course was no easy task in the earlier days, especially when it involved two countries. Permission had to be received from both governments before being able to go ahead with the layout of the course. Dave Banantyne of Estevan was hired to lay out the course, his fee being \$25.00. Several early residents helped to build the course. One thing that had to be kept in mind while laying out the course was to be sure that there were no bad sunholes while playing the course in the evening. A good deal of work in getting the course playable had to be done with a team of horses. When the course was completed Mr. Dick Collier was the caretaker and he did the mowing with a team of horses. he was assisted by Mr. Bill Jackson of Portal.

In 1934 the first hole in one was realized on the course by a fourteen year old boy. As this got to be world known through the Believe It or Not by Ripley, quote, "George Wegener, age 14 of Portal, North Dakota, scored a hole in one from one country to another. He drove across the border from the

9th tee in Canada and into the cup on the 9th green in the United States Gateway Golf Club U.S. and Canada." A film was also made of it and seen in many movie theaters around the country whenever they are discussing the unprotected boundary between Canada and the United States.

In the late thirties the first rotary mower was purchased along with a Model T Ford for pulling it. At this time the land still belonged to the C.P.R. railroad, but it was learned that if they wanted to keep the course it would be necessary to buy the land since the railroad had a chance to sell it for farm use. Things looked pretty black since the times were tough and the club had very little money. Not wanting to see all of the work that had been done go down the drain, Mr. Norris Loney, who was club member, loaned the club \$800. to purchase 80 acres from the C.P.R.

In the mid forties the Model T gave out and it became necessary to purchase a tractor for the course maintenance and a new tractor was purchased by the club members. The members were reimbursed through dues. In the fifties another crisis developed when the school board was looking for a new location for the school and some of the board members thought that the hill on the seventh fairway and the sixth green also the eighth tee box would make a good location. This was averted when the course sold the board the property where the new school is now located for \$1.00.

In the early fifties a club house was added with Mr. Collier assuming the duties of looking after the club house and the course. Also during this time the tree planting got under way, spearheaded by Munroe Dunbar assisted by Mel Barber.

The nine hole golf course has provided a source of recreation for North Portal; Portal, North Dakota; Lignite, North Dakota; Frobisher and Estevan, Saskatchewan, as well as many other areas.

The golf event of the year is the annual tournament held the last Sunday in July.

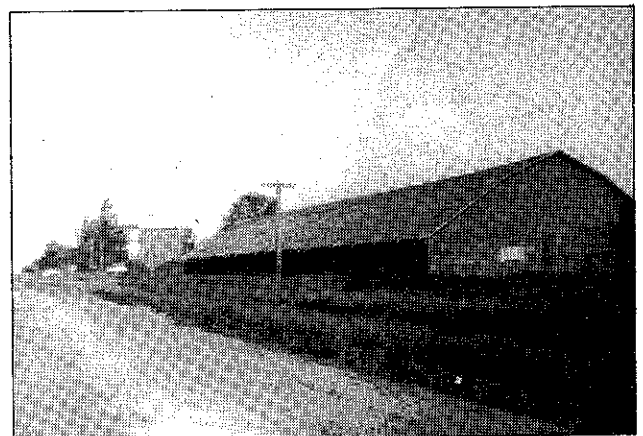
## Curling in North Portal and area

By Alan Davis

The "Roarin' Game" came to Canada with the Scottish settlers and advanced Westward as the land was settled and communities started.

No record is known of any outdoor curling having been played in North Portal, but no doubt, at some early date, probably around the turn of the century, some homesick Scotsmen, who were also curling buffs, cleared the snow from a small patch of ice on a frozen pond and slid anything from prairie fieldstones to frozen buckets of ice up and down it, thereby somewhat quenching their thirsts for their favorite winter pastime.

Three government inspection barns were built





Curling in North Portal in one of the Government livestock inspection barns in 1915. Left to right: Pete Lyall, Geo. Wicks, Louis Shoebridge, Tony

Chezik, Tom Jarrett, (unidentified), Willard Dorsey, Ike Donovan.

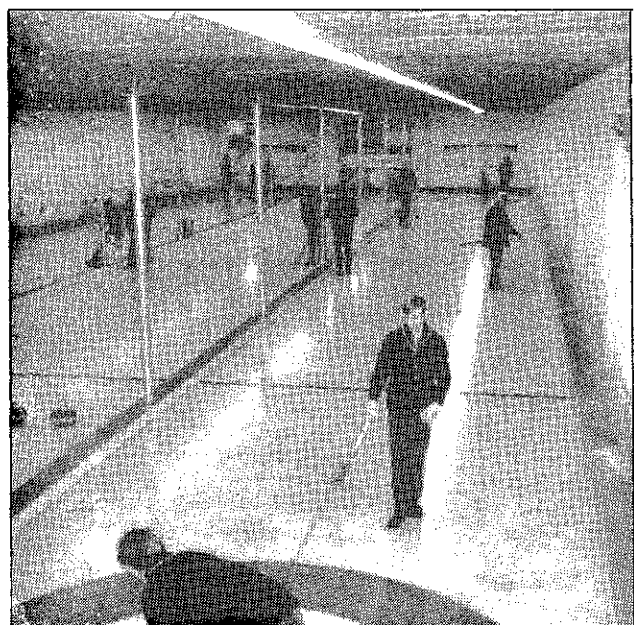
by the federal Department of Agriculture in approximately 1910. These were located along the East side of the C.P.R. tracks across from the Menzies (Mitchell) home, or where the Taylor residences are presently situated. As the movement of livestock slowed down in the winter months, one of the barns was flooded from end-to-end between the stalls and curling had it's birth in

North Portal. Pictures of that first sheet of curling ice indicate that it was probably a little narrower and shorter than regulation size, but that really was not important to those early enthusiastic participants.

In 1916, Union Rink Ltd. was established. It was the first incorporated body founded in North Portal. It had eighty-three shareholders who purchased 137—\$10.00 shares. These shareholders were both Americans and Canadians, rural residents and town residents. The book listing the shareholders is still on hand.

A wood frame three sheet curling rink was built the same year on the east side of North Portal along the International boundary, just South of the present location of number eight green on the golf course. Union Rink Ltd. became defunct in 1920, but curling continued in the building under the name of the International Curling Club. The building was used until 1961, at which time it was torn down and the present cement block facility was erected under a Winter Cements Program and a hard working committee spearheaded by Percy Davis and Munro Dunbar. It was one of the first "modern" curling rinks in Southern Saskatchewan, complete with matched rocks imported from Scotland, and was the envy of many communities around. Other towns soon took up the challenge, came to North Portal for a look at our new rink, and returned home to promote one in there.

Artificial ice was installed in the fall and winter



Curling in North Portal's "International Curling Club" in 1970.



of 1973/74. Curling was late in getting started that year but the artificial ice was worth waiting for.

The International Curling Club became incorporated under the Societies Act of Saskatchewan in 1961.

Ever since curling began in North Portal it has always been supported by members and participants from the American side, thereby serving as a bond between the two communities and

bringing about many lasting friendships. The club had some shaky years, brought about by the decline in population in both North Portal and Portal, North Dakota, but 1979 was one of it's best years.

May it continue to flourish and remain as a centre of sportsmanship and fellowship in our community.

## The Royal Canadian Legion, No. 117

The Canadian Legion, North Portal, Branch No. 117 was organized under the British Empire Service League shortly after the close of World War I. Minutes recorded in various ledgers, indicate the following named persons (some first names missing) to be among the first members of this branch: Mr. Dick Collier, Mr. Mossopp, Mr. Nielsen, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Jack Brownlow, Mr. Jack Bennett, Mr. Menzies, Dr. Parker, Mr. Erwin, Mr. Teeter and Mr. Bradley.

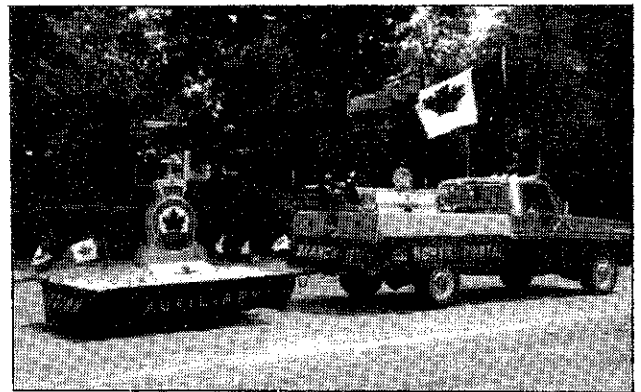
Having organized without the facilities of a hall, meetings and other functions were held by this Branch at various locations such as the Portal Odd Fellows Hall, the United Church Hall, Minto School and the Grand View Hotel lobby. During this period, memorial services were conducted at the sight of the present Cenotaph.

In the Fall of 1932 (as near as can be established) the North Portal Branch bought two lots and the original Customs House from the Canadian Pacific Railroad. The members assisted by Arthur Daley, Harry Olsen and Reid Lyall along with some moving equipment from Estevan, moved this building to its present location. Remodelling and repairs to the hall followed and the members held their first function, a bridge party in their new hall on December 12th, 1932.

During World War II, Zone representative Mr.

Worrel of the Bienfait Branch, at a joint meeting with the North Portal Branch, gave the North Portal Ladies Legion Auxiliary full authority to conduct and manage the business of the Legion until such time as service men returned to once again replenish it's membership.

After World War II, a welcome home party was held for the servicemen of this area. The North Portal Branch was reorganized during 1946-47.



The Branch was renamed Royal Canadian Legion. Canada's Legion celebrated its 50th anniversary. North Portal's present Legion enrollment numbers 56 members.

### Honor Roll, World War I

Adams, George	Ellis, Arthur
Allsopp, Thos.	Eaton, T.
Anderson, Chryst*	Ford, Chas.
Anderson, Olaf*	Ford, Ernest
Brittain Abe	Ford, H. H.*
Brindley, Howard*	Ford, G.
Bates, Archie	Fair, Harold
Bennett, John	Fox, Archie
Carter, Ernst	Gilpin, Roy
Collier, Richard A.	Gilpin, Albert
Cotter, Harvey	Good, Herbert A.
Clark, George*	Henderson, Alfred*
Cameron, Alex	Henderson, Clifford
Dee, Archie*	Higman, Robert
Dee, Clifford C.	Hutcheson, Walter*
Dunbar, Ira	Jenish, Joseph
Dunbar, J. D.*	Johnston, Arthur
Dunbar, John M.	Jone, Archie Wynne
Evans, Fred	Kendall, Percy

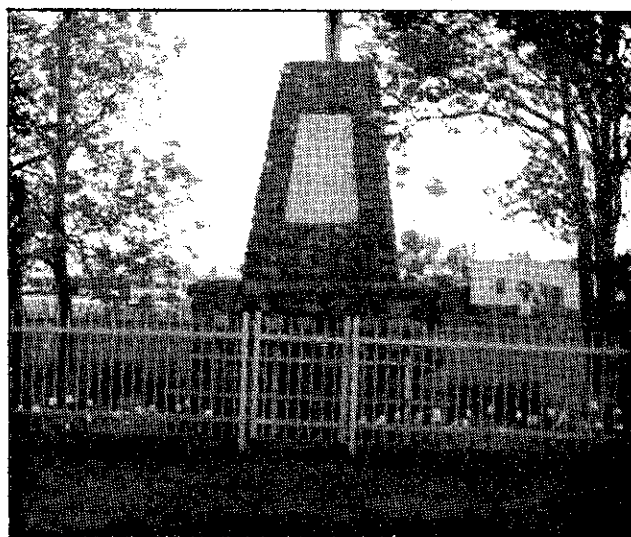
Kemp, John  
Moore, Percy  
Morley, H.E.  
McLean, Simon F.  
McLeod, Peter  
McLeod, Adam  
McRae, J.  
Norris, F. G.  
Paterson, Capt. Geo. I.\*  
Paterson, Jon D.  
Perkins, Wm.  
Prankie, Victor  
Rolph, Arthur

Roan, Lawrence  
Robinson, Hirman  
Seals, Wm. F.  
Stanley, A. S.  
Smith, Wm.  
Smith, Frank E.  
Vaughn, Alfred  
Webb, Herbert\*  
Wilson, H. W.  
Wilson, B. P.  
Wynne-Jones, F.  
Whitacher, E.  
Waddington, Wm. J.

*Those names marked with an asterisk (\*) are those who paid the supreme sacrifice.*

## Honour Roll, World War II

Abood, G.	Kirk, W. F/O
Bjork, C.	Lewis, M.
Bjork, E.	Lees, A.
Bjork, R.	Mackenzie, Maj. I.
Bjork, M.	Mackenzie, R.
Bjork, J.	McClelland, G.*
Coller, A.	McClelland, J.
Crate, A. D.	McClelland, Geo.
Davis, C.	McClelland, D.
Dickson, A.	Mitchell, J.
Dunbar, D. A.	Mitchell, B.
Dunbar, F.	Milne, E.
Earl, C.	Osler, Maj. E., M.C.
Earl, K.	Osler, N.
Earl, L.	Pukas, J.
Earl, R. F/O D.F.C.	Rabski, Alex
Gunn, R.	Rabski, W.
Johnston, B.	Rabski, A.
Johnston	Shoebridge, L.
Johnston, E.	Skoczylas, M.
Johnston, H.	Skoczylas, Joe



Skoczylas, N.	Swenson, O.
Skoczylas, J.	Thompson, R.*
Smith, G.	Wicks, Capt. S.
Sokoloski, M.	Wicks, R.
Sokoloski, V.	

*Those names marked with an asterisk (\*) are those who paid the supreme sacrifice.*

## Ladies' Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion

The North Portal Ladies' Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion was organized on March 16th, 1929 with ten women present. The first meeting was held on March 20th at which time dues of one dollar were paid and we had our first members. Our founders were Mesdames Elliott, Bradley, Bennett, Brownlow, Davis, Menzies, Nielson, Mossopp, Irvine and Miss Chadwick. Affiliation with Provincial Command was discussed several times but it was not until 1930 that we applied for our charter. Mrs. Fraser, provincial president, attended a meeting and addressed our group in February 1931 and gave us valuable information. By the time our charter was received in April 1931, Mesdames Teeter, Lyall and Parker had joined and the following names were put on our charter: Mesdames Bennett, Brownlow, Davis, Elliot, Menzies, Nielsen, Mossopp, Lyall, Parker, Teeter and Miss Chadwick.

In 1932 the Bienfait women requested our assistance in organizing their branch and in the month of May, Mrs. Lyall and Mrs. Elliott attended a meeting in Bienfait. Mrs. Elliott took the chair and conducted the meeting during which they elected their first officers.

In October 1932, the Canadian Pacific Railway had some old buildings for sale and it was decided to purchase the Customs building from them for \$300.00. A cheque in that amount was given to the secretary of the Legion who assisted us in the transaction. An additional amount of \$70.00 was required to get the moving equipment from Estevan and pay the expenses of two local farmers who loaned their tractors to move the building to

its present location. By December the hall was being used for regular card parties and dances and we were busy buying card tables and chairs and clothes racks and other necessary items for it. In 1935 we assisted the young people of the community by loaning them the hall for meetings of a Variety Club they had organized. The club was a success and the young people were very grateful. During the war years the hall was put at the disposal of the Red Cross for their meetings.

The war years were busy ones for us. We had a sweater knitted for every local young man and all relatives of our members who joined the armed forces. In addition we sent food parcels at Christmas, and at Easter when possible. In between we sent cigarettes and Smiles & Chuckles chocolates. This took extra finances and, in spite of butter and sugar rationing, food sales were often held. We also had card parties, dances, raffles and solicited cash donations.

Our membership through the years had averaged ten and now new members were urgently needed. A membership drive was begun in October 1942 which resulted in twelve very welcome new members. But the Legion membership had fallen so low they could not hold meetings. In August 1944 the Zone Representative of the Legion called a joint meeting of our Legion Auxiliary, and it was decided that we would conduct and manage any new business of the Legion, together with Mr. Brownlow as a councillor of the Legion, until they were again able to hold meetings.

After the war there was a drastic change in our membership. Our old members were tired, some of

the new ones left to join their husbands and several families were transferred out of town. So we found ourselves with three active members. But we had faith in our future and the Provincial Command was both patient and understanding.

As the Legion membership increased we sent more and more applications to our prospective members. In 1946 we sent twenty-four applications with no results. It was not until 1949 that interest began to grow and early in 1950 we had a real rally with a very good meeting of which fifteen women joined and we were once more an active organization.

Our history has changed little in recent years. Our membership has been good and we are able to meet our commitments. We support local youth activities, improve our hall every year and assist the Legion.

We are proud to be able to say we are forty-eight years old and grateful to our founders for making it possible for us to celebrate today.

1929— Mrs. Elliott, Mrs. Bradley, Mrs. Bennett, Mrs. Brownlow, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Menzies, Mrs. Mossopp Mrs. Nielsen, Mrs. Irvine, Miss Chadwick.

1930— Mrs. Teeter.

1931— Mrs. May Lyall, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Ethel Collier.

1936— Mrs. Kirk, Mrs. Osler, Mrs. J. W. Smith.

1938— I. Marlin, N. Richards

1939— Leona Gunn

1942— Marge Ewen, Jessie Mitchell, Catherine McClelland, L. Joyce, Miss Harriet Hargreaves, Mrs. Lischinsky, Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Sokoloski, Frances Smythe, Marge Harris, Pearl Davis, Mrs. Roy

Smith.

1943— Mrs. Bjork

1944— N. Pratt

1945— Lily Thompson

1946— Mary Earl

1947— Heather Green

1950— Irma Collier, Shirley Collier, Eileen Collier, Ann Enmark, Olive Lock, Mary Skoczylas, Elsie Earl, Helen McEwen, C. Szouronski, B. Soppit, Norma Barber, Sylvia Swenson, Janet McClelland, Mary Mitchell, Alice Markoski.

1952— Laura Abraham

1953— Betty Ellis

1954— Elaine Taylor, Doreen Maxwell, Hazel Benson

1956— C. Shaw, Betty Williams

1957— Dot Arnold, Marg McDonald, Florence McDonald, Ann Swenson, Hazel Shoebridge, Jane Dunbar, Pearl Dunbar, Irene Seale, Rose McClelland, Bette MacDonald

1959— Lillian Goddard, Nellie Lang

1960— Lenore Price

1962— Alice Lees

1963— Marg Dickson, Ethel Sherratt, Clair King

1964— C. Rabjohn

1965— Marg Wood, Heather Wood

1968— Lena Hughes

Members who joined since 1976— Jan Dunbar, Mona Nott, Donna Taylor, Jeannette Taylor and Marion Milne.

Our membership for 1979 is 24 and we meet the third Wednesday of each month. We are planning to celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 1981.

Our two remaining *Charter Members* are Mrs. Bennett who lives in California and Mrs. Brownlow who lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

## Britannia School District, No. 325

1894-1958

In the spring of 1894 the pioneers of the Britannia area began to plan for a school. The first meeting was held at Joe Balison's on April 4th, 1894. Mr. Balison acted as Chairman and trustees chosen were W. H. Dunbar (G. A. Dunbar's father), Donald Kerr and J.B. Adams. (Millen Dunbar's grandfather). Mrs. J.B. Adams chose the name of Britannia for the school. A second meeting was held on June 30th, 1894 at W. H. Dunbar's and a third in the school room on July 31st, 1894. J.B. Adams was chosen Chairman and Donald Kerr as secretary-treasurer. At this meeting a letter was read from A. W. Argue offering to teach for \$40.00 per month. He was to be accepted if no cheaper offer was received before August 4th. Oscar Mohrman was chosen as auditor. (Information taken from first minute books).

The first school was made of two-ply lumber, shingled, had two windows and a good floor. It was built and situated on the land of a homesteader named Tom Miller (brother of Mrs. Kerr). He rented this building to be used as a school for \$15.00 per month. This building was just west of the

present day buildings belonging to Mrs. Gladys Brinkworth. The board equipped the school with six double desks, blackboard and a globe bought



Britannia School No. 325 in 1908

Teacher was Alice Sharpe. Lavina Brinkworth, Sarah Brinkworth, J.D. Dunbar, Mary Belle Dunbar, Richard Dunbar, Joe Brinkworth, Lena Anderson, Reginald Bassett, George Dunbar, Edith Brinkworth, Jens Fraas and Alex Dunbar.



from Christie's Book Store in Brandon, Manitoba. There was a small table and three benches to be used for pupils when the school was crowded.

The school term was from April until November. Mr. Thos. Kennedy was hired for the summer of 1895 at \$40.00 per month. By 1898 the school was too small so it was decided to enlarge it by 12 feet.

The first pupils were Bob and Allie Dunbar (sons of W.F. Dunbar) Donald Kerr's family of four or five children, Willie, Elias and Minnie Adams, Jancie Balison. Ella and Eva Harris attended the second year. Kerr's were burnt out with a prairie fire that year so they moved to Williston, North Dakota. The next year the Hassard family came — Bob, Jimmy and Connie and Charles Knight came from Roche Percee. The children from the Forbes District attended Britannia before their own school was built.

Other pioneer trustees from 1894 to 1912 were: Robert Dunbar, Robert Nicholson, Harvey Balison, Sam Frayne, Alex Dunbar, Tom Dunbar, Joe Brinkworth, Archie Wynne-Jones, Clem Wynne-Jones, Simon MacLean, Tom McKersie, George Robinson, Frank Hanson, Ralph Brinkworth.

Mr. Charles Nivins was the first School Inspector.

A new school was built in 1905, heated with a Waterbury heater, with windows on east and west and a small porch. Later, the windows were all put on the east, larger cloakrooms added, chemical toilets installed, a basement with furnace and a hardwood floor was laid.

Teachers who taught from 1894 to 1958 were: A.W. Argue, Thos. Kennedy, Mr. Valance (later a Doctor) Mrs. H. Balison, Mr. Inglis, Rev. Brokenshire, J.S. Caldwell, Henry McLennan, Mabel Gunn, Alice Sharpe, F.L. Clendenan (later Mrs. Gordon Galloway of Estevan) Miss Strickland, Mr. MacDonald, Vera Harbottle, Miss Kisbey, Miss K. Dorsey, Miss Spencer, Miss Huff, Mr. Gillespie, Mr. MacLean, Miss Yangt, Miss Reynolds, Miss Sullivan, Emerson Nash, David Dunbar, Bill Dunbar, Elva Trout, Dot Hamilton, Margaret Dickson, Kay Beiber, Alma Thompson, Miss Klingman, Freda Boehme, Ruth Gibson, Georgie McRae, Ruth Taylor, Joyce Leonard, Eleanor Ciorton, Gloria Vaughn, Mrs. Long, Edna Hildahl, Connie Dubza, Marjorie Wilson.

Britannia School was always the hub of the community until it was closed in 1958. During the



pioneer days the community made its own entertainment. In summer it was football and baseball. Britannia's team played in the football league with Taylorton, Estevan and Northgate. During the winter, dances or pie, box and shadow socials were held regularly with the Dunbar Orchestra providing the music. The double desks were stacked on the platform and used for coats and as beds for the little ones as they got sleepy. The whole family attended these gatherings as there was no baby-sitting in those days. During World War I, money was raised for the Red Cross by these socials, sometimes boxes going as high as \$20.00, which was high in those days. Before a box social there was always a lot of scheming by the young men to find out what the box, owned by their young lady was to be like so they could bid on the one wanted. The young school teacher would often be the main attraction for these young fellows. Many "Shin-plasters" (paper quarters) changed hands to get younger children to do a bit of peeking when boxes were being made. All of this added to the fun of the occasion. There was always a hilarious time also, when there was a shadow social.

Meetings, Ladies' Aid Meetings, suppers, concerts and church services were also held at the school. Britannia was a part of the North Portal charge for years, their service being held at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon.

These activities of this early Britannia community will never be forgotten by those who attended or took part in the planning. The community spirit was strong until new up-to-date ideas were brought in and the country schools phased out.

Submitted by M. Dickson

## Forbes School District, No. 730

Forbes School received its name from Mrs. Forbes, on whose land it was erected. She donated two acres on the north-east corner of her quarter section. The land was south of the old highway and the Joseph Pukas farm buildings are on part of it. In 1912 the land was still unbroken prairie.

The first school meeting was held at the Alex. Paterson home, February 24th, 1912. Among those present, besides Mr. Paterson were Messrs. John Waddington, John Hill, Louis Shoebridge,

Allie Dunbar, August Glosser, Jack Paterson and Joseph Hill. John Hill chaired the meeting. They proposed that the school be built and completed by June 15th. Simon McLean's tender was accepted for \$1,175.00. Subsequently, a barn was built, a well dug, trees planted and the yard fenced. The well was dug, but the water was unpalatable. The ponies snorted and refused to drink, no matter how warm the day.

Miss Kate Dorsey was the first teacher at a



**Forbes School in 1912**

**Front row:** Elsie Waddington, Ethel Shoebridge, Arthur Glosser, Annie Paterson, Laura Waddington, Bertha Dunbar, Vera Hill, Moe Shoebridge, Loui

**Dunbar, Dave Dunbar. Second row:** Jack Taylor, Bill Waddington, Alec Dunbar, Ralph Glosser, George Dunbar, Dick Dunbar, Austin Fraser, Bill Dunbar. Teacher Catherine K. Dorsey.

salary of \$60.00 a month. She boarded at the Joseph Hill home and rode side-saddle to school. The first school term was a short one, closing in the autumn for the winter months. The students in 1912 included Bill and Elsie Waddington, Laura Waddington, Jack Taylor, Mary and Ethel Shoebridge, Ralph and Arthur Glosser, Annie Paterson, Vera Hill, Dick, Alex, Tom and Bertha Dunbar and Austen Fraser.

About 1914, the Amos McRae and A.S Fox families moved into the district and swelled the numbers by eight students, Myrtle, Bill, Almor and John Fox and Melford, Gladys, Hazel and Archie McRae. Shortly after that the two Joseph Frankie, Uncle and Nephew, arrived to give the teacher problems with their names. They were followed, in those first five or six years of the school's operation, by Merle Hill, Annie and Myra Wright, Annie and Adolph Pukas, the Wynne-Jones children and the John Hill children, Frank and Clifford. A few students walked to school, but most had buggies or rode horseback.

Up to 1920 the teachers were Miss Kate Dorsey, Arthur Ellis, K. Rappell, A. McLeod, Elsie Dorsey, Libby Harris and R. McDonald. The salaries increased until in 1920 the teachers were being paid about \$1,200.00 per annum.

Gradually the school year lengthened to take in more of the winter months, with two weeks holiday in July.

Along with other rural schools, financing became a problem in the dismal thirties. It became very difficult to raise the money to pay the teachers and for general expenses.

With the advent of the larger school units, the school closed in 1954, with Miss Black the last teacher. The building was moved to the Walter Brook farm.

#### **Teachers at Forbes School**

Catherine K. Dorsey	July 1912	Oct. 1913
Arthur S. Ellis	March 1914	Sept. 1914
K. C. Rappell	Oct. 1914	Dec. 1914
A. McLeod	March 1915	Dec. 1915
E. A. Harris	April 1916	Dec. 1916
A. Elsie Dorsey	March 1917	Dec. 1919
Ruby McDonald	March 1920	July 1920
F.M. Spencer	August 1920	Dec. 1920
Lucy Freestone	Feb. 1921	June 1921
Alice G. McKenzie	July 1921	Dec. 1921
E. P. Muirhead	April 1922	June 1923
Myra Henderson	July 1923	Dec. 1923
Ruth Magoon	March 1924	Dec. 1926
Clarence B. Hunt	March 1927	June 1927
Janet Robinson	July 1927	Aug. 1927
Clarence B. Hunt	Sept. 1927	Dec. 1927
G. A. Bolstad	June 1930	June 1932
K. E. Wayling	June 1932	June 1933
Mary I. McKenzie	July 1933	March 1936
Mary V. L. Werk	April 1936	June 1937
Milton R. Bjork	July 1937	June 1938
J. C. Dengler	July 1938	Jan. 1939
Mrs. C. H. Dickson	Jan. 1939	March 1939
Mrs. E. M. Landru	June 1939	-----
Mrs. E. M. Landru	July 1940	Oct. 1940
Miss N. E. McCoy	July 1941	June 1943
Miss Thelma Shannon	July 1943	Oct. 1943
Miss F. M. Sweet	Nov. 1943	June 1944
Miss Catherine Szouronski	Aug. 1944	June 1947
Miss Elizabeth Drefs	Aug. 1947	June 1948
Mrs. Eileen Coller	Aug. 1948	Oct. 1948
Miss Helen Erickson	Nov. 1948	June 1949
Miss Marian Jacobs	Aug. 1949	June 1950
Miss D. E. Black	Aug. 1950	June 1954

The school closed in 1954



## McColl School



"THE SHACK" McColl School  
TORN DOWN: 1979? 80?

The petition was signed by Mr. Kerr and Mr. Proudfoot. The first name chosen for this district was Enfield, but changed to McColl. School opened in 1912. School officials in 1915 were Mr. North, Mr. Milne, Mr. Kellington.

Teachers were: Miss A. MacKenzie, Miss L. Weatherby, Miss E. Curtis, Miss E. Jones, Miss M. Wright, Miss McGinnis, Miss D. McDonald, Miss G. Lawrence, Miss O. Currie, Miss V. Johnstone, Miss Group, Mr. G. Cripps, Miss L. Ham-



McColl School, June 1943

Back row, left to right: Ruth Milne, Mary Crate, Raymond Schnell, Patricia Schnell, Irene Schnell. Front: Gerald Schnell, Richard Schnell, Morgan Kay.

pson, C. L. Avery, Irving Dorsey, Ian MacKenzie, Jean Douglas, Mary Niblett, Ruth McClenighan, Howard Howes, Mrs. Schneider, Miss Marian Dennely, Miss Irma Herman, Miss Elsie Drefs.

School was closed in 1948. Pupils from Russeldale and McColl were transported by bus to Minto School in North Portal.

## Minto Public School District, No. 490

Submitted by Edythe Thomas



Back row: Tressa Harris, Dorothy Hanson, Drewry Watson, Pearl Curtis, Bernard Sargeant, George Richardson, George Hanson, Jack Watson, Jim Smith, Mr. Newman.

Second row: ???, Marian Klien, Hilda Hanson, Alice MacKenzie, Edythe MacKenzie, Annie Smith, Jean

Smith, Mary Olsen, Joyce Sargeant, Harry Olsen, Murray Randall, Ted Camm, Irving Dorsey.

Third row: Oscar Olsen, Annie Rabski, Mable MacKenzie, Susie Rabski, Hanka Skoczylas, Kitty Rabski, Ian MacKenzie, Jack Klien, Jeff Camm, Archie MacKenzie.





#### North Portal School, No. 2 Room

First row: Florence McClelland, Ella Olsen, Mary MacKenzie, Nellie Smith, Kitty Rabski, Annie Rabski, Jessie Skoczylas, Hanka Skoczylas, Viola Thompson, Mary Kuster, Susie Rabski. Second row: ???, Alex Smith, Reggie Flavelle, Oliver Harris, Jim Thompson, Frank McClelland, Gordon MacKenzie,

Rondeau Jarrot, Katie McClelland, Anna Olsen. Third row: Clarence Kuster, Sydney Wicks, Russell Lyall, Lodic Rabski, Wong Po Sing, Archie Dickson, ???, Alex Rabski, Staffee Skoczylas. Laying: Rob Waddington, Archie Dickson, Bud Waddington, Harold Johnston. The teacher was Miss Moerika, back right.

The Minto Public School District No. 490 was organized by the rural residents of the area, with three of the longer established farmers, each of whom had school-age children, being the main forces behind the erection of the school district.

In accordance with the regulations of the school ordinance, a poll was held for the election of Trustees. The results of the poll which was held February 13th, 1899, constitute the first entry in the minute book for the district. Only three men were nominated. The one elected by the largest majority was to hold office, for three years, the men receiving the second and third highest votes were to hold office for two years and one year respectively.

The Trustees elected were J. K. MacKenzie, W. F. Harris and William Waddington, all local farmers. J. K. MacKenzie was elected chairman and also acted as secretary of the Board of Trustees.

Now to get a school was quite an ordeal they went through. Their first plan was defeated, then the trustees met and decided to ask permission from the Department to hold school in a rented building for the first three months of 1900, owing to the difficulty of building a school at this season of the year. Also in not being able to provide stable accommodation for the horses of the scholars. Permission to rent a building was immediately granted by the Department.

The board proceeded to rent a building (a granary) for five dollars a month with "stable accommodation" from one of the trustees, W. F. Harris. Money was borrowed to buy seats, black board, a stove and other material for the school. Also a teacher with a second-class certificate, Alfred Wylie, was hired for a period of three months at a salary of \$45.00 per month.

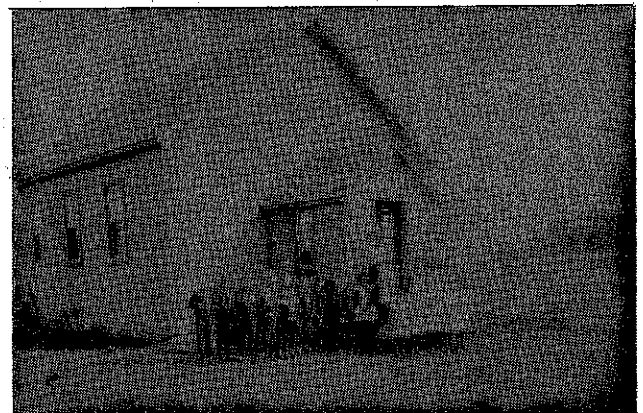
On July 20, 1901, a special meeting of ratepayers

of Minto School was called for the purpose of electing a trustee to hold office in place of deceased trustee, Wm. Waddington. A. C. Paterson was elected trustee.

In 1902 a one-room school was built, Minto Public School, No. 490. The name Minto was from Lord Minto, the Governor General of Canada at that time. Miss Hall was hired as teacher at a salary of \$45.00 per month, with two weeks summer vacation.

In 1903, Miss Lowe was hired for one year at \$45.00 per month. She only stayed the year. They then decided to write Miss Hall and ask her to come back and paid her \$50.00 per month.

At the Annual Meeting in 1914, D.M. Randall



#### Minto School about 1904. Teacher Unknown.

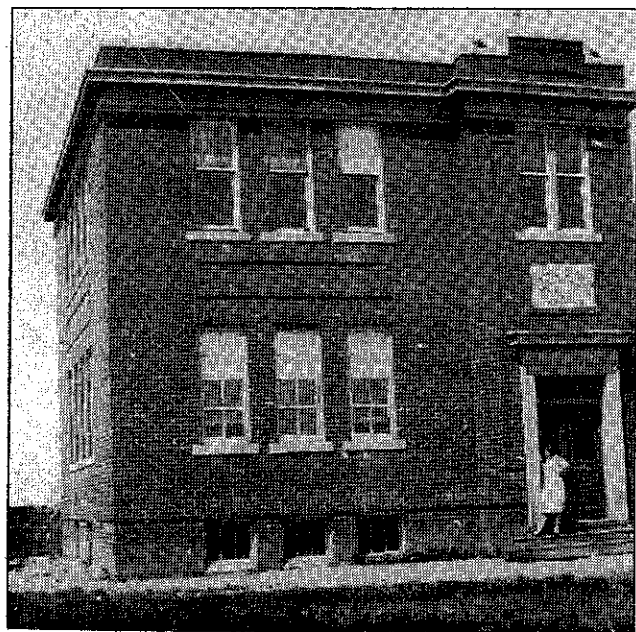
Manly Waddington, ???, ???, George Paterson, Morrell McDonald, ???, Sylvester Kihl, ???, Billie Waddington, ???, Eddie Schrader, Libby Harris, Violet Schrader, Katie McGinnis, Ada Hanson, Elsie Waddington, Ann Paterson, Kate Dorsey, Ella Gilpin, Tressa Harris, Dorothy Neal, ???, Mautetta MacDonald, Elsie Dorsey.

was elected trustee. at this meeting a motion was made by Rasmus Hansen and seconded by John G. MacKenzie that trustees make provision for the building of a larger school. It was decided they would pass a by-law and notify the Deputy Minister of Education and recieve his consent as to the same. The said by-law to raise \$8,500.00 for a two room school which would be a brick building. They would sell the old school, asking \$800.00 for it. This building was converted into a dwelling house, and at this time is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Mel Barber here in town.

In 1916, a two-storey brick school with two classrooms was built. At a meeting held in August 1916, Miss C. K. Dorsey was hired as principal at a salary of \$1,057.50 and Miss Libby Harris as Primary Teacher, salary \$900.00.

In 1918, Mr. R. H. Douglas was elected trustee to fill a vacancy on the board by the resignation of D. M. Randall.

In 1919, Thomas Jarratt was elected trustee to take the place of W.F. Harris.



Second Minto School which burned about 1929 or 30.

At the Annual Meeting in February of 1925, R. H. Douglas tendered his resignation and Mr. George Wicks was elected to the board to fill the vacancy.

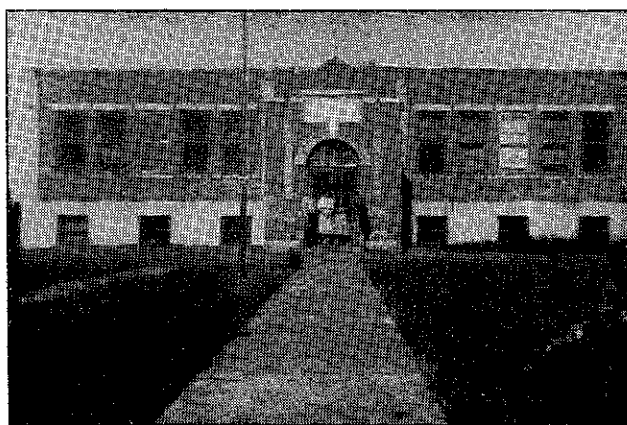
Annual Meeting on January 27th, 1928 saw Wm. Shand elected trustee to take the place of C.P. Wright.

At the Annual meeting in January 1929, W.H. Dorsey and W.F. Harris were elected trustees.

The school burnt in November of 1929 and another one was built in the same place. It was a one-storey, two roomed brick school.

At the Annual Meeting held on January 29th, 1938, J.K. MacKenzie was retiring trustee. Mrs. E.J. Brownlee was elected trustee by acclamation and J.K. MacKenzie as Honorary Secretary.

Mr. Harris resigned in 1939 from the board after his long-term of office, being one of the trustees elected at the organization of Minto School on



The Third Minto School.

February 13th, 1899. J. K. also served continuously as Secretary of Minto School until the school unit was introduced. R. A. Collier was elected trustee in Mr. Harris's place.

The school attendance was growing, so they couldn't accommodate them all. The McColl School was moved into town next to the school, and it was used as a classroom. They finally decided there would have to be a larger school built, so this was done. The opening of the new school was in 1957, with 127 students on the roll:

Room I, Mrs. Orla Dorsey (1 & 2), 34 Pupils.

Room II Louise Cook (3 & 4), 25 pupils

Room III, Mr. Miles (5 & 6) 26 pupils

Room IV, Mrs. Marge Dickson (7 & 8) 19 pupils

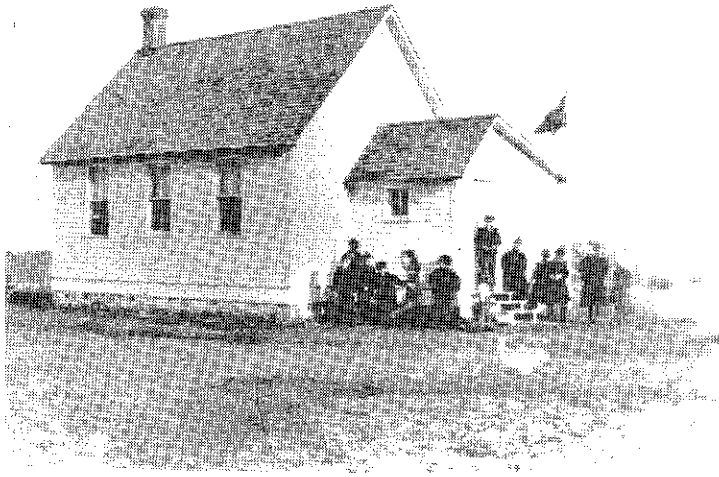
Room V, Mrs. Janet McClelland (9 & 10) 14 pupils

Room VI, Mr. Hamilton (11 & 12), 9 pupils

#### Teachers who taught at Minto School

Miss Hall	1902
Miss Lorr	1903
Miss Hall	1904
May Davis	1908
Miss C. K. Dorsey	1916
Arthur Rolph	1917
Libby Harris	1918
Ethel Moerike	1920
Annie Armstrong	1921
Mrs. Dora Finnen	1923
E. W. McDonald	1924
Alice G. MacKenzie	1925
Ruby Partington	1928
Margaret Holley	1928
Reta Cameron	1929
<b>School Burned in November</b>	<b>1929</b>
Belva Howitt	1930
R. J. M. Hattie	1931
Ian MacKenzie	1933
John A. Parker	1935
Mabel MacKenzie	1935
Isabel Osten	1936
John Raichman	1936
Margaret Lloyd	1937
J. B. Parker	1938
Mary MacKenzie	1938
Horace Ward	1939
Arthur Ewan	1941
Harriet Hargreaves	1942
Mrs. Orla Dorsey	1943
Dorothy Davies	1945
Gordon MacKenzie	1945
Eileen Seipp	1946
Orville Zander	1946
Hazel Earl	1947
Catherine Szouronski	1947

## Russeldale School, No. 2684



The petition for the formation of Russeldale School was signed by John W. Fair, George Harris and H.F. Fraser. School was opened in 1912.

Teachers at Russeldale were: Miss Brosnahan, Miss Bessie Jones, George Goodson, R.J. McRae, J. Neta Robe, N. Tiller, Mrs. A. Skilleter, Miss A. Brookes, Mrs. MacDonald, Mrs. D. Smith, Mrs. D. Wilson, Mrs. M. MacLeod, Mr. R. Bacon, Miss D. Ireland, Mr. H.D. Russel, J. G. McInnis, Mr. R. Ward, Miss M. Johnston, Miss M. Niblet, R. McCleneghan, H. A. Howes.

School closed in October of 1948.

### A Letter

The following is a copy of a letter, in part, written by Jack Hill, half brother of Joseph Hill who presently resides at North Portal.

North Portal,  
ASSA. N.W.T.  
CANADA

Feb. 10/94

My Dear Fred:

You will think me a long time in answering your kind letter, but unfortunately I mislaid it and did not remember your address. I heard from Tommy a few weeks ago and he told me you were going to be home this winter. Am sorry to hear of you being so ill, the rest will no doubt recruit your health and make a new man of you.

The letter later on states:

I am in first rate health and living on my homestead. I have to live on it 6 months each year for 3 years. This is my second 6 months. I was in the states most of the summer. It is pretty cold here in the winter although this is the best we have had since I came to the country. We actually had a thaw in January which left the ground partly bare from snow. We do not use wheels here for travelling in winter, but sleighs. They are much more comfortable to ride in as they glide along as easy as a boat. I have had a very enjoyable Xmas. We get up a series of concerts, one every week which makes the long winters pass very pleasantly. I am generally in for a song or two, or a reading or something of that kind. We had a dance at Portal a few nights ago, quite a lot of people there but mostly men. We have so few girls up here that the men exceed them about 5 or 6 to 1. It was fine fun to see the boys rush for partners as soon as a dance

was announced. One had to be pretty smart or he would get left. I guess I got my share alright and enjoyed it immensely. What a paradise it would be for some of the girls of old England. They would think they were in clover, no matter how old or homely they were. Portal is the new town which was started on the "International Boundary" where the new railroad that built last summer crosses it. It is not very large as yet, there are two stations one on each side of the boundary, also Customs houses, two boarding houses, 3 or 4 stores, Mount Police barracks and stables, two hotels, some private boarding houses and several private houses, all built since last September, which was then bare prairie. It is only two and half miles from my land so I struck it pretty rich as regards railroad accomodation. But I am afraid our summer are too dry to make farming a success. Las year the crops were burnt up by the drought. Still sometimes we get a good season when 41 bushels of wheat and 70 of oats are threshed to the acre. That is how it was in 1891. The next year was about half that, last year hardly anything. Still I suppose we must live in hopes. I am not going to farm next summer, shall let the land I have broken. I am trying to get a job on the railroad as caretaker and clerk in the commissariat department. This road is going to be extended to the Pacific coast next summer. It is going to be built through the Rocky Mountains. It will require hundreds of men who will have to be fed and lodged in camps. I am looking forward to seeing the Rockies. I have been on the praire for nearly three years and I can tell you it becomes wearily monotonous to see nothing but endless plains wherever you look or go.

From you affectionate cousin  
Jack.



## The Abraham Family

Said and Lottie Abraham were married in Mashgara, Lebanon in 1900, and immigrated to Houghton, Michigan the same year where they resided for 12 years.

Then on July 4th, 1912 they immigrated to North Portal, Saskatchewan. At that time they had



**Said and Lottie Abraham**

seven children, Fred, James, May, Alice, Rose, John and Frank. Agnes and Thomas were born at North Portal.

They took up a homestead seven miles north east of North Portal. Fred, May and James attended McColl School for a short time before being transferred to Russeldale School where they all obtained their education.

Said Abraham worked for Arthur MacKenzie for fifteen years while the family took care of the chores at home.



**George Zine**

George Zine, cousin of Said Abraham came from Mashgara, Lebanon in 1913 and made his home with the Abraham family. He took up a homestead nearby and he and Said raised stock together. He also worked out during Spring Seeding and Harvest time.

The Abraham brothers all went into farming. Presently Fred retired and took up residence in Estevan. James retired and resides at Bowbells, North Dakota. Frank still is engaged in farming at North Portal. Thomas is in the barber business in Estevan. Alice Richards resides in Brandon, Manitoba and Agnes Kuster resides at Portal, North Dakota.

Said, Lottie, May, Rose and John and George Zine are all deceased.

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## The Joseph Allens

The Allens came from England in 1903 with two sons, George and Frank. Their first home was at Taylorton, where Joe worked in the mines. This was a job he felt he knew, having been a miner in the old country. However, he had not come to Canada to mine for the rest of his life, so filed a homestead north east of North Portal. With a couple of Oxen and a plow they did their best to break up the prairie soil and grow a crop. They knew the land was stony, but when a prairie fire swept through revealing one hundred and sixty acres of solid stones they decided once again it was time to move. Their move was to a farm in the Souris Valley. The Allens now had four boys. Gordon, born at Taylorton and Bill on the homestead. A little girl, also born on the homestead, died in infancy.

It was while in the valley that the rest of the children were born and raised. Fred, Robert, Arthur, Lillian and Oliver. Except for the loss of George by drowning in the river, the years by the river were happy ones. Swimming in the summer, skating in the winter and fishing in the spring.

In the early thirties, like many others who found it increasingly difficult to make a living on the hot dry prairies, the Allens moved north to greener pastures. They settled on a farm in the Glaslyn district. However, the south still called some of them back. Frank to the mines in Bienfait. Gordon to Weyburn, Bill to North Portal and later to Southern Manitoba, Fred to North Portal and then to Nelson, B.C., Oliver, Arthur and their parents to Trossachs. Robert and Lily remained in the Glaslyn Area.

Submitted by Mrs. Lily Treummer

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## William Aspinall

William Aspinall was born to John and Annie Aspinall on December 2nd, 1893 at Lancashire, England. His father died when he was a young boy. With his mother, sister Ethel and step-father Meech, he immigrated to Canada when he was 12 years old to the Parkman, Saskatchewan area. He went to work as a farm helper at the Robinson farm near Manor the same year. He worked there for two years and received his clothing plus \$50.00 for wages.

Meanwhile, his step-father, who had worked at the post office in England acquired a job in the



**William and Ella Aspinall.**

post office at Manor. William then went home to do the farm work and each weekend made a trip to Manor with horses to bring his step-father home. After his step-father's death, William as a young man continued to operate the farm. In 1921 he married Ella Fox of North Portal. Ella had gone to Parkman to work in her cousin's store. Her cousin's husband was also a relative of William. They farmed at Parkman for a time then moved to the Fox farm at North Portal in 1941. Six children were born to this union: Earl, who married Olive Goddard of Wordsworth; Ruby, who married John Sigglekow of Northgate; Arthur, who married Margaret MacKenzie of North Portal; Lyla, who married Donald Taylor of Parkman; Inez, who married Philip Sigglekow of Northgate, and Everton, who married Delores Semenuk of Estevan.

They farmed at North Portal until 1967 when they retired. They enjoyed their home in Estevan until William's death in 1977 at 83 years. Ella continues to live in Estevan at the time of this writing.

## **The Baker Family**

Albert Charles Baker with Ernie Leonard came from Selsley, Gloucestershire, England in 1911. Charles Baker worked for Henry Dunbar at Brandon Hills as a hired man for some time, then he came to North Portal and worked for Robert Dunbar as his hired man. Finally, in 1913, he decided to send for Alice Rosina Evans, his fiancée, in England.

She travelled to Canada with her brother, Fred Evans. She stayed in the Dunbar home a few days, before the wedding day arrived. They were given a democrat and team to drive to North Portal where they were to be married. Mary Belle Dunbar, then about 16 years old, was to be bridesmaid, and Fred Evans was to be best man. On arriving in North Portal, no Fred. A hunt turned him up in an elevator with a load of grain. He was quickly hustled off to the Douglas Store where a friend worked. A suit of clothes was borrowed, and he dressed and off to the wedding before returning to the farm he was working at.

The bride, groom, and bridesmaid were to return

to the Robert Dunbar farm. The day turned out to be quite windy. They had to shop before leaving for home as they were to start housekeeping in a small 2-room house in the R. Dunbar yard. The house is still there on Murray MacKenzie's farm. A wash tub was bought, and my mother's large hat was taken off and put under it to get back to the farm. This was March 27th, 1913.

Then there was lots to learn by mother, but Mrs. Robert Dunbar made a great teacher as far as cooking and cleaning, and my mother became an excellent cook and homemaker.

February 1st, 1914 arrived, and with it a baby girl Ethel Emily was born to the proud parents Alice and Charlie Baker. I was born in the 2-room house. It must have been cold because I was told the bedclothes froze to the wall.

By 1914, Ernie Leonard had brought his mother and two brothers, Wilfred and Ralph, out from England. Mrs. Sarah Leonard was the midwife who looked after mother and daughter. Grandma Leonard, as she was known to many, was a dear friend to us all until her death. I was able to go back from Oak Lake to attend her funeral. Then on January 16, 1915, a baby boy, Jack Baker, was born.

I am not sure just when my father bought his own  $\frac{1}{4}$  section of land adjoining Robert Dunbars farm, but it must have been either just before or just after Jack was born. We remained on it until I was 10 years old, then my Father bought another  $\frac{1}{2}$  section 4 miles south west of his first farm. The house burned that winter, and the small home was moved from the first quarter and some extra rooms added over the years. We moved to Mozart, Sask. in 1934 as the Dirty Thirties had hit hard. We moved to rent Mrs. Lund's farm at Mozart. Dad rented out the farm in Britannia District to Mr. Richard Thompson.

In 1938, on March 28th, I married Douglas Abbott and we moved to Oak Lake where we farmed until May 1971 when I lost my husband. My family, one son and daughter, both adopted, have always been very close and good to us. My daughter came home for one year with me to clear everything up and then I moved to the town of Oak Lake. One year later my son Charlie and wife Gail returned to live on the farm about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Oak Lake. Charlie and Gail have 3 children, twin boys 4 years old and a baby girl 6 months old. My daughter, Mary Abbott, lives at Calgary.

My sister, Betty, who was born 12 years after me on November 27th, 1926, started school at Britannia as Jack and I did, but as we left in 1934 she took the rest of her schooling at Mozart, Saskatchewan. She met Sid Oliver, a neighbour's son, and was married in 1943. They have one son Brian who is married and he and his wife, Linda, have 2 sons. They later adopted a daughter, Beth, who married in 1978, and she and husband, Glen Warlow, live at Martensville, Sask.

My brother, Jack, moved north with the rest of the family to Mozart, Sask. in 1934, but he left to return to Britannia district in March, 1946. Mother returned with him, and Ralph Story travelled with the carloads of effects and livestock.

In January, 1953, Jack married and lived in the Britannia district until they moved to Bienfait. Jack and Mary have a family of five. Two sons and three daughters. Bill at Saskatoon University; Grace married Robert Moore and is living at Wainwright, Alberta. They have one son. Dawn, husband Bob Seibel, and two girls live at Bienfait, Sask; Nadine and Charlie still go to school and live at home.

Charlie Baker passed away August, 1944 at the age of 58 years. Alice Baker passed away February, 1970, age 80 years.

Ethel E. Abbott  
Box 91  
Oak Lake, Manitoba  
R0M 1P0

## Jancie Balison

Jancie Balison was born at Fort Ellis, Manitoba. Her mother passed away when she was an infant and she was cared for by her aunt.

When Jancie was about seven years of age, she came to live with her father on the homestead on S.W. 22-1-6 W2. She attended Taylorton and Britannia schools, riding horseback to and from school, summer and winter.

She loved horses and as she grew up she became an excellent rider. One of her greatest pleasures was riding over the prairies and through the pastures, checking her father's herd of cattle and horses.

Jancie was always at the forefront at the many prairie fires which occurred across the bare prairie. She distributed wet bags and gave what help she could to the fire fighters.

Jancie's fiance met with a fatal accident at the coal mine and she never married.

She was a kindly person and always had treats for children when they came with their parents to visit.

Jancie passed away on Oct. 14, 1942.

## The Balison Family

Joe Balison was born in Prince Edward Island in 1853.

He moved with his parents to Hamilton, Ontario, then to Brandon, Manitoba.

His father, Richard, was a carpenter with whom he worked and when in Brandon they were engaged by Professors Bedford and J.E. Saunders to build the first Brandon Experimental Farm barns.

Joe Balison then went to Fort Ellis where he took up a homestead about 1882. He worked in Moosomin in the winter time at carpentry work, and lived on his homestead in the summer breaking up land to crop. He was married to Jane Little in 1883, who died in 1885 leaving a baby girl, Jancie, who was cared for by Joe's sister Mary Balison.

Joe Balison having so many crops frozen in



Joe Balison putting up ice.

Manitoba, moved south to the coalfields district, where he was allowed to take up another homestead on S.W. 22-1-6 W2 in 1889. His father also filed, on N.W. 16-1-6 W2 and his brother Harvey filed on N.W. 14-1-6 W2 in 1892.

Mary Balison married Sam Frayn, who homesteaded N.W. 22-1-6 W2. Sam Frayn was a locomotive engineer at Taylorton when they hauled coal across the Souris River to a siding near the C.P.R. track where No. 39 Highway crosses today.

Joe Balison later moved to the Souris Valley on the south half of 36-1-6 W2, about 1902. He raised horses and Shorthorn cattle. He told of the time when he was 14 years old of asking a farmer for his first job. The farmer said 'Yes, I can use a boy to help.' He then pointed to a grindstone and said 'Go and turn that'. Joe did what he was told expecting the man to bring something to be sharpened, but the farmer walked in the other direction. Later he came back and found Joe still turning the grindstone. He smiled and said "You will do, come to the house and have your dinner."

Joe hauled sawlogs for this farmer all winter for 12 dollars a month and board.

Joe Balison died May 9th, 1935 at the age of 82 years.

## The Ernest Berday Family

Ernest Berday was born on June 30th, 1881 in Mushgara Lebanon. He came to Canada in 1894. He was joined by his brother Kail a year later. They were stone masons and built many stone buildings in the Oxbow, Glen Ewen, Carnduff and Carievale areas. They came to North Portal in 1898 and homesteaded here. They lived in a sod house until 1908.

Hodla Added was born December 8th, 1887 in Rashiba, Lebanon and immigrated with her family to La Crosse, Wisconsin. Ernest met Hodla during a visit to Wisconsin and they were married there on Feb. 10, 1909, and Ernest returned with his bride to the prairies.





**Ernest and Hodla Berday.**

Ernest and Kail farmed in partnership until 1915. Ernest continued farming until 1946, when they retired and moved to Estevan. In 1951 they moved to Edmonton.

Mr. Berday often related, to his children, the hardships of the pioneers. To obtain fuel for home heating it required two to three days, by means of horses and wagon or sleigh for a ton or two of coal from the coalfields. For food it was necessary to travel, by some means to Winnipeg, Manitoba, a two to three week trek.

Mr. and Mrs. Berday celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on the farm in 1959.

Ernest Berday passed away December 10th, 1962 and Hodla passed away August 23rd, 1968. They were predeceased by an infant son, Edward in 1917. They are survived by one son Abraham and three daughters Mabel Tucker, Lil Burner and Emma Skagford, eleven grandchildren and many great grandchildren.

The original homestead is being farmed by a grandson Milt Berday.

## **The Kail Berday Family**

In 1895, Kail Berday immigrated to Canada from Mashgara, Lebanon. He made his home in Winnipeg for three years, then came to North Portal, N.W.T., which later became Saskatchewan. He and his brother Ernest homesteaded five miles northeast of the village. They built a sod house and other necessary buildings on the northeast quarter of Section 10, then proceeded to work up the land. Being a stone mason by trade, he built some homes in the Glen Ewen, Oxbow and Carnduff areas, as well as a two-storey stone granary on the homestead.

In 1903, Kail returned to Lebanon for a visit and to bring the rest of the family to Canada. In 1904 he married Miss Takla Ausford, born in Ayn Anya, Lebanon. She received her education in the Anglican Mission School in Nazareth and taught there and in other localities for several years. He returned to Canada the same year, accompanied by his wife, mother, brothers Sam and Salem, sisters Phoebe and Helen, who all settled for a time in the North Portal district. Ernest got married sometime later and built a home close by. The homestead was then divided between Kail and Ernest. Land was acquired for other members of the family. Sam and Salem later moved on to other parts of Saskatchewan.



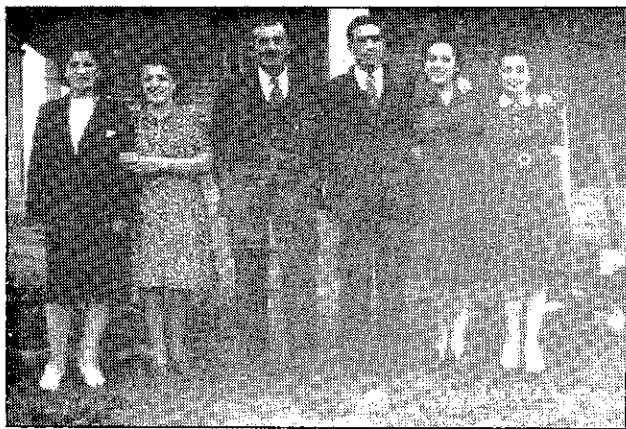
**Kail and Takla in 1931.**



**1910 on the Kail Berday farm.**

In 1917-18 the present brick house was built, a short distance from the sod house, which was later demolished. Before Kail, Takla and family moved in, a housewarming event was a well attended community dance—all proceeds went to the Canadian Red Cross Society. Like many other pioneers they were well known for their community endeavours and hospitality.

Kail was a member of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and United Grain Growers. Besides farming, he was in charge of Municipal road building and maintenance for several years. A place of great importance was the workshop which included a hand-fired forge. This was put to good use by himself and the community—anyone who had something to fix or weld. In the 1920s his threshing outfit with cook car, looked after his and the needs of several neighbors. Takla taught Sunday School for a time and was an active member of the Ladies' Aid Society and of the community.



**The Berday family**

Kail passed away in 1946, predeceased by his wife in 1931. Their daughter Minnie Peterson, who lived in North Portal and Portal nearly all her life, passed away in January 1979. They are survived by three daughters, Nellie, Lena and Mary, son George and 17 grandchildren.

George, Marge (nee:Kuster) and family reside on and farm the "home place."

## **The Brinkworth Family**

Joseph E. Brinkworth was born in Gloucestershire, England, coming to Canada in 1889. He first settled at Brandon, Manitoba where he met and married Sarah Evans. Later they moved to a farm at Alameda, Sask. Dad had to make the long trip to Estevan with oxen for coal and flour. Due to a shortage of water on the farm, they decided to move to Coalfields where he worked in the mines. Tragedy struck in the form of fire - their house and its contents were destroyed and the family had to take refuge in the barn. They found a new home in what was known as the 'Green House' and some clothes were provided by friends. Our brother Joe was born here.

The family finally settled on a farm north-west of



North Portal. Besides farming, Dad continued to work in the mine during the winter, hauling posts from the Short Creek district. Because he had to return late at night, Mother always hung a lantern outside the house to guide him home.

A two-storey granary was their home until part of the house was built. As the family increased, so did the house, and our friend, Mr. Kershaw of Bienfait was one of the carpenters.

The barn was built in the year 1909—the stove and cement work was done by a Mr. Jackor and it is still a fine example of his work. The upper structure was built by Simon MacLean.

At first Jim Hill used to bring around the threshing outfit each fall. Then Dad decided to buy his own. His first purchase was a Hart-Power gasoline engine—it was moved from field to field by horses.

Old "Jim", Dad's first horse was our only means of transportation to school, for mail and groceries for many years. He lived to be twenty-eight years old.

If there is one special asset on a farm, it surely is the water supply. Here can be found a well which has supplied good water through the years—and didn't go dry during the "Dirty Thirties". This period, when the wind blew the seed and soil away, day after day was really heart-breaking for the farmers in Saskatchewan. Bud Dad and his neighbors had faith in the land and did not move away.

Our first car was a McLaughlin-Buick (touring model). When it rained there was a rush to button the curtains on the sides—even then a great deal of water came inside. We kids thought this was a step above Uncle Ralph's Model-T, but from the numerous times we had to walk home, I think the Ford was more reliable.

At that time the R.N.W.M.P. (Corporal Kirby was one of the policemen) used horses and the trail ran through the farm yard.

Our "parlour" was used as a court house and Dad acted as Magistrate. Of course the children were curious but since Dad believed that "Children should be seen and not heard," we daren't ask any questions.

A summer outing to which we looked forward was the annual picnic at Taylorton on July 1st. In 1915 there was a snow-storm so everyone had to wear winter coats.

There was also a football team in the Britannia district, to compete against teams from near-by towns.

The first school house was situated on the Miller quarter, which was later sold to Dad. The building was moved to the farm to be used as a blacksmith



**The Brinkworth Family**

shop, up to the present time. An interesting feature about this building is the use of square-headed nails, a type you don't see now.

The new school house (Brittania No. 325) took it's place. We remember many Christmas concerts, box socials and dances at the school—Allie Dunbar made a very capable "Emcee".

There are many happy memories of life on the farm, and being a large family we had to plan our own fun and games. The hills provided many hours of pleasure—sleigh riding on a big tin toboggan during the winter. In the summer we could pick Tiger Lilies, Blue Violets and sweet Wild Strawberries in the ravine. We could also go paddling in the many pools fed by springs.

Being a music loving family, many evenings were spent singing songs while one of the girls played the piano. Often our dear friend Harold Longney was there to play the violin. The girls took music lessons from Miss E. Harris and Mr. Billy Neal (A Customs officer) of North Portal.

As a visit to the doctor was very rare, Mother had her own "home cures". For colds we were rubbed well with a mixture of turpentine and lard and Dad often took a spoonful of sugar, with kerosene poured on it, for a cough. Our spring tonic was a

vile tasting but potent sulphur and molasses concoction - it was supposed to purify the blood.

Vitamins were unknown in those days, but we unknowingly got ours by eating rose hips, which were plentiful.

In 1920, mother and the three youngest girls moved to Estevan so they could continue their education—later to become teachers—which was the only profession our Dad considered suitable.

Mother passed away in 1924 and Dad in 1943. Both are buried in the North Portal Cemetery.

Of the ten children born, six sisters are now living: Lavinia Earl, Estevan, Sask.; Sarah Gibson, London, Ont.; Edith Spencer, Morden, Man.; Daisy Fletcher, Regina, Sask.; Gertrude Horning, Regina, Sask.; Lillian Kendall, Estevan, Sask.

The home place was left to our brother Joe and is now farmed by his wife Gladys and son Roy.

A brother Ralph Brinkworth married Rose Bannerman and lived west of Brittania School. They had for children: George (deceased), Margaret, Dennis and Mildred.

A sister, Sarah Leonard and three sons, Ernest, Wilfred and Ralph lived in the Brittania district.



## The Richard A. Collier Family

by Shirley Davis

Richard Alfred Collier was born on April 16, 1888, to Richard Lovett and Julia Sophia Collier of Berkenhead, Cheshire, England. He was the youngest of six children and an only son.

Coming to Canada in 1912 to stay with the George Robinsons in the Britannia District, West of North Portal, he arrived at Estevan in the middle of the famous cyclone of that year. Shortly after arriving he went to work on the J.K. MacKenzie farm. Having never had anything to do with farming he had many rare experiences while learning to become a farmer.

In 1914 when the First World War broke out he left for Winnipeg to enlist and receive his training. While home on leave, before being sent overseas, he married Ethel MacKenzie on February 19th, 1916.



Dick and Ethel Collier in 1916.

Ethel was born on June 13th, 1891, to James Kay and Elizabeth MacKenzie of Glen Souris, Manitoba. She moved to North Portal with her parents in April of 1894. She received her education in North Portal and Estevan, later going to Winnipeg to train as a seamstress. After finishing her course she returned to North Portal and worked in the D.M. Randall store. When the store was sold to R. H. Douglas, and the Randalls moved to Biggar, Sask., to open a store, she went with them until the war was over.

When Dick came home from overseas they lived on a farm in the Britannia District for a number of years. Here their oldest son, Alfred, was born on April 4th, 1920. They moved to the farm now owned by Oscar Olsen and then to a farm one-half mile from the Jim MacKenzies.

A second son, Keith, was born on April 7, 1927, and three years later a daughter, Shirley, was born on October 22, 1930.

On May 22nd, 1932, Ethel passed away, and from that day on Dick became father, mother, housekeeper, cook, dishwasher and breadwinner

for his family, and you'd have a hard time finding a better one.

Along with farming, Dick was also caretaker of the Government Barns, and the Golf Course. In 1942 he became agent for the Pool Elevator and retired in 1953. During this time he moved his family into North Portal.

In November of 1953, Dick returned to his homeland in England for a four month visit with his sisters and their families.

His retirement was short lived after his holiday as he took over as manager/caretaker of the Gateway Cities Golf Club, finally retiring in 1969.

He was an ardent and enthusiastic golfer and was continually promoting the sport with young people and non-golfers. The Gateway Cities Golf Club conferred a life membership on him in 1969. Also, during his golfing years he made a hole-in-one, which was quite a feat as he hit the ball from the tee in Canada and it landed in the hole on the green in the United States, which of course, is Gateway Cities Golf Club world famous number nine hole. He actively golfed until 1973.

Dick enjoyed curling in the winter months and curled until 1963.

He was a member and supporter of the Anglican Church and a member of the Canadian Legion. Ethel was a charter member of the Canadian Legion Auxiliary.

Their three children have all married. Alfred married Irma Herman on March 8th, 1947. They have five children, Renee, Richard, Cindee, Cheryl and Rodney. Keith married Eileen Seipp on December 31, 1947. They have three children, Diane, James and Colleen. Shirley married Alan Davis on July 12th, 1950. They have three children, Mark, Gene and Leslie Kim.

Dick Collier was a friend to many people, and to his family he was a friend and much, much more.



R. A. Collier family.

## The Robert Curtis Family

by Pearl Partridge

My father, Robert Curtis came to North Portal, which was then in the North West Territories, in 1898 and began farming on a quarter section of land situated on the Canada-United States border.

He, my mother and myself lived there until 1910 when my mother passed away.



My father then sold the farm and we moved to the village of North Portal. He worked in the store operated by R.H. Douglas as well as being custodian of the Immigration Hall.

He held these positions until his death in 1924.

He was a long time member of the I.O.O.F. Lodge.

## The Daley Family

Jeremiah Daley was born in LeRoy, New York in 1858. As a young man he migrated west and got work in Casselton, North Dakota on the Dalrymple Farm, reputed to be the largest wheat farm in the world. Eventually, he became Superintendant on one of the many divisions of this huge farm. To get started on his own, he looked over land in the North Portal, Saskatchewan district, and in 1900 he decided to buy three sections. Mrs. Daley and their two sons, Hubert and Arthur moved to the farm in 1902. The summers were hot and dry and the farm had to be broken and cultivated before production. Therefore, he decided to accept a job on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, plowing a fireguard to Moose Jaw and back.

This required a crew of eight plowmen with four horses on each walking plow. Jerry and helpers followed with team and covered wagon. They hauled enough water and feed for noon-day stop. They plowed 16 miles a day, or from one section

house to another, and their main supply car was moved by the local which was very often late. On their way back they reached a town by the name of Drinkwater, which probably was the hottest and driest spot in Western Canada. Their supply car with water and feed didn't get in until around midnight. The horses, which were tied to old railroad ties, all broke loose and took off for water. The next day a team and a carry-all with water and supplies, and also a man on horseback were started out to find the lost horses. The man on horseback scouting on his own, got separated from the team and supplies; becoming completely lost. An Indian found him three days later, with his tongue all black and swollen. It took months before he regained proper speech. Ten days later the Indians also brought the horses. This delay proved costly. The trip also cost Jerry 40 pounds in weight, and ended his employment with the C.P.R.

Good crops were few and far between in the following years, but 1915 produced one of the best in Canada's history. This helped to balance the books and pay off numerous debts. He had built a large horse barn, 36 feet by 96 feet, in 1914 and this had to be paid for.

The year 1916 was extremely wet and promised to break all production records. At the start of August, my father and I (Art) were inspecting a quarter of summerfallow wheat, when he remarked that we might as well pull in and cut it. I was dumfounded, but he had had previous experience with black rust. That fall we regretfully plowed under several hundred acres of 40-bushel wheat. To make matters worse, we had built a modern new home on the farm. These buildings are still standing and in use. The years rolled by and crops were fairly good. Jerry Daley passed away on June 10, 1932. Son Arthur was left to carry on the un-enviable task of management under the most difficult years the people of this country have ever known. Severe drouth, grasshoppers, hail, rust, etc. You name it! We had it! Grain prices strangely went down instead of up. Cattle were such a drug on the market you would think that people had quit eating. I attended an auction sale and the auctioneer, Matt Ross, coaxed me to give him a starting bid on an old "hay-burner" cow. I played safe by offering him six dollars; so he yelled and yelled and then dropped the cow on me. Being short of feed, I was highly displeased. I also shipped two carloads of barley and when prices took a big drop when it reached Winnipeg, I decided to hold. Result was \$24.00 for both cars. Everyone was broke and looking for work. Things couldn't get any worse so I got married in October 1933, to Louise Pfeifer of Woburn, North Dakota. She had taught school in Portal for five years. I scraped up a few hundred and we took off for Los Angeles. Conditions were just as bad there as here and hundreds of fine apartment buildings were closed. We selected a very fine apartment on Sunset Boulevard, near City Center. The rent was \$20.00 per month, with maid service. Meals were extremely cheap also, so we lived like millionaires on very little cash. After six weeks we returned to the Daley farm. Mrs. Daley Sr., continued to live on the farm until her death in



**Jerry Daley farm in 1910.**

1971 at the age of 101 years.

In 1935 we became the proud parents of a daughter, Mary, who eventually became a registered nurse. She is now married to an attorney in Merrill, Wisconsin. They have three girls and a boy. In 1937 our son, Jerry Jr. was born.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Allen lived on the Daley farm from 1949 to 1957. During this time Fred was active in the management of the farm.

In 1958, Jerry Jr. married Joan Antonini, a registered nurse. They live in a modern home, which they built, not far from the original Daley home. They have a girl and three boys. Jerry Jr. became co-owner in 1958. He raises cattle and has complete charge of the farming operations. Having two grown sons, he seldom required hired help at harvest time.

Arthur's brother, Hubert E. Daley, finished schooling in St. Paul in 1914. He engaged in the wholesale potato business until his death from lung cancer in 1960.

Hopefully this farm will continue under its present name for many years to come.

## **The Charlie Davis Family**

by Doris Meguire

My father, Charles George Davis, was born in Guilford, Surrey, England, on September 24, 1877, and my mother, Mary Gibson Bewick was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on May 27, 1891. They both emigrated to Canada with their families and met in



**Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Davis**

Winnipeg where they were married in 1912.

The family moved to North Portal in August of 1920. My dad was with the Immigration service and was accepting a border posting for what was to be for five years, but ended up being thirty-five. The family at that time consisted of my older brother, Percy, aged 3, and Charles (Chuck) Jr., only ten days old.

When we first arrived we stayed with the Arthur Johnston family for about six weeks until we could find a house to live in. Our first home was a red house owned by Tom Waddington which was across the street from the United Church manse. In Winnipeg we had indoor plumbing and I can remember my mother was always running the pail over under the sink. In the Spring the house was surrounded on three sides by water which also filled the basement. I can remember wading in the basement to get canned goods, etc. off the shelves and being small at the time I thought it was great fun—but there were drawbacks—lots of snakes and lizards!

My dad had a large garden and raised some beautiful flowers, especially sweet peas and Nasturtiums. I can remember Perc and I would sell flowers during the summer months at the CPR depot when all the Shrine and other special trains came through with holidayers and conventioners.

My dad used to go down the line, as they called it, to Minot or Kenmare and check the people coming to Canada. This avoided the people being delayed at the border. Sometime, settlers were held over for many days and stayed at the settlement house which was located across from the depot.

The Portal light plant burned down in 1922, and we had no electricity for two years. We had lamps and my mother ironed with "Sad" irons. My brother, Arthur, was born on December 18, 1922, and I can remember what a joy he was to have around.

My folks never owned a car until about 1924 and my dad bought a Chevrolet touring car in Estevan. He drove it back having no driving training, only what was shown him before leaving Estevan. He arrived many hours later at North Portal and ran into the fence and almost through the garage. We had many experiences with the car. Every time we



went to Estevan, which took all day, we had to walk up and down every hill because dad never learned to change gears on the hill. Many other times we had to run and put rocks under the wheels while we put the rain curtains on which were kept under the seats. My dad never drove over 25 miles an hour, which was a blessing, I guess.

In April of 1927, my brother Arthur contracted Scarlet Fever and died on Easter Sunday, which was a sad day in all our lives. On May 29th of the same year, my brother Malcolm was born which helped fill the loss of Arthur. On February 10, 1930, brother Alan was brought into the world.

Mother was very active in the community, being a member of the Legion Auxiliary, United Church Ladies Aid, and Order of the Eastern Star. She took her turn at office and worked hard on various committees. She was always home when we needed her, however. She saw to it that we attended Sunday School and Church regularly and taught us to pray when we were very small. My dad's chief hobbies were gardening and playing the violin, which he did very well. He used to play with and orchestra on the Portal side for dances, etc. He was a Mason and enjoyed curling in the winter months. He was a Legion member, being a veteran of the First World War.

My brother, Percy, married Pearl Davis in 1940. My brother, Chuck, married Anne Lantinga in 1941 and they had two sons, Ron and Gregg. Chuck died in November, 1973. My brother Malcolm, married Ingrid Forsell in 1960, in Vancouver where they still reside. They have four children, Kellie, Laurie, Scott and Grant. My brother Alan married Shirley Collier in 1950. They have three children, Mark, Gene and Kim. As for myself, I married George E. Meguire in November 1940. We have two children, Gerry and Mary Ellen. George, or Mickey as he was known in Portal, died May 21, 1975.

As a family we always had lots of fun. Every summer we went to Carlyle Lake on dad's vacation. I always admired my parents, especially my mother who was my best friend and pal. When dad retired from the Immigration in 1945, being an active person, he sought work at Taylorton Mines for two years as a time-keeper and weight-checker. They sold their home in North Portal in 1950 and retired to Vancouver B.C. Mother died in January, 1958, and dad passed away in March, 1962.

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## The Dorsey Family

Willard Hargrave Dorsey was born at Beeton, Ontario, the youngest child of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Dorsey. Orphaned at an early age he came west to Methven, Manitoba, in 1891, and on to Estevan, Sask., in 1892.

Here, Mr. Dorsey had the honor of opening the first mail bag at the Estevan Post Office, he being postmaster under the late Dr. H. Scott. He opened the first store in Estevan and in 1894 came to North Portal, where he homesteaded and operated a

general store, thus being one of the earliest residents in both Estevan and North Portal. While in Estevan, Mr. Dorsey was united in marriage to Ida Fogg of Newmarket, Ontario.

From 1901 to 1911 he was C.P.R. Agent in North Portal. Resigning this position he entered the Canadian Immigration service in March 1912, a position he held till retirement.

Mr. and Mrs. Dorsey raised a family of three children: Catherine Kenray Dorsey, Elsie Dorsey and Willard Irving Dorsey.

Catherine was the first white child born in the village of North Portal. She had a varied teaching career and until her retirement, was head of the French department at Central Collegiate in Regina. Kay was the last surviving member of this pioneer family, passing away April 8th, 1979.

Elsie Dorsey taught for some time in Regina and at the time of her death in 1963, was the Art Supervisor for Regina City Schools. On Castle Road in Regina stands the "Elsie Dorsey School", named for her in honor of her accomplishments in the art field. She won international recognition for her modern methods in the approach to the teaching of art.

Irving began a teaching career at McColl School, North Portal. Later he was principal at Glenside, Wilcox and Oxbow. He was married to the former Orla Margaret Donaldson of Saskatoon.

Irving later became Inspector-in-Charge of Citizenship and Immigration at North Portal. He passed away in 1974.

The surviving members of the Dorsey family are Willard Donaldson Dorsey, the son of Irving and Orla Dorsey. Don is an engineer with Sask-Tel in Regina. He has two sons, Donaldson Perry Dorsey of Regina and Willard Michael Dorsey of Abbotsford, B.C.

Michael is a member of the Canadian Parachute Team that won the gold medal for Canada in the World Parachuting Championships held in Brisbane, Australia in 1977. He operates his own business out in Abbotsford, B.C. and will be competing in the National Parachuting Championships to be held in Gimli, Manitoba in August 1979.

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## The R. H. Douglas Family

1857—

The Douglas family emigrated from Scotland to Canada in 1857. Between Quebec City and Montreal, tragedy struck their ship when fire broke out. On June 26, 1857 the steamboat 'Montreal' burned and sank in the St. Lawrence River. Eight members of the Douglas family died leaving thirteen year old William the sole survivor. He went to live in Ontario where he later married Martha Hastie. The fourth of their seven children was R.H. Douglas.

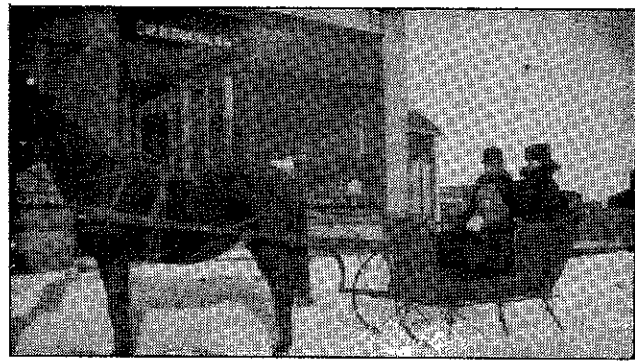
Robert Hutchison Douglas was born in Camlachie, Ontario on August 13, 1872. He attended high school in Forest, Ontario after which he attended the University of Toronto for one year. His schooling was interrupted when a younger

brother Will became ill with lung trouble and R.H. took him to the Mountains of California in an effort to improve his health. They lived about a year in California after which R.H. came west to Maple Creek, Saskatchewan to work on a ranch for a short while. Around 1899, he joined the Canadian Pacific Railway as a Baggage man on the run between Moose Jaw and North Portal.

Esther Caroline Irving was born at Uxbridge, Ontario on June 24, 1864. "Cassie" was the fourth daughter born to Annie (Weir) and George Irving. After attending school in Ontario Cassie moved to New York City to work as a dressmaker. She later returned to Thedford, Ontario where she opened her own dressmaking shop. About 1898 Cassie and her Mother Annie Irving came west to be near Cassie's sister Mrs. A. C. (Em.) Paterson of North Portal.

Cassie went to work as a clerk with the Canadian Pacific Railway at North Portal. In those days there was no "Women's Lib" so whenever Mr. Milestone the Superintendent came to inspect the office, Mr. Prairie the C.P.R. Agent sent Cassie home. Thus the Superintendent did not know there was a female on staff. Due to the influx of U.S. settlers to the area extending from Portal, west to Crosby, North Dakota, it was decided to open a railway depot on the American side of the border. With Tom MacKenzie as helper, Cassie was assigned to open the new depot.

Through their mutual employer, Cassie Irving and R.H. Douglas met and on November 11, 1902, they were married at North Portal. Rob and Cassie then left the employment of the C.P.R. and opened



Winter mode of transportation for Mr. and Mrs. R.H. Douglas and Jean.

a General Store in North Portal in the building owned by W.H. Dorsey. Later they moved down the street to the building owned by Mr. McPhee. While operating the store at this location Miss Eva Harris came to work for them as a clerk. In 1908 they built their own building and opened the "R.H. Douglas General Store".

The second story living quarters were completed before the business section of the new building. Cassie, however, was anxious to move into her new home for the birth of her baby which was due. The stairway to the upstairs was not completed so Cassie climbed a ladder to the upstairs and on January 22nd, 1908, Annie Jean Douglas was born in the Douglas' new home.

In 1912, the Douglas' sold the business to D.M. Randall. They lived in California for six months and then moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta where



The team belongs to G.S. Richardson and Charlie Doan. On steps is R.H. Douglas.





**R.H. Douglas Store in North Portal around 1918. The car is a Maxwell.**

R.H. worked as bailiff in the Sheriff's office. Later they moved to Regina where he worked for the Canada Life Insurance Company. In 1914 Rob and Cassie returned to North Portal and went into partnership with Mr. Randall. A few years later they bought Mr. Randall's interest in the business. R.H. and Cassie operated the "R.H. Douglas General Store" until Robert died on April 16th, 1928.

During his years in North Portal, R.H. Douglas was an active community member. He taught a young men's Sunday School Class and was on the local school board. He was a member of both the Masonic and Oddfellows Lodges. R.H. helped establish the first golf course located west of what is now Motorways and he was also one of the first shareholders in the old Curling rink. R.H. loved to "bonspiel" in Minot, Weyburn and Estevan. Cars apparently also were of interest to R.H. because the Douglas' drove automobiles that today are only a name to car buffs, a 1924 "Star", a 1925 "Maxwell" and a 1927 Chrysler Sedan. Cassie later acquired a 1929 Oldsmobile Coupe.

After Robert's death, Cassie continued to operate the "Douglas Store". When Rob became ill Cassie phoned Mrs. H.C. Dunbar to ask if one of her boys would come in from the farm to help in the store. Munro was chosen because he had spent a winter working in the Montgomery Ward Mail Order Store in Minneapolis. After the death of Mr. Douglas, Munro continued working for Cassie. She carried on the store business until 1943 when at the age of seventy-nine Cassie retired and sold the business to her daughter and son-in-law, Jean and Munro Dunbar. Upon retirement Cassie continued participation in the Eastern Star and Rebekah Lodges which she has been actively involved with for many years. Cassie continued to live upstairs in her home that she had climbed the ladder to in 1908. This was a very convenient location to enable her to still visit with her many friends whenever they came to the store. On April 23, 1953, Cassie died.

Jean was the only child born to Cassie and Rob Douglas. She attended Elementary school in Medicine Hat, Regina and North Portal and High

school at Regina College and Estevan Collegiate. After receiving her Teacher's Certificate from the Regina Normal School, Jean taught for four years at McColl School east of North Portal. She left the teaching profession to assist her mother, Cassie, in the operation of the Douglas Store. In 1937, Jean married Robert Munro Dunbar. Jean and Munro continued to operate the store until 1953, at which time the forty-five year era of the "Douglas Store" in North Portal came to an end.

The "Douglas Store" building was also used for many community functions. The Patriotic Society and the Red Cross used the upstairs to serve Community Suppers for fund raising purposes during the First World War. In later years the front portion of the downstairs was frequently used by the Legion Ladies Auxiliary and the Women's Auxiliary of the United Church. In those days the hours of business were extended to eleven every night. In later years, however, the store closed at six on weekdays but remained open until Midnight on Saturdays. The store was the meeting and visiting place of many members of the community. Miss Eva Harris was the first of a very long list of local people working in the "Douglas Store". Many of the young people of the community earned their spending money working after school and on Saturdays as delivery boys, shelf fillers or clerks. Some continued as full-time clerks after they had finished their school careers.

In the early days besides providing for local customers, the Douglas' catered to the needs of settlers who were heading west to homestead. Large wooden crates of underwear were ordered directly from the Stanfields Factory in Nova Scotia. In later years English Bone China was sold in large quantities. One afternoon a tourist from New York City stopped off the train just long enough to purchase a complete dinner set for twelve. This readily available supply of china provided many gifts for bridal showers, therefore the local brides could always depend on being endowed with a collection of fine china. Other items such as Empress brand jams and Ontario Cheddar Cheese were also among the favourite items for which customers made special trips to the Douglas Store. Although the building has been remodelled and is presently vacant, it is still standing and contains many memories of the history of the North Portal Community.

*Burned June, 1987*

## The Alex Dunbar Family

Alex Dunbar was born in Nova Scotia in 1867 and came to the N.W.T. in the year 1888 and took up a homestead in what has been the Britannia School District. He started to break the land with a team of oxen and used oxen for some years before owning horses.

He and his brother Robert lived in a sod house, built on the half mile line. Each slept on his own quarter. The table sat on the line and each sat at the table on his own quarter.



Alex worked at the mine in the winter and he hauled coal to a loading station and by doing so he was able to buy more land.

He met Hannah C. Hopkins, while working at the mine and married her in 1897. They lived in an oat bin until they had a small house built. Their sod barn had a roof of poles and straw. One night a prairie fire burnt the roof off the barn and its contents—the feed.

While living in the small house, seven children were born amongst which was a set of twins, named Alex and Robert. Robert died at 18 months of age.

In 1907 a large barn was built on the farm which housed 28 horses. The year following a ten roomed house was constructed and later three more children were born. Nine of the children attended Britannia School. On July 25, 1918 the crop suffered 100 per cent hail damage and it was that very day that R. H. Douglas, the storekeeper and family friend, had to break the sad news to the family of the death of their eldest son, J. D., S/Lieutenant in the R.A.F., who had been killed in action at the age of 20, overseas.

Alex Dunbar died in 1925 at harvest time. His sons carried out the farming for their mother. In 1959, Hannah C. Dunbar passed away after a short illness. The farming was carried on by Dick and Mac.

In 1960, Robert Munro Dunbar died, and Dick Dunbar passed away in 1974.

At present the Alex Dunbar farm is operated by Dick Dunbar's son Jim.

Living sons and daughters of Alex and Hannah Dunbar are: Alex R. Dunbar of Prince George B.C.; Thomas H. Dunbar of Surrey B.C.; Bertha L. Mundie and Edna M. Hansen, New Westminster B.C.; Ruth M. McIntyre of Lac La Hache, B.C. and Fraser M. Dunbar of North Portal.

Mac Dunbar

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## Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Dunbar

It was in the spring of 1888 that Henry Dunbar came to this area in search of new land. He obtained that piece of land described as 18-1-5, west of the Second Meridian. However, it was not until June 1891 that Henry brought his family here to make their home. Allie Dunbar was Henry's eldest son and was to spend his whole lifetime in this area.

A new house was built on the farm in 1910. It was to this home Allie brought Jeannie Brockie as his bride in March 1911. Because of the numerous Indian artifacts found on their land and their deep interest in Native Folklore, they named their home Arrow-Head Farm.

One son and two daughters were born to this union. Their son Millen married May Higgins and was the third generation to own and farm the land. They are now retired and live in Brandon. Their daughter Gladys married Jack Mair and they make their home at Souris, Man. Emily married

Herman Hanson and since her husband's death, has resided in Brandon, Man.

Allie and Jeannie retired to Estevan in 1954. Throughout a lifetime which spanned from days of oxen to the space-age, they were ardent Church Workers. Their deep-rooted faith was exemplified in the compassion and friendship they had for all fellow man.

Allie died on Nov. 2, 1966 and Jeannie on Aug. 1, 1977.

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## The John Thomas Dunbar Family

John Henry Dunbar

John Thomas Dunbar farmed with his Dad, John David Dunbar at Lorne, Pictou County, N.S. Although the cultivated acreage was small, they did grow enough grain and hay to feed their sheep, cattle and horses. Much of their income was realized from the sale of lumber on their land. During the winter months, the young men went to the woods and cut logs, hauled them to the river. When the ice melted in the Spring, Dad was one of the ones who rode the logs down the river to the saw mill, before returning home for spring work.

In 1894, at the age of 23, Dad left Lorne, N.S. to homestead in the Britannia District. He proved up on his homestead for three years, during which time, he lived in a sod shack. This shack was still intact when he returned in 1907. His only means of transportation was to ride horseback. His two twin brothers, Alex and Robert, had homesteaded in the Britannia District, a few years previously, so he had them nearby, to visit.

In the Fall of 1897, he returned to Lorne, N.S. where he was married to Annie Alice MacCarthy in October. Four children were born in Nova Scotia: Howard on August 28th, 1898; John Henry on July 11th, 1900; Robert Alexander, May 1st, 1905 and Annie Helen on August 3rd, 1906.

Dad came west again in the Spring of 1907. He helped to build the Alex Dunbar barn, returning to Nova Scotia in the fall. The following spring of 1908, he moved out to his homestead bringing with him a carload of stock, machinery and household furniture. He had bought the first house of Alex Dunbar's and moved it to his homestead. His family followed on the harvest excursion in August 1908. They had many interesting experiences on the train, on the trip west, which were thoroughly enjoyed by Howard and John Henry. They stayed overnight with Uncle Henry Dunbar in Brandon, then on to Bienfait the following day. Dad met us in Bienfait and we spent our first night with Uncle Alex's family. It was dark when we arrived in Bienfait and I can remember that we kids were scared when we heard the coyotes howling.

Grandpa and Grandma Dunbar, John David and Marybelle, and Austin Fraser, their Grandson, as well as Grandpa Roddick were on the same coach, from Lorne to Brandon. They visited with Uncle Henry's for a time, before coming on to the Britannia District. Austin Fraser's mother died when he was just an infant, and Grandpa and

Grandma Dunbar raised him.

Thomas Parker was born on November 19th, 1910 and Helena Victoria on August 25th, 1913.

Dad built the present house in 1916. Dad was always interested in the good of the community. he served for many years as Councillor for the Rural Municipality of Coalfields; on the Britannia School Board and his family were faithful attenders and supporters of the Church. Dad was also a member of the I.O.O.F. Lodge in Portal, North Dakota. He was never too busy to help his neighbors. Anyone needing help, a meal or a bed, were always welcome in his home.

In the early years, horse thieves came across the line into Canada. Many nights, the farmers had to sleep in their barn, to prevent their horses from being stolen.

During the early years, people travelled with team and sleigh in winter, and horse and buggy or democrat, during the summer. Dad, Uncle Alex and Uncle Robert, also curled regularly, in North Portal. You, younger generation, may think that life was very dull, but it was far from it. There was much more community spirit in those days than there is at the present time. House parties, local dances, Christmas concert, pie socials, box socials, during the winter; picnics and football league games, during the summer. All the family attended these events.

Mother died \_\_\_\_\_ December 9th, 1941

Dad died \_\_\_\_\_ September 1st, 1947

Lena died \_\_\_\_\_ December 8th, 1948

Howard died \_\_\_\_\_ November 16, 1965

Robert Alexander died \_\_\_\_\_ July 1st, 1974

Annie Helen died \_\_\_\_\_ November 11th, 1977

Howard married Viola Patterson; John Henry married Constance Stovin; Robert married Anita Patterson; Annie Helen married Bill Brockie; Parker married Thelma Roberts, and Lena married Archie Holley.

Because of Dad's poor health in 1936, he asked me to take over the farm. This we did and farmed it until 1964 when we sold it to our daughter Shirley and son-in-law Gordon Thompson.

## The Robert Dunbar Family

Mr. Robert Dunbar was born in Pictou County, Nova Scotia on December 14, 1866. In 1887 he came west to Brandon Hills south of Brandon, Manitoba, helping W.H. Dunbar (Millen Dunbar's grandfather) with harvest. He and Henry came west to this area, scouting for land in 1888. They found there was a good water supply and coal close by, two essentials for a home. He returned to Brandon Hills and during that winter he was joined by his twin brother Alex. Robert worked for the settlers teaming grain to Brandon, 11 miles. Alex was a carpenter so he began getting things ready to come to their homesteads the next spring. He built bob-sleds, a wagon box for a wagon, table, chairs, etc. They also trained two steers for a yoke of oxen. They waited until seeding was over in the



Home of Robert Dunbar, later occupied by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John David Dunbar.

spring of 1889 and the ground was suitable for travel.

The journey from Brandon Hills was made across the open prairie in a covered wagon drawn by their yoke of oxen, along with the yoke of broken-in steers, a team of horses, a pony, and all their effects. At that time there was no Oxbow or Estevan, no railway line except many miles to the north. There was no Souris line or line from Moose Jaw to North Portal. The latter railway was completed and trains running in 1893.

That summer they ploughed a little, planting a few potatoes and scattering some wheat and oats to see how these would grow. Robert and Alex built a good sod shanty over the boundary line of their homesteads so they could live together and each still be living on his own land. Their barn was also built of sod.

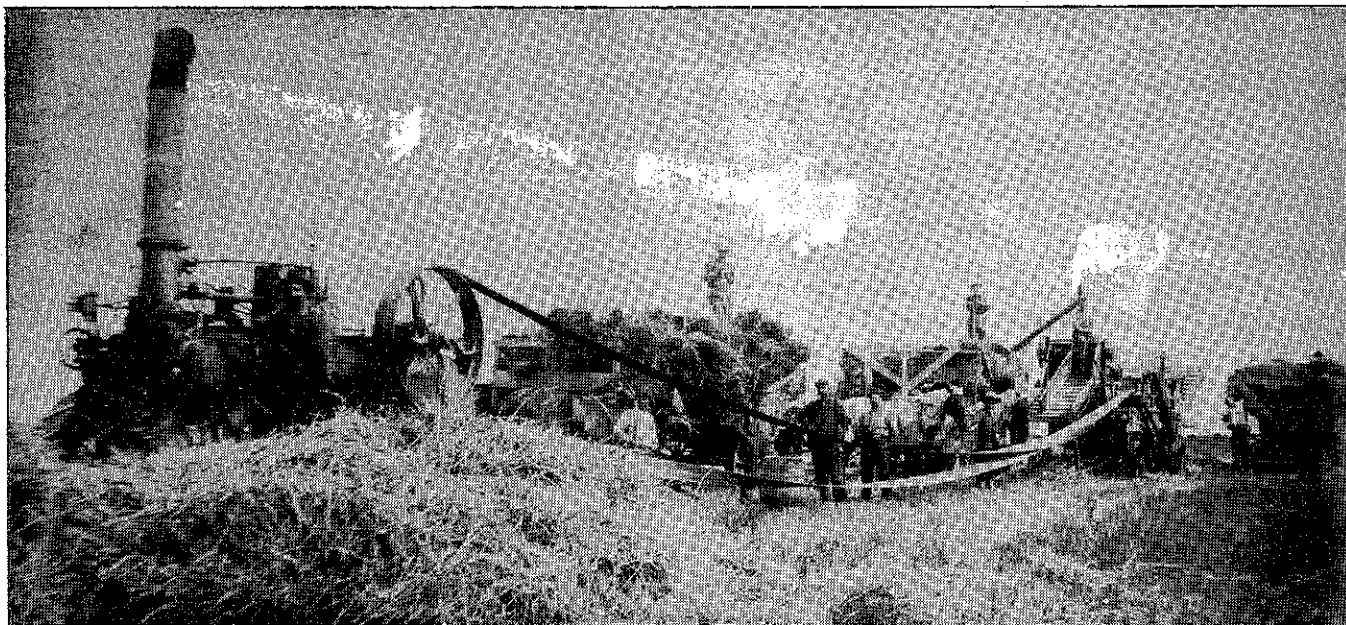
A story which illustrates how sparsely this country was settled in those days is that of a time when Robert accidentally shot himself while cleaning guns. He had to ride horseback, eighty miles, to Williston, North Dakota to a doctor.

Robert often acted as mailman for the settlers living east of Britannia district because before 1894, the first post office in the area was at Coalfields.

Before Robert was married he built a house near the middle of the quarter of land, south of Highway 39 and north-west of Jim Dunbar's buildings. This spot is still marked by a few trees. Later he built a new house in 1908 and the previous home was occupied by his parents who moved out from Nova Scotia.

In 1895, Robert married Helena B. Roddick of Brandon Hills, daughter of Rev. George Roddick. Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar were always closely linked with church work. He was active in establishing the Presbyterian Church, later Knox United Church of North Portal in 1898, also old Taylorton Church in 1901. They were both active in Sunday School work in North Portal, Mr. Dunbar being Superintendant for years and Mrs. Dunbar helping with the Young People's Group. Mrs. Dunbar was active in Ladies' Aid and Red Cross work. She was a member of the Rebekah Lodge and he a member of the Oddfellows and Masons.

Mr. Dunbar was a member of the Union Rink Co. which was the original Curling Club in North Por-



**Dunbar threshing outfit - Sam Frayn, engineer; Robert Dunbar, separator man and boss.**

tal, dating back to 1913. He and his brothers drove to North Portal with a team and cutter during the winter months for curling.

For a few years, Mr. Dunbar was Reeve of the Municipality of Coalfields No. 4. Following this he went into Provincial affairs. He was elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly in the Provincial Government in Regina from 1917 to 1925.

Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in November 1945 at their home in Britannia district. Mrs. Dunbar passed away in 1947.

Alex, Robert's twin brother passed away in 1925 and Thomas and Robert in 1947, thus the passing of three pioneer brothers. With the passing of such "old-timers" an era in the history of the west passed away also.

Children born to this pioneer couple were:

Mary Bell—Mrs. George Evans of Tacoma, Washington. Mary Bell was born in the only house in Estevan at that time in order to get a doctor from Weyburn. Estevan then consisted of one house and the police barracks.

George, who followed his father as owner of the home farm in 1948, took an active part in community affairs as his father did before him. He sold out and retired from farm life. He now resides in Burnaby, B.C.

William of Calgary, Alberta who taught school for several years before he became Immigration Inspector in Kingsgate, B.C.

David of Vernon, B.C. who was also a teacher before he became Supervisor in the Canadian Customs in North Portal. He was active in Knox United Church affairs and assisted George with farming.

Margaret (Mrs. C. H. Dickson) of North Portal, who taught school 10 years in country schools, then in North Portal from 1956 to 1978.

During Mr. Dunbar's long career he remained steadfast through two drouth periods—1890 to

1895 and again in 1930 to 1939. In the hard years of the 30's his large flock of sheep and several milk cows helped tide the family through, as sheep could exist on the only feed available - Russian Thistle. The steadfastness and vision of these early pioneers are qualities which made the West and to which we must still hold fast.

Submitted by M. Dickson

## **The Norman Earl Family**

Pinto, Saskatchewan

Charles Norman Earl was born in Montreal, Quebec, August 14th, 1887. In 1911 he came west to Manitoba and at Winnipeg he worked for the C.P.R. as a grader operator putting in a railroad grade to Willowbunch, Saskatchewan. When the job was completed he went to Roche Percee, Sask. and worked in the coal mines. However, this did not suit him and after two trips underground he decided that was enough and worked as a choreman around the mine driving a team of horses hauling coal to the village.

From the mines he went farming, working first with the McKersie family of Roche Percee and in the fall of that year he returned to Montreal. He came west again in the spring where he once again worked for the McKersie family, the George Robinson farm and the Joe Brinkworth farm. It was while working with George Robinson that he met his bride to be, Lavinia Brinkworth. They were married on July 27, 1916. Lavinia's parents were pioneer farmers in the Britannia District.

Mr. Earl and his wife made their first home on the farm of Joe Hill where he worked and it was here that the first of seven boys was born. This child died in infancy. After three years he decided to go farming for himself and rented  $\frac{3}{4}$  section of land on the Canada—North Dakota border. It was here in the 1930's that they experienced difficult





Vinnie and Norman.

times. The family was now larger by four boys. Another child, a son, was born but died in infancy. The dust storms of the thirties are well remembered. Many times the family went to bed at night and in the morning their faces were covered with dust and the outline of their heads was clearly visible on the white pillow cases.

In 1937 the family moved to the Andy Johnston farm in the Pinto district where they remained until Norman and Lavinia retired to a Senior Citizens Home in Estevan. During their life at Pinto, World War Two broke out and four of the five sons served on active service with the Canadian Armed Forces. Lavinia now resides in Estevan, Sask. Norman passed away in 1970. The remaining sons are: Clifford and Russell of North Portal, Lawrence and Lloyd of Winnipeg, Manitoba and Kenneth of Estevan.

## John Fair

1872-1928

John Fair, the son of James Phare (1833-1908) and Louisa Symonds (1847-1913), was born in Minnesota. His father was born in Nova Scotia and his mother in Illinois.

John married Victoria Frymire (1871-1953), the daughter of William Nicholas Frymire (1807-1881) and Christina Shorts (1827-1903), on October 14th, 1891. Victoria's father was born in Ontario and died in South Dakota. John and his wife had six children before moving to Canada; Vera, Harold, Allan, Maude, Ray, and Les. After in Canada, they had two more: Grace and Bill.

In 1901, John, Victoria, and their family moved to Saskatchewan. They settled in the North Portal District. John worked for awhile on the farm where his grandson Warren Fair now lives, six

miles east of North Portal. In 1903 he homesteaded the SW¼ of Section 20, north-east of where Oliver Harris lives now. He patented his homestead in 1908. In the summer, he lived on the farm but in the winter he worked at the mine. Later he bought the NE¼ of Section 19. John had been a school teacher before moving to Canada and did not like farming. John Fair was one of the persons instrumental in the establishment of Russeldale school, north-east of the Village of North Portal. Eventually, in 1919, he moved away from the farm to live near Moccasin Rock in the Roche Percee area. After the river flooded, they moved to Taylor-ton. John's son Ray stayed on the farm for awhile but when the farm house burned in the early 1920's, he too moved away.

After moving to Canada, John changed the spelling of his last name from Phare to Fair because of a letter telling of his father's illness he never received. It was because the "P" in Phare looked like an "O".

## Elsie Ford

Elsie Aleta Waddington Ford, daughter of William Frederick Waddington and Lottie Amelia Harris, born July 30th, 1898 at North Portal, North West Territories, on the farm in a sod house. She had two brothers, the oldest one Manley Dewitt, born November 18th, 1895, was born in Brandon Hospital, while the family lived in the Brandon Hills a few miles from Brandon, Manitoba. Her other brother, William (Billie) Frederick John, was born January 9th, 1900 at North Portal in the same sod house as Elsie. The family lived in the sod house until their father passed away when Elsie was three years old.

Her mother moved the family into a two storey house with two bedrooms upstairs and one large room downstairs. Her Aunt Lucy Harris, and her mother ran the Post Office in North Portal. One corner of the large room downstairs was the Post Office. The next year, her mother added to this dwelling, four bedrooms upstairs and one large dining room and kitchen downstairs and a front room.

Two years later Grandpa Oliver Harris and Grandma came to live with them. They had left their farm to Fred, their son. She remembers the day they came to live with them. They drove a sorrel horse with white legs and face, hitched to a buggy. Before Grandpa and Grandma moved in with them, her mother boarded C.P.R. men, who stopped off. Some slept during the day, and some during the night, and in the same beds, according to shifts. After the Grandparents came, she rented only one room to the C.P.R. men, the Grandparents used the south bedroom. She also boarded the teacher, and the Methodist Minister, a Mr. Harrison, who had the downstairs bedroom. He drowned while going to Roche Percee to preach. There was also a Mr. Hinze (Rev.) but she couldn't remember any more except that they were all English.



**Elsie (Waddington) Ford and Tressa (Harris) Fox at Roche Percee picnic.**

May Davis, whom she believes came from Nova Scotia, was Elsie and Billie's first teacher. Manley may have started school earlier. She thinks they had a school on the MacKenzie farm which he may have attended. May Davis taught school for many years. She married and lived West in British Columbia.

There was also another teacher by the name of Bill Newman, but she doesn't think he boarded with them. The name of their school was "Minto School".

Elsie remembers one Easter Holiday, in particular, her mother wanted to give the family something to do to keep them busy for the week, so she set up a quilt to be tied with wool. Friends Annie, Jack and George Paterson, Dorothy Neal and Ella Gilpin, Billie, Manley and Elsie all set to work on the quilt so industriously that they got it all done in one day, much to her mother's surprise. These families were all very close friends.

The town skating rink was behind the barn which was behind the house. The skating rink was a very busy place as families spent many hours on the ice.

The family owned an old driving horse called "Pinky". She had quite a mind of her own where the children were concerned. She would willingly go as far as the cemetery which was on the way to visit Uncle Fred Harris' farm. Then she would flatly refuse to go any further. Down would go her head and back home she would go, no matter what they did to try to change her mind.

Elsie remembers one Christmas when she got the most beautiful big Eaton Beauty Doll. A Mr. Curtis was caretaker of the Immigration Hall—a big

white building. He had a daughter Pearl. Elsie and Pearl were very close friends and played together alot. Pearl now lives in Winnipeg. She also remembers when they used to drive to Roche Percee with Pinky in the buggy, for a picnic on the 1st of July. The rock had a large hole in it. Everyone used to have their pictures taken in there. The Ladies Aid had a picnic or garden parties at the Shoebridges. The Robert Dunbars also had garden parties - possibly for the Church, too. They still had Methodist and Presbyterian Churches but they all seemed to go. There was an Anglican Church to which the children went in the afternoon after attending Sunday School at the other Church in the morning. The children were presented with cards for which they had to learn Bible verses.

Elsie can remember when Aunt Lillie Harris (Mrs. Jack Hall), was married. There was a very bad snow storm the day of the wedding and the bride was all dressed up, but there was no bridegroom. Everyone was becoming quite worried in case he, Jack, had got lost, as he lived about six miles west of Portal. Her brother Fred and someone she couldn't quite remember decided to go and see what was wrong. They found him safe at home. He had just decided the storm was too bad to go out in, and thought the next day would be alright to get married. He got dressed up, went back with the boys and got married that day, after all. They had 3 sons, Frank, Clifford, and Willfred. They moved out to Victoria while the children were still quite small.



**Manley and Kathleen Waddington and Family, Eileen, Louise, Arthur, and Fred.**

She also remembers when Aunt Ella Harris got married to Clem Davies, who boarded at mother's and was the Methodist Minister. She remembers seeing them off on the train after they were married. They went to Flaxton to live.

North Portal at this time had two hotels, one the Grandview, owned by Mr. Mead and someone else. She wasn't sure about the name of the second one unless perhaps it was "Union Hotel". One possible owner was Mr. Richardson, who had two sons, Jack and George, with whom she went to school.

McFees owned the general store. Douglas had the general store on the north side of the railroad track. He always used to call her brother Buster Brown, and Elsie, Buster Brown's sister. At first

he used to own a small store, but later he built a larger store, which still stands.

Mr. Dorsey was the Immigration Officer. He had two girls, Kate and Elsie. They were a bit older than Elsie was. All the little girls of the town had such a great time playing with paper dolls, which they used to cut out of the Saturday Evening Post and the Ladies Home Journal.

Some other people that Elsie remembers, were a Mr. Hansen, who was a section foreman. He had a family too. His daughter Ada was the oldest and also had a son Walter. Then there was a Mr. Gilpin, a section man. They had two sons, Roy and Albert, also two daughters, Muriel and Ella. Also a Mr. Sand who moved in with two children. One, a girl was called Violet. They all attended school together. Elsie remembers helping her mother wash clothes. The washing machine had a wheel that had a handle on it, which you turned around and around to turn a dolly. She remembers also how her Aunt Lucy spoiled Billie, who used to say that Aunt Lucy was good for a nickel a day.

The children used to go to a confectionery store owned by a lady they used to call Mrs. Dinky Davidson to buy jawbreakers.

When Manley was fourteen years old and had finished Grade VII, he decided he wanted to go back to the farm, location 6-14, on which a nice house had been built—no longer the sod house.

The family left the North Portal house to the Grandparents. The children still attended the Min-to School in North Portal. They all stayed on the farm until 1914. Bill Perkins, Manley and Elsie and their mother all went to Meadow Lake, where they took up homesteads, while Billie went to College in Regina. Manley stayed at Meadow Lake all winter, while Elsie and her mother went back to Portal. In the summer Manley came back to Portal to run the farm.

Walter Ford and his brother Howard worked for Uncle John Waddington when Laura was a little girl. Walters older brother Rowland, worked for Elsie's mother. All the Ford brothers moved to Horizon, Sask. in 1914. Then in 1917, when Elsie and her mother came back to Portal for the winter, it was the same day that Walter came also, although neither knew the other was coming, not having seen each other for three years.

In Spring, he had to go back to Horizon, and Elsie and her mother went back to Meadow Lake. This, though was the winter when they first started keeping company. After Walter got the seed in the ground, he left for Meadow Lake. She remembers when he came in that day. It was terribly muddy that June day, and he wore beautiful high button shoes and a dress suit, something that was seldom seen in Meadow Lake. The local boys thought they could easily "cut him out" believing that she had just met him. Later he went back to the farm at Horizon, in 1920. He was 21 years old. In the fall Elsie and her mother went back to Portal and in January, Walter and Elsie were married. Her dress was a hand made lemon coloured georgette, made by her mother, and trimmed by Ethel (MacKenzie) Collier, who stitched on tiny beads around the cuffs and collar and all down the

front of the tight waisted full skirted dress. This was worn over a crocheted camisole made by her mother. The next late fall she washed the underwear and hung it on the line outside to dry, and when she went out to take it off the line about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, she found it had been stolen. Her going away outfit was a taupe silk dress. She wore red shoes and a string of red beads topped off by a large brimmed hat of Mohair type of material, beautiful and soft. They spent the whole four days of their honeymoon at the Kings Hotel in Regina. They visited Mr. and Mrs. Harper—Bill and Ethel.

Walter and Elsie spent one year on the farm at Horizon by themselves. Edith, Walter's sister, was 12 years old and she stayed with them until her parents returned to the farm. Elsie knew nothing about milking cows, but one day, she offered to do the job while Walter was working in the field. He was already hitched up and ready to go, when Elsie decided to do the milking, but the turkey gobbler took after her and she screamed and screamed. Walter came to the rescue and threw a pitch fork, never really expecting to hit the bird, but he did, killed it dead on the spot. Walter had to unhook the team and the rest of the day was spent in dressing and canning the turkey. They had lots of good meat until it was all used up.

After Walter's parents came back to the farm, he and Elsie moved back to Portal where he had a barber shop in the same house Elsie's mother had built and kept boarders. Their son Howard was born on January 9th, the next year, a thin little baby.

Elsie's mother spent most of her time in Meadow Lake now with Manley and Billie. Walter still worked for Uncle John Waddington, but after Howard was born, the family moved to Meadow Lake.

They lived in a house back of the house built by Manley in which her mother and Manley lived. Billie was a fire ranger north of Meadow Lake.

In 1935, Walter, Elsie and their three children Howard, Melba, and Elaine moved to B.C. staying first in Langley Prairie, with Walter's sister and family and then moving to Victoria. Elsie and Walter lost their son Howard on D-Day in World War II. They lived in Victoria during the war and after moved to Vancouver, where Walter died in 1968.

Elsie celebrated her 80th birthday last summer at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Melba and Chuck Biddle. Also to help her celebrate was her other daughter and son-in-law, Emil and Elaine Johnson and Elsie's three granddaughters and grandson. Friends from far and near attended. The main attraction was "This is your life Elsie Aleta Ford", all done in pictures from 1898 to 1978.

Elsie is a very active and outgoing lady at the age of eighty-one and this North Portal Celebration will be a fond memory in the years to come.

Submitted by Mrs. Melba Biddle



## The Fox Family

Solomon P. Fox moved from Essex County, Ruthvin, Ontario and settled across the river east of Glen Souris, Manitoba. There was a large family of eight boys and three girls. The girls were already married so only the boys came with them.

The T.B. Waddington family already lived at Glen Souris, Manitoba.

In 1895, on June 3rd, S. Everton Fox, the sixth of the Fox family, and Annie Waddington, the third of the Waddington family, were united in marriage. Our father Everton, worked with his brother Clarence on the farm at Ronthwaite, Manitoba. There were five children born at Ronthwaite. For these, Mrs. Duket, a midwife, was on hand. When the children got sick, a Doctor Vanstone from Wawanesa came to see them.

Everton Fox then bought a quarter section from T.B. Waddington at Glen Souris, about twelve miles east from Brandon, Manitoba. As soon as he was able, he built a granary on this land to live in while he built the house. John was born at Glen Souris, where a doctor drove from Brandon for his arrival.

In the fall of 1913, the family of Everton and Annie Fox and children Ella, Archie, Myrtle, William, Almor and John moved by train to North Portal, Saskatchewan. We bought the farm home of T.B. Waddington (grandfather) and they were to live with us until they passed away.

Grandpa Waddington was a very interesting man, even though he was handicapped. He was very active in doing things he could do. In introducing Archie and Bill one day, he pointed to Archie and said "Fine boy now, fine boy!" then pointing to Bill he said "Chip, chip, chip, chip." He, Grandpa Waddington passed away in the fall of 1925, and Grandma Waddington died in 1936.

In 1919 the Fox family adopted Retha, who was about one year old. Our home was one of activity when we were all home.

Our home became a boarding place of many school teachers of Forbes School. Elsie Dorsey was one we had for a number of years. She made things interesting for us all. Pearl Muirhead, who married Dick Dunbar, was with us too. I, Bill used to tease her a bit.

There were many men who walked the railroad tracks. They would stop off for something to eat and occasionally they would sleep in the barn loft. One day there were about sixteen boys stopped for lunch. After awhile mother got them to chop the old railway ties for their meals, so most of them quit coming. Then the First World War broke out and we didn't see many more.

Ella A.F. Fox, the oldest, was the first to leave home and she went to work at Parkman, Saskatchewan, in the Lees General Store. On June 22, 1921 she married William Aspinall and they resided on the farm at Parkman. In 1941 they moved to North Portal, to the farm (originally T.B. Waddington's), which they purchased from S.E. Fox. They lived there until they retired to Estevan



Mr. and Mrs. Everton Fox.

in 1967. William Aspinall passed on May 21, 1976, and so Ella resides alone in Estevan.

Archie S.E. Fox, the next in the family, lived on the farm, too, in a little house they brought in from the mines and fixed up for him and our parents. Father S. Everton Fox passed away at the age of 77 years and 6 months, in 1946. Archie then looked after mother, Mrs. Annie Fox, until she died in 1955 at the age of 81. Archie lived alone then, but ate his dinners at Ella's, until in 1963, on November 25th, he passed away in a Regina hospital at the age of 66 years.

Myrtle M. Fox went to work at Roblin, Manitoba for an uncle, then worked at Colgate, on a farm for a short while. In the month of August, 1931, she married Victor Cowan and moved to Waldeck, Saskatchewan, where they farmed and raised egg-laying hens. Victor passed on August 22, 1966 and in 1976, Myrtle moved into Swift Current, Saskatchewan to live.

Almor Fox moved to Torch River district, near White Fox, Sask., in 1934. He was married to Doris King in 1938 and farmed there until his death in 1965 at the age of 60 years. His son Wayne still resides there.

William L. Fox who they call Bill, moved to Ruthilda, Sask., in the spring of 1922. He went back to North Portal for Christmas of 1923, and the second day of January was married to Tressa I. Harris. They farmed in Ruthilda district for many years and Tressa passed away. On April 15, 1965, he married Elizabeth Ann (Harris) Mackenzie, and they retired to Rosetown the same year. Libby passed away in July 1974, and Bill lives alone in Rosetown.

John W. Fox farmed at North Portal and married Margaret Zwick in 1936. They moved to Salmo, B.C. and then later on to Vancouver. He passed away in the fall of 1969 at the age of 60.

In 1937 Retha Fox married Rev. Ralph Hornby, who while pastoring there organized and helped build the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church. They later moved to London, Ontario where he organized the building of another new Church. Ralph passed away in London and Retha later married Bin Sword in January of 1969. They still reside in London, Ontario.

Ella Fox Aspinall is living alone in Estevan and has six children, twenty-nine grandchildren, and

thirteen great grandchildren.

Archie passed away and never married.

Myrtle Cowan lives in Swift Current, has three children and eleven grandchildren.

William Fox resides in Rosetown and has three children and thirteen grandchildren.

Almor Fox passed away in 1965, his wife Doris lives in Nipawin, Sask. and has three children and six grandchildren.

Retha Fox Sword lives in London, Ontario with her husband and has two children and four grandchildren.

The Fox family home at North Portal is now owned by Everton Aspinall (youngest son) who purchased it from his parents, Bill and Ella Aspinall.

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## The August Glosser Family

August and Nannie Katherine Glosser left Hay Springs, Nebraska, U.S.A., with their family in 1893. The long journey was made by Prairie Schooner (covered wagon).

August was a member of The Buffalo Bill Cody riding team. When the show made the trip to England in August, August decided not to go along.

On arriving in Canada they settled in the Britannia District of what was then the Territories.

August passed away in 1914 and his wife Katherine followed a couple of years later.

William Glosser and Annie MacKenzie were united in marriage on January 1st, 1919. There were three daughters born to them, Evelyn,

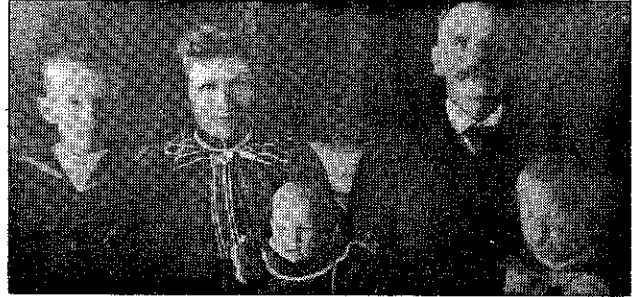
Elizabeth, and Barbara.

William and Annie farmed for a good number of years.

After sickness took Annie from the home, William farmed until 1934, when he started to work for the Standard Gravel Co., of Calgary, Alberta, until the time of his death.

Annie passed away in the regional nursing home in Estevan, Sask. on August the 23rd, 1976.

Barbara is married to Keith G. Reid, and at this time reside in North Vancouver, British Columbia. They have two sons; Wm. Dean and Keith George.



Wm. Edward, Katherine, Arthur, August and Ralph. There was another child born, her name was Rosie. Her life was short, dying as a babe with diphtheria. Ralph followed her shortly in death, leaving William and Arthur to carry on the work their parents began.

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## Oliver Harris

Oliver Harris was born in 1837 in Devonshire, England, the youngest son of a family of eighteen. He came to Mitchell, Ontario with his parents at



The Oliver Harris family.

age twelve on a sailing ship. It took many weeks.

In 1865 he married Anne Francis who also came from Devonshire, England, as a child on a sailing ship. She caused her mother a few anxious moments on the voyage when she climbed on the bow-spit to the far end, before she was rescued. She was born in 1844, only a few miles from the district Oliver was from.

In 1882 they left Ontario and took up a homestead in Brandon Hills area with their family, which now included six children. In 1890, Mr. Harris and his one son, Fred, took up homesteads on N.W. 18/1/4 W2 and S.W. 18/1/4 W2, coming from Brandon by wagons, oxen and horses. They each built a barn and shared a small house on the dividing line of their homesteads. There was no railroad here, no Portal, no North Portal, just a few tents. One or two early settlers preceded them. The rest of the family (two more girls were born at Brandon) arrived in 1893 by the now completed railroad from Brandon to Estevan. There was by now a sod house ready on S.E. 19/1/4 as well as a sod church on corner of S.W. 18/1/4 awaiting them.

The family that came to make this community their home and contributed to the development of this area included: Lucy M. (early postmistress), Frederick Wm., Lottie, (Mrs. Wm. Waddington) Ida, (Mrs. Wilmot Johnston) Lily, (Mrs. John Hill) Fannie, (Mrs. Frank Stringer) Eva May, and Ella (Mrs. Clem Davies).

Mr. and Mrs. Harris retired from the farm in 1905 to the newly formed village of North Portal where they lived until their deaths. Their home there, as well as their sod house on the prairie, was a haven to many early ministers of the Methodist Church who found that it radiated Christian cheer, and that it's hospitality was boundless. They both lived until their 85th year.

## Lucy Matilda Harris

Lucy Matilda Harris, oldest daughter of Oliver Harris, was born in 1867 at Mitchell, Ontario. She came to Brandon Hills with her family in 1882 and to North Portal area in early 1890s to help her father and brother with their homestead duties. She had tailoring training in Brandon and used that skill on the new frontier, for a few years, making wedding and bridesmaid dresses. In 1901 she became assistant postmistress in the hamlet of North Portal and a year later was appointed postmistress. She held this position until her death in 1930.

## William Frederick Harris

W. F. Harris was born in 1868 in Mitchell, Ontario, the only son of Oliver Harris and Anne Francis. He homesteaded S.W. 18/1/4 and a few years later purchased the south east quarter of the same section. In 1897 he married Georgina Roddick (born 1872) of Brandon Hills. Their wedding trip from Brandon lasted a week due to a severe blizzard.

Four children, three girls and one boy, comprised their family: Elizabeth Anne, (Mrs. Stewart MacKenzie) Tressa, (Mrs. Wm. Fox) Oliver Roddick, married I. Olsen, and Lois Bernice, (Mrs. Albert Thomas)

It was hard work breaking his land with a walking plow and even when tractors and bigger machinery came into use, many trials persisted. Frost, hail, grasshoppers, and the drought of the "dirty thirties" was perhaps the worst experience. However, he always maintained a cheerful outlook



The Fred Harris home in 1913. Pictured from left are: The Hired Man, Oliver (child), Bob Hazard, Fred

Harris, Mrs. Fred Harris, Libbie, Tressa and Elsie Waddington (Ford).





**William Fredrick Harris and Georgina Roddick.**

and made the best of the trials of the thirties. He was small of stature. That, he always said, was because he had seven sisters that practiced cooking on him.

He rented his father's land when he retired in 1905 and purchased another N.W. 17/1/4 from the C.P.R. Cattle raising was part of the enterprise, which wasn't always too profitable. In 1934 a sales slip shows: 1—580 lb. steer sold for \$2.90 and two 730 lb. calves for \$3.65

He passed away in 1950, predeceased by his wife in 1942.

His land is now farmed by his son, Oliver and sons.

### **Miss Eva Harris**

Eva Harris was born at Brandon Hills in 1884 and came to North Portal with her mother and sisters in 1893. She attended the earliest public schools, Britannia and later Minto when it was housed in homesteader's cabins, and one year in the Presbyterian Church in North Portal. In 1903 she attended high school in Regina, where she recalls attending the opening of the Legislative Assembly of the North West Territories when Hon. A.E. Forget was Lieutenant-Governor.

While growing up on the farm she milked cows and many other labor demanding jobs that were required in pioneer farming. She recalls hitching up a team of oxen to a stoneboat to fetch barrels of soft water from "Upper's Slough". After getting the barrels full, the oxen refused to move, so her father had to come to the rescue. They would obey his every command.

After she finished her schooling she worked in Kelly's store in Estevan and later helped in the R.H. Douglas store in North Portal, as well as helped in the Post Office. After her sister's death in 1930, she was appointed postmistress and

carried on until her retirement in 1944. She spent ten years in Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia, then returned to the prairies where she feels is home. For a few years she operated a china shop in North Portal.

### **Arthur (Art) Haup**

Art Haup was an American soldier who fought in one of the early American wars. When discharged he came to North Portal. He lived a mile west of Jack Kemp's. After a few years he moved in and lived with Jack for a short time.

He then took to herding cattle, just west of the pumphouse on the Souris River, and that is where the old soldier died.

Submitted by Archie MacKenzie

### **Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hill**

by daughter Jeannette Taylor

My father came to North Portal in July 1914, bringing his whole crew and big threshing machine. Mother and my brother Merle arrived in November. Dad liked this part of the country, after having three years of no crops in Alberta.

I was born the next spring at the farm of Lou Shoebridge, where many of the children around the country were born at that time.

Mother was active in the Red Cross and Ladies Aid, Legion Auxiliary and the Homemakers Club. She helped to start the Sunday School Class at McColl School, with the help of Rev. Waite.

A community Sunday School Picnic was held each year at our farm, 6¾ miles east of North Portal. Homemade Ice Cream was served.

After Dad and Mother retired to live in the Grandview Hotel in 1940, she had many a Quilting Bee and club meetings in their apartment.

Mother passed away in May of 1946 and Dad passed away in March, 1948.



**Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hill and family and Ed Babcock, in 1918.**



Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hill in 1938.

## The Joseph Hill Family

Joseph Hill was born at Moortown farm, near the Village of Knowstone, North Devon, England on November 19th, 1878. He was the eldest of eleven children born to John and Caroline Hill. John Hill had been married before and had another family of eleven children. One of the younger members of that family, John, had immigrated to Canada and Joseph at 19, also decided to try Canada. That was in 1898. Most of the first family remained in

England, but the second family had an urge to see the world. As a result, we have relatives in New Zealand, South Africa, Australia, as well as in Britain and Canada. It has meant a lot of letter writing through the years.

Joseph got his homestead, the S $\frac{1}{2}$ /6/1/5 W2nd. Later, he bought the NE/6/5 from Mr. August Glosser and what we always referred to as the Johnson place from Mr. Andrew Johnson.

In December, 1903, Joseph married Caroline Mary Myers, whose family came to take up a homestead in North Dakota, from Wisconsin. Two daughters were born, Vera and Gladys. Gladys died when slightly more than a year old.

Those early days on the farm were busy ones, not only in planting and harvesting crops, but in planting a variety of trees and fruits. He also got into cattle and hogs on a modest scale. There were always 15 to 20 work horses, and two driving ponies, the stylish and very fast Jenny, and the comedian, the I-don't-care-as-long-as-I-get-there, Daisy. As a team, they pulled the light sleigh in the wintertime. During school time, they took turns taking Vera to school. One of her early memories is riding home from school, and then going into the house to the smell of mother's good bread, just out of the oven. A cinnamon roll for Vera and a carrot for the pony and back on horseback to round up the cattle.

Joseph soon took an interest in outside affairs. He became a councillor in the small local improvement district in 1904, and councillor and Reeve of Coalfields No. 4, for about 40 years.

He was associated with the Municipal Hail Association and Board from 1913 to 1960, still Honorary President. He was on the Municipal Executive from 1923 to 1934. He became Chairman of the Provincial Assessment Commission in



The Joe Hill farm about 1909 or 10.



Joseph and Caroline Hill and Vera - 1910

1934. He served with the Anti-Tubercular League for about 12 years in the late 20s and 30s. He helped organize the Forbes School District in 1911.

He was on the Estevan Fair board from the beginning. He was one of the original members of the Saskatchewan Pool. He has been a life-long member of the Conservative Party, and ran in three elections, but was not lucky.

Farming with horses required plenty of help and harvesting was a major operation. We had a company machine, that is, several farmers contributed their work and allotment of help. They worked from farm to farm until the job was done. Women were not idle. Besides preserving food for the win-



Joe Hill with Vera and his wife, taken on a blustery day in Vancouver in January 1947.

ter, the cooking of large meals for the crew took up every moment of the day. Mother was seldom idle. If she had time to sit down, she was at the sewing machine.

However, it was not all work and no play. There was the Saturday evening movie. It seems now we found more pleasure in the old silent movies than we did later with the 'talkies', although the musicals were popular with us. We had live entertainment too. The circus arrived every summer. There were stock companies coming to Estevan from Regina and Winnipeg, travelling pantomimes, the Winnipeg Kiddies, and between the wars, the Dumbells. We recall Red Newman in 'Oh, it's a Lovely War', Al Plunkett with his romantic and comedy songs, his brother Morley and the Captain, Ross Hamilton and his impersonation of a stately and beautifully gowned woman, and Jack Holland and his not quite nice representation of womankind was hilarious. Oh, there were so many more. A few years ago I saw a TV interview with four of the then remaining members of the company. It was a very nostalgic experience.

## The Hugh Irvine Family

Submitted by Marge (Irvine) Seamon

I was born in Portal on February 8th, 1907, as were all my brothers and sisters, six of us. My father rented the Hanson farm which today belongs to Ken McKenzie. We left the Hanson farm about 1916 and went to the Arthur Johnson farm east, about ten miles from Portal.

My father found it very difficult there financially and moved to Shand where (he having steam papers from the railway in Scotland) ran some type of machinery for a brick plant there; it was not a success so he moved to Estevan where he entered the dray business with a Mr. Johnston.

My father and mother came out from Scotland about the time the McLellands, Dunbars and Scotts came. He first worked for Mr. J. Daley. Neighbors were the Olsons, McKenzies, Dunbars, Glossers, Batersbys, Milnes. Many of their children are still with us today.

It was no surprise to find a hobo or two sitting on the well in the yard on a warm summer day, waiting for a hand out. Mom would take them a jug of milk and a loaf of homemade fresh bread and a bit of cheese and we kids would sit in a row on the back step till they had their lunch, and wave them goodbye as they struck off across the prairie, looking for work or another handout, and a straw stack to sleep in and for another day to begin.

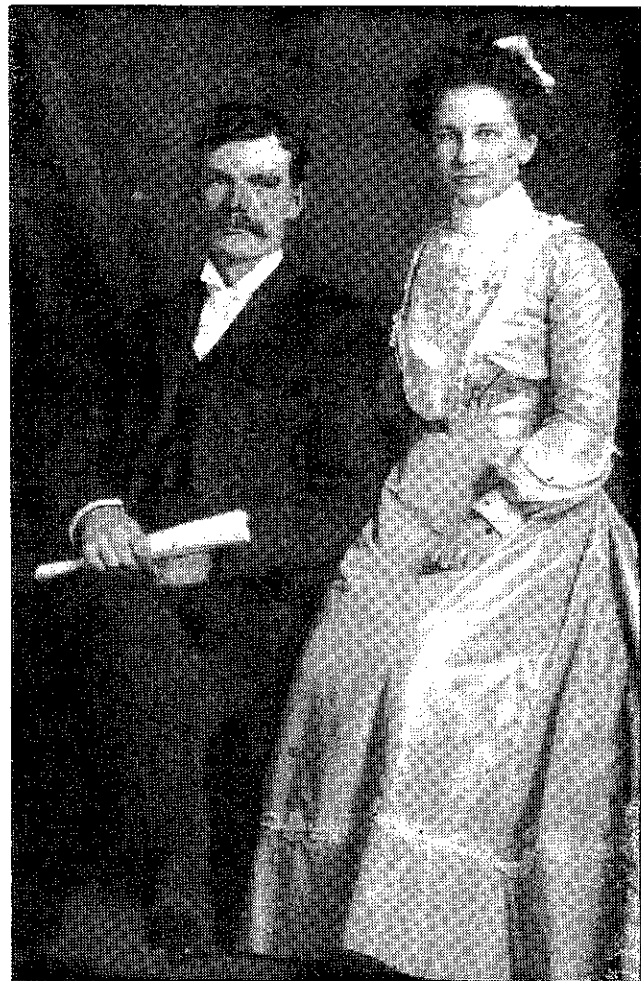
When we went to town we never thought of locking up - it just wasn't done! Of course, we always had a good dog! We were getting ready for bed one night when a huge figure of a man loomed up at our blindless kitchen window and he says "Could I come in, I think there's a storm coming." I remember it was a gorgeous moonlight night and the ground was white with snow. My dad let him in, but my mother was so afraid - we had no phone



and she dressed and hurried off to McKenzies for help. But father fed him and he warmed up and father edged him gently out into the snow and we watched him go up the railway to Estevan; that was the surest, safest way in those days - roads were just mere trails and it was easy to get lost, especially at night.

The next day father went to town with the hay rack; he heard there had been a robbery of Douglas' Store. Then on the way back he saw what he thought was one of the cows in his straw stack, so he drove in to see, and here it was a big hole dug out of the stack and just stuffed with groceries, etc., so father put it in his rack and brought it home to show mom what he found and the story of the robbery and the big man at our window, all tied in. Father took the goods back to the store and reported what he found to the police. Well, they followed the man to Estevan. He was captured and sent to prison. We kids didn't see why we could not keep all those goodies! We knew that poem that says - Finders keepers, Losers weepers! - but it didn't work in this case.

I became a Registered Nurse, sister Janet a steno; Tom and Alex fought in the second World War; Tom disappeared after the war and has never been located. Jack became an Appraiser in a gold mine in Timmins, where he still lives with his wife Olga Branville from Macoun; Janet lives in Sudbury, Ontario; Ina passed away November 22, 1978. Father and mother passed away in 1954 and 1955 respectively.



Arthur and Minnie Johnston.

## The Arthur Johnston Family

Arthur E. Johnston and Mary Braim Waddington were married in North Portal December 17, 1902, and set up homestead on section 7, east of North Portal where they moved into a sod house, and in order to start farming, my dad Arthur borrowed enough money from my mother Minnie's father, T.B. Waddington to buy a horse and a plow to start tilling the soil.

I remember my dad telling us about their courtship. He would drive or ride horse back on the one horse he had at the time to court my mother, Minnie. As usual on the farm they went to bed early, and with one ear open and an eye on the clock. At 8 p.m. a voice would call loudly "Arthur it is time to go home", and he went! My mother Minnie was quite young when she had to take over the running of Grandpa Waddington's home - cook, feed help and do everything a housewife had to do, so when she married my dad she was well aware of the hard work ahead of her. She told me of how she had to beat gophers off with a shovel at their sod shack door. However, from there they moved to the house where I, Ethel, was born. I do believe they had the first girl, Mabel, at the sod shack; she was the oldest, and then Harold, Clara, Harry, myself, Phyllis and Lloyd; we were all born in that farm house except Lloyd, and all by midwives.

Mabel died of cholera at a year old; no one knew

of any help at that time. Having babies those days was the most natural thing for women and they would be up and out working within a week. I mean work!! I was the baby until my dad came back from overseas in the first World War. He was too old to go but he felt it his duty, and John Kemp, who had come out from Scotland to find work, leaving his family there, got work with us for his room and board and a small amount for his needs.

I do remember what a beautiful life we had. After supper in the winter we would go into the living room with the only light being from the pot bellied stove. I would be on dad's knee and the others would be sitting on the floor. My dad told us a story every night and it would always be continued. John and mother would hurry with the dishes to come and listen and before we went to bed we would all sing In The Evening By The Moonlight - oh! how I still love that song. One thing about our life, our folks never told us how tough things really were. We had enough to eat, but no fancies except on Saturday night when dad would always bring candy.

I am getting away from my story. When dad and John, also Billy Waddington, who was only 16, went overseas (he lied about his age - he was too young and dad was too old), he moved us into Portal and took a cow, Fairy was her name. While on the farm the boys taught our dog to pull a hand sleigh; the dog would pull us to school on the farm, and while



Pte. A. E. Johnston

in town we sold milk from Fairy and that dog pulled the boys and the milk, and knew every customer and where to stop. Mother made up a parcel every week to send dad some of all her good cooking, as all the relatives know. I have a diary dad kept all the while he was overseas; he was the oldest in his unit, and all the young lads called him dad; he also had another name - Scrap Iron Pete, as he kept so many souvenirs. After the war was over, he drove a dozen nurses through the battlefield. It was a great day when he arrived home. He then got work at the freight sheds, and it was during that time that the killer flu took so many lives. My dad was working nights and we all were down, but dad and a Mrs. Stobert, whom he got to nurse us. She did a great job although I didn't like her treatment, castor oil.

We went back to the farm after having rented it during that time, and although my dad did not care for farming, he was the best one in the neighborhood. My mother was a tower of strength to him; she would go out and stook like a man and made us kids go too. We all had our chores, morning and night. Mother used to cut up all the beefs that were slaughtered, and she could do it as well as a butcher. Pigs the same, and she would salt them down as hams like I have never tasted since. How they did all they did I will never know, and have babies in between; do washing with a hand machine and iron with flat irons. People who think they are hard done by today make me sick - Idle hands are the devil's playthings!

My dad knew he wasn't going to make farming his life. He got wind of the flour mill for sale in Estevan. He had taken his apprenticeship in Ontario at the large salary of sixty dollars a year and board and room, but before doing this he had learned to play the trumpet and after playing in a few bands, got into the Barnum & Bailey Circus band. He travelled with them until he got a little nest egg, and came out to Portal. After the war and still on the farm, instead of stories he sat us around the kitchen table and taught us all, except Clara, to play an instrument. Well, we got good enough that we would go to Portal and cross the line and give a little band concert, which everyone seemed to enjoy. Even though we weren't so hot, it was different. This led to Estevan.

After he got the mill in good running order, he decided to start a band, teach any one any instrument for he could play them all. Our house was never free of tooting here and there - front porch, bedroom, and band practice once a week at the town hall. My two brothers, Harold and Harry were in it, and myself on the French horn. Come Fair time everything stopped. We marched down the main street with Doreen Thrift twirling the baton. That was the highlight of the year. My dad always said "If they are in the band room, they are not getting into trouble," and Saturday nights we had a concert across from the Town Hall in the summer time, and at River Park on a Sunday night.

I must add this - everyone in Portal thought my dad was out of his mind to buy the mill, but he was the best miller that ever hit the country. Farmers would bring in their wheat and wait for their flour. Any complaints and he would say "Bring the bag in and my wife will make a batch while your wife watches." Mom did that and the wife sure got H.. when mother turned out the most beautiful bread from what she said was no good. I guess these women had a bad time all the way home.

My two brothers worked with Dad and were both terrific millers. During the second World War they worked twenty-four hours a day, shipping overseas. Lloyd also learned the trade, but due to sinus he couldn't participate, but now he is Manager of Western Pet Feed at Innisfail, Alberta, and a great success. He has three boys. Brent, who teaches in Bowbells, Mark who lives in Victoria where he works for a moving company, and Greg, the youngest, is a music genius.

My brother, Harold, took over the mill in Mayville, N.D. with his wife Nancy. They had two children. Berva, who is married and has two children Llyne and Jeff. They all live in Everett, Washington. Barry, Harold's son, also lives in Everett. Harold passed away in 1960 with cancer. Harry, my second brother, married to Norah Dyer, took over and made a great success. He passed away with cancer in 1978; Norah is still in Mayville. Their son, Dr. Glen, is head Pathologist in Detroit's largest hospital; Nickie who is married, is nursing in Fargo, N.D. closest to Norah.

I am once again ahead of myself. Phyllis was born after dad came back from overseas, and she died of pneumonia at one year and five days. It was

winter and the snow was so deep the doctor couldn't get to us. Those days it was almost impossible. So there were seven children. Clara died at the age of thirty. Now there are two - Lloyd and myself, Ethel. Zach and I were married in Plentywood, Montana in 1934, during the Dirty Thirties. He was making thirty dollars a month, working at the Empress Hotel and I was a telephone operator. We had forty-three years together, except when the war took him away. He was a Colonel when it ended and continued on until the year before he left us in 1977. We adopted two beautiful children- Larry in 1938. He was very young when Zach went overseas. We adopted Joy after the war.

My mother came out to live with Zach and I in 1960 until she died, and was so happy because most of her old friends from Estevan were here. My mother was the most understanding, not demanding, person I ever hope to know. Zach being the son-in-law was so kind to her always; she just helped make our life complete. My mother was Aunt Minnie to all my relatives in Portal. They were always welcome at our home in Estevan, or anyplace, and I might add, after my mother came to live with Zach and I, every summer she would go by plane to Regina where some of the relatives would meet her and look after her. She would see everyone as her kin folk meant the world to my mom. Just goes to show, it isn't all give and take.

My father was a very healthy man. He did have a heart problem, but he kept it to himself. He was never in hospital a day in his life. He took a stroke in the spring of 1950 and passed away three days later. Strangely enough, his band practice was on Monday night, and all the band was there and hadn't heard of dad's illness. I believe Morris King took over, but to think of all the years he had devoted to the town and young people of Estevan, I hope he will never be forgotten.

Just a few things come to mind. Peter Neilsen came from Ottawa to work at the Customs. He was batching just below us in North Portal after the war, so mother would have him up for many a meal. Shortly after we moved back to the farm, Peter was about to go back east and come back with a bride, Dolly, and well she was named. There was big excitement the Sunday morning Peter came to church with his beautiful bride, and sat in the front row. After church they came out to the farm. Dolly was so happy she wanted to stay and send Peter home alone. They used to come out weekends and we just had a hilarious time. Then Dolly got pregnant, and you would have thought it was the end of the world. She was frightened, and of course mother would tell her "nothing to it."

However, mother was with Dolly when the most beautiful daughter arrived, Peter walking the floor. I think Dolly made up her mind that was enough. We have been like brother and sister all through the years. I must add they are the most wonderful couple I have ever known. Audrey and hubby are following very closely in their footsteps.

Another funny experience. Dolly and Pete always spent Christmas with us. Well they were out there two days before and we were to play band

at the Christmas Concert. Dad got the sleigh all fixed - straw in the bottom, foot warmers, bear rugs and the whole bit. We were sliding along the most beautiful crisp moonlight night. Dad was guiding the horses. We were all singing Christmas carols when all of a sudden the sleigh slipped out of the rut and turned over and us with it - instruments, the whole bunch, in the ditch; straw all over our pretty clothes; hair just beautiful to enter the hall. Had dad not jumped and held the sleigh from going right over we would have got it in the neck. Dolly got hysterical. She called it roaring when she cried. We all saw the funny side and my dad was the biggest kidder of all.

We all tried to get ourselves back in order with a few straws sticking out of our hair, and arrived in time to start the concert.

I just want to say in closing that my life in North Portal and on the farm holds the fondest memories of my life, but I do feel sad to hear the buildings have all been burned. I never want to see the farm again. I will remember it as when we left.

Submitted by Ethel Hamilton (Johnston)

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## The Wilmot Johnston Family

Submitted by May Hill

Wilmot Johnston (1873 to 1925) came to North Portal in 1896 with Mr. T.B. Waddington. In 1898 he homesteaded the SE¼ of 12-1-4-W2nd and lived in a sod shack, west of the ravine, where he was later joined by his sister Elizabeth and brother Arthur. He was married in 1903 to Ida Harris, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Harris, and they moved to the new house. Born to the Johnstons were Olive Gladys (1906); Ida May (1909) and Walter Norman (1913). It was in 1913 following the death of his wife, Ida, that Wilmot Johnston was called to Drayton, Ontario, to attend the funeral of his mother. At this time, he arranged for Minnie Udy (1891-1972) to come west to care for his young family. In 1919 they were married and their two sons were Joseph Raymond (1920) and Earl Wilmot (1925). Wilmot Johnston farmed mostly with horses. He introduced Percheron horses and D5 Macaroni Wheat into this area. Their rhubarb patch was well known.

Gladys Johnston married Alex R. Dunbar, farmed in the area and on NW¼ 3-1-3-W2nd. They had one son Donald. Because of the Dirty Thirties, they migrated to Love, Sask., and took up a homestead and worked on road construction, and Gladys cooked for the crews. They now reside in Prince George, B.C.

Walter Norman Johnston (1913) farmed from 1925 to 1930. He worked at lumbering in 1935 at Torch River, Sask. He married Viola Brandt of Portal, N.D. in 1935. They had three children - Parker, Donna Mae and Mervyn. In 1940 the family moved to Seattle where Norman and his sons have been longshoremen. Norman has farming interests here, so resides part time at North Portal and at Seattle.



Ida May Johnston taught at Russeldale School in 1928, and other School Districts in the Estevan area. She married Merle Hill, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hill in 1936 and had two sons, Gerald Lorne (1937) and Robert Vernon (1939).

Merle and May operated Hill's Garage from 1945 to 1975 and sold White Rose and Shell products. From 1951 to January 9, 1968, Merle also was with the Canadian Consolidated Elevator, which was purchased by the United Grain Growers and traded to the Saskatchewan Pool in 1968. In 1964 Merle and May built a two-bay Service Station and Cafe, which was leased by Shell Oil and was operated by various personnel, among whom were Mrs. Peter Barabash, the Gordon Swensons, the Borden Terneys, the Ray Marchands, the Robert Notts, and others. This business was sold in 1975 to the Provincial Government for the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. The rental house was bought by Norvin Uhrich and is now located at Carlyle Lake.

Gerald Lorne Hill (29-4-37) married Shannon Feller, daughter of H.Feller in 1957. He was employed by Producer Pipelines at Estevan, Carduff, Alida, Eston and they are now in Calgary, where he is a technician for Dome Oil Company. They have four sons, Scott, Mark, Monte and Darren.

Robert Vernon Hill (1937) married Merleen Landseidal of Arbuthnot, Sask. He is employed by Olivetti-Underwood Co. and has been stationed in Calgary and then Victoria, B.C.

Joseph Raymond Johnston (9-25-27) farmed for some years at 12-1-4-W2nd. He married Doris Richer. He moved to Fort William (Thunder Bay) Ontario, where he has employment at the Lakehead terminal elevators. They have three daughters.

Earl Wilmot Johnston (May 15/25) enlisted in the Army. He was married to Ruby Todd, and their children, David, Donald, Robert and Lois reside in Toronto where Earl is a Bell Telephone technician.



**Robert and Mary**

to a village called Stenen, Sask., in the Yorkton area. In 1947, I returned to the family farm, with my wife and two children, Glen and Dorothy, to take over the farming duties from my Mother and Dad, who at that time were unable to manage it



**Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Kellington**

## **The Robert Kellington Family**

In the year of 1898, Robert Kellington came from Keswick, Ontario to Wimbleton, North Dakota to work. In the year 1901 he married Mary Ellen Thompson and they moved to Portal, N.D. to homestead on a farm about two and a half miles southwest of Portal, which is now known as the Skalicky farm.

In the year of 1912, along with my father, mother, my three brothers, Irwin, Elgin, Squire and my two sisters Gladys and Millie, I, Floyd Kellington, moved from Portal, North Dakota to a farm two miles east of North Portal, Saskatchewan, where I lived and grew up, going to school in the Russeldale School District.

In the year of 1933 I married Elsie Groves who previously came from Yorkshire, England in 1926, and lived in the district.

In the Depression of the 30's, I moved in 1934

themselves. In April, 1951, my father passed away, then in April, 1971, my mother passed away.

In 1974, I sold the family farm to my daughter, Dorothy and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Fair.

I moved into the village of North Portal where my wife and I now reside to enjoy the time with relatives, friends and neighbors I have known through the years.

Submitted by Floyd Kellington

## John (Jock) Kemp

Jock Kemp came to this part of the country, when he was discharged from the army in the Boer War. He enlisted in Scotland and was in the Scottish regiment. He came here and worked for Luke Thompson's father down on the river for some time, then he came to North Portal and took up a homestead just north of the ridge bordered on the north by what is the PFRA Government Pasture now.

When the Matt Kleins moved off the farm that was the north half of 13-1-5-W2nd, Jock Kemp moved on and batched there for many years. He used to walk over two and a half miles to town and back after a days work, and many rides he would turn down as he figured he needed the exercise. As he walked, he would kick the loose rocks off the road.

I remember one year we were threshing for Jock, and it had snowed and the snow blew around the stooks, so we had to dig them out and knock the

snow off of them. It was late December - that was the worst threshing we had ever done.

Jock used to walk over to our place. I can remember him doing an old Scottish dance, called the Highland Fling and he was pretty light on his feet.

Jock sold out, moved to Bienfait, and batched for many more years and died in his top eighties, a bachelor, with no relatives in Canada.

Submitted by Archie MacKenzie

## The Nickolas Kuster Family

Nickolas Kuster was born in Germany in 1878 and immigrated to the United States in 1887.

Gertrude Noll was born in Reading, Pennsylvania in 1883 and later moved to Minnesota with her family.

Nick Kuster and Gertrude Noll were married at Mankato, Minnesota in 1901 and resided in that area for nine years.

In 1910 they moved to Canada where they rented the A.C.Patterson farm at North Portal. In 1918 they purchased the J.S.Upper farm and resided there until their retirement to North Portal in 1949.

Nick Kuster died in 1964, Gertrude in 1972 and their eldest son Henry in 1978.

Other family members include: Susan (Adams), Nick, Mary (Halverson); Clarence, Ida (Rohwer), Bill, George, Laura (Abraham), Frank, Marge (Berday).



The Kuster family in 1951 on the occasion of Nick and Gertrude's 50th Anniversary.

## The Henry Lee Family

Henry Lee came to Canada from Kent, England in the 1860's. He sailed back to England, after homesteading in the Souris Valley, and returned in the 1870's.

He was married and they had a fairly large family, but to the best of my knowledge, only five reached maturity. They were Walter, George, Alf, Annie and Alice.

Henry's wife came from Kent, and as many women did in those days, she acted as midwife to the neighboring families.

Henry had the wanderlust; went to Australia and back and finished his days in Midway, B.C. His wife survived him by some years and is buried in Winnipeg.

Their son Walter was born April 1, 1881, in Fort Garry, now Winnipeg. He married Nellie Ruth Marten from England in 1912. They had one child, Raymond, born April 16, 1916.

Walter was drowned in the Souris River on November 11, 1916. His grandson, Walter, now farms on the same farm he settled on in 1913. Walter has four children.

Henry had been a sailor in the old days of sailing ships and was reported to be a good hand with a needle and thread. He also had been a successful gardener in his home shire of Kent.

Submitted by Raymond Lee

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## The Ellis Lees Family

Ellis Lees was born September 3rd, 1876 in Oldam, Lancashire, England. After completing the 7th Standard in school, equivalent to Canadian Grade 8, he started working in a cotton mill. The last job he had there was inspecting skips for shipment. These skips are bolts of cloth.

His wife was born Emma Smith, in the year 1878 on December 14th. She started working in a weaving mill at an early age. It was a Velvet Weaving Mill. She became very good at her work and was given the new samples to weave, which was very slow work but the pay was better.

They were united in marriage in the year 1900 and lived on Glodwick St. Oldman, England. Their first child was born December 19th, 1902, a son.

Ellis and his father owned a greenhouse in England where they grew all kinds of vegetables. This was on an acreage. They also raised chickens, geese, ducks and pigeons. This gave him a liking for working with the soil and fowl.

Going to work one morning, looking up, he noticed a placard he had never seen before. On the upper portion showed a horn of plenty from which poured a stream of gold coins. "Come to Western Canada, 160 acres free." On the lower half showed a field of golden wheat being harvested with a binder drawn by three of the most beautiful horses he had ever seen. They were of the Scottish breed

'Clydesdales', with white stripes down their forehead and their distinguishing white fetlocks, a most imposing sight. This was the beginning of a life long dream of freedom from working in the cotton mills; labors he had performed since early boyhood.

On September 13th, 1903, he set sail from Liverpool for Canada on the Steamship 'Ionion'. After a gruelling fourteen days on the Atlantic Ocean, he landed in Canada and came by train to Roche Percee, Assa., Northwest Territories. He worked in the coal mines at Taylorton, Saskatchewan.

Emma and her son of 18 months left England in the spring of 1904. They sailed on the Steamship 'Canada'. They were on the water seven days. That was the quickest trip made across the Atlantic Ocean at that time. They came to Roche Percee, Assa., also. They lived in one of the valleys at Taylorton until Ellis filed on a homestead in 1905, the SE ¼ of 22-1-4 W2.

There were four sons born to this marriage - Ellis, John, Frank and Arthur. Arthur is still living on the land that was Ellis's homestead. Ellis passed away in November 1958. Emma passed away in November, 1963.

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## The Frederick Hubert Lees Family

Northgate, Sask.

Frederick Lees was born in England in 1879. He came to Canada in the 1890's and drove a dray team in Winnipeg until 1907 when he moved to North Portal where he worked as a cashier for the C.P.R.

In 1908 he married Eva Coffin, daughter of Rev. Robert Coffin. There was a boy, Hubert James and a daughter Elizabeth, born in North Portal.

In 1914 a Canada Customs was established in Northgate, Saskatchewan, and Fred Lees was appointed a Customs Officer at that port. During his early years at Northgate, he road a bicycle from North Portal to work in Northgate in the summer months; in the winter he boarded with a family in Northgate. This was his arrangement until he and his wife moved to Northgate.

Fred Lees worked with the Canada Customs until his retirement in 1943. Mr. Lees was Justice of the Peace in Northgate for many years.

While in Northgate, a daughter was born - Edna, and sons Jack, Fred and Thomas are all living at various locations.

Mr. Lees moved to North Portal in 1956 to reside with his son Fred. He died in 1960.

It is interesting to note that the distance from North Portal to Northgate is thirteen miles. Quite a distance to ride to work on a bicycle.



## The Ernie Long Family

My dad came out to Canada the first time in 1913 and worked for Joseph Brinkworth. He went back to England and came back out in the spring of 1920.

My mother came out in August of 1920 with three small children. She came to Archie Wynne Jones' place where Ernie, Leonard and his mother lived and stayed there until the fall. They then moved to Alex Dunbar's place and lived in a yellow house. A great many of the elderly people remember that house.

Dad worked for Alex Dunbar and Louis Shoebridge. Albert, my brother, and I went to Britannia School; also put one or two days in at Forbes School. Pearl Muirhead was teacher then.

After two years there, my parents moved east of Portal to work for John Kellington for two years, then they moved again to South Frobisher to work on a farm. They moved back to farm south of Roche Percee, Sask., and lived there until they left the farm for good in the fall of 1957.

My dad passed away May 18, 1959. My mother lived there until she passed away January 4th, 1971.

They had five children - Gladys (Mrs. Joe Brinkworth) of Roche Percee; Albert lives in Rugby, Warwickshire, England; Stanley of Roche Percee; Ruby Babbings of Weyburn, Sask., and Robert of Roche Percee.

Submitted by Gladys Brinkworth

## Harold Longney

Harold Longney was born in Gloucestershire, England and came to Canada in 1910. The next year he went to live with Joe Balison in the Souris

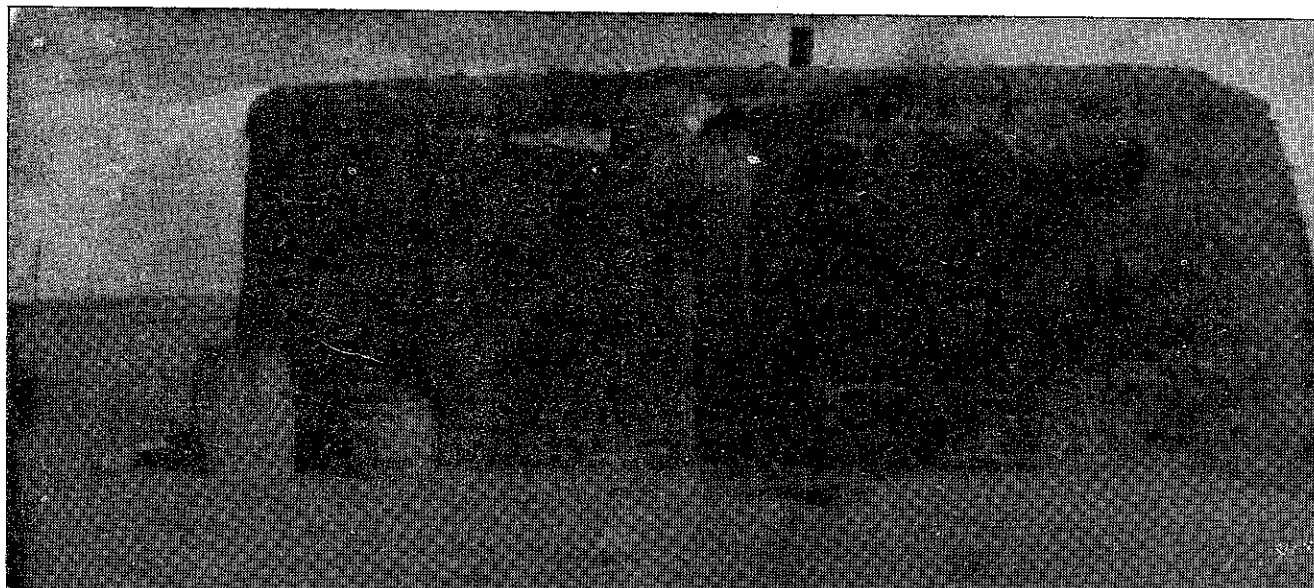
River Valley which became his home. While working for Mr. Balison, he many times in preference to wages, would choose a heifer and soon built up his own small herd of cattle. He had many lively experiences while breaking and taming broncos for use on the ranch.

For several winters, Harold was employed at the Lignite Coalmines, working at Shand, Alex Wilson mine, Jenish mine and Prospect mine. He related an incident which happened while working at Alex Wilson's mine. One morning in the early winter, Mr. Wilson and Harold started out across the prairie for Estevan, with two teams of horses to bring back two sets of sleighs. On looking back to check on Mr. Wilson, he saw him sitting on the snow and waving his cap in the air. On going back, he found that Alex had stepped into a badger hole and his heel had gone down, wedging his foot in the frozen ground, and no way could he get him free, so he walked back to the Shand mine where he got a pick and a bar. Mr. Peterson, the manager there, sent a man back with him and they carefully chopped the frozen ground and freed Mr. Wilson's foot. Harold said, at the time it was laughable, but it could have been a tragedy if Mr. Wilson had been alone.

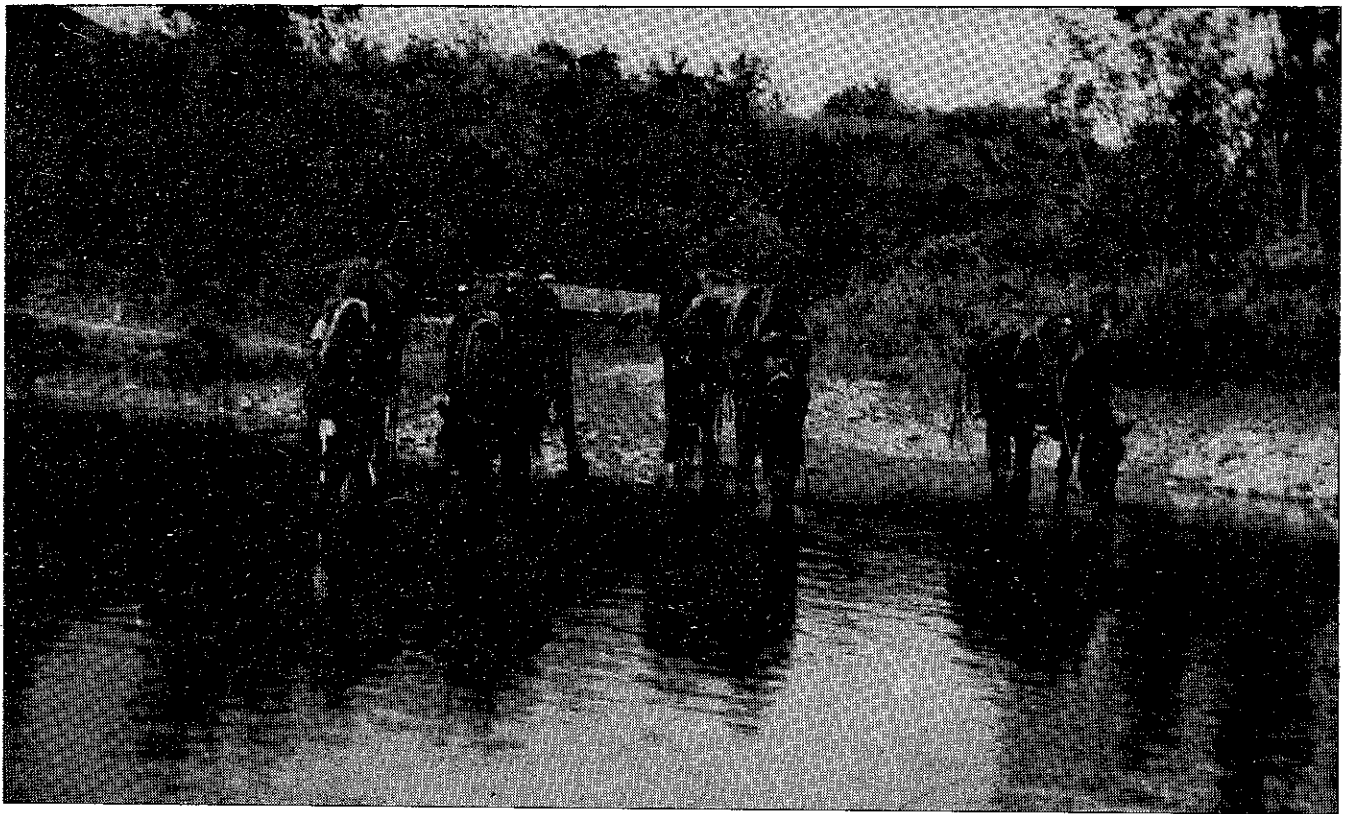
In 1934, when there was no crop or feed for cattle, Harold moved his herd to Kamsack where he wintered them. He bought oats at the elevator for twenty cents a bushel and cattle were selling for from one to two cents a pound.

The next fall, he and two riders drove the animals back home. Then again in 1937 there was a crop failure and Harold drove his herd to Lauder, Manitoba where there was ample feed. He said some times it was rough going, but he enjoyed it; said when the front of his overalls wore out, he could always turn them around and wear them backwards.

Now, in 1979, Harold spends the winter months in Arizona, but still enjoys the valley home in the summer.



1900: "This is my dwelling house" —Harold Longney



Harold Longney's 1915 Horsepower

## The Lyalls

While it is known they originated in Scotland, the actual year of their arrival in the United States is unknown, but it was undoubtedly in the mid-nineties. Through stories heard, Robert Lyall was the first to arrive, coming in charge of a shipment of sheep, destined to some point in the State of New York. After this was completed it was his intention to return to Scotland, but instead of doing so, decided to see other parts of the country, ending up at Harvey, North Dakota, at which point he obtained land and remained for the rest of his life. This no doubt enticed the rest of the family to migrate to the United States, but whether or not they did so at the same time is also unknown. In any event, before the move was completed the entire family was involved which consisted of their parents, brothers James, Peter (our father) Jude and two sisters, Mary and the other name unknown. The unknown one later took up residence at Brooklyn, N.Y.

At the time of their arrival, none were married, but later did so with Mary getting a husband named David Chalmers and moved on to Chewelah, Wash. The others, except dad, found suitable wives in the Harvey area. Dad returned to Scotland and married Mary Dickson Reid (after whom I was named) in 1898 and then again returned to the Harvey area, where three children were born.

After a time in the United States, dad decided to move on and possibly due to the homestead land

available in Canada, located on the SW¼ of Section 6, Township 1, Range 3, West of the Second Meridian, and at the same time purchasing the whole of the adjoining Section 5. As he did not receive his Interim Homestead receipt until July



Mrs. Peter Lyall



3rd, 1901 from the Dominion Land Office at Alameda, Assa., N.W.T., no crop could be grown that year and it was possibly spent in building a home and breaking sufficient acreage to comply with the homestead regulations. It does not appear as though much farming, if any, could have been done during 1902 as further breaking would be required and construction of other buildings was done on the south westerly corner of Section 5, where he undoubtedly intended building a permanent home as soon as the conditions of the Homestead Act had been complied with and patent received, as that is the location of the buildings to date.

However, it would appear that 1903 supplied sufficient crop to warrant the purchasing of a threshing outfit, consisting of a Case steamer and a Case separator. This, of course, required a portable water tank and portable bunk house to accommodate the crew. This information is based on the fact that he received a Provisional certificate of qualification as a steam engineer on September 24th, 1903, with Third Class Engineer's Certificate being received, dated May 11th, 1904. With this outfit he did considerable custom threshing, leaving his own to the last in order to get as much extra threshing as possible. Owing to the number

of men required to operate the machine and the limited space in which the men could be fed in homestead houses, he built a portable cook car which could be moved to the various locations. Later on, due to the difficulty in locating suitable water for the steamer he purchased a large 30-60 Pioneer gasoline tractor, which also reduced the size of the crew required in the operation. Later a complete smaller outfit was obtained with threshing confined to his own farm.

It is not known in what year he moved the family, which now consisted of three children, to Canada, but I doubt if it could have been before 1902, as the youngest of the children was born on Oct. 1, 1901. After moving to Canada, six more children were born, four of whom remain today: Gordon of Manchester, Wash.; Douglas, Victoria, B.C.; Russell, Kamloops, B.C., and the writer at North Portal.

In later years, additional land was obtained, consisting of the NE¼ adjoining the homestead; the NE¼ of Section 4, Township 1, Range 3, which was later traded for the NW¼ of the same Section, with his last purchase being the SW¼ of Section 9, Township 1, Range 3, giving a total of eight quarters, which was known as Ash Grove Farm, being surrounded by trees on three sides, mostly ash.



**Dad and Mother**

While dad's farming operation was mostly in grain, a certain amount of mixed farming was involved, with a good number of horses being sold, some to the Canadian Army during World War I as well as a number of cattle for slaughter. Of course, a few milk cows were retained through which the sale of cream to the creameries, the trading of butter and eggs to the stores, along with a good garden, took care of the grocery bills.

In 1910, while in Regina, dad purchased a new Model T Ford touring car which he took three days to drive home. At the same time he obtained the Ford dealership and sold a good number of vehicles throughout the district. With carbide lights and no winter roads, the car was placed on blocks to eliminate the weight on the tires.

For some unknown reason dad purchased a home in Portal, N.D., possibly in order for mother to get away from the farm during the winter. However, in 1914, he built a home in North Portal, Saskatchewan, in order to be nearer the school as three miles was too far during the winters. This house was only used during the winter months, returning to the farm each spring. Incidentally, the house he owned in Portal, N.D. was later traded for a seven passenger Studebaker touring car from A.R. Chezik who had the dealership.

I would be amiss if I did not mention some of dad's interests and activities in community affairs. These included along with A.E. Johnston and A. McKenzie, a Petition for the formation of Enfield School District in 1909, which was later formed as McCall School District in 1910. Incidentally, a letter on file with the Archives, indicates a letterhead of P. Lyall, Ash Grove Farm, Agent for Ford automobiles.

Another of his accomplishments, with the assistance of others, was the formation of the International Telephone Co. Line 5, which was first proposed on May 3rd, 1909, and when going into operation had eight subscribers, with three later from the U.S.A. making use of the facilities.

He was also instrumental in the formation of Iniskillen Municipality and was the representative for his area until retiring to Victoria, B.C. in 1925. Another was the formation of the Union Rink Co. Ltd., on August 28th, 1915, with Peter Lyall, Robert Douglas and Joseph Hill being the signing officers. This building was to be used for skating, curling, hockey and such games played on ice and also to conduct a roller rink. However, more about that in another article.

Like many others, during World War I, dad was active in raising money for charitable organizations and many social activities such as box and shadow socials took place in McCall School. At one such event I can recall him mentioning that over \$800.00 had been raised.

In some manner, he received two appointments as a Commissioner for Oaths, one at North Portal, Sask., and the other at Portal, N.D., dated March 23rd, 1917.

During the winter of 1911-12 dad was assigned to a position in Scotland for the purpose of seeking settlers to Canada, at which time he took the family for a holiday. I can recall him saying that he would stuff the various pieces of literature in people's pockets and returning over the same area later on, the literature would be scattered around the exhibition grounds.

While previously stated dad left Harvey in 1901, he along with five others from the point, incorporated the Nicola Valley Lumber Co. Ltd., at Merritt, B.C. on September 28th, 1907. This area was known to be the best pine lumbering district at the time. However, it was later taken over by other interests.

So far nothing has been said of mother's activities. Well, these were mostly taken up with raising a family and seldom, if ever, did she get away from the farm during the winter months, until such time as we moved into town during that period of the year. While she came from a large family, none of her kin ever migrated from Scotland, so she undoubtedly found it very lonesome when first coming to this country. She would spend many of the long evenings knitting socks and stockings, and at the same time reading a book. And it was through her efforts during the summer that the cows were milked and the chickens fed, the milk separated, making butter which was always welcomed by the local stores. A

A great number of these chores were taken over by other members of the family as soon as they became old enough.

Mother was born February 17th, 1874 and died July 17, 1955. Dad was born in April 1874 and died in 1940.

Submitted by Reid Lyall



## The Archie McKenzie Family

Florence and Archie McKenzie's family was three girls and two boys.

Son Murray married Dorothy Drader on May 31st, 1949 in North Portal. They have six children. Gary and Bernadet live in Winnipeg with one son Ryan. Joyce Johnson lives with her two children, Dawn and Murray in Estevan. Duane and Mardell live on the farm, with their children, Bret and Charity. Jewel works for the Mercury in Estevan. Scott is still going to school and farms in his time off.

Judy is the baby of the family and is still going to school. Murray and Dorothy bought the former Robert Dunbar farm from George Dunbar and they live there. Murray works as a welder at the mines as well.

Daughter Marilyn married Harvey Conrad on June 12th, 1953 in Estevan and set up housekeeping in Regina, where Marilyn worked for Sask Tel, and still does. Harvey was on the police force for the City of Regina, and then transferred to city bus driver. They have three children.

Their son Bryan was in his twenties when he married Debbie Harder at Castor, Alberta, where her folks live on a farm. They set up housekeeping in Regina. Bryan worked as an accountant and Debbie as a clerk, and now they have bought their home in Saskatoon, and handle the office of the Mission Department for the Apostolic Churches. Son Brent is twenty-one and just finished Bible School, and is travelling with their choir on a tour of cities and towns.

Son Gerald married Margaret Belcher on December 28th, 1957 in Calgary. They set up housekeeping in Calgary. Gerald worked for Occidental Life Insurance and they moved him to be Manager of the Toronto branch. They live in Etobicoke, Ontario.

Cameron, their oldest boy, goes to school and works for Canadian Tire in his spare time. Their daughter Joanne is a teenager too, does housework, piano and babysits, as well as going to school. Son Jeffrey is a paper boy and a good hockey player, and not in his teens yet. Son Gregory is the baby, but he has had about three or four years of school; he too is a paper boy and hockey player.

Daughter Audrey married Armen Maser in Edmonton, Alberta on April 4th, 1959. Audrey still nurses and Armen is in real estate and advertising. They are living in their second home, east on 111 Avenue.

They have two girls who have not reached teen age yet. Janice is twelve. She likes skiing and school, swimming and piano lessons. Rhonda is eleven. She likes school, swimming and piano lessons, and they keep her busy.

Daughter Pat married John Semeniuk July 25th, 1975 in Edmonton and they have a nice big home for two on the north side of Edmonton. Pat has spent about eighteen years working for Imperial Oil and John is a technical teacher in plumbing. They have no children.

Their mother, Florence, went to be with the Lord on June 9th, 1962 and I (Archie) continued batching and farming.

Mrs. Glen Purson was widowed about a month after I became a widower and moved from Denver to Lignite, North Dakota, to take care of her dad, and in September, 1966, we were married in Lignite, and bought her dad's home.

Ellen has three married daughters, Jean Ryan in New Mexico, Linda Young outside Denver, Colorado and Beryl McCormick outside Chicago, Illinois, and with my kids in Regina, Saskatchewan, Toronto, Ontario and North Portal, we have spent a lot of our time travelling.

Submitted by Archie McKenzie

## The Arthur Mackenzie Family

Arthur Mackenzie was born in 1861 in London, England. His wife was born in Bristol in 1865.

Arthur Mackenzie came to Manitoba in 1887 but moved to Saskatchewan after a couple of years where he met his future wife at Oxbow. Their wedding took place there in 1893.

Mrs. Mackenzie had a college education in England and taught school there and on the continent for many years. While teaching in France and Germany, she learned the languages of those countries, and could speak them fluently.

Arthur Mackenzie went to his farm at North Portal ahead of his wife and put up a sod shack while she followed later by CPR work train and ox cart. Edith Mackenzie was the first white woman in the district and never saw another for two years. Estevan and Oxbow were the nearest towns and the end of the railroad was Estevan.

Clara Alice was the first white child born in the North Portal district in the year 1894.

Mr. Mackenzie farmed for many years and also owned a grocery store at Northgate, Saskatchewan, which was later sold. The farm home and grounds were planted with trees and flowers and were beautiful. Their hospitality was extended to all who came and they took part in community affairs whenever they could.

Arthur Mackenzie passed away in the spring of 1945, at the age of 83 years. Edith Mackenzie died on the farm in May 1950 after being in poor health for some time.

The Mackenzie farm was left to Alice, or Kiddy as she was widely known. She had been managing since her father retired and was very fond of horses and garden. In July 1953, she married her American neighbour, Leonard Wheeler and they stayed on the farm until about 1965 when Len became ill.

After Len died about 1966, Kiddy bought a house in town near the golf course and lived there until her health and age made it necessary for her to give up housekeeping. She spent about a year at Wheatland Lodge at LaFleche and in the fall of 1978 moved to the Estevan Nursing Home.

Kathleen Mackenzie (Kay) was born June 1901

She became a teacher and taught in the Melaval district. She met and married Charles Free and lives in Melaval.

Their son Arthur Mackenzie left home as a young man in the depression years and found work near his sister Kay. He married Dora Macleod from Limerick, Saskatchewan. He has farmed and resides at Piapot.

Submitted by Mrs. Dora Mackenzie  
Piaopot, Sask.

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## The Gordon MacKenzie Family

Gordon Waddington MacKenzie, youngest son of J.K. and Mrs. MacKenzie was born September 1, 1911, on the NE¼ 12-1-5-W2nd in the farm home. He attended Minto School No. 490 through Grade 10, going to Estevan for the eleventh grade. The first teacher was Miss Kate Dorsey, the last one was Miss Ruby Partington.

In the fall of 1928 he enrolled in the Regina Normal School, graduating the following year. His first school teaching experience was in a rural school, five miles east of Bienfait - Lignite School District. The tenure there lasted until 1935, when he married Doris E. Wilson, only daughter of Charles and Mrs. Wilson of Bienfait.

The day after the wedding they left by car, if it could be thus called. It was a Chevrolet Sport Coupe with a rumble seat, powered by a 1928 Whippet 4-cylinder engine and power train. We ended our wedding honeymoon at a log teacherage at the Torch River School, north of Nipawin. The second night of the marriage I slept in a wheat stook and Doris in the car, in a field close to Dafoe, Saskatchewan.

In 1937 the first child, Charles James, was born May 4th, 1937, in the Nipawin Hospital. We stayed at Torch River school until the summer of 1939. We came back to the prairie and spent the remainder of the year with our parents.

In January 1940, we moved to a farm house near the Roseleigh School, north east of Steelman. Depression was on and the forty-five children who attended the school had not attended school since June 1939, as no teacher could be hired. The teacher did the janitor work at the school for \$10 cash for the six months of school we were there. We didn't get any salary but received relief cheques to live on. From our relief cheques Doris' dad gave us cash to buy gas for our old car. Our contract called for \$100 per month; we received the payment for the six months a few years later, but with the relief cheque subtracted.

Joan Elaine, our first daughter was born February 14 that year in Bienfait Hospital. When she was two weeks old she caught a good dose of chicken pox and poor dad batched for seven weeks. That fall we returned to Torch River where we operated a saw mill co-operating with cousin Almor Fox and nephew Ray MacKenzie. This kept us busy until the fall of 1941 and we returned to

Lignite School for another year.

After leaving Lignite, we moved into the back part of the Wilson Butcher Shop where we lived and worked until we moved to the farm of John Waddington in March 1944. On March 31, 1944, our second daughter Zetta Beryl arrived in the Bienfait Hospital.

We worked for Uncle John for a year and then moved to the Stanley Harris farm and we started farming. We are still at it, with a lot of water under the bridge. In 1944-45 we farmed and also taught the senior room of Minto School.

Our next move was to the N.E.¼ 13-1-5 W2, where we stayed until 1956. With the family that now was composed of five children, we moved to Saskatoon to spend the school term each year. Darwyn Gordon was born in Bienfait in 1949 and Perry Thomas in Estevan in 1955.

Besides being a farmer since 1956, G.W. has represented District 5 of Federated Co-operatives as Director on the Board, retiring March 3rd, 1979.

The family now number nineteen. Charles James - married with two daughters, teaches High School in Medicine Hat; Joan Elaine - married and has two daughters and is Office Manager for Cowin Equipment, Birmingham, Ala; Zetta Beryl is married and has four daughters; she stays at home and her husband Scot Martin is employed with Shell Oil, Calgary; Darwyn Gordon is married and now articling for his C.A. in Saskatoon, and also farms at Langenburg. His wife Cathy, is a teacher in Saskatoon; Perry Thomas farms at North Portal. Dad and Mum live with him in summer and in winter we move to Saskatoon.

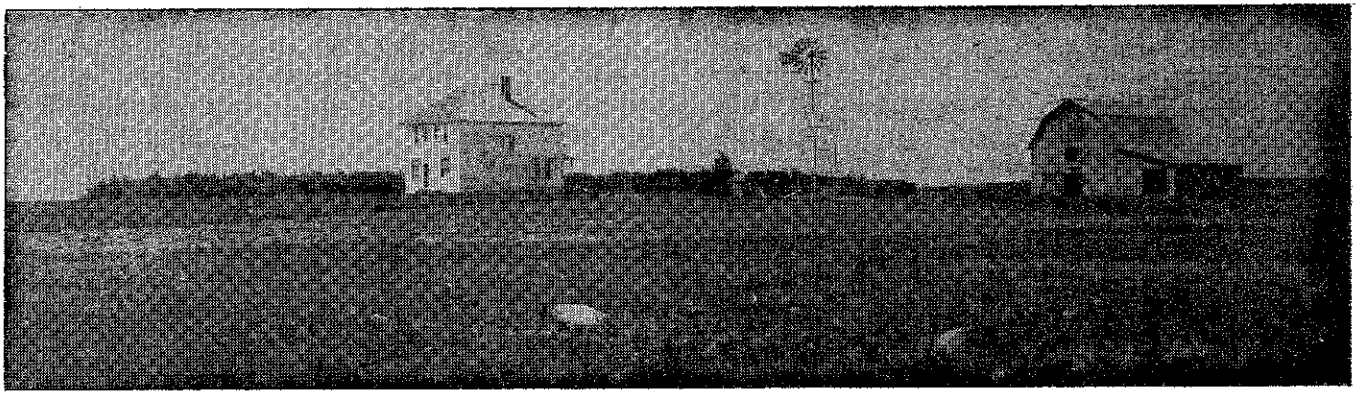
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## The James K. MacKenzie Family

James Kay MacKenzie was born in Lochee, Dundee, Scotland in 1867, the son of James Keay MacKenzie and Jean Stewart MacKenzie. After completing his schooling at the age of sixteen years, Jim and his older brother Tom, eighteen years of age, had a very adventurous urge to see Canada, so they packed their bags, booked their passage on a boat, came steerage and worked their way over. They were six weeks on the water. Their destination was Brandon, Manitoba, where their



Jim and Lizzie MacKenzie



James K. MacKenzie farm in 1920

eldest sister Eliza and her husband Tom Green lived. After a short while spent with his sister, Jim decided to go to the west coast with some other young fellows he had met to find work. Tom worked on a farm at Glen Souris for several years, then came west to North Portal, where he took up a homestead on NE 10-1-5 W2.

Jim came back to Glen Souris, Manitoba, where he fell in love with Elizabeth Alberta Waddington, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T.B. Waddington, who had moved from the County of Cumberland, Ontario in the year 1882, and came west where they farmed at Glen Souris. On November 4th, 1900 Jim and Elizabeth (Lizzie) were married and farmed in the Glen Souris district. Their first child, a daughter, Ethel, was born June 13, 1891. There were quite a number of people heading out west to file on homesteads - neighbors, friends and relatives, so Jim and Lizzie decided they were going to venture out also. T.B. Waddington had gone up to North Portal and filed on a homestead and bought land and built a large home on the north side of the CPR track, the farm where Everton Aspinall and family now reside. The he returned to Manitoba and moved his family up later.

Jim and J.S. Upper started out with wagon loads of settlers' effects with horse and oxen for North Portal in April 1894. They ran into a heavy snow storm and were snowed in at Souris for several days. They finally reached their destination and Jim filed on a homestead NE 12-1-5-2 and built a sod house, and nearby the house, they planted a row of asparagus, and to this day we are still cutting asparagus off of it every spring.

Their second child, a daughter Annie, was born on Jan. 1, 1895. They spent the first winter in Tom's sod house and Jim used to go every day to the Hazard coal mine near what was called the Sugar Loaf, and hauled coal into Bienfait to be shipped out by railroad. He said there would be as many as forty teams hauling at times. Money was scarce and this was one place they could make a few dollars.

On November 23, 1897, Stewart Bennett MacKenzie was born. About six months later, in March, Elizabeth Anne (Libby) Harris was born in Estevan and when Mr. Fred Harris was going up to Estevan with the team and sleigh to bring Mrs. Harris and the new baby home, Lizzie and baby Stewart, went along with him to see her little girl

Ethel, who was staying with her aunt Jean MacKenzie and going to school. This was the first time Stewart and Libby went sleigh riding together. In December, 1920 they were married and went honeymooning together. In 1903 Jim had a large two-storey house built. August 14, 1904 Archie Campbell was born in the new house; March 28th, 1907 Edythe Elizabeth arrived and on January 13, 1909, Kenneth James made his appearance. September 1st, 1911, Gordon Waddington arrived on the scene, so Jim and Lizzie were blessed with seven children.

Jim's community service was varied. He served as Justice of the Peace for many years. He spent many hours serving in this position. Well does the family remember the many times he had to leave at night to try a case. Many cases were tried out in the field alongside the threshing outfit; the police would bring out the culprit. In 1899 Jim accepted the position of Secretary-Treasurer of Minto Public School Board No.490. He was the first trustee to be elected on the school board having the largest majority of votes. On the board with him were Fred Harris and Wm. Waddington. Jim served as secretary-treasurer for the life of Minto School, as when Minto joined the Estevan School Unit, he lost his job. Jim also served as Councillor for Div. 2, Coalfields R.M. No. 4. He was the third man to represent the division. The first to serve was Joseph Hill, the second was Amos McRae. Jim served continuously from 1916 to 1951 and he would never miss a council meeting. Once in the winter he walked into town and caught the train in the morning to Estevan and then walked the railroad track to Bienfait. Of course, any one who knew Jim MacKenzie knew that we would sooner walk than hook up a team of horses.

Jim didn't like to ride horseback or milk cows. Lizzie was the milker. She could milk two cows while any other member of the family milked one. Lizzie loved to pick berries and when saskatoons and chokecherries were in abundance, Lizzie always got her share. She had a big patch of black currants where she spent many an hour, often times with some of her neighbors.

Ethel married Dick Coller in February 1916, lived at North Portal and had three children, Alfred, Keith and Shirley.

Annie married William Glosser in January 1918, lived at North Portal and had three girls, Evelyn,

Betty and Barbara.

Stewart married Libby Harris in December 1920, lived at North Portal and had three children, Raymond, Malcolm and Margaret.

Archie married Florence Stovin in February 1928, lived at North Portal and had five children, Audrey, Murry, Gerry, Marilyn and Pat.

Edythe married Jack Thomas, July 1935, lived at North Portal and had one daughter, Kay.

Kenneth married Florence McClelland in May 1935, lived at North Portal and had four children, Sherry, James, Sandra and Wayne.

Gordon married Doris Wilson August 1935, lived at North Portal and had five children, Charlie, Joan, Zetta, Darwyn and Perry. In all, there were 24 grandchildren, 59 great grandchildren and 24 great-great grandchildren.

Lizzie passed away at home March 8th, 1949 at the age of 78 years and Jim on September 13th, 1963 at the age of 97 years, short of two weeks, and they are both buried in the North Portal Cemetery.

Submitted by Mrs. Edythe Thomas

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## The John G. Mackenzie Family

John Green Mackenzie, known to his family and friends as "Jack" was born in Lochee, Dundee, Scotland in 1872. He was the youngest son of James Keay Mackenzie Sr. and Jean Stewart Mackenzie. Jack has three brothers - Tom, Jim and Bill and five sisters.

After completing school he qualified as a Master Painter and Interior Decorator, having shown a natural talent in a variety of artistic endeavours. His brother, Bill, two years his senior, qualified as a Carpenter so in 1890 as skilled tradesmen Jack and Bill decided to come to Canada to visit their sister Mrs. Eliza Brenton, who lived in Brandon. In that same year they travelled by horse and buggy to North Portal, N.W.T. as their brothers Tom and Jim were already in that area.

On September 17, 1890 Jack filed on a homestead near North Portal. Here he lived in a sod shack with his brother Tom and tried to cultivate the talents of a bachelor pioneer. This type of life had little or no appeal for him so he decided to return to Scotland and make use of his trade. This proved to be a good decision as he was employed as a foreman with a large firm of Interior Decorators, who accepted contracts for complete redecorating of the homes on estates in England and Scotland.

In 1902, Jack married Mary Grant of Lochee and they took up residence in London, England.

In July 1904, Jack decided to return to Canada and go into business for himself. He was accompanied by his wife and daughter Alice, who was four months old.

On arrival in North Portal Jack and Tom became partners in a General Store. The store had been built by their brother Bill, who had a lumberyard and had erected several buildings in the area.

Jack and Mary set up housekeeping in a large home across the street from the store. This house became the family home for over forty years. They continued in business for some time, then Jack decided to return to his own trade and Tom went to work for the C.P.R. Jack worked not only in North Portal but also in Portal, North Dakota. He also filed on a homestead and a small wooden house was built on it. This house became known as "the shack" and years later was moved to the family yard in North Portal as a paint shop. It is still being used on the Jack Thomas farm near North Portal being moved there after the town house was destroyed by fire in 1961.

In 1905 Jack's parents, Mr. and Mrs. James K. Mackenzie Sr. came to Canada to be with their family, so an addition was built on to Jack's house for them. They made several trips back to Scotland during their lifetime.

Their father died in 1916 and their mother in 1925. Jack's brother Bill died, having been injured while riding horseback. He had married Margaret Montgomery in Canada and they had one son.

Jack and Mary had four other children, all born in the family home in North Portal: Ian, Mabel, Mary and Colin. Colin, who was born in 1913, died from whooping cough when he was two months old.

When Alice, Ian and Mabel started school, it was in a one room building across the back lane from their home. Instruction was given from Grades I to VII. Later a two room brick school was built at the end of their street out on the prairie and Grades I to IX were taught. This meant that those wishing to further their education were obliged to go elsewhere. When Alice completed her Grade IX at age 14, her parents decided that she would attend the Estevan Collegiate. This meant that she had to live in Estevan during the week and travel home by train for the weekends. After completing her Grade XII she was granted a permit to teach for six months at Forbes School near North Portal and boarded with the S.E. Fox family. Alice then attended Teachers College in Regina and upon graduation she accepted a position in the village school in North Portal; there she taught from 1923 to 1927. Later she enrolled in the University of Saskatchewan and obtained her degrees in Arts and Education. She taught high school in Shaunavon and Prince Albert before accepting a position in Saskatoon. There she taught on the staff of Nutana Collegiate for twelve years before retiring in 1958.

After Ian completed his Grade IX he enrolled in Estevan Collegiate for Grades X, XI and XII. He then graduated from Teachers College in Regina. One of the schools in which he taught was McCall School near North Portal. Later he became principal of North Portal village school. Ian decided to leave teaching and so enrolled in the University of Saskatchewan in the College of Medicine. After completing his Pre-Medical studies he decided to become a dentist, so he transferred to the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis to complete his degree in dentistry in 1938. At his graduation he was presented with an award - The Gold Key, for



being chosen as the most distinguished graduate.

In 1939 when World War II was declared he immediately left his dentist practice and enlisted in the Dental Corps of the Saskatoon Light Infantry as a Lieutenant. In June, 1940, he went Overseas and was promoted to the rank of Major. While in England, he married Margaret Moore at Guildford in Surrey.

Later he saw active duty in France and Italy in charge of a Mobile Dental Clinic.

After the war he and his wife returned to Canada and Ian practised dentistry in Ocean Falls, B. C. and later in Vancouver. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and was active in the Dental Reserve Unit.

Ian and his wife had five children - Ian Junior, Heather, Robert, John and Margaret. Ian Jr. is now a Captain on a government ferry in B.C. Heather and John are University of B. C. graduates in Education. Robert is a U. B. C. graduate in Architecture and Fine Arts. Margaret is a college graduate in Interior Decoration. Ian Jr. has two sons, Sean and Scott and Heather has two daughters, Megan and Robin.

In 1974 Ian Sr. died suddenly in Vancouver of a heart attack.

Mabel completed her high school education at the Estevan Collegiate and then went on to graduate from Teachers College in Regina. She taught at various places in Saskatchewan including McCall School and the village school in North Portal. She resigned from the North Portal school to become a government secretary in Regina. In 1937 Mabel married Millard Holmgren of Estevan. They have one child, Dr. Grant Holmgren. Dr. Holmgren graduated from the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan and then went on to take further studies in his specialty - Obstetrics and Gynaecology. He is now practicing in Dawson Creek, B.C. His wife is the former Lorena Brown of Estevan and they have three children - Peter, Kerry and Sheila.

Mabel returned to teaching in the public school system in Estevan where she remained until her retirement in 1973. Mabel and Millard now reside in Calgary, Alberta.

Mary continued her education in Estevan and at Central Collegiate in Regina. She then graduated from Teachers College in Regina and taught at various places in Saskatchewan, including Forbes School near North Portal and the village school in North Portal. In 1941 she resigned to enroll in the St. Boniface Hospital School of Nursing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. At her graduation she was awarded the gold medal for the highest standing in theory. Mary also received a scholarship to continue her nursing studies at the University of Manitoba. After graduation from University she joined the teaching staff at St. Boniface School of Nursing.

In 1948 she accepted a position at St. Paul's Hospital School of Nursing in Saskatoon because her parents and Alice were now living in that city. Mary was on the teaching staff of St. Paul's Hospital for twenty years, then she became Registrar-Counsellor for the new Diploma Nursing

Program which was being established at the Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Science in Saskatoon. There she remained until her retirement in 1975.

It is interesting to note that Alice and Mary both taught in the Forbes School District and that Ian and Mabel both taught in the Mc Call School District and all four members of the family chose to teach in the village school of North Portal.

Alice and Mary still live in the family residence in Saskatoon. Their father died in 1948 and their mother in 1959.

While living in North Portal Jack was always interested in civic affairs. He was at one time Overseer of the village. Although Mr. and Mrs. Jack Mackenzie had an old country city background, they adjusted well and enjoyed life in Canada.

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## Stewart Bennet MacKenzie

Stewart Bennet MacKenzie was the oldest son of James Kay MacKenzie and Elizabeth Alberta Waddington. He was born November 23, 1897 and on December 15, 1920, married Elizabeth Ann Harris, daughter of W. F. Harris and Georgina Roddick.

Stewart helped supply music for the old time dances. He cut hair, shoed horses, worked as a wheelwright and did some forge welding and other blacksmith work.

Raymond Harris MacKenzie was their first son, followed by twins, Malcolm and Margaret. Doctor Parker called them 'sixteen and a half pounds of baby.'

Then came the "dirty Thirties," - pigs sold for two cents a pound, cattle less, and grain was worth very little. Stewart and Libby, with Gladys and Alex Dunbar, decided to move north. They and several other young men set out with horses, cattle and travelling in caravans, went to Torch River in 1934.

Stewart died then and with Raymond going into



Elizabeth Ann Harris and Stewart Bennett MacKenzie on December 15th, 1920.

the Airforce in 1942, Libby and the twins returned to North Portal. She was the niece of the first Postmistress and later served in that capacity for twenty-one years. On her retirement, she married Bill Fox and lived in Rosetown till her death in 1974.

Raymond still lives in North Portal. Margaret married Arthur Aspinall and they are at Medicine Hat, Alberta, and Malcolm and family live near Chase, B.C.

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## Thomas Stewart MacKenzie

Uncle Tom MacKenzie was my dad's eldest brother. They came out together from Scotland to Manitoba, where he worked for my great grandfather, John Waddington, for seven years. He then came west and homesteaded at North Portal on NE 10-1-5 W2.

He handled the team and the eighth walking plough for Mr. Jerry Daley when they ploughed a fire guard from North Portal to Moose Jaw in the early days. He was in the hardware and lumber business with his brother Jack in North Portal. He worked as a fireman on the C. P. Railroad. On account of his eyesight he could never become an engineer, so he quit the railroad here and went to Winnipeg where he worked for some time again on the railroad, until he took rheumatic fever and was in St. Boniface Hospital for nine months, leaving him with a weak heart. He came back to North Portal and made his home with us for the remainder of his life. He was never able to do heavy work, but chored around. I counted it a privilege when we were able to share our south west bedroom upstairs with my Uncle Tom in our old home.

As we had no heat in the room, Uncle Tom would always close the bedroom door. I never asked him the reason, but since I've thought it was because he always sat up in bed with his night cap and his pipe with Macdonalds Cut Plug or Peppers True Smoke as he puffed away during the night, and he didn't want the smoke drifting through the house. He loved to tell us stories from his school days to the time he came to live with us. I learned more French, Latin and German from him than I ever did going to school - the only thing, I wasn't smart enough to contain it all.

Uncle Tom was always faithful at feeding the horses and one Sunday morning as he was feeding them, the horses crowded him down as he was going up between them, and he laid there for some time before someone found him. He was never the same afterward, and he died in his bedroom in the winter of 1931.

There was a carpenter in Estevan - Norris Turner, who during the thirties built coffins for thirty-five dollars. If you wanted a hearse to carry the coffin to the cemetery, it was a two wheeled trailer you hooked behind a car. We never needed the hearse, as our old Scotch neighbor, Jack Kemp, drove our black team on the sleigh with Uncle Tom

in his coffin on the day he was buried, and another old timer was laid to rest.

Submitted by Archie MacKenzie

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## The Ivor Mattson Family

Ivar Mattson was born in a farming area in Ljunskile, Sweden. As a young man he came via boat to the U.S.A., landing in New York Harbor. He then went to Minneapolis, Minn. where he was employed at the Pillsbury Flour Mills for some time. He went to night school in the evening to learn the English language.

Later he decided to move further north and came to Portal, N.D. where he worked for the Soo Line Railway. There are still tales told by the old timers how Ivar "the strong Swede" could lift ties as if they were hardly any weight at all.

Later Ivar decided to move to Canada. In 1907 Ivar bought the NE¼ 3-1-5-W2nd that had been registered in 1901 by a Bella H. Cook. In 1908 he homesteaded the SE¼ 32-1-4-W2nd. Later Ivar sold this quarter to a Mr. Haynes. He purchased the NW¼ 2-1-5-W2nd.

A brother Carl Mattson farmed in the Short Creek area in the Forest Glen District. After the death of Carl, Ivar farmed this land many years, and it was finally sold to the late Mr. Schlapkohl (a nearby neighbor).

In the year 1917 when Ivar was spending the winter in Winnipeg, Manitoba, he visited a Dr. McCallum. Jessica Piper was the receptionist in the doctor's office. Jessica Piper came from Glasgow, Scotland in the year 1914 and was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Piper of Glasgow. A romance bloomed between Ivar and Jessica and they were united in marriage in Winnipeg on January 5th, 1917.

Ivar did mixed farming and Jessica had a natural talent for cooking, so baking and cooking for large threshing crews came natural to her.

In 1921 Mrs. Mattson and daughters Hilda and Margaret made a trip to Scotland and visited friends and relatives.

The farm owned by Mr. and Mrs. Mattson has been sold and the new owners are Fred and Robert Lees, sons of Mr. and Mrs. John Lees.

When Ivar retired from farming he made his home in the Grand View Hotel, and later spent his last years with his daughter Margaret and her family.

Mr. Mattson passed away in the year 1963 on April 14th. He was predeceased by his wife Jessica and also two infant sons. The remaining members of the family are Mrs. Hilda Nygard, Northgate, Sask., Mrs. Margaret Lees, North Portal, Sask., and Mrs. Jean Schnell, Mission, B.C.

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## The William Menzies

The following information was supplied by Lily Thompson of Regina and Lina Cox of Lumsden - granddaughters of the late William Mitchell Menzies who arrived in North Portal about 1908.

At the time of his arrival, his intentions were to relieve the custodian of the Government Quarantine Station for a period of approximately six weeks. This had to be the longest six week period in the history of North Portal - since Mr. Menzies remained in residence at North Portal until his demise on February 19, 1936.

The barns were busy buildings in the years of the settlers - and the corrals provided space for the overflow of stock awaiting inspection. These buildings were eventually painted a "government green" with red trim. It took many gallons of "whitewash," periodically, to keep the interiors ship-shape - as well as for the miles of board feet in the corrals and loading platforms.

There were a vast number of animals that passed through the quarantine station during the heavy influx of settlers from the States to Canada.

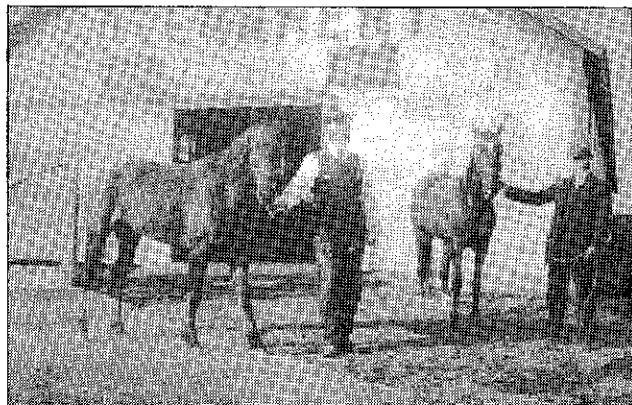
Of interest to the community may be the fact that at one time the game of curling was enjoyed in one of the three long barns (each one held at least 300 head of stock). The barns, of course, had wooden floors and the well-house being in close proximity to the other buildings made flooding the ice quite easy. This preceded the building of a rink down town.

Mr. Nicholson, a former Mayor of Estevan, eventually purchased and had one of the barns removed, intact, to the Estevan area.

The fact that as many as 500 head of stock (awaiting inspection) together with 900 to 1,000 housed in the barns means that as many as 1500 animals would be under the care and supervision of those responsible.

It became necessary for our grandfather to take an early retirement on account of his failing health and this transpired no later than the summer of 1934.

In order to be close to his work, the late Mr. Menzies purchased several acres of property adjacent to those occupied by the quarantine barns. While the family home was being built, the Menzies



Mr. Menzies (center) and another fellow holding horses on halter.

family were in residence at the Presbyterian Manse in Portal, N.D.

The family consisted of W.M.Menzies Sr., his wife Lily D. and two children, William M. Menzies, Jr. and Jessie K. An older son, Robert, passed away in Ontario on January 30, 1908, six weeks after arriving from Scotland.

The family moved West to Weyburn to be near other family members, e.g. The late Dr. R.Menzies Mitchell and J.A.M. Mitchell; also several other first cousins.

Needless to say, the quarantine station layout, platforms, etc., as well as the Menzies home became a veritable heaven for both Mitchell and Menzies grandchildren from Weyburn. Summer holidays in North Portal were, without a doubt, the ultimate in human experience.

Straying from the "barns" to the house - two family weddings were solemnized there; three births (all girls - the three boys were born at Weyburn) and two deaths took place in the house. These happenings made the home a "shrine" for those of us privileged to have been a small part in it's history. The weddings were those of: Jessie Menzies to James B.Mitchell - August 5, 1912; Lily Mitchell to Wallace R.Thompson - October 27, 1942.

Births were those of: Lily (Mitchell) Thompson - September 9, 1914; Charlotte B.Mitchell - October 21, 1916 - died March 3, 1927; Lina (Mitchell) Cox - June 27, 1918.

The deaths were those of the original owners and the reason for all other family members having contact with North Portal: William Mitchell Menzies, born March, 1865, Scotland; died February 19, 1936 at North Portal; Lily Davidson Menzies, born February 19, 1864, Scotland; died May 11, 1940 at North Portal.

Grandad was overseer of the hamlet or village as it subsequently became. He did carry a hammer around for instant repair - just couldn't stand anything out of repair - sidewalks especially!

Grandad and Grandma Menzies were both charter members of Ina No. 88 O.E.S. Portal, N.D., as well as Past Patron and Past Matron. Grandad was a 32 Degree Mason - Estevan and member of Kem Temple Shrine at Grand Forks, N.D. Grandma was active in the Red Cross Ladies Auxiliary to the British Empire Service League (now the Royal Canadian Legion). Both were regular church attenders and supporters. Grandad became a Master Mason in Glasgow, Scotland. He was also one of the curlers that curled in the quarantine barns.

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## The George Miller Family

George was born in Marionpoli, Lithuania in 1895 to Katrina and Kaczmer Ragazinskas, the youngest of nine children. At the age of 14 he and his family moved to Scotland, where at this young age he worked in the coal mines there.

In 1910, again he and his family moved to the



**Threshing time on the farm of George Miller**

great young country of Canada. They came to settle on a homestead about seven miles northwest of North Portal. The land was very rocky and very unproductive, so he farmed in the summer and worked on the CPR track or the coal mines in the winter. Later he bought a piece of land five miles straight north of North Portal.

In 1927 he married Mary Andraites who came from Kiduli, Lithuania, the same year. They were blessed with six children - Della, Joseph, Edward, Leonard, Donna and Rose.

In 1949 the family moved to a dairy farm one half mile west of North Portal. For some years they ran the dairy, but later went into straight grain farming.

One by one the children married and George and Mary left the farm life too, to retire to Bienfait. It was a whole new way of life and a bit heart breaking to leave the good old farm life, and all the memories.

In 1975 George passed away after a lengthy illness. Mary moved to Yardley Place, Estevan in 1978 and is presently living there.

NOTE: As I (Della) write this, I will never forget the faith my mother and father had in their new land. Through all the years of drought, the grasshoppers, the bad winters, the total crops wiped out by hail and wind, they stuck it out, always full of hope and joy and thankful for what they had. There were good times too. Sunday always brought many visitors. They visited and sang songs and gave each other encouragement for another while. There was always a quiet calm,



**Mary and George Miller in 1927**

peace in those good old days and not the hustle and bustle we find today. I want to thank our Lord who provided my parents and their family with all this goodness.

## **The James Milne Family**

James Milne was born at Perth, Scotland of parents James Milne and Catherine Cochrane (Milne).

He was very young when he began working in a flour mill where he fell off a ladder severely injuring his back. His greatest ambition was to come to America to join his two older brothers who were working in the saw mills at Saginaw, Michigan, U.S.A.

Finally in 1883, at the age of 21 years, he got a job taking care of a ship load of race horses that were being shipped to Montreal, Quebec. He spent very little time in Montreal as he did not like the city and couldn't understand the French language. Being very short of money, he had to work his way through Ontario until he reached Michigan.

He finally reached his destination and worked for a time in the saw mills and woods. A strike broke out and the mills had to close down. When it looked like the strike wouldn't end very soon, they all decided to leave for Dakota Territory, where they had heard about the Homestead Act and land was very cheap to induce settlers into the territory.

They arrive in Minnewaukaw, North Dakota in 1885, went to the Land Office there to see what land was available. They walked for over twenty-one miles until they reached what was then called the Antelope Valley and picked out the land they wanted.

James registered his land on May 11th, 1886 as his homestead. It was 160 acres- SE ¼ of Sec. 34-152N. Range 69W, North Viking Township, Benson County. He paid for it in cash on May 7th, 1888. The nearest town at that time was Oberon, N.D. which was sixteen miles away. The town of Maddock was founded in 1901.

The first years money was scarce, so two of the brothers would find work during the winter months and the third one would take care of the three farms. James worked in St. Paul during these winters. One winter he worked in a factory canning tomatoes; other times he worked on the dray.



In 1901, just as the railroad was reaching Maddock, N.D. he sold his land to his brother William and left for Harvey, N.D. where the Lyall brothers lived; he knew them from Scotland. He went to Canada with Peter Lyall who found land east of North Portal. He worked for Pete, helping him build his barn and get started in farming, until he got land of his own.

In 1903 he was united in marriage to Dorothea Marie Madsen. She was born in Villeoslov, Jutland, Denmark, February 1st, 1877. She worked in Odense as a dressmaker and fitter in her brother-in-law's tailor shop. In 1901, her sister Mrs. Robert Lyall, sent passage for Dorothea and her sister Ida (Mrs. Andrew Olsen) to come to the U.S.A. She worked at different places in the Harvey area before her marriage.

When they first came to Canada it was Assiniboia, N.W.T. In 1904 they homesteaded NE 12-1-4 W2, six miles east and two miles north of North Portal, Saskatchewan. Their first dwelling was a sod shack until they obtained a two-room frame house.

As their family grew they had to have more room so in 1915 they built a large frame house and the same fall bought their first Model T Ford car. They endured many hardships.

In January 1911, he was caught in a blizzard on his way home from town with a load of coal. The next morning he was found by his neighbor, Pete Lyall's hired man. His feet were badly frozen and he had to have all his toes amputated from his right foot and three from the other. He was very active in community affairs. He donated an acre of his land for the McColl School to be built; helped in building the telephone line which they had in 1911. He served on the School Board for many years, acted on the election boards and helped with the building of McColl School in 1910.

They raised a large family, ten in all, one dying in infancy. Albert, born Feb. 1, 1904 lives in Alameda, Sask., Maybelle, born May 13, 1905, deceased 1977; Elsie Bergdahl, born Dec. 7, 1908; deceased August 1976; William B., born Aug. 15, 1910; deceased April 1969; Margaret M. Severson, born Jan. 17, 1912, lives at Estevan, Sask.; Jean R. Shaffer, born Oct. 8, 1915, lives at Maddock, N.D.; Ernest A. Milne, born Sept. 17, 1913, Estevan, Sask.; James III, born Dec. 2, 1917, lives at North Portal; Edith C. McEwen, born June 6, 1920, lives at Carrot River, Sask. James R. died Feb. 28, 1939; Dorothea died June 25, 1957. They are both buried in North Portal Cemetery.

## The Andrew Olsen Family

Andrew Peter Olsen was born on the Island of Samso, Denmark, in 1885, the son of a fisherman. Even when a very young boy he had a keen desire to go to America—the "Land of Promise." It could be said he had "America Fever," a condition that

affected many young people of poor families in Europe at that time. He worked on farms in various parts of Denmark for several years until in 1894, at the age of nineteen he was able to emigrate to America. He went first to Buffalo North Dakota, worked on farms there, and later at Harvey, North Dakota where he filed on a homestead. At Harvey, Andrew worked for Bob Lyall whose wife Kristina had emigrated from Denmark too, in the early 1890's.

When Andrew returned to Denmark for a visit in 1901-1902, Mrs. Lyall asked him to look up her sister Ida who was then working in Odense. It didn't take Andrew long to persuade her to come to America too, and become his wife.

Ida Elizabeth Madsen was born on a farm in 1879 near Vellerslev in Jutland, Denmark. She was one of a family of fourteen children, so it was necessary for them to go out to work at a very early age. Ida worked on farms for several years until she met Andrew. Then she and her sister Dorothy emigrated to America in 1902, to Harvey North Dakota where their older sister lived. Ida and Andrew were married there in March 1903.

In 1902, Andrew had come up to Canada and filed on a homestead east of North Portal (SW 10-1-3 W2). About the same time he acquired a half section of land near North Portal (S½ 17-1-4 W2) from James Lyall of Harvey, in a trade for his homestead quarter there. He brought his wife Ida to the new farm after their marriage in 1903. During the next several years, two more quarters of land were added to the home farm, and his homestead was sold. In 1913-14, a modern new home was built to accommodate their growing family.

Pleased with their success in the new land, the Olsens wished to help other young people from the Old Country to come to Canada too. Around 1913-14 three of Andrew's nephews, Olaf, Chryst and Andrew Anderson were helped to emigrate. They worked on farms for a while until two of them, Olaf and Chryst enlisted in the Canadian Army and went off to fight for their adopted country. They were both killed in action in France. Their names appear on the war memorial at North Portal.

At the time of Andrew's untimely death in Oc-



The Andrew Olsen children, taken in the early 1920's. Back row, from left: Mary, Harry, Oscar, Peter. Front: Ella, Anna, Frances, Ida.

tober 1919, the Olsens had been in Canada just seventeen years but had achieved much. They had a family of eight: three boys and five girls. They had a large prosperous farm with modern buildings. Ida, with the help of the older children and some hired hands, ran the farm until most of the family left home. Ida passed away in August 1951.

The Olsen family:

Oscar Christ: born 1906, married Alice Stringer. They have six children (one died in infancy).

To date (May 1979) there are 60 living descendants of Andrew and Ida Olsen - eight children, 17 grandchildren and 35 great-grandchildren. They are a living memorial! The family farm has recently been sold.

## The A. C. Paterson Family

1853-1977

Archibald Campbell Paterson was the first Collector of Canada Customs for the North Portal area.

A.C. Paterson was the second child of eight born to Margaret (Campbell) and Roger Paterson, April 13, 1853, at Iona Station, Ontario. He became a teacher and taught school for some time in Ontario.

In 1881 he came west by train as far as Winnipeg, then by Red River cart to Qu'Appelle. At Qu'Appelle he undertook the operation of a transport service between there and Prince Albert and North Battleford. This transport business was used to carry supplies to the troops during the Riel Rebellion.

During his stay in Qu'Appelle he had many interests. As well as resuming his teaching profession, he started Qu'Appelle's first newspaper. He was also instrumental in starting the first Masonic Lodge in the town. Later he was employed by the Federal Government Department of Weights and Measures.

On August 30, 1892, at Winnipeg, A.C. Paterson

married Emily Irving, whom he had known in Ontario. Around this time A.C. joined Canada Customs and was appointed the first Collector at North Portal when the Soo Line Railroad was put through to Moose Jaw. (Exact dates are unavailable. Based on Jack Paterson's birth date of February 19, 1896 at North Portal, Mr. Paterson's appointment must have been prior to that date.)

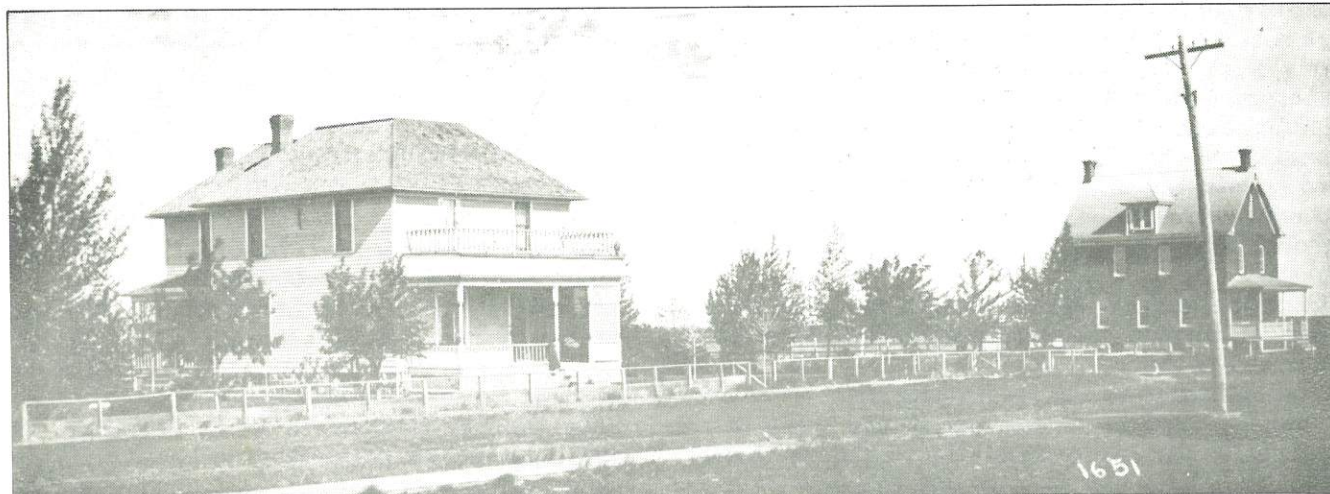
As well as doing Customs work, A.C. and other officers were required to do Immigration work for an honorarium of \$100 per annum. Because of the lack of communication, it was very difficult to determine the exact times of arrival of trains, so many times he and other officers had to maintain around the clock schedules. He believed in enforcing the Customs Act in all respects except in one area, he refused to collect duty on coffins.

Housing accommodation was a problem in those days. When Mr. and Mrs. Paterson arrived in North Portal, they and eighteen other people lived above the first C.P.R. station. Later they built and resided in the house that is now the Wayne Abraham residence.

A.C. and Em. had three children. George was born in Thedford, Ontario on November 9, 1893. He later became a flight commander with the Royal Air Force during the first World War and was killed in action on April 2, 1918. Jack was born at North Portal on February 19, 1896. He served in both World Wars and ended his career with Molsons in Edmonton in a senior position. Jack died in Edmonton on August 8, 1973. Anne was born at North Portal on January 28, 1898. Her career included that of librarian in the Regina Public Library from which she retired to Victoria, B.C. She died in Victoria on September 12, 1977.

It is believed that about the time that young George was of school age, there was no school in North Portal. A school district was being formed on the American side of the border and so George was enrolled there to help make enough students to form a district. About a year later he was enrolled back on the Canadian side to form a school district and attended school in what is now the Mel Barber residence.

In 1910, Mr. Paterson was appointed Chief



Residence of A. C. Paterson, Collector of Customs

Moved + Burned in 1986 71



Customs Inspector for the Prairie Region with his office in Calgary. His family did not move to Calgary as it was believed that the office would be relocated. It was in fact relocated in Regina in 1912 and Mr. Paterson was moved there as Chief Inspector.

Sunday, June 30, 1912, Regina was struck by the "Terrible Tornado." The next day the Paterson family moved from North Portal to Regina. Their house was in the path of the tornado but suffered the loss of the porch only. The Baptist Church, two doors down on Lorne Street, however, was severely damaged.

Mr. Paterson's inspection area was quite extensive and travel in those days was by train and livery. The inspection of the North Portal Customs office always happened to coincide with the annual harvest season. This was convenient because A.C. owned the land which is now the Frank Abraham farm.

A.C. died in Regina on June 1, 1927. Em. died in Regina on September 28, 1943. Both are buried in the North Portal Cemetery.

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## The Andrew Pukas Family

Andrew Pukas emigrated from Vilna, Lithuania, to Scotland. In Scotland he met Annie Rogazinskas. On February 21, 1909, they were married in the Roman Catholic Church of Mossend, in the district of Bellshill, county of Lanark, Scotland.

Andrew and Annie then emigrated to New York where they made their home for a short time and had their first child, Annie. From New York, they came to North Portal to find work in the coal mines. Andrew had worked in the coal mines in Lithuania and so was experienced in that field.

They homesteaded a few miles north west of the Harry Waddington place. It was here that five more children were born to Andrew and Annie. They were Adolf, Christina, Francis, Joseph and Margaret.

At the age of 37 years, Andrew was killed in a mine cave-in which brought a lot of hardship to the Pukas family. Adolf, the oldest son, at the age of twelve years, went to work for Harry Waddington to help support the family. In time, he bought the Waddington place and in later years, his mother, Annie, lived there also. Adolf never married and died at the age of 55 years in October, 1967.

Annie married Leo Ceglowski and they had four children. Annie and Leo reside in Portal, North Dakota.

Christina married Walter Brooks and they are living in Bienfait, Saskatchewan. They have a family of five children.

Frances died when she was a young girl.

Joseph served in World War II and while in England, he met and married Gladys Kimber. Joe and Gladys have four children and live on a farm near North Portal, Saskatchewan.

Margaret married Clifford Earl and raised three



Andrew and Annie Pukas, 1909

children. Margaret and Clifford live in North Portal, Saskatchewan.

Annie Pukas moved to Bienfait, Saskatchewan, shortly after the death of her son Adolf. She lived in Bienfait for as long as her health permitted, and then took up residence with her son, Joseph at North Portal. Annie died at the age of 87 years on December 5, 1976.

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## The Randall Family

Dad, Mother and my two sisters arrived in North Portal from Winnipeg in, I believe, 1913. Dad was buying out the R. H. Douglas Store.

We as children went to the old school; Miss Ives was our teacher; later Bill Newman when the then new school was built. I went to High School as did my sister Edith, under principal Rolph.

Mr. Douglas returned to North Portal and he and Dad went into partnership. A house was built behind the old Methodist Church for our family, which was on the edge of town.

As a boy I used to help deliver groceries. As we

had no good water and Mr. Dorsey had a well, we used to carry water from his well. For household chores there was a cistern in the basement.

The first auto accident I was ever in occurred beside Dad's Store, possibly the first in North Portal. Myself and a couple of other boys were playing on the road. Along came this auto - more like a buggy with high, hard rubber-tired wheels. We all got out of the way, but one of us, Edgar Burger was the unlucky one. He fell down and was run over and had his leg broken. He was a hero of sorts for awhile.

Then World War I came along and many of the local boys went to war, and quite a few never returned.

The Americans at that time were very pro-German and the kids on our side had many tangles with wooden swords and wooden guns. George Richardson was our General, but when the States joined the Allies, our battles were over.

There are many memories, all mostly good - picnics at Roche Percee, the police meeting all trains; firing guns and revolvers under the trains to scare the hobos off (they carried placards saying 'I want work'); the baseball teams, Sports Days and Baseball Days; the day Bernard Sargent and I went skating in the curling rink - we were not popular.

Submitted by Murray Randall

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## The Kazis Ragazinskas Family

Kazis Ragazinskas was born March 15, 1857 in Suwalki, Barbirisko, Russia. He and his wife Katrina moved with their family to Scotland where he found work in the coal mines. They had eight children - Joseph, Mathew, Tony, Peter, Margaret, Annie, George and Mary.

In 1910 they emigrated to Canada and lived northwest of North Portal. In Canada, Kazis Ragazinskas changed his last name to Miller.

He lived with his son, George Miller, for a time and then later lived with his daughter, Annie Pukas.

In September, 1946, Kazis Miller died at the age of 89 years.

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## The G. S. Robinson Family

George Spence Robinson was born December 22, 1875, in Oxtou, Lancashire, England. He apprenticed with an insurance company before immigrating.

He came to Canada in 1899 to Brandon Hills, Manitoba, where he worked for Roddick's and Henry Dunbar. He kept a diary in 1900 of his first experiences at farming.

In 1903 when the Henry Dunbars moved back to Saskatchewan he drove an outfit of horses and

wagon from Brandon Hills to the Dunbar farm.

He filed for his homestead, and in the meantime worked for the Dunbars. His first outfit was a team of oxen.

In April, 1907, he married Nora Tryphena Hill who had come to Canada in 1905 from Devon, England. Before her marriage she was governess for the Arthur MacKenzie family, and also worked in R. H. Douglas' General Store.

Mr. and Mrs. Robinson had four children: Hugh, Janet, Barbara and Arthur.

Mr. Robinson was secretary of the Local Improvement District before it was organized as a Rural Municipality. He was a member of Britannia School Board, and a councillor for a number of years for the R.M. He supported the Anglican Church in North Portal, later Bienfait Anglican Church, then St. Giles, Estevan, where they retired from the farm in 1950.

Mr. Robinson passed away in 1961. Mrs. Robinson is a resident of Estevan Regional Nursing Home.

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## The August Rogers Family

Mr. and Mrs. Rogers came from Scotland in 1905. They brought with them three children, Annie, Mary and George. A fourth child, a son, passed away in Scotland.

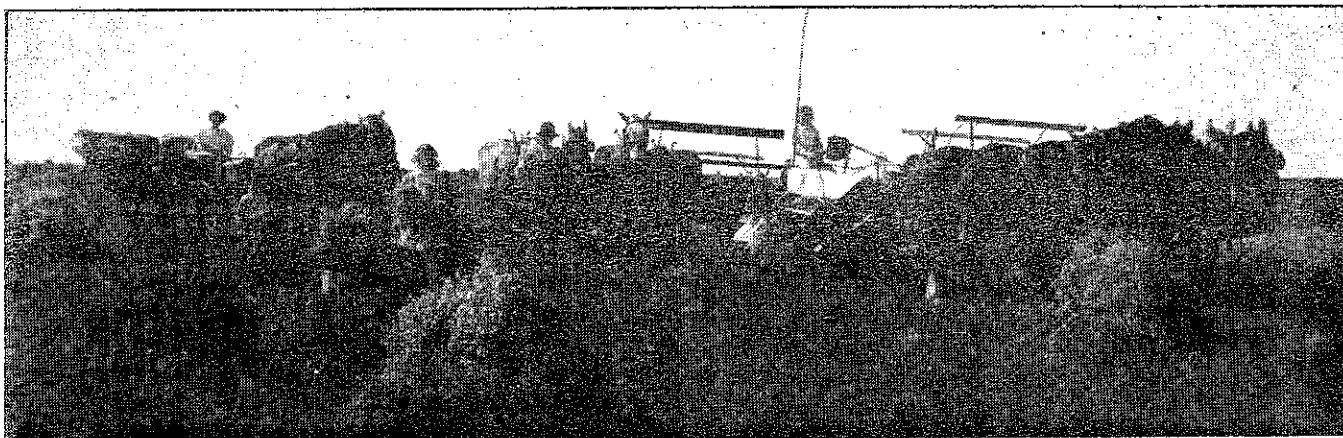
They came to Winnipeg, Manitoba, staying and working there until 1907, at which time they moved west to Pinto, Saskatchewan. Pinto was a small mining camp situated north west of North Portal on the C.P.R.

Mr. Rogers worked at the mines until 1910, when he filed on a homestead. This was the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  14-1-4-W2nd. Upon moving to the farm, he built a small house of wood construction with a dome roof. A barn was built of sod for the horses and cows. Another small barn was built for the calves.

He broke the land south of the buildings to grow grain crops. On the north he had a garden; from this garden was grown an enormous amount of vegetables. Storage for the vegetables necessitated the digging of a root cellar, which was situated on a ridge just west of the house. This root cellar was used to keep vegetables to use during the winter. A pit was dug below frost to store potatoes.

The wheat and oat bundles were stacked until they could get some one to thresh them. A large portion of the north part of this quarter, was used for pasture. Later he leased the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  23-1-4-W2nd for pasture. Land in this area had many rocks. A lot of labour was involved in preparing the land for breaking. A team of horses he used for a chore team were called Barney and Ned. This team was used to haul coal from the mines and rocks off the land. He also used this team to cut the hay and haul the grain bundles as well.





**Roughton Farm harvest in 1913**

Submitted by Clara Roughton Jeffery

## **The William L. Roughton Family**

Mr. and Mrs. William Lee Roughton and three children, formerly of Pesotum, Champaign County, Illinois, came to North Portal, Saskatchewan, March 1913. Mr. Roughton preceded his family, arriving by Immigrant train with horses, cows, machinery and household goods, having purchased the Hans Mellon farm, located three and a half miles northeast, consisting of a section (4 quarters) of land, at \$35.00 per acre, with house, barn and granaries.

Mr. Roughton (Lee) was born August 21, 1897 at Pesotum, died aged 85 years. His parents, Charles and Mary Roughton, were English and Irish descent. Mrs. Roughton (Sadie) was born April 24, 1878, at Tipton, Indiana, died aged 86 years. Her parents, Winterly and Clara Hinds were German



**Sadie and Lee Roughton**

and Irish descent. They were married in 1899. Children were Clara (Mrs. H.M. Jeffery) Portal, N.D.; Erma (Mrs. Dr. T. Pebonen) deceased; Clarence (deceased). There are eight grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren. They were naturalized Canadian citizens, members of Masonic and Eastern Star Chapters and the United Church.

The children attended Russeldale School, and later transferred to Portal School, the new building was completed that year.

Crops of wheat, oats, barley, abundant vegetables, also turkeys and chickens; eggs and butter were taken to the store in exchange for groceries.

Machinery was horse drawn, coal was hauled, horse drawn from the Lignite Mines, near Bienfait.

Portal and North Portal, Soo Line and Canadian Pacific Railways joined on the International Boundary. There were many business establishments - grocery stores, restaurants, hotels, Doctor and churches. Thousands of immigrants were enroute to Canada; their animals were health inspected by Veterinarians. Glanders in horses was either treated for two weeks or the animals were rejected.

The depression of the 1930's caused untold hardships. There was a ten year general drought during that period. Two world wars fought with Canadians and Americans involved.



**Clara, Clarence and Erma about 1915**

## The William Shand Family

William Shand came to North Portal in 1912, having come from Scotland in 1900 to Manitoba. He was employed as bridge builder for the C.P.R., later to Moose Jaw Division.

In 1914, he married Madeline Smith (who came from Scotland to the U.S.A. in 1911, then to North Portal in 1913 to her brother, Sandy Smith). They had two daughters - Madeline now in North Portal; Betty now in Calgary.

From 1914 to 1918, Dad was at the C.P.R. pump-house at Garwood (outside Weyburn); In 1918 he moved to North Portal as foreman in C.P.R. freight sheds, where he was employed for some twenty odd years.



Mr. and Mrs. William Shand, Betty and Madeline

He served as J.P. for years, and on the school board, Town Council. He played bagpipes to the delight of neighborhood kids, who followed with sticks and cans. When Customs was built, he had the job of Inspector of Works.

Father passed away in 1960; Mother passed away in 1973.

There were four grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Submitted by Madeline Werry

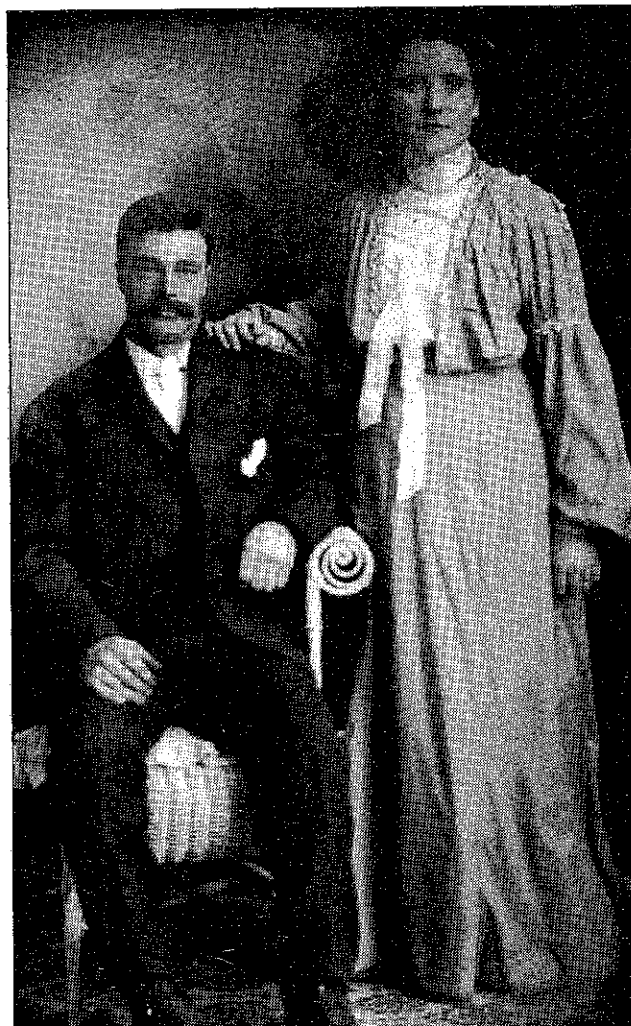
## The Louis C. Shoebridge Family

Louis Caleb Shoebridge was born February 8, 1876 in England. He came to Brandon Hills about 1884 and worked for room and board at Bob Roddicks until of age to come to North Portal and homestead for Henry Dunbar.

He bought his own land and married Lillian Cook in 1904. They had three children, Mary, Ethel and Louis (Bud). They celebrated their Golden Wedding in March 1954 at North Portal.

They adopted Leonard Elliott in 1925 after his mother's death; he lives in Regina. Ethel, the only other child living, lives in California.

Louis passed away October 5, 1956; Lillian



Lily and Louis Shoebridge at their wedding on March 16th, 1904 and fifty years later at their Golden Anniversary.

passed away in November 1954; Bud passed away in October 1969; Mary passed away in November 1977.

Louis enjoyed farming and really was a "pig" man. He and Bud were champions at horseshoes. He never lost his love for Canada.

Submitted by Ethel Engstrom

## The Michael B. Skoczylas Family

Our mother and dad, Michael B. Skoczylas and Tekla Barozouska, both came from Tarnopole, Austria. Dad landed in New York, U.S.A. in 1900. He had a brother in New York who worked with R.C.A. but is now deceased.

Mother landed in New York in 1913 and they were married there in 1915, and immigrated to North Portal, Saskatchewan, Canada that year.

Dad was affiliated with the C.P.R. until his retirement. He died March 31, 1954 and mother still resides at North Portal.



Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Skoczylas

The family consists of three children by dad's previous marriage - Helen Bonchal; Jessie Bourquin; Staffie Soroko; also nine children from this marriage (Michael and Tekla) - Mike Skoczylas, Olga (Pivoras), Mildred (Preston), Catherine (Harrold) Joe Skoczylas (these two were twins), Nick Skoczylas, who died December 29, 1968, Brunnie (Johnson) Lucy Skoczylas and Wallace Skoczylas.

Living grandchildren - Lynn and Patti Skoczylas; Jean (Siferd), Marie (Pott), Robert Pivoras; Beverley (Shipshock); Karen and Heather Rhea Skoczylas; Philip Skoczylas; Lisa Skoczylas.

Living great grandchildren - John, Anthony, Brent, Catherine Siferd; Douglas and Leanne Pott; Kelly and Kenneth Pivoras; Kelly and Catherine Shipshock.

## The Michael L. Skoczylas Family



Michael and Magdalena

Michael L. Skoczylas, was born in Tarnapol, Poland, September 24, 1892. He immigrated to Troy, New York, where he met and married Magdalena Kramar in 1911.

In 1915 they moved to North Portal, Saskatchewan, where Michael was employed by the Soo Line Railroad until his death in September 1943.

Michael's family consisted of four daughters and one son - Anne, Mary (deceased), Frances and Madeline the twins, and John Paul.

Mother has resided with her daughters in Bienfait for the last four years.



"Little Mike"

## The Alex Smith Family

Alex (Sandy) Smith and his wife, the former Annie MacKenzie, and three months old son James came from Scotland to North Portal in March, 1902.

Sandy was employed as Express Clerk here at C.P.R. until his death in 1931. He also served as

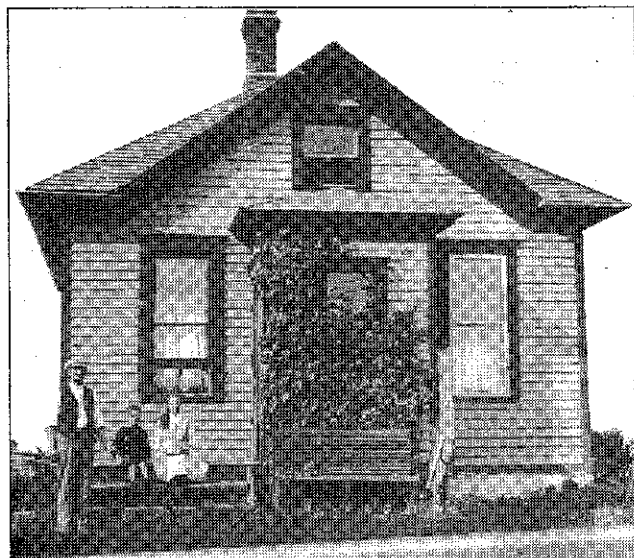


**Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Smith and family**

town clerk from the early 1920's until 1931. Sandy played piano and fiddle for local dances in the early days.

They had three daughters and another son. Anne, Jean, Nellie and Alex.

Nellie passed away in her early 20's; Anne is in



**1918— A. F., Alex and Anne**

Winnipeg; Jean in Ladysmith, B.C.; Alex in St. Thomas.

The Smiths had one of the first cars in North Portal - a Model T.

After Sandy's death, Mrs. Smith moved to Winnipeg to live with Anne.

Submitted by Madeline Werry

## **The James F. Stringer Family**

James Franklin Stringer was born November 9, 1870 at Yarmouth, Ontario. He lived at St.



**The Stringers in 1935**

Thomas, Ontario until he came west in the late 1800's and worked for Oliver Harris.

He started back to Ontario and got as far as Winnipeg and met Tom Waddington and was talked into coming back to Saskatchewan. He took up a homestead and got title to it in 1900 in the Assiniboia District (now North Portal).

In 1904 he married Fanny Loretta Harris and to them were born nine children - Annie Bithiah Florence (Swenson); Charles Oliver (deceased in 1921); Lillian Evelyn (Wrigley) deceased in 1967; Alice Marion (Olsen); Ida Blanche (Forsythe); Aleta Irene (Nelson); William Henry, deceased in 1975; Olive Margaret (Locke); George Franklin.

In 1924 and 1925 he was a blacksmith in Portal, N.D. He went back to farming and farmed until his death in 1938.

## **The John T. Taylor Family**

John T. Taylor (Jack) was born in England in 1901 and came to Canada with his parents at the age of two to live west of North Portal.

Jack started to school at Britannia, returning to England to live with his grandparents for part of his education, until Forbes School was built in 1912. Then in 1915 he moved to North Portal with his parents and attended school in the old Minto School, at that time, which is now the Mel Barber house.

Jack started to work at the C.P.R. station as a call boy and clerk in the fall of 1917. At that time there were twenty-seven men working in the office. He worked there until he returned to England with his parents in December 1919.

In the spring of 1927, Jack came back to Canada and North Portal.

After visiting his aunt and uncle in Roche Percee, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Battersby, he heard Jim Hill was looking for a man to work on the farm, so Reid Lyall took him out, east of North Portal. He worked there and other farms around, until returning to work at the C.P.R. station part-time in 1929.

In 1931 he was married to Jeannette Hill. In 1932 we moved to Estevan and Jack worked there the winter months on the C.P.R. as billing clerk and checked coal cars at Truax Coal Mine, south of



Estevan. The mine moved south of Bienfait in 1938, then Jack was out of work, which was common in those days.

In 1940, Jack, Jeannette and family moved back to North Portal district west of town and farmed for five years. Their three children went to school at Forbes, the same school their parents had both gone to.

In 1945 we moved into North Portal as Jack got back on the C.P.R. as clerk and later as cashier, after George Wicks retired in 1947, which he worked at until retiring in 1966.

After retiring from the C.P.R. he had his own business as Custom Broker and Fire Insurance Agent until his death in June, 1975.

Our three children are all married. Gordon lives at Creston, B.C. and they have four sons.

Jeanne (Taylor) Drefko has three daughters and lives in Kamloops, B.C.: Ronald lives here in North Portal and has one daughter, Barbara and a son Ricky.

I, Jeannette (Hill) Taylor still live in our home on Menzie Street.

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## The Joe Taylor Family

Joe and Kate Taylor came to North Portal district in the spring of 1903 to work on the farm of



Jack Patterson, west of town, where they lived and worked until the fall of 1915, when Jack Patterson died.

The Taylor family then moved in to North Portal to the house they had built, which still stands on the corner of Antrim and Ulster.

Joe then worked as a clerk in the C.P.R. station, till 1919, when the family returned to England.

The Taylors had three children - Jack born in England in 1901; Walter born 1912 in Canada; Clara born in Canada in 1915.

Walter and Clara are still living in Blackpool, England. Both are married and Clara has one son.

Submitted by Jeanette Taylor

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## The Dick Thompson Family

Richard (Dick) and Eleanor Thompson came to Canada May 24th, 1915, from North Dakota, with six children, James, Viola, Clara and Edith (twins), Raymond and Russel.

They settled north of the Souris River, in the Frobisher district. Two more boys, William and Robert, were born there. In the spring of 1918, the family moved to "the Miller" farm, north of North Portal. The children went to Russelldale School, later to Minto School, North Portal. Donald and Marie (Dolly) were born there.

In 1925, the family moved south east of Roche Percee. The older children attended Short Creek School at this time. Gordon and David were born there.

In the early "Thirties", the family moved to the Britannia District, where the four younger children completed their school years.

In 1932 James was killed in an underground mine accident. Viola passed away in 1942. Robert (serving with the S.S.R.) was killed in France in 1944.

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson passed away in 1951 and 1954 respectively. Russell was killed in a mine accident in 1957. Raymond, Edith and William have also passed away.

While living in Roche Percee, David and Gordon continue to farm in the Britannia District. Three other children survive, Clara (Mrs. Howard Day) on a farm north of Estevan, Marie (Mrs. Stanley Long) lives in Roche Percee; also Donald.

Submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Thompson

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## The Henry Waddington Family

"Harry" the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. T.B. Waddington was born on January 8th, 1887, on the farm twelve miles southeast of Brandon, Manitoba. He received his schooling in Manitoba and at Brittania, a rural school in the North Portal



**Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Waddington**

area, where he had come with his parents in 1898. He finished his schooling with a term in a Brandon Business College.

He farmed in the North Portal area for several years and in 1922 moved with his wife and son Arthur to Ruthilda, Saskatchewan, where he farmed for forty-five years. He served as secretary-treasurer of the local rural school district for many years. He was secretary of the Wheat Pool Committee for several years also.

He was a warm hearted friendly man, always ready to lend a helping hand - a good neighbor.

Harry retired in 1967, but was not given much time to enjoy his retirement. He moved to Saskatoon in the autumn of 1968 and passed away in August of 1969.

His son Arthur, and grandson Lyal now farm the Waddington land at Ruthilda.

Arthur was born November 19th, 1919. He married Viola P. Beirnes in 1940. They had a family of three. Dorothy married F.J. Waddington and they have a family of three; Lyal married Carmel J. Abercrombie, and they are blessed with three children; John married Cheryl Davis and they have three children.

Submitted by Chrissie Waddington

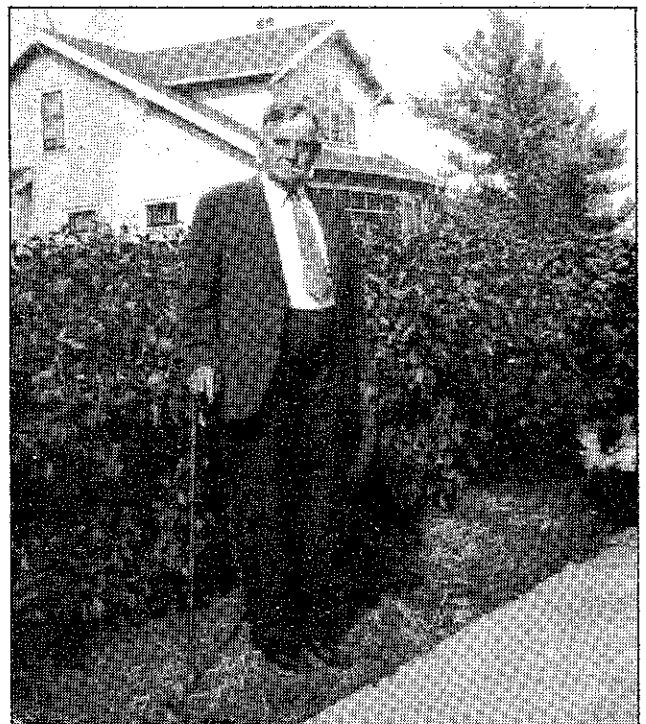
## **The John Waddington Family**

John Waddington, the second oldest son of Thomas B. and Amelia Jane Waddington, was born near Cumbermere, Ontario, January 24, 1875. He was seven years old when he came with his family to Glen Souris district south of Brandon, Manitoba, where they lived on a farm.



**Mr. and Mrs. John Waddington in 1902**

At the age of 23 John moved with the family to North Portal, Saskatchewan. They arrived at North Portal on January 1st, 1898. Soon after, on January 18, 1898, he filed for homestead rights on SW 16-1-4-Wnd and proved it on October 16, 1901. He purchased land on 22-1-5-W2nd where he made his residence.



**Uncle John Waddington**

On October 28, 1902 he married Elizabeth Johnston at North Portal. She had come from Drayton, Ontario in June 1901 and up to the time of her marriage, had been keeping house for her brothers Wilmot and Arthur Johnston. The sod house, in which they lived, was on Wilmot's homestead and where she arrived, after being conveyed by team and wagon from Oxbow, which was her destination by train.

Two daughters were born to Mr. and Mrs. Waddington. The eldest, Laura Janet, now Mrs. W.L. Wilson of Regina, was born on the farm on February 7, 1905. Anne Edna was born July 2, 1909 at the farm. Anne received her R.N. from Regina General Hospital and continued nursing until shortly before her death on February 16, 1941.

Mrs. Waddington died August 1, 1936 and Mr. Waddington died February 6, 1961. They are both buried in the family plot in the North Portal Cemetery.

## Thomas B. Waddington Family

Thomas Braim Waddington was born in Leeds, Yorkshire, England in 1846. With his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Waddington, he came to Canada at the age of twelve years. They settled in Hastings County, Ontario, where he later met and married Amelia Jane Bennett.

In 1882 Thomas Waddington, his wife and children came west where he bought C.P.R. land, twelve miles southeast of what is now the City of Brandon, Manitoba. He farmed there until 1898 when he moved with most of his family to the North Portal District and bought the farm on which Everton Aspenall now resides.

Before leaving the Brandon area, he had been partially incapacitated by a paralytic stroke, which paralyzed the right side of his body and affected his speech. He never fully recovered from this.



Back row, left to right, Annie (Mrs. S. E. Fox), Thomas R., Elizabeth (Mrs. J. K. Mackenzie), John, Sarah (Mrs. N. Clark), Front: Mary (Mrs. A. E. Johnston). Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Waddington. Henry E. (Harry). Missing is oldest son William J. who died before photo.

With this disability, he was faced with the formidable challenge of caring and providing for his wife and the members of his family still at home. His wife looked after his correspondence and with the aid of members of his family and hired help, he managed his farm and the general care and rental collections from several houses he had acquired in the village of North Portal. In later years, his daughter Annie and her husband, Everton Fox and family, took over the responsibility of the farm and care of the two old people.

There must be some people in the village and surrounding area who still remember the old phaeton and the faithful gentle little mare he drove, handling the lines a bit awkwardly in his left hand.

Later in his life he bought a car; this caused his family some anxiety as they feared with his independent spirit, he would try to drive it himself. Their fears were unfounded. He apparently knew his limitations. His grandsons, Archie, William, Almor and John Fox acted as chauffeurs. The car was more comfortable than the phaeton and a great time-saver.

Mr. Waddington passed away in the autumn of 1923. Death was caused by a final stroke.

The Waddingtons had eight children - William, Jan. 27, 1870 - June 4, 1901; Elizabeth Alberta, Dec. 4, 1871 - March 8, 1949; Annie Elsie, May 1, 1873; John, Jan. 24, 1875 - Feb. 6, 1961; Sarah Ruth, July 27, 1879 - Feb. 27, 1943; Mary Braim, Feb. 1, 1882; Thomas Richard, Feb. 26, 1884; Henry Edwin, Jan. 8, 1887 - Aug. 1969.

With all our conveniences and luxuries today, it is almost impossible for us to understand the loneliness, privation and hardship endured by pioneers of the western prairies; their sheer determination and indomitable will to succeed and provide something better for their children and grandchildren than they had. Their faith in the new land has been justified. They planned and built, perhaps better than they realized. We owe them so much.

Let us try to keep the inheritance they left us, free and clean.

Submitted by Chrissie Waddington.

## Thomas Richard Waddington

Thomas Richard Waddington, son of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Waddington, was born February 26th, 1884. He married Ida J. Coffin November 3rd, 1909.

Mr. and Mrs. Waddington and son Thomas are now deceased. The remaining members of the family, namely daughter Mary, now Mrs. Jas. Smith and sons Robert and Keith now reside in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Submitted by Laura Wilson

## The Waid Wood Family

Waid Wood came from England in 1886 and homesteaded on the SE6-2-2 in the Souris Valley.

His wife, Margaret Leach, was a Scottish girl. Their family consisted of three sons, George, Roy

and Henry, who now live in the Portal district. Their father had full responsibility of the boys rearing as his wife died when they were very young.

They came to the farm at the River in 1919. For recreation the boys played hockey on the River with home-made hockey sticks made from ash trees. The pucks were a piece of wood sawed from a tree.

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## Portal On The "Soo."

1907

This is the common designation of the busy little twin city which is rapidly rising into importance on the "Soo" line of railroad, where it intersects the International boundary in the New Province of Sask. One half of the town lies on the South of the boundary—the other half on the North, separated by a neutral space of 99 feet. For many years it made little progress, until the "lure" of the West took possession of the United States and immigration to Alberta and Saskatchewan became an overflowing tide. Now it stands second to Winnipeg as an important emporium. A second advantage is its proximity to vast fields of lignite coal, which in this treeless country shows the wise arrangements of Divine Providence. The country around it on both sides of the line is fairly good from an agricultural point of view. Years before the advent of the railroad a few settlers pitched their tents on its open plains, attracted doubtless by its coal fields, as abundance of coal cropped out of the

banks of the Souris river. Among the first pioneers were several Pictonians from the district of Lorne. For some years these settlers were "Forlorne" as their crops were dried up with hot winds from the bad lands of Dakota. Many of the settlers became discouraged and removed to pastures new. But Scotch grit and perseverance prevailed and for years the district has given large returns. The early settlers from Lorne are no longer "Forlorne." Their united crop this year totals 16,000 bushels of wheat and 10,000 bushels of oats. The settlers to whom I refer are W. H. Dunbar and his two nephews. The settlement to-day is one of the most prosperous in the West. In Church matters also they are well situated, enjoying as they do the highly prized services of the Rev. Mr. Coffin, formerly of Durham, Pictou Co.

Yours respectfully,  
GEO. RODDICK

## How to Start a Model T Ford

First, lift up one side of hood and switch on gasoline, then retard the spark advance. This is the lever on left hand side of steering column; push it upward. On right hand side of steering column is the auxiliary lever. Pull this down about half way. Check in front of car to make sure there are no obstacles, such as a wall. When holding crank, fold thumb up to fingers so crank will slide freely if motor backfires, (prevents broken thumb). Crank by turning over *once*. Repeat as often as necessary. When motor starts, advance spark by pulling lever down until motor runs smoothly. Leap out of way as car lunges forward; run and catch up to it and jump in.

## Thorne In The Side

Ivar found the small son of his housekeeper a real thorn in the side and scolded him on many occasions. Ivar's partner, Hunter, was a little more patient with the boy. One day Ivar was splicing some leather reins on which the child had tried out his new pocket knife and suffered the consequences. His anger cooled by now Ivar thought he'd see where he stood with the boy and asked,

"Who do you like best, Billy, me or old Hunter?" Solemn eyes looked into Ivar's as Billy answered, "Oh, Mr. Mattson, I wouldn't want to tell you that, it might hurt your feelings."

—Margaret Lees



## Prairie Fires

Prairie fires were a very disastrous thing in the early days. When there was so much prairie that had not been broken up yet, the homesteaders encountered some very frustrating times, when they would see smoke rising in the distance, they often lost their haystacks.

Mr. Jerry Daley ploughed the C.P.R. fireguard from North Portal to Moose Jaw. My Dad, J. K. MacKenzie and another fellow ploughed the boundary line from North Portal to Lake des Lacs and this served as a fire break in the early days.

And in the later years when there was more freight trains, the danger of fires were greater, as when the old locomotives climbed the grade from Pinto up, they used to get down to "Chugging" pretty heavy, and would throw out sparks, especially in the fall of the year when the grass was dry, and with a south or west wind, the fire would be away with nothing but prairie to the river until it got further east. The threshing machines, binders and combines would all stop and the men and boys would get loaded in wagons, with barrels and cans of water, bags, rags, and shovels, and lots of drinking water and food, as it was sometimes into the night before it was put out. The C.P.R. section foreman and his gang would be on the job.

In 1926 there was a bad prairie fire. One I remember in particular, when Frank Stringer's home and all his farm buildings burnt. They got

the horses out of the barn, except one which was burnt along with six cows. The house was two storey built in 1914.

Then in later years when farmers got pick-up trucks and more cars, it became a little easier to get around, and there was a little more time to visit some that we had not seen since the last prairie fire.

When the Portal, N.D. fire department got their motorized fire equipment and invited North Portal to join them, it was much easier to fight a prairie fire when they bought the fire truck. With lots of men it helped alot. I believe several times Frobisher and Bienfait fire trucks came and were helping.

Simon McGregor, a bachelor that lived back on the prairie, had cattle. I had hauled cattle out for him. His shack burned down in a prairie fire, and he had just put a roof over his cellar hole and was living in the hole, just a small space by the stove where he slept. A year or so after my brother Ken went back to Simon's on horseback to tell him to come into North Portal for Millet. This was in the spring and Ken saw some crows sitting on some dark object. It was Simon. They figured a horse maybe had dragged him to death, which was very sad.

—Archie MacKenzie

Though Minto school, North Portal, was in existence before the closing date of this book, this writer was not attending it then.

### Minto No. 490; the Thirties

Big Swede, Dago, Hunky or Kraut  
A Norwegian's a Dane with his brains knocked out  
(Or vice versa, depending on your heritage)  
The Little Red Schoolhouse so fair  
With bigotry the first rule there  
Lives on in poignant memory  
Of happy times and being free  
With sharing lunch and telling tales  
And nursing wee ones' anguished wails

They scarce can hate but call the name  
And answers come back without shame

The Irish Pig and "Scotche" so tight  
The Limey who is always right  
They fight each other every day  
But stand together all the way  
And vow anon to never snitch  
Even threatened with a switch

Loyalty to teacher too  
Is part and parcel of the crew  
Inspector comes, she trembles so  
The students show off what they know  
By giving of their very best  
In putting answers to his test  
The beaming teacher says good-bye  
Behind her back the brushes fly.

—Margaret Lees

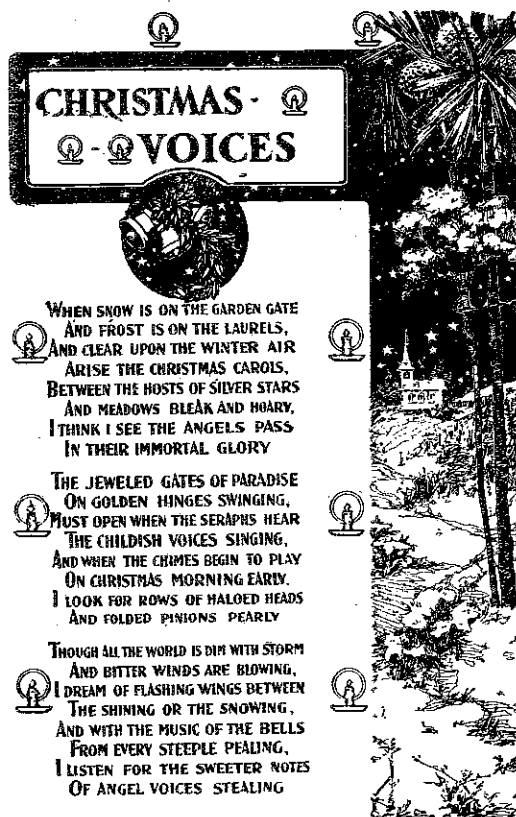
## The Rawleigh Man

The Rawleigh man was a welcome visitor in the early years. One recollection is of a yellow, horse drawn van coming into the farm yard just at supper time. The tired traveller would rest his horses and spend the night. He had plenty of time to show his wares and the company was welcome; a door to door salesman had access to local gossip and political opinions from the whole district.

The lady of the house was allowed to pick a gift to pay for a night's lodging; usually she chose some of the selectable spices or extracts, though the delicately perfumed soaps were a temptation.

In the morning, after an early breakfast, the children watched as their friend packed up his treasures. Then came the best part of all as the Rawleigh man reached under the seat of his van and pulled out a carton of chewing gum and passed it around, a whole package each if there weren't too many young ones present.

—Margaret Lees



MINTO  
**PUBLIC SCHOOL**

District No. 490

North Portal

1908

MAY T. DAVIS, Teacher

**Pupils**

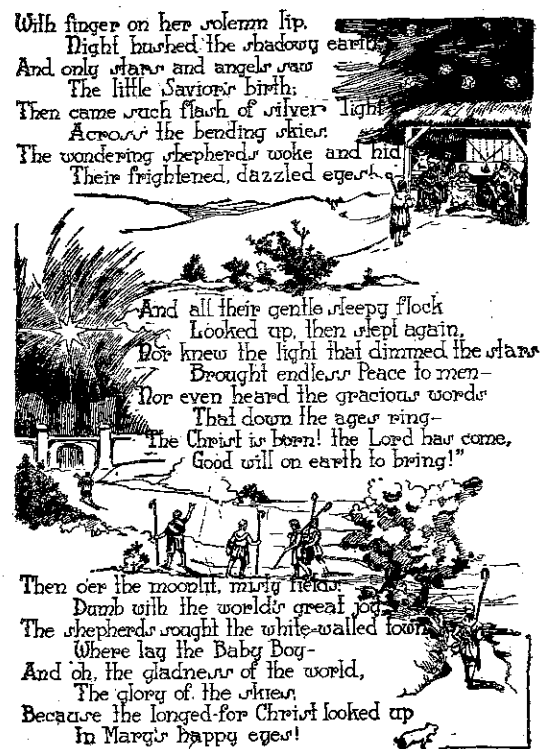
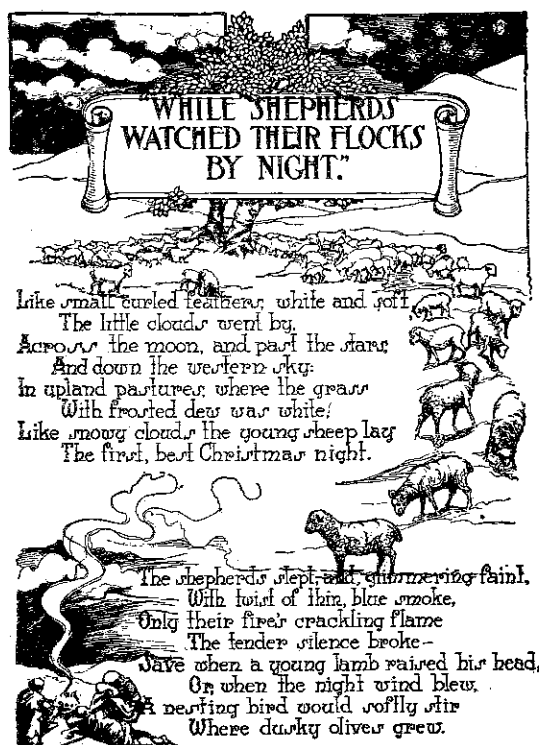
Kate Dorsey	Ada Hanson
Annie McKenzie	Kate McGinnis
Maurita McDonald	Jack Paterson
Manly Waddington	
Roy Gilpin	Morrel McDonald
Annie Paterson	Elsie Dorsey
Libbie Harris	Ella Gilpin
Vincent Kihl	Henry Croymans
James Carns	Sylvester Kihl
Stewart Mac Kenzie	Maud Carns
Dorothy Neal	Elsie Waddington
George Hanson	
William Waddington	
Francis Croymans	Pearl Curtis
Helen Marten	George Richardson
Ronald Brown	Fred Richardson
James Smith	Clarence Brown
Maggie Carns	Tressa Harris

Rosie Marten  
Marguerite Harrington  
Edward Harrington  
Muriel Gilpin

**School Board**

W. H. Dorsey, Chairman  
W. F. Harris  
James K. Mac Kenzie, Secretary

This was a Christmas Card the teacher gave the students in 1908.

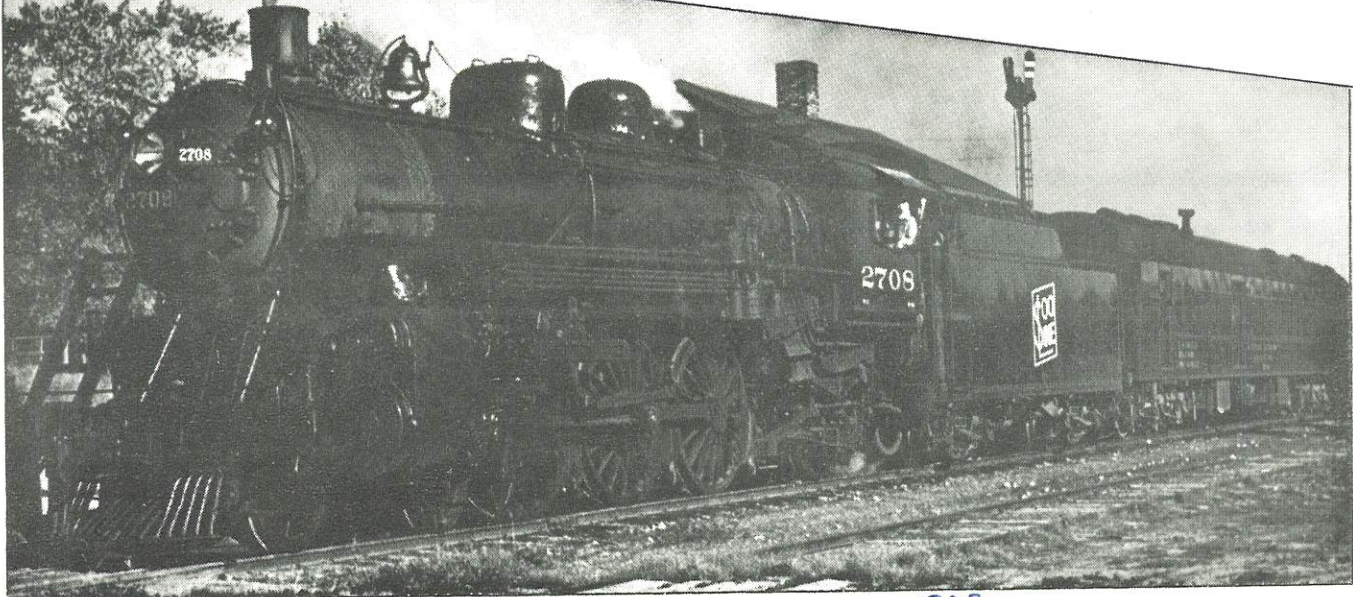




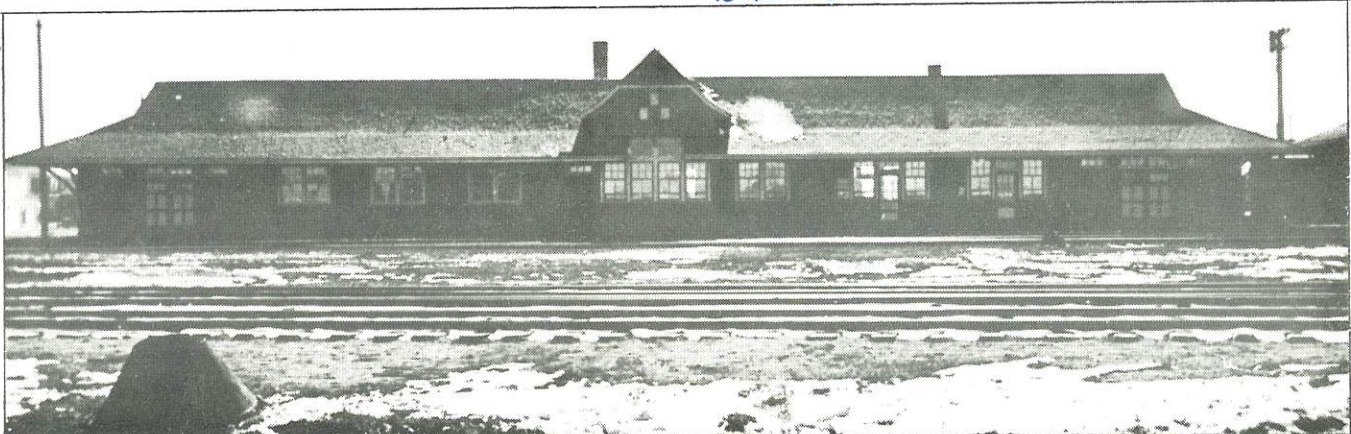
**Pictoral of the C.P.R. in days gone by....**



The first C.P.R. Station in North Portal circa 1907



Torn down = 1988 Later C.P.R. Station in North Portal







**C.P.R. Day Staff in North Portal, 1913**



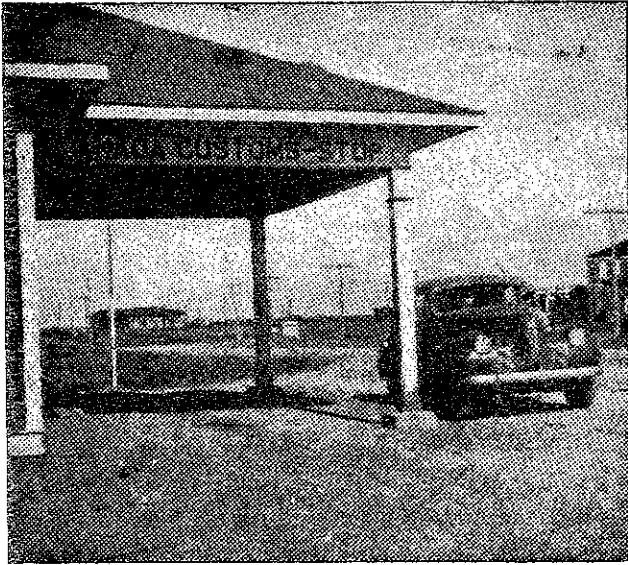
**Front Harry Briers, Left to right: Sandyh Smith, R. Dickson, ?, Kathleen Godson, Engineer and Fireman, Bill Shand.**

**Duke and Duchess of Windsor at North Portal on way to Ranch at High River in 1940 or 1941**





## Portal's Example Could be Copied



Customs stop at North Portal

The following article is taken from the Regina Leader-Post, July 6th, 1948. The headline reads:

### Portals' example could be copied

By GORDON KNIGHT

ESTEVAN, July 6 (Staff Special).—In North Portal, Canada, and Portal, U.S.A., if you want to play golf you play eight holes in Canada and sink the last putt in United States.

This is indicative of the neighborliness of the two communities only a stone's throw apart in distance but which are governed by different laws.

Citizens of the two villages commute regularly "across the line." They patronize each other's stores as much as the efficient but courteous customs officials allow, share each other's amusements, inter-marry, and co-operate in so many activities that the boundary line separating them is definitely an "imaginary line."

What North Portal lacks, Portal, N.D. has, and vice versa. Having no drug store, the people of North Portal patronize the drug store in Portal, N.D. Similarly, they go to movies on the American side, having no theatres. When the citizens of Portal wish to curl or golf, they come to the Canadian side.

The spirit of co-operation is exemplified by the local fire brigade. They call it a local brigade although the engine is on the American side. Men of both villages are members of the volunteer brigade and go to fires on both sides of the line.

Being so close together and of different countries, gives rise to many amusing incidents in this spirit of co-operation.

An example of this is to be seen in milk delivery. The dairy is in Canada and supplies milk to both villages. However, the dairy has two problems to contend with. It has to use smaller bottles for the American side due to the different systems of measurement, and it sells milk cheaper to the

Americans due to the different price standards.

On the baseball diamond, a player can actually "hit the ball out of the country," part of the outfield being in Canada while the infield is in the United States.

### Dual Citizens

Many of the young people of North Portal are dual-citizens. North Portal has never had a hospital, but up until seven years ago there was a hospital on the American side. Children born to Canadians in this hospital are classed as dual-citizens and can come and go between the two countries without the customary red-tape. They can work or go to school in either country. Some of them even served in the United States army and navy during the war. The airport, telephone exchange and light and power plants are all on the American side of the line and are used by both villages, while most of the businessmen in Portal, bank their money in Canada.

The busiest port of entry in Saskatchewan, more than 100 cars daily come into Canada and about the same number leave for the United States. About 700 of the working people in North Portal work either directly or indirectly for the customs and immigration. Most of the remainder are employed by the railroad, North Portal being a large railway terminal for both the C.P.R. and the Soo Line Railway.

### Woman Agent

When the Soo Line Railway first built a station at Portal, the agent chosen was a former employee of the C.P.R. Strangely enough, this person was a woman.

That woman is still in North Portal. She is now Mrs. Cassie Douglas, who, after leaving her position as agent, married and bought the department store in North Portal. Now retired at 84, she lives in the store operated by her son-in-law, Munro Dunbar.

It is believed that the village was incorporated in 1912. Although it was quite a busy community before that time, there are no records earlier than that year. First overseer of the village was T.R. Waddington and the first secretary-treasurer was George Wicks. Still living in North Portal, George Wicks drew up most of the bylaws of the village.

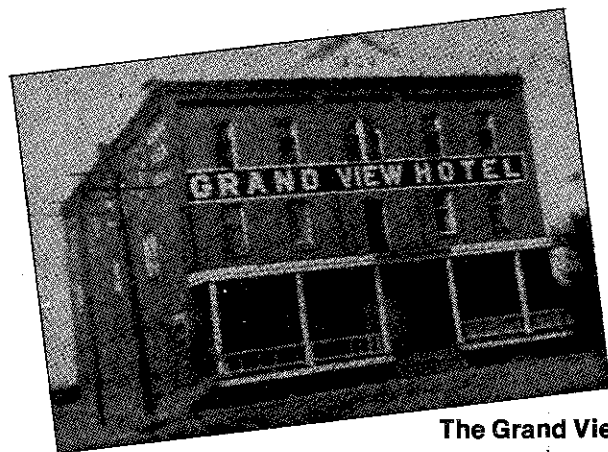
Nowhere else are you likely to find two communities in different countries that get along as well and practice co-operation so successfully. North Portal, Sask., and Portal, N.D. are setting an example that if copied on a world scale, would guarantee peace better than any method yet tried.

## Peeks into the past....

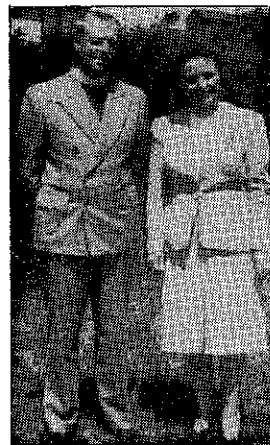


Union Hotel in 1905. The calender on the wall indicates the photo was taken in April 1905

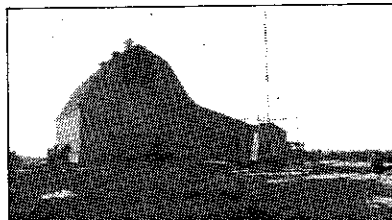
Dick Dunbar and Clark Babcock. Dick in Canadian Aviator Uniform and Clark in U.S. Aviator Uniform crossing hands on the U.S. and Canadian Boundary



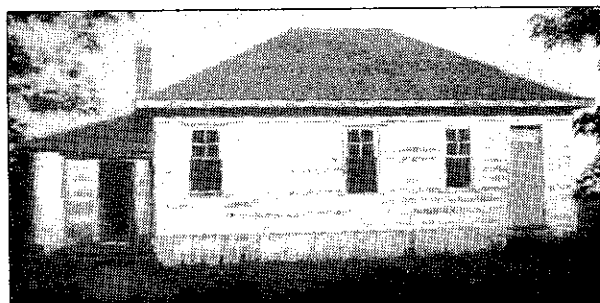
The Grand View Hotel  
Torn down -2002



Rev. and Mrs. David Cook



Kuster's barn was scene  
of many barndances



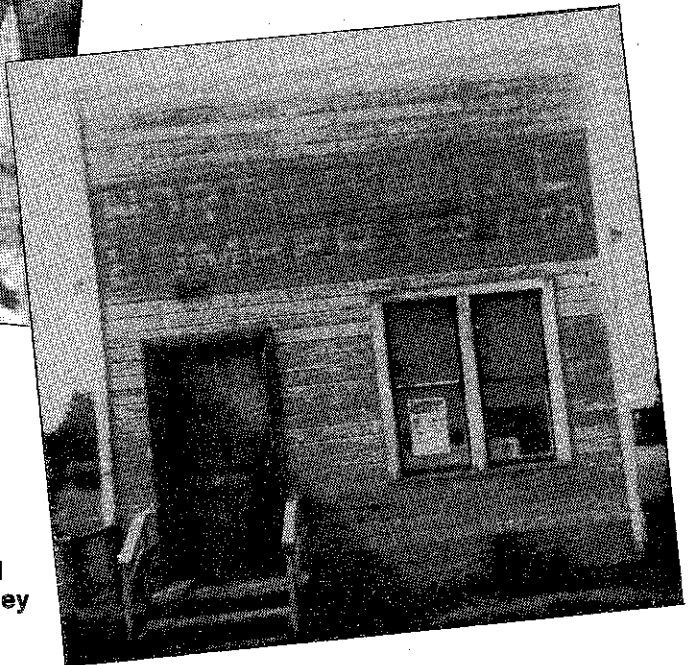
North-Portal Legion Hall



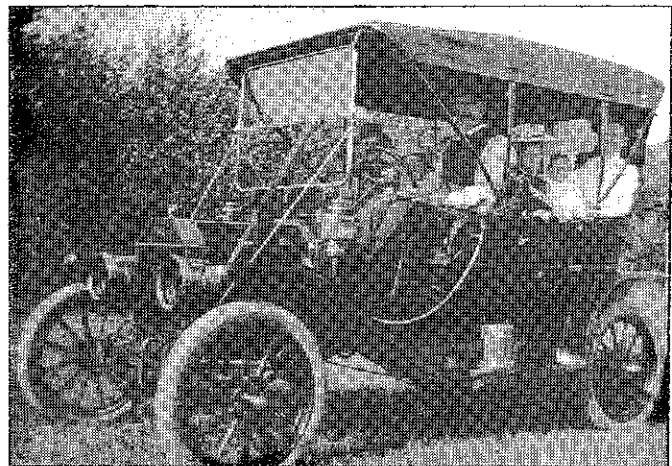
Winners of the Paterson Cup in 1914 and 1915.  
Clockwise from Top Left: George Fordyce, Riom  
Menzie Peter Lyall and R. H. Douglas



Rev. and Mrs. Frank Meyers and son

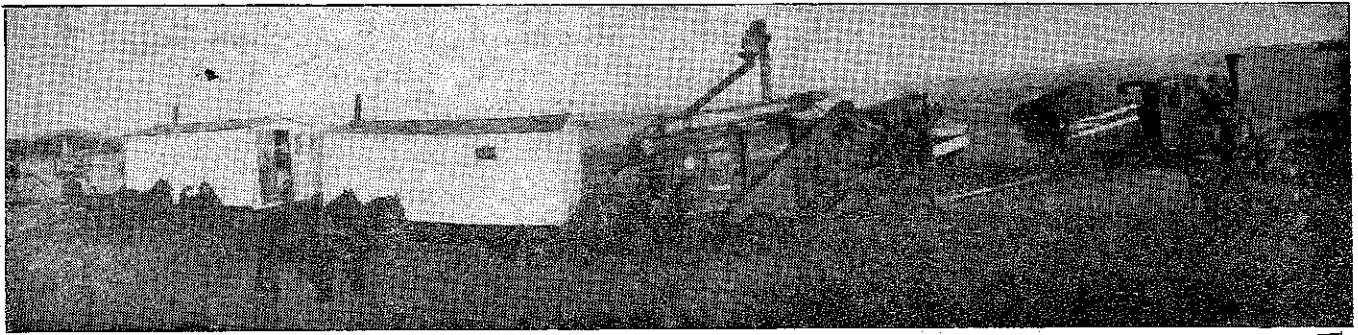


Harold  
Longney

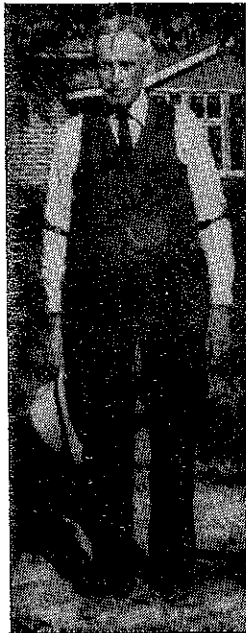


George G. Lyall's 1910 Ford featured a wooden  
body, and no front doors. Photo taken about 1912



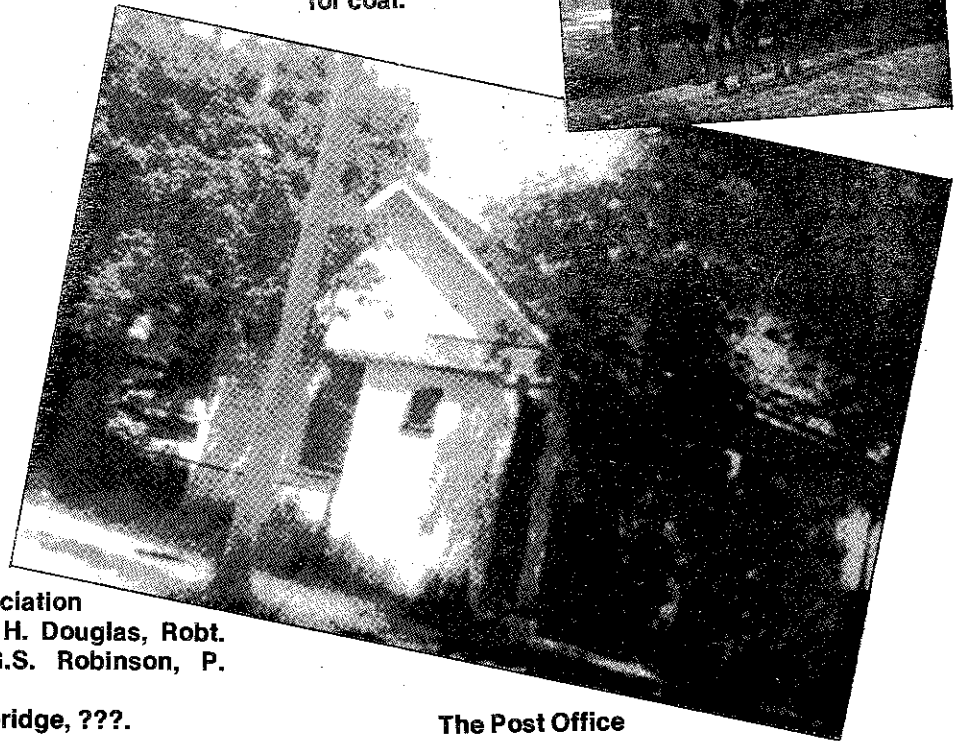


**Luke Thompson's 1908 Threshing Outfit**



**Rev. James  
Hamilton**

**Mr. and Mrs. Kuster  
going to the mines  
for coal.**

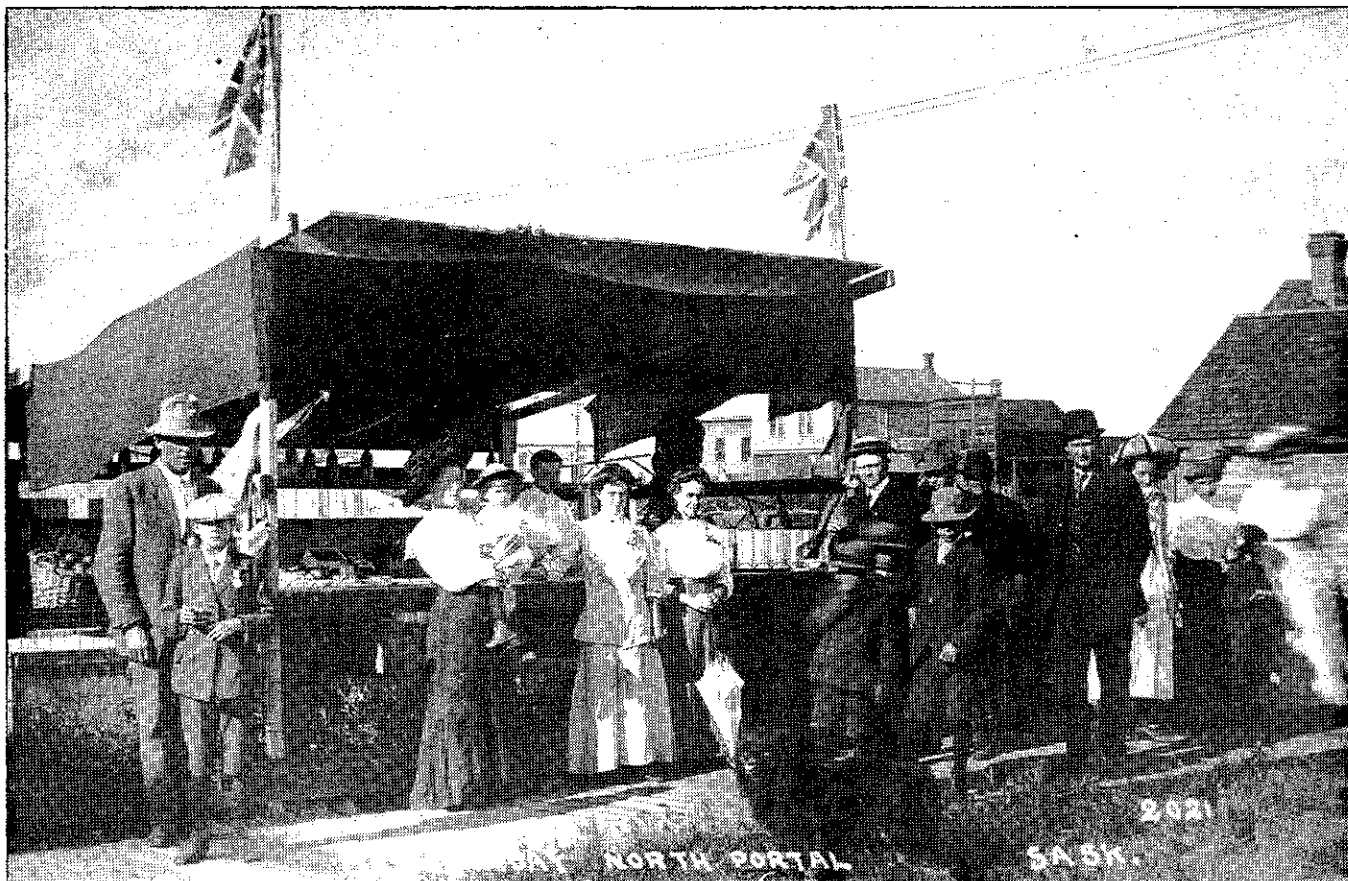


**The Post Office**

**Pinto 1909 Rifle Association**  
Back row, left to right: ???, R. H. Douglas, Robt.  
Dunbar, ???, Alex Dunbar, G.S. Robinson, P.  
Brinkworth, McKersie  
Middle: ???, W. Neal, L. C. Shoebridge, ???.  
Front: ??????????, Allie Dunbar.





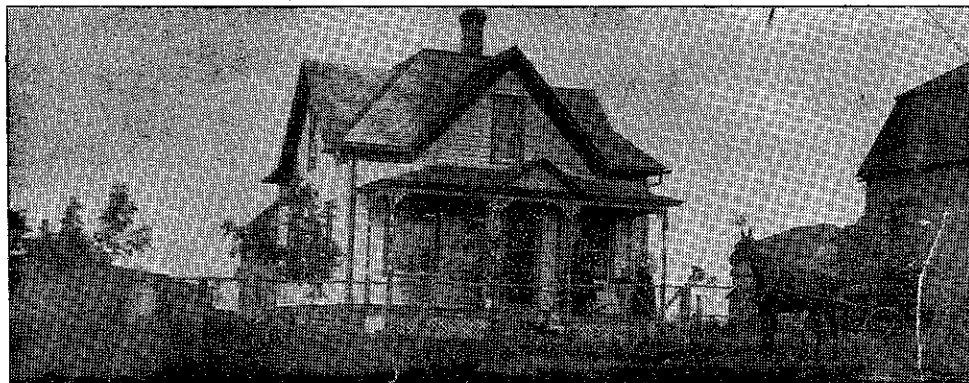


**Market Day in North Portal in 1911**

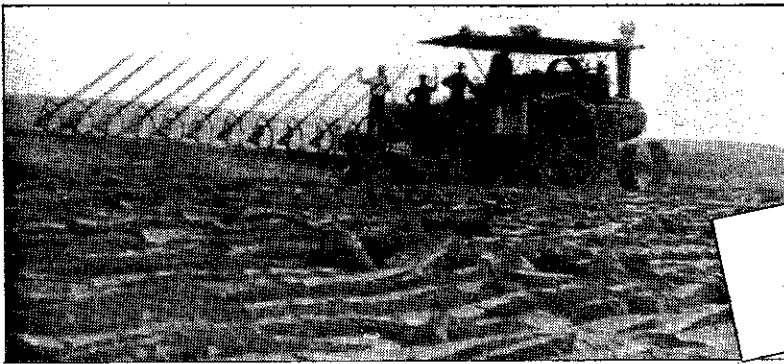
**The Boy Scouts—Standing left to right: Rev. Oliver, Ted Camm Taylor, Harry Olsen, Archie MacKenzie, Irving Dorsey, Harold Johnston, C. P. Wright. Front: Bob Dickson, Peter Olsen, Oscar Olsen, Ken MacKenzie, Claude Wright, Ian MacKenzie.**



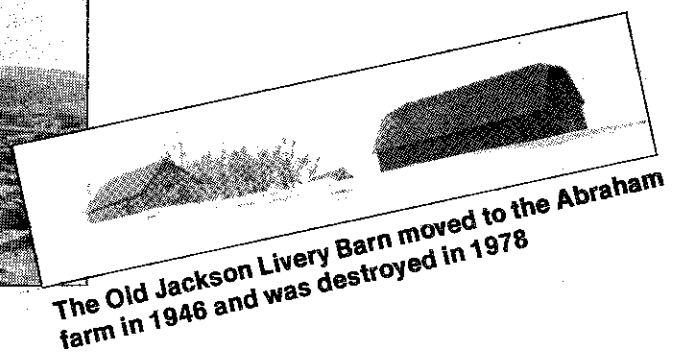
**Residence of Mrs. Forbes, G. S. Richardson in the buggy. Now is the home of Mrs. Ethel Sherrett.**



*TORN DOWN: 2002*



Jim Hill's Double Cylinder Twin Compound Rumley Steam Engine with 12, 14-inch breaking plow bottoms. This gave a 14-foot swath. This picture would be complete if it showed the engine with the attachments of the plow: A 14-foot, 1800 pound land packer, a 14-foot disc harrow, a 14-foot smoothing harrow, all attached to the outfit. The Rumley would travel 2½ to 3 miles per hour with this load. It required an engineer, fireman, plowman, water hauler, coal hauler and foreman, plus one good cook to feed the crew. At least three teams of horses were needed to service the outfit, which was brought from Alberta.



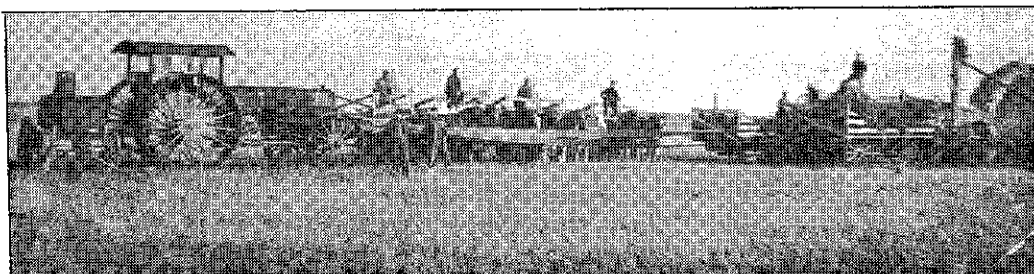
The Old Jackson Livery Barn moved to the Abraham farm in 1946 and was destroyed in 1978



P. Lyall and a Saskatchewan Wheat Field



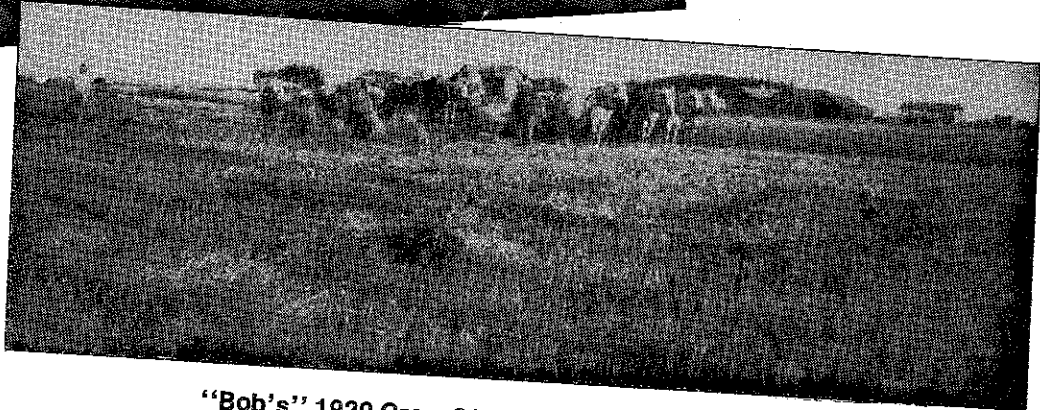
Red Cross meeting at R. Dunbar's



Lyall's Threshing Outfit



An early press drill



"Bob's" 1929 Crop, 2 1/2 Miles East of North Portal

