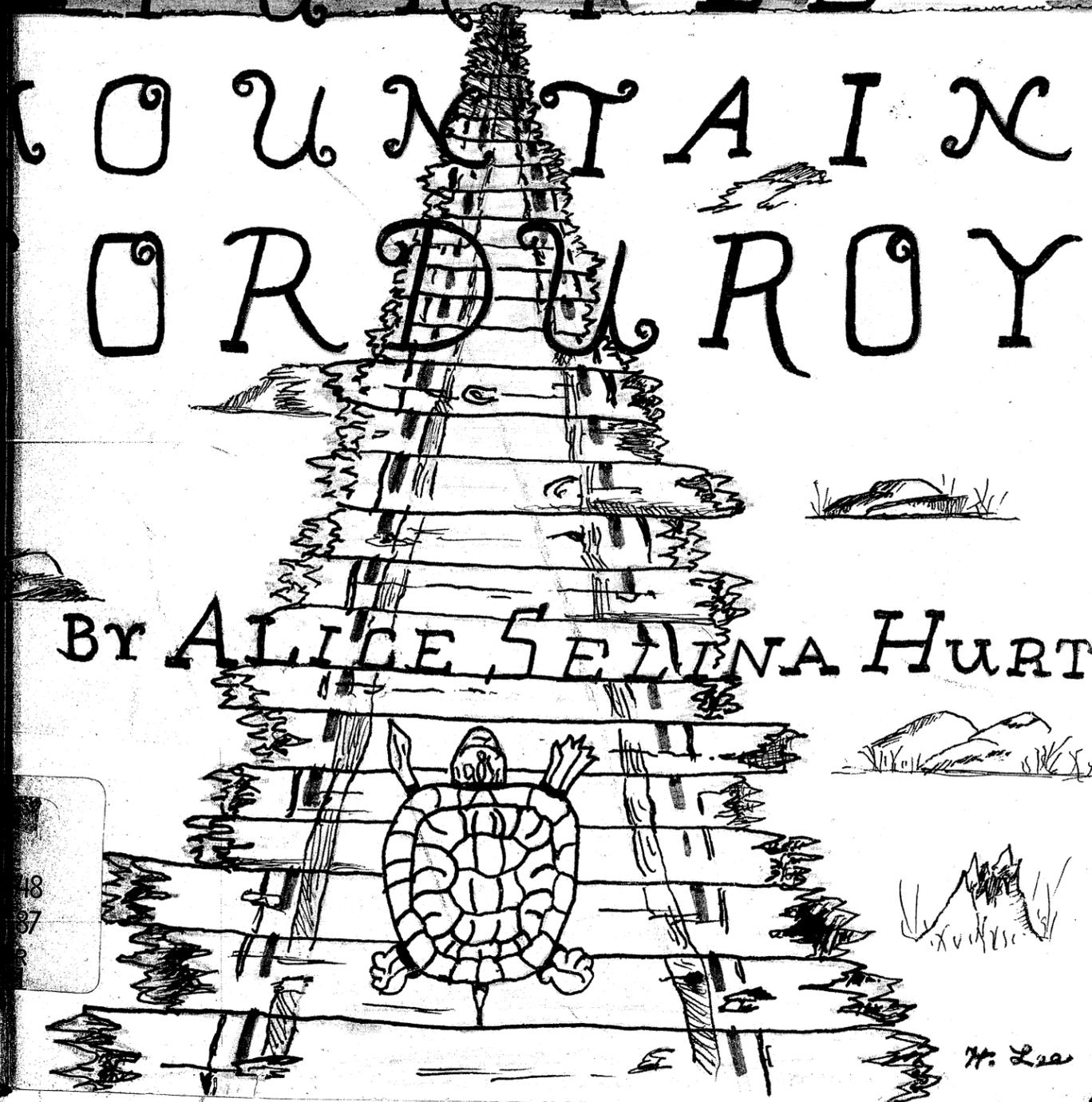




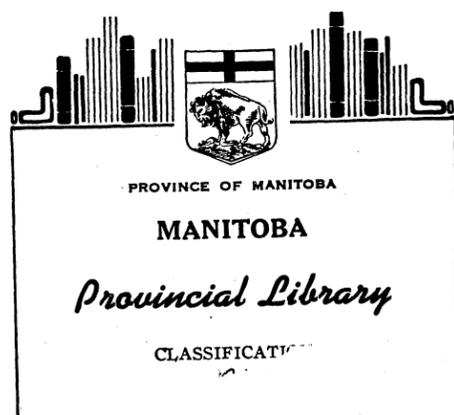
TURTLE
MOUNTAIN
ORDUROY

BY ALICE SELINA HURT



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"TURTLE MOUNTAIN CORDUROY"

by

ALICE SELINA HURT

THAT REMINDS ME!

!!!!!!!!!!!!

Alice Selina Hurt

PART 1"TURTLE MOUNTAIN CORDUROY""AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING"CHAPTER 1

In 1880 two young lads left their home in Whatstandwell, Derbyshire, England, on an adventure that would take them across the Atlantic to New York, and eventually to the Turtle Mountain area in southern Manitoba, Canada, an unknown land, thousands of miles from home and family ties.

As small boys these two, Robert John Hurt and his younger brother, Charles John had been "farmed out" by their mother when her husband died in his late thirties. He was a parson, and as often happens he left a large family and very little money. Mrs. Hurt had an abundance (18) of brothers and sisters, so she distributed the family among them, took the youngest boy and the girls and went to live in France, as it was cheaper living there at that time than in England.

Robert and Charlie were sent to live with four sisters, whose lovers had died or been killed in the Crimean War. They built a house they called "Chase Cliff" and lived there in a sort of melancholy "retreat". One of them became a nun in a nursing order. The house was a lovely place set in a beautiful location, near the village of Whatstandwell overlooking a heavily wooded and beautiful valley. The river Derwent, a canal and a railway ran along the bottom.

The two small boys had a nurse to look after them, but knew nothing of "tender loving care", bedtime stories, or adult interest in what they did or wanted. The only time they saw their Aunts, the sisters, was at four o'clock each afternoon when they were dressed and sent down to the drawing-room, where the ladies each looked at their nails, necks and ears to see if they were clean, then they had a piece of bread and butter and a piece of cake each and were sent back to the nursery. They were five and three years old at this time. At six Robert was sent to a boarding school, from there at nine he went to the merchant service training ship "Conway" to finish his education and train for the merchant service. At fourteen he went to sea as a midshipman.

As he was especially good at scripture study he won several prizes at boarding school.. He might have followed his father in the Church if he had had a chance to choose a profession. At the "Conway" he won prizes in navigation. On one journey the ship was becalmed off Cape Horn for six weeks. Robert read the Bible through from cover to cover twice. He knew it chapter and verse almost by heart and would not hesitate to check anyone up who misquoted any part of the Old or New Testament.

PART 1CHAPTER 1

Charlie went to boarding school at six too. He often told of the life there. Everyone up at 6.00 a.m., dressed and in class for lessons at 7.00 a.m. until 8.00 a.m. Then breakfast consisting of a dry roll and a mug of beer. Lessons again from 9.00 to 12.00 when dinner was served, always the same, stew with very little meat and lots of vegetables. No second helpings as it was always in short supply. Back to class until 4.00 p.m., supper at 5.00 p.m. bread and dripping, beer or water. Then bed.

Small wonder Charlie was a frail lad and became an epileptic. He was a shy sensitive man all his life, though later when he was in business for himself and married he was freed from the epileptic seizures.

What with Robert getting shipwrecked and Charlie having fits the family found them a great trial and very embarrassing. It cost money to outfit Robert after losing everything in a wreck and one never knew when Charlie might have a fit. So the men of their mother's family decided to send them both somewhere far away where they would be on their own. Manitoba was being talked about and as no one knew too much about it that seemed like a good place to send them. Robert was nineteen and Charlie seventeen, just out of school and not at all robust.

In the course of his travels Robert was aboard a ship taking railway lines to Vancouver Island for the railway being built to the coal mines and opening up the Island for settlers. He made two trips from Glasgow to Esquimalt, B.C. and Nanaimo among others. It was a long haul round Cape Horn, six months for the round trip. Returning from one of these trips he received a telegram from home at Queenstown, Ireland, telling him not to sign on again as he and Charlie were going to Manitoba.

No one had heard of Manitoba, it was not shown on the ship's maps. A thousand questions rose in his mind. Where was it? Was it a new country? How did one get there?

He was due to write examinations for his master's papers, but the thought of new adventures put an end to that. Had he written these exams and passed he would have been eligible for a position as master or captain of a ship almost anywhere.

On reaching home the plans were explained, all arrangements had been made, passage booked, tickets paid for, everything was settled so there was no danger of hitch in the proceedings. They travelled by steamer to New York, Robert's first encounter with a mechanically driven ship. It was of course a great interest.

PART 1CHAPTER 1

From New York they took the train to St. Paul, Minnesota, and again by train to Neche, North Dakota. Here they purchased a yoke of oxen, equipment and supplies to take them a hundred miles or more across the prairies to they really "knew not" what.

They drove the oxen from Neche to Emerson, Manitoba, across the United States boundary. This was quite an operation. They had had contact with horses, but oxen were unknown beasts. Robert used to laugh years later about his efforts at oxen driving. He said he would crack the great long leashed whip and roar "Glang" at the top of his voice. Then light his pipe and puff awhile, finally the oxen would begin to move.

Arriving at Emerson they found the Red River in flood. The ferry had broken away from the cable and lay stranded on the mud on the far side of the river and down stream some distance.

In 1877-78 quite a number of people, mostly men, came to Manitoba from Ontario looking for land to settle on and develop. Some returned to their Ontario homes with glowing accounts of the vast prairies and abundant timber on the Turtle Mountain. Land was free for the taking in some areas, and for homesteading in others. Many men had cleared forests to get land where they could grow wheat, and a garden in Ontario. Here they saw acres open ready to be ploughed in this new Manitoba.

So they returned home, disposed of their farms in Ontario, loaded stocks and equipment on trains or covered wagons and struck out with their families (and sometimes friends), for a new life on the Western Plains, using their past experience to develop the fertile prairies for agriculture.

Many had arrived at Emerson before Robert and Charlie Hurt got there, only to find their way barred by the rampaging Red River. The situation at Emerson had become serious, because it was only a tiny settlement and the food supplies for man and beast were running out. The train from St. Paul ran only once a week and everything had to be hauled from Neche to Emerson. Some men had had to kill pigs and poultry to feed their families.

Things were looking pretty grim when Robert and Charlie Hurt arrived at Emerson, adding to the crowd. Robert looked over the ferry situation, located cable, hawser, pulleys, also a flat bottomed boat, and several heavy teams of horses with capable drivers. Having done this he called for volunteers to go over to the ferry and see damage if any had been done, and what the possibilities of salvage there were.

PART 1CHAPTER 1

Four men volunteered so they started off, Robert sculling at the stern, a method he was very skilled at, and taking a light line attached to a hawser with them.

The current was running strong with a lot of debris floating on it. However they made the trip safely, boarded the ferry and hauled over the hawser which they made secure to a stanchion and gave the signal for the men on shore to begin driving the teams.

It was a big question! Could the horses break the ferry free of the mud. After several teams got the rythm of pulling together, it swung free and out into the current and there was a great rejoicing. Gradually the ferry was hauled back to her slip and made secure there. The broken end of the cable had to be picked up on the far side of the river, spliced to run smoothly through the pulleys and attached to the ferry. All this being accomplished a trial run was made and proved successful.

Everyone was overjoyed and turned to with a will, packing up their belongings and getting them loaded on the ferry. As it was a "walking" ferry everyone had to help pull it across the river against the current.

Robert and Charlie supervised several families crossing with their stock, gear and equipment. Seeing all was going well and smoothly they loaded their own oxen, wagon and supplies and began the long tedious journey along the Old Commission Trail, headed for Turtle Mountain area where they had planned to settle.

They had many adventures and mishaps on the way such as getting stuck in Dead Horse Creek, and when the oxen lay down in the water and refused to get up at Tobbaco Creek ford. Robert was a resourceful lad and found some solution to the various problems that arose. They had one clear direction pointer to travel by as long as they kept the "Pilot Mound" in view.

The Old Commission Trail ran directly East and West. With the Pilot Mound to the North they were able to keep a fairly straight course though awfully slow. Oxen are good at pulling but take their own sweet time about it. The Trail ran as far as Old Deloraine, where there was a Government Land Office. This was where all those wanting land for settlement had to apply.

Robert and Charlie Hurt did not take up land themselves at once. There was a lot to learn about keeping alive on the Prairies if you had no experience. Clearing where there was a growth of wolf willow for instance was a tremendous job. Also knowing what land would grow grain crops, what would make stock range, and where water was available.

PART 1CHAPTER 1

Wolf Willow is a pretty, wild shrub, having thick leathery silver coloured leaves, and a sweet smelling tiny yellow flower that produces delicious honey. The bushes grew from three to five feet high in the early days and were a very thick heavy growth, often so dense a man had difficulty breaking through. Cattle and horses could get lost in the tangle of full grown scrub. It covered acres and acres for miles. To clear for ploughing this scrub had to be cut off at ground level or a plough could not cut through it.

All this had to be learned by newcomers to the prairies. Such knowledge could mean the difference between life and death.

PART 1"DESTINATION REACHED"CHAPTER 2

In early days lumber was scarce, so huts were built of sod cut from the open grass land by plough. Properly built these huts, or soddies as they were called, were substantial and fairly comfortable. Building one required "know how" and hard work. The base of the outside walls had to be four feet thick at the base and tapering off slightly as it was raised, but never less than three feet. Dividing walls inside would be less. When the desired height was reached poplar poles were laid across from wall to wall, close together. This formed a base for the sod roof. On this foundation sod was carefully laid, each layer arranged so there were no cracks for water to run through. It required at least three feet of sod. The floor was just earth, or sometimes poles laid close, and flattened on top with an adz for easier walking, and the space between filled with soil.

There was a constant filter of dust falling from ceiling and walls. Those who could afford it stretched factory cotton over all walls and ceiling. This held the dust back but if rain came through of course there was an ugly mess.

Robert and Charlie lived in a "soddie" for some time. They included a side shelter for their oxen as part of their establishment. Thus saving labour on at least one wall of the shelter construction.

It was necessary at this time for settlers of Turtle Mountain area to go to Brandon for all supplies. A trip of sixty miles or more. Those who had a wagon and oxen or horses took a load of wheat over and brought back flour, oatmeal, bran, etc. Even sometimes they took a sack of grain over on their back, bringing back flour, walking both ways. It was a pretty grim trip at the best of times, but to walk it must have been dreadful, sleeping in the open, devoured by mosquitoes and black flies in summer. In winter when they would need to camp near bush to get wood for a fire, made it an endurance test.

Robert got the bright idea of building a grist mill on a creek near "Waubeesh". He procured mill stones and machinery and built the mill. It was to be driven by a water wheel. When the building was completed he gave a big party and a dance to celebrate his 21st birthday, January 21st, 1882. Everyone for miles around was invited, special drinks and eats were brought from Brandon. It was to be a real spree. As the weather had been fine and mild for some time everyone and the cat came to take advantage of the chance to meet with friends, dance, talk and have fun. The music most likely was produced by a fiddle, comb and perhaps a Jew's harp.

PART 1CHAPTER 2

After supper someone noticed the wind had risen and the temperature was falling. On investigation it was discovered a blizzard had blown up. From a balmy 50° it was heading fast for zero. Everyone hurried off home as fast as they could before the storm got too bad. Next morning it was 30° below zero. All the eats left were frozen solid in the unheated building.

There seems to be no record of why the mill never operated. Nor what became of the building and machinery except one mill stone. This turned up many years later as a door step to a farm house at "Waubeesh". It was round and serated on the surface and the edge. There was a square hole in the centre. I saw it and was very interested in it. An old timer told me it was "the drive stone from the grist mill at 'Waubeesh'." Sad to say the house was burnt down and not rebuilt for some years. When eventually it was built it was on a different site. So an historical relic was lost for ever.

PART 1"THE CALL OF WATER AND BOATS"CHAPTER 3

A man named Morton had a saw mill and planer at Lake Max, one of a chain of lakes along the top of Turtle Mountain. There was lake Max, lake Lulu, lake Oscar and lake William, all connected at that time by creeks. As the mountain was heavily timbered with oak, elm, ash, Manitoba Maple and birch as well as scrub growth consisting of choke cherries, pin cherries, high bush cranberries, Saskatoons, alder and poplar, these lovely lakes made the mountain a very lovely spot. The forest was made up of huge trees that provided many hundreds of board feet of lumber.

Robert worked for Morton for some time. He seemed drawn to the water and boats after the long trip across the prairies. Charlie was there with him some of the time. On one occasion they had a great fright. They were sleeping in a partly constructed building. The doors and windows had not been installed. During the night a terrific storm came up. They got up to look out and saw two eyes moving about at the back of the building quite close by. Thinking it was a bear they huddled close together in a corner and watched the door. Cold shivers running down their spine. Holding their breath they waited for the bear to come in through the door. As nothing happened they fell asleep. Eventually the storm passed and dawn came. Looking out again they saw the two eyes were two oxeve daisies flowers swaying in the breeze.

The mill stood on the bank at the north end of the lake. A stream ran into the lake on the east side of the mill, from a large slough back a hundred yards or so. As logs were cut they were hauled and dumped into this slough. Later they were sent down a flume to the lake where a boom was chained at the entrance to the lake from the stream. Here they were held until taken out to the mill for cutting.

There was a large oak tree on top of the bank to which the mill boiler smoke stack was guyed with a long bolt through the tree. Two huge slab piles were there too, one near the planing shed.

Mr. Morton had an arrangement whereby any man needing lumber could work at the mill and be paid in lumber. As there was very little cash in the district this was a great help to many people. Robert may have taken advantage of this plan when Charlie and he were needing the lumber for their buildings.

PART 1CHAPTER 3

About this time there was the first sports day held in the settlement. Ned Sankey and Robert made a flag "Saint George's Red Cross on a white field." They made two flags really and they were works of art, time and patience. About eight feet by five, they were made of heavy white cotton twill, the red cross of turkey red, neatly hemmed down on to the white back ground. One of these flags hangs in the Boissevain Museum, and the other belongs to the "Cutty Sark" Club in Winnipeg, of which Robert was a charter member. He gave the flag to them.

For sports they had cricket and various races, both running and slow. Robert's oxen won the slow race hands down.

A tree was planted to commemorate the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It was planted near where the C.P.R. Station now stands. C.W. Plummer had the honour of planting the tree. To give it an extra good start he watered it with beer, after planting. It may have been a "teetotal" tree because the poor thing did not survive very long.

In 1885 a railway was built following somewhat the route of the Old Commission Trail as far as Deloraine. At this time the name of "Cherry Creek" was changed to "Boissevain" in honour of a New York financier who loaned money for the railway project, and came out on the first passenger train, "just for the ride."

E. B. Tatchell and Robert Hurt went into partnership and built a grain elevator on the railway. It was the first elevator in the village. Nine other elevators were built later. Established as grain buyers they had a good start in business.

In 1887 Robert came into some money and went home to England. Of course he went to his old home, "Chase Cliff" in Whatstandwell village, and met again a girl he and Charlie had known as young lads. She was Alice Mary Shaw, better known as "Minnie." She had five brothers and a sister and they lived in Whatstandwell too. They became engaged and Robert returned to Canada full of plans for building a home in Boissevain to bring his bride to.

He bought five acres of land on the outskirts of the village and engaged a man to draw plans and build the house. As this man, Bunting by name, came from near Robert's home he took a special interest in the project.

PART 1CHAPTER 3

It was to be a four roomed bungalow, the first of its kind in the settlement. It had a peaked roof, and the walls were plastered (another first). All the woodwork was red cedar varnished, making it a very attractive red finish. The walls were painted a soft pink like a "swallow's breast". There was a bay window in the sitting room, and a tiny hall over the front door. A furnace was installed too. Heretofore houses were heated by stoves.

When completed it was a very pretty and comfortable "wigwam" for the English bride to be. Minnie's father was very much against her going so far away. As she was to go out alone, and he did not know very much about the place, nor Robert's circumstances and what living conditions were like in far off Manitoba, he was very worried.

However, when his sister Mrs. Landor, widow of Dr. Landor of London, Ontario, invited Minnie to come to her and be married from her house and that she would give the bride away herself, he gave his consent. There were four girls in the Landor family. Two of them were to be bridesmaids for Minnie, so there was lots of excitement over plans, dresses, etc.

Robert had to be in London for a month before he could get a licence for his marriage so he brought his best man with him to bolster his courage. He had not met any of the Landor family, nor had he seen Minnie for two years. He insisted that Minnie must have a train on her dress, and a long veil. As she had not planned on this there was excitement over getting these things made.

John Nicholson was to be the best man. He was a cheerful gay person and with two Landor boys, they made lots of enjoyable trips to nearby places of interest and beauty, having a lot of fun.

Mrs. Landor had worn "widow's weeds" ever since her husband's death, but decided to wear a hat at the wedding to give her niece away. In case someone does not know what "widow's weeds" refers to, it was a close fitting cap-like head piece made of folds of black crepe, with a white corded silk border resting on the hair. There was a long flowing black silk veil bordered with crepe hanging down the back. A widow always wore one from the time of bereavement for at least a year. As they were very becoming to some women they continued to wear them, even for the rest of their life.

PART 1
CHAPTER 3

Robert John Hurt and Alice Mary Shaw were married in St. John's Church, London, Ontario, July 16th, 1890. It was a new church and this was the first wedding, so they were presented with a Bible from the Rector and Wardens. There was a suitable inscription on the fly leaf signed by them.

The honeymoon was spent at Niagara Falls. While they were there the best man and bridesmaids joined them for a day of sightseeing. They had numerous photos taken before and under the Falls, some the old style "tintypes", photographs on tin.

PART 1

"A NEW BEGINNING"

CHAPTER 4

Charlie Hurt had taken up a homestead near Whitewater Lake. He built a frame house, also a stable and pump house which contained a crushing machine. All were operated by a huge wooden windmill, on top of the pump house.

He had a married couple who had come out from England to work for him. Mrs. Wilson was housekeeper, and Tom was farm manager. When Robert and Minnie returned from their honeymoon their house was not ready for them to move in. So they continued on to Whitewater to stay with Charlie as he had a nice comfortable home to welcome them to.

There was a very heavy crop that year, a "bumper" crop was anticipated in the area. The day after their arrival Charlie took them out to see the lovely wheat fields. The wheat stood tall and heavy. When Robert stood in the field the grain heads came up to his mustach (he stood 5'11" tall). Charlie said, "I will give you a piano for a wedding present when this is threshed."

A bad storm was gathering in the West so they started for the house in a hurry. As there were no roads they drove across country, and bumped over a badger hole breaking the spring. Charlie folded up the floor covering and stuck it under the break, whipped up the horse and hurried on. They reached the house as the storm broke with a deluge of rain and hail. Charlie got the horse and rig into the stable and had to put a pail over his head to get to the house. The hail stones were as big as hen's eggs and golf balls.

Every window was broken and hailstones piled up in the rooms and on the beds. Many animals were killed in the fields by the terrible force of the hail.

Next day they drove out to see what damage had been done. A dreadful sight lay before them. Not a blade of that beautiful grain remained. It was like newly ploughed field. The pastures and hay meadow, even the prairie grass was beaten into the ground. Nothing was left for man or beast, where the storm had passed. A strip five miles wide and twenty miles long had been swept bare of vegetation.

Boissevan Village had been devastated, windows broken, gardens destroyed, poultry and small animals lay dead. Trees stripped of foliage. There was not enough glass in the village to replace even a small portion of the broken panes. It was weeks before it was shipped from Winnipeg, the amount needed was so tremendous.

PART 1
CHAPTER 4

Eventually Robert and Minnie were able to move into their house and get settled. Come Sunday they went to church. Minnie wore one of her best trousseau frocks, a pretty printed muslin in shades of steel blue and grey. When she took her dress off she found a big ugly oily mark in the middle of the bodice back. It turned out to be from putty that had been stuck on the pew back when the windows were repaired in the church. As she was unable to get the stain out of her dress she never wore it again.

The house furniture and Minnie's dresses were a source of great interest to the villagers. The ladies were particularly interested in Minnie's clothes and would come shyly to the door and ask if they might come in and see her things. At first she was reluctant to let them in, but Robert assured her it was a friendly interest and not meant rudely. People had no opportunity to see new styles and furnishings so far out on the prairie. About 1.00 a.m. soon after they had taken up residence in Boissevain, a most appalling row burst forth, horns blowing, drums beating, tin pans clattering, men whooping and hollering, Minnie was scared stiff. However, Robert realized it was a "grand shivaree" put on by the male inhabitants. He laughed, got up and dressed and went out to meet "the welcoming committee."

When he appeared at the door there was a clamour for Mrs. Hurt. Then they marched around the house singing -

"We won't go home till morning
We won't go home till morning
We won't go home till morning
Or Mrs. Hurt appears."

So of course she got up and dressed and went out and invited them all in. Fed them bread and cheese and jam and no doubt there was liquid refreshment handy. They must have had a good time as they stayed until 4 o'clock and voted it a "first rate party" and "a right good time."

Minnie found the sound of the wind across the grass and window screens very disturbing. She could not get used to the "sooing" sound, and it made her very nervous and fearful. When Indians came and camped near the pasture fence she was really upset. John Nicholson and Aggie Landor were married a year later and came to live next door, so that helped her somewhat to overcome her fears.

The house was set back from the road, and faced out to a tennis court surrounded with trees. The entrance was a curved driveway up to and round the house. Robert had planted a fine lot of trees, Manitoba maple, poplar, cottonwood, willow and evergreen, also a "Balm o'Gilead" which was so lovely in Spring with the perfume exuded as the sap rose. He also made a little hop bower, which looked lovely when in bloom. He did everything he could think of to make Minnie happy in her new home.

PART 2
"FAMILIE AFFAIRS"
CHAPTER 1

The first part of this narrative concerns my father, Robert John Hurt, and his younger brother Charles John. It is related as told to me over the years.

I came on the scene June 26th, 1891. It was not a happy event. As there was no doctor in the settlement (nor a trained nurse) a midwife who had learned the "job" by experience and a young medical student brought me into the world. The student did his best, but evidently left some important matters improperly attended to, as mother was in very poor health for some years and never had another child.

A severe electrical storm came over the village at the time which terrified mother. She could not get used to the violence of the prairie storms, and was so frightened she insisted on Dad staying beside her during her confinement with the result he fainted when I was born.

It is not hard to understand what that did to his morale. For a man who had reefed sail at the main mast in a gale and experienced shipwreck twice, to faint at the birth of a baby was a pretty bad blow to his pride, and put me in the "dog house" with two stripes against me. He would have nothing to do with me. I never could sit on his knee, fall asleep in his arms, hear bed time stories, or go walks with him. When I was older and heard him say they could not do something "because of the damn kid", I was finished as far as he was concerned. However, the time came many years later when he learned to see me as an individual we became real friends.

In 1895 the doctors in England told mother and dad that I would not live past seven years, or at least it was very unlikely. If I did survive at that time I would certainly not pass fourteen. On this account I was never sent to school.

Miss Caroline Pelley who came to Canada to seek her fortune as a kindergarten teacher came to help mother when I was six weeks old. She stayed with us until I was twelve and taught me all the "reading, writing and 'rithmetic" I ever had. In 1903 she was asked to go to Winnipeg and open classes for pre-school children. This she did and had a part in educating many prominent men and women who are today in positions of great responsibility in Manitoba, and other parts of Canada.

In 1906 Dad's elevator was burned down. It was a terrible shock to us all. It caused me to have a memory "black out". I answered the telephone when the message came saying the elevator was on fire. The call came at 2 o'clock in the morning. I ran and told Dad, then looked out of the window and saw the flames pouring out of the highest point of the roof.

PART 2CHAPTER 1

That is all I remember of the fire, or what was left after. It is all blank to me. Needless to say it was a terrible blow to Dad. His only means of livelihood gone in a few hours. It left him stunned.

We had a very difficult time. Dad got odd employment from time to time but there was no regular money coming in. Having very little formal education, I was unable to do anything that paid a good salary. I worked in the telephone office for a while at \$28.00 a month, top pay for an operator. I thought it was a grand amount, but it did not do much towards keeping the wolf from the door even in those days. When the town built and operated the electric light plant, Dad was appointed engineer.

In 1911 Mother died. When she knew she was not going to recover, Mother asked me to write and ask Aunt Edie, her sister, to come out. This I did, but got no reply until the day Mother was buried, because Aunt Edie had been away in France and did not get my letter until she returned to England.

Dad was so sure that Aunt Edie would not come if she knew that Mother had died he insisted I send a cable to tell her. This hit me very hard, I felt as though I was really not of any account, that no one cared what became of me because I was really "nothing".

From the time I sent that cable I "blacked out". I have no memory of what went on around me for a week. I believe the Good Lord spoke to Mrs. Holditch and told her to send for me because that is what she did. Margerie, her daughter, came to my room and told me her mother had sent her and said she was to bring me home with her. I was in bed. I saw and heard her but I had no power to move or make a decision. She packed some clothes for me, helped me dress and get into the rig. It was all like a dream. I remember dimly the drive to the farm. It was a glorious June evening. When we arrived all the family were there to greet me. Mrs. Holditch suggested I went up to bed at once, and she brought a cup of warm milk which I drank, then lay back with my arms over my head. The next thing I knew was Margerie leaning over me and calling my name. When I opened my eyes she said, "So you are still with us". "I was worried, you have not moved all night and it is now 12 noon. You have slept the clock once and a half round." My arms were numb. I could not move them. Marg and her mother massaged them and gradually got the circulation back so I could put them down.

PART 2CHAPTER 1

Thanks to these kind friends I was soon able to be back to normal again. I stayed a few days and then returned home. I had picked some Saskatoons and was making them into jam when the call came delivering the telegram sent at 6.30 a. m. from Winnipeg saying Aunt Edie was arriving at 3.30 p. m. that day. It was 2.30 when the message was delivered to me. I put the jam down in the cellar, got into some tidy clothes and raced up to the depot, about 15 minutes walk. The train was in sight when I arrived. After getting the message from the telegraph office I called Dad at the power house. He was cleaning the boiler so I gave the assistant the message. Dad was sitting in the ditch when I reached the platform, he had not had time to change out of his dirty clothes, and was ashamed to be seen.

When Aunt Edie stepped off the train we were startled by her likeness to Mother. Poor dear, she was awfully tired, hot and hungry. Also she had laryngitis, due to the extreme heat in Montreal. Her luggage had not been put on the train with her so she had nothing but what she stood in. As the Royal Alex dining room did not open until 8.00 a.m. and the train left at 7.30 a. m., Aunt Edie had been unable to get any breakfast. When the twenty minute break for lunch at La Riviere was announced she had no idea what that meant. There was nothing to eat on the train but chocolate peanuts and chewing gum. She was really feeling pretty faint and weary by the time we got home.

Later she told us about the bands and parades, etc. that were going on at every station along the way. We realized it was the Dominion Day celebrations, as this was July 1st. She thought it must have been a Sunday school treat, or picnic, and wondered why all the villages had chosen the same day. After a while she came to know what July 1st stood for.

All the troops that had taken part in King George V coronation were returning on the "Empress of Britain" that Aunt Edie came over on. She met many notables as she was seated at the Captain's table. Sir Wilfred Laurier was one, also Madame Pavlova, the famous ballet dancer and several of the outstanding Army personnel.

Aunt Edie was a real champion the way she fitted into our disorganized way of life. She found me a helpless, useless individual with no sense of responsibility or discipline. I just sat on my fanny and let the world pass by. She could not understand how I could be satisfied with no aim or objective in life. I used to say I could not do this or that. She would say, "Have you ever tried? How can you know what you can or cannot do until you have at least tried?"

Before long she taught me to knit, crochet and embroider, also how to entertain and act as hostess, how to live, in fact. She was such an outgoing, kindly person, she even got Dad out of his shyness, and willing to meet people and enjoy conversation.

PART 2CHAPTER 1

All my friends came to look on her as an "Aunt" and confident, and would come to her for help and advice without fear or self-consciousness. I called her "Tantrum" so everyone called her that.

In 1916 we moved into Winnipeg, Dad got work at the Vulcan Iron Works. The 1918 flu epidemic caught Dad, he was very sick but recovered. However, he never worked again. I took over as bread winner, getting work in the toll department of the Manitoba Telephone System. Dad and Aunt Edie ran the house. In 1920 Aunt Edie returned to England so Dad took over the housekeeping, and he made a first rate job of it. He could cook a roast of beef, with potatoes and parsnips cooked in the pan, and Yorkshire pudding fit for a king. His baked custard and rice pudding was a real treat.

All my young friends liked to come to our home. Dad was really a gracious host. He thoroughly enjoyed having people in for a meal and would have no end of fun preparing it. There was always laughter around our table and fire place. I had a silly name for him, it was so much the opposite of what he looked like that it stuck. It was of all things "Lovey-Dovey". All my friends called him "Lovey", and he always answered quite naturally. If anyone asked for or about Mr. Hurt they got a blank look.

Aunt Edie returned to Canada in 1922. She brought all her belongings with her, to make it her home. England was no longer home to her. Needless to say I rejoiced.

Dad was the most unlucky person at bridge. It was as though the cards were stacked against him. One time he was invited out for dinner and bridge without Aunt Edie. He refused flatly to go without her. The hostess called and told Aunt Edie why she was asking Dad alone, so there was no hurt feeling on Aunt Edie's part. After much persuasion he went alone. As he left the house I called out, "Now you be sure and bring home the bacon". We were in bed when he returned but he knocked on the door and said, "I brought home the bacon." The first prize was a pound of bacon. He was so thrilled he told everybody he met about it.

One of Dad's favorite pastimes was reading. He went to the library every two weeks and brought back six books. As he found standing wearisome he used to sit down on the drug store step waiting for the street car. One day I saw a lady sitting beside him. Later I asked who she was. "Oh! that was Mrs. Colin Campbell," says he. I nearly had a fit, because Mrs. Colin Campbell was one of the prominent society ladies of Winnipeg. Her husband had been a member of Parliament before he died. Dad had known him and had met Mrs. Campbell at political dos. Since her husband's death she and Dad always had lots to talk about when they met. I said, "Her skirt must have got awfully dusty sitting on that dirty step." He said, "When the street car came she just flicked her tail and got on board." What a man!!!

PART 2CHAPTER 1

In 1935 Dad died after a short illness. I missed him very much. We had become such good companions and has so much fun together. I still hear him laugh when something happens that would have amused us both. He is buried beside Mother in the cemetery he helped to create so long ago.

PART 2"UNCLE CHARLIE GOES COURTING"CHAPTER 2

In 1892 Uncle Charles John Hurt decided he would like to get married. He wanted an English girl, attractive and accomplished. Mother named several girls she had known in Whatstandwell and Criche where they had lived and wished him well. Off he went to England to find him a wife.

Eventually he courted and became engaged to Christine Louise Iveson of Criche, Derbyshire, and came back proud and happy. Christine Iveson was very nice looking, an accomplished pianist and spoke French and German. Her mother was French and had her daughters finish their education in France and Germany.

Uncle Charlie brought me a beautiful musical box for my birthday. It was quite large, played ten tunes and had a lovely inlaid lid. Unfortunately he packed it in his portmanteau and when it arrived it was smashed almost flat. The rosewood case was broken as was the mechanism. He and Dad decided they could repair it but found they could not make it work. So he had a really substantial case made for it and decided to take it back to England when he went to be married. This he did but had to take it to Paris for repair. Eventually it was fixed and arrived home safely. By this time I was old enough to operate it myself, and really had much pleasure from the sweet tone and music.

When Uncle returned from England he bought land and drew plans for the house himself. He really knew very little about houses, having lived mostly at school in England and on the prairie anywhere he could lay his head. At any rate he planned the house as he thought a house should be from hearsay, and with no thought of convenience and comfort. The result was a very awkward lay out. There was a wide screened veranda across the front that made the sitting room very dark, and on account of the high pitch of the veranda roof the bedroom windows were so high you had to use a chair to see out of them.

He intended the house to face south with a lovely view of rolling prairie, but through some error in his description of the plan it was built to face east on to the back of the flour mill and stable yard. Poor Uncle was furious when he found out, but it was too late to change it. So he called it "Maison Tourney" and planted hundreds of trees to block off the ugly mill yard. He even had a large elm tree dug up and hauled from his farm at Whitewater and planted it in front of the dining room window to block the rather drab outlook from there. The tree grew too, much to everyone's surprise.

When Uncle planted the trees, he gave Dad two small elms, which were planted in front of our house on each side of the tennis court. I was very interested in the trees and at once named them "Uncle Charlie" and "Aunt Christine".

PART 2CHAPTER 2

I was visiting in Boissevain recently and went over to meet the present owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Upperman. Mrs. Upperman asked me what names I had for the two elms. When I told her I asked how she knew about the names, and she said she had heard I gave them names. They are huge and beautiful trees now with graceful sweeping boughs and a thick trunk about thirty inches in circumference.

In 1895 Dad, Mother, Uncle Charlie and I went to England. Uncle Charlie and Christine Iveson were married in the Criche church they had all attended. It was quite a big wedding. I was too small to go but I saw them all go off in the carriage, Mother, and Dad, Aunt Selina Hurt and Uncle Charlie. My nursemaid kicked her slipper off after them. I had to go and get it for her.

The newlyweds spent their honeymoon in Austria, Switzerland and Paris. It must have been a shock to Aunt Christine when she arrived in Boissevain, which was a very small village at that time, with no social or cultural life at all.

Uncle Charlie bought the flour mill in Boissevain around 1893. He sent to England for a miller's smock and hat, always wearing it when in the mill. He looked very striking in it too, made of heavy homespun linen, the yoke and wrist bands smocked in red and blue. He used part of the family crest for a trade mark which raised an awful row in England. He did not care in the least. In fact he felt the crest was honoured by being put to such a practical use.

Somewhere around 1902-3 Uncle sold the mill in Boissevain and bought one in Carberry, Manitoba. He did very well there, and obtained a contract for a very large amount of flour to be shipped to England.

Being a very independent sort of person he drew up the contract papers himself without consulting a lawyer regarding legal details. Some months later when he had more than half the order ready for shipping and wheat on hand to complete the deal, the British firm suddenly cancelled the whole thing. As there was no clause in the contract to cover such an event, he could not force them to pay anything. He had tons of flour he could not sell to raise money to pay for the wheat he had bought to complete the order. So he went bankrupt, lost everything, mill, house, all he possessed. They left Carberry and moved to British Columbia, eventually settling in Vernon. He began again, this time in insurance, real estate and as bailiff for some large timber holdings in B. C. owned by people living in England.

Uncle took a keen interest in municipal affairs. He was an alderman and acting mayor for many years. The city library was having financial difficulties, and in danger of having to close. He organized a campaign and really tore into individuals or schools who took books out and did not return them.

PART 2CHAPTER 2

He was ruthless and made many feel guilty so hundreds of books began to arrive back at the library that had been out for years.

The hospital was also in financial trouble, with his hat jammed down and fire in his eye Charles John once again entered the fray. He got a committee together to really examine every aspect of the situation. It was found many people who could not pay cash for hospital care could pay in kind, which in turn saved buying produce from stores and wholesale. Meat, poultry, vegetables, eggs, milk, fruit and fuel all helped to cut down cash outlay. People felt better knowing they were able to help in this way to keep the hospital operating.

Uncle had a sense of humour too. He said he never could remember which foot to press down when driving the car and something or someone was on the road in front of him. He had several accidents to prove this too. Finally he bought a motor cycle and used to tear around on it scaring the inhabitants. One person told me when she saw him on the road she went home or into a store because "one never knew where he would go next."

Aunt Christine died in 1929. He was very lonely after that. He visited us once before Dad died and once after. In 1948 he came to live with me in Winnipeg, he was 84 then. He was such a dear kindly man, though terribly shy. In 1950 he died. I took him to Vernon where he lies beside Aunt Christine.

PART 2"CORDUROY AND CAMPS"CHAPTER 3

My first visit to Lake Max was in 1896 when we went there with Captain and Mrs. Whitla, Mr. Forbes (Mrs. Whitla's brother), Mr. and Mrs. Frank Thompson and two small children, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Thompson and their small boys. When we were about half way to the lake through the bush our way was blocked by a poplar tree fallen across the road. No one had thought to bring an axe! How what?

It was impossible to turn round, the tree was too large to move by hand. All the men got down from the rigs, lit their pipes, puffed clouds of smoke, looked at the tree and swore, then glared at the women. I dissolved in tears, feeling we were there for the rest of time. Nothing had any effect on that rotted tree.

After half an hour of deep pondering, and smoke puffing, a sound was heard on ahead, and round a bend came a man, a team, a wagon and an AXE. It was Mr. Ned Sankey, brother of Mrs. Frank Thompson, and a friend of all present. He attacked the tree and had a piece cut out, large enough to let the rigs through in short order. As it was impossible to pass on account of the hick forest on each side of the road, he took his wagon apart in the middle, turned each end by hand, turned the horses, hitched them up again and came back to the lake to picnic with us.

At this time the road through the bush was nearly all corduroy, because due to the heavy foliage from the thick forest neither sun or wind could penetrate to dry the road after a downpour of rain. This meant water lay in the wheel tracks and made deep mud holes when wagons went through them. To prevent these wagons from getting completely mired and stuck, logs were laid across the road eight feet or so long. They saved the situation where getting stuck was concerned but made dreadfully rough riding.

We reached the lake without further trouble and had a lovely picnic on a high bank near the saw mill, overlooking Eagle Island and a wide sweep of lovely water to the far south end of the lake, 10 acre Island being to the right, a truly lovely vista.

The picnic was a jolly time. Captain Whitla was a great provider, and had very decided views about food and its serving. He had brought wine and wine glasses in his hamper. After lunch and some talk, it was decided a swim was in order. When Mrs. Frank Thompson went in to the water she took the dishes, etc. used for lunch in a covered basket with her to "wash up", she said. She swam around swishing the basket about. I was very interested in this method of "washing up", it seemed a lot of fun. However, since I "grew up" I have wondered what happened to the wine glasses and other china. I never heard!

PART 2CHAPTER 3

In 1898 the whole of Turtle Mountain was burnt over. It was a great tragedy, all that beautiful forest of hard wood destroyed, to say nothing of the wild animals and birds. The saw mill, lumber yard, all the houses and other buildings were burnt to the ground. Only the great oak tree that held the guy wire for the mill smoke-stack survived. It was scorched but not killed and grew for many years, eventually falling in a wind storm.

There was a huge slab pile on a point of land behind where the planing mill had stood. This escaped the fire, and was of great value in later years when camps were opened on 90 acre Island, providing fire wood, and slabs for rustic seats, cabins and kitchens.

I remember going to the lake after the fire and crying when I saw the terrible devastation. Nothing green left anywhere, only blackened stumps and fallen logs.

The majestic forest was destroyed. Wild raspberry canes soon sprang up hiding the scars with their green leaves and luscious red fruit. Before long people were coming in droves to pick berries on the Turtle Mountain.

They came from as far as forty miles by wagon, buggy and democrat (a large double seated rig that could carry nine people). Whole families would join together, bring tents and have a real holiday as well as make jam for winter use. Huge preserving kettles hanging over open fires on tripods were kept going. Sacks of sugar, cases of jars came along too, Mother tended the kettle, Auntie prepared the jars, measured sugar, etc., Dad gathered wood and saw to the fires, while the young folks picked berries.

After a long day picking berries there was a swim to look forward to. Then a meal cooked over an open fire, followed by a ride in the good "ship" "Lady of the Lake". She held twenty-five passengers comfortably, but many more would pack on to the tiny decks, fore and aft.

Dad was the "commodore" and he ran the boat out around the islands past many beauty spots. If it was calm he would stop and drift in the lovely sunset hour. Soon everyone would be singing old favorites, well known songs and hymns.

The "Lady of the Lake" was a neat craft powered by a gasoline engine that had to be "wound up" with a huge copper handle and had as many moods as a pampered beauty. Sometimes she would balk making fearsome bangs, scaring everyone half out of their wits. Then suddenly away she went purring like a kitten as though nothing had happened. She was really very seaworthy, and those who had been fearful learned to pay no attention to her noise and blather, really enjoying the boat ride.

PART 2CHAPTER 3

I was terrified at first and had to be covered up with rugs until things got going smoothly. This misery passed after a while and I learned to love every bang, crash and splash. When there was a high wind there was often a lot of water swept inboard. Many years later the "lady" was stolen from the lake during the winter and never heard of again. I hope she continued to do a good job, giving pleasure to people wherever she went.

We had the first house on 90 Acre Island, it was built in 1898. Arthur Atkins and 4 or 5 men went out and cut logs during the winter, hauling them to the campsite with horses. When the ice had gone a "building bee" was arranged where a dozen or more men with strong backs and willing hands went out, laid the logs and raised the roof.

Mother and Dad and several other people went to see the place before it was finished. We crossed to the Island at the narrowest point, in a home made boat that was more like a sieve. Two people baled madly while one rowed. I was terrified. However, we landed safely and walked over a very rough path to the campsite. As the cabin and location were very nice the leaky boat was soon forgotten.

There was a wide red door facing Birch Island. This was a small island and had escaped the fire's fury due to a swampy area between it and the mainland. Almost all the trees were birch and there was very little under brush. The area behind the island was a haven for muskrats and water birds. I saw a loon's nest there one year. Yellow water lillies grew there, also big fat bull rushes, and other nice water weeds. There were always several muskrat lodges visible.

After our house was built several families came to camp on 90 Acre Island. First in tents, then later building houses, frame or log. The Joe Taylor's had a camp next to us. They had a large tent for the men and boys and a tiny cabin where the poor women were supposed to sleep. Owing to the fact there was only one small window, and no screen on it or the door the mosquitoes had a fine feast. If the door was closed there was no ventilation, and there were so many packed in to the tiny space sleep was something one only heard about. I think there was a revolt. At any rate there was a good log house built the next year.

Mr. James A. Wright, the druggist in Boissevain, built a double house at the extreme south end of the Island where there was a sandy beach. A Winnipeg man named Casper Killer took half of the Wright's house and used to bring his family from Winnipeg each summer. Finally he also built a log house and they continued to come for many years. They had a large black dog which being a city dog knew nothing about skunks. He located one and as he always killed cats proceeded to kill the skunk, but not without dire results as you may guess.

PART 2"PRAIRIE PICTURES IN SPRING AND SUMMER"CHAPTER 4

We used to go to the lake for weekends before the camping season opened to see that everything was alright, and put the boat into the water. The 24th of May was usually the first time anyone went out. Sometimes the camps were broken into during the winter and things stolen or destroyed. We had a large granite tea pot that had been used at threshing time on a farm. It held a gallon and could be put on an open fire. Some "kook" used it for target practice with a revolver. You can imagine what happened!!

When we went to the lake like this we left town at 7.30 a.m. arriving at the lake about 9.30 a.m. Good time for the sixteen miles with a livery rig and team on the country roads and the mountain corduroy. There was always a boat on the mainland concealed somewhere so we could get to the Island. There was usually lots of cleaning to do after the winter and repairs of this and that. Also paths and dooryard needed the growth cleared away.

Leaving the lake at 7.00 p. m. we drove through the fresh Spring evening, hearing the voices of the lovely evening thrush and song sparrows. Everything seemed to exude the smell of things growing and a delightful perfume from flowers and earth.

On later trips we would pause at the highest point on the mountain (2400 feet) and drink in the grandure of the vast panorama before us. It was a breath taking sight when the grain was coming into head and again when it was ripening. Mile upon mile of wheat looked like "watered" silk spread from the foot of the mountain to the Brandon Hills fifty miles away, divided by black ribbons of road allowance. Scattered here and there were clumps of trees, choke cherry, Saskatoons, hazel nuts, aspen and high bush cranberries like islands on a sea of green.

Looking West we saw Whitewater Lake, a great mirror reflecting the beauty of the sky and clouds in the setting sun. The villages of Ninga, Boissevain, Elgin, Hartney and Whitewater could all be seen, their grain elevators standing out on the prairie 10, 15 and 20 miles away. This lovely picture can no longer be seen because the trees have grown tall once more and block it off.

However, we recall how long before this area was settled or cultivated Mr. Morton (who had a saw mill at Lake Max) had built a store and house near the edge of the bush about a mile from the foot of the mountain. He had a cupola on the roof where he hung a lantern each night as a "guide light" for anyone travelling by night or in a storm on the prairie. The Indians called it "wassewa" or "White Light" translated. Dad and Uncle Charlie both experienced its saving grace and blessing. There is still a Wassewa district near the Mountain.

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CHAPTER 4

Mr. Morton was an "all round" sort of man and store keeper. As there was no doctor, dentist, barber or veterinarian in the district he did what he could to help man and beast in need, cutting hair, pulling teeth, prescribing for ailments as best he could.

One day a man came to him suffering from elimination difficulties. "Oh! you need a dose of Epsom's Salts", said Mr. Morton. "How much should I take," asked the man. "About a cup full", answered Mr. Morton. Some weeks later the man was in the store again looking pale and wan. "Oh! I have been wanting to see you," said Mr. Morton. "I gave you the wrong doseage for Epsom's Salts. What I told you was for a cow". Most likely the man felt the "urge to kill"!!!

Growing up on the prairie I learned to love it in all moods, and seasons. Winter when the snow drifted high and hard into caves, cliffs, valleys and rolling waves. I would wander with my dog over the fields after a blizzard seeing the fantastic patterns and shapes created by the wind. It was always an adventure. Sometimes I would sneak my mother's metal tea tray to slide down some steep bank. The blue shadows cast by the drifts fascinated me. Many times I gathered the snow and melted it to see if the water was blue too.

In Spring when the prairie awakened from its winter sleep the land was carpeted with the lovely blue "fur coated" crocus (Manitoba's flower emblem). The sun reflected in the golden centre. Soon the tiny buttercup came out and the violets, then columbine and wallflowers in tight clumps pouring forth their perfume. In June the wild rose was always "queen". Deep and pale pink, some very large, others small, all filling the air with their glorious scent. I always loved the wild rose, perhaps because it bloomed in June, my birth month. When I was grown up Dad's one little tenderness was to put a spray of wild roses by my plate at breakfast on my birthday.

Wild strawberries were ripening in June too, delicious little berries that grew tall in the grass on our fields. Blue bells "tinkled" in the breeze. Large gold and brown galardias with big "pin cushion" centres grew with tiger lilies shining red amongst the grass, wormwood, and catnip silver leafed and strong smelling grew with bergomot and vetch, their pretty mauve blossoms a delight to eye and nose.

As summer advanced we saw sunflowers, black eyed Susans, white yarrow, Queen Ann's lace,; where there was marsh land king cup and marsh marigolds, carpeted the ground. The lovely lady slippers also grow where it is somewhat marshy. The tiny yellow ones have a faint perfume. The larger yellow flowers are truly beautiful, as are the large pink ones. The dainty

PART 2
CHAPTER 4

formation and delicate colouring of these lovely orchid like blossoms make one marvel at the skill of nature's "great artist." Truly "only God can make a tree," and the prairie flowers.

There were almost as many varieties of grass as flowers on the prairies. Some tall and graceful like timothy and broom, some mean and dangerous. When spear grass ripened it could penetrate one's clothes and skin, causing a painful infection. Ripe foxtail was another mean variety, the sharp sprays could get into fabric and really make a lot of trouble. Fire would race through a patch of dry foxtail so fast a prairie fire was under way before anyone could do anything. I was very fond of sweet grass, it has a delightful perfume that will last long after the grass has dried. The Indians used it a lot to make baskets and bowls and many other items for sale. They were very clever at weaving it. The wild oat was and still is the most hated wild growth. Its life cycle is such it is almost impossible to eradicate it from a field. And the finest quality domestic oats can be down graded if there is one wild oat in a sample.

The small song birds of Turtle Mountain area have always been a delight to bird lovers. They are so much a part of the prairie and bush land life, some nesting in trees and others in the grass. The meadow lark's nest is hard to find though built on the ground in among the grass roots. The horned lark came first, he is not a very striking fellow. His cousin the meadow lark cuts a dash with his yellow vest and black necklace. Also the distinctive and lovely song. Dad and I always had a competition as to who would hear the first lark or robin. When the crows arrived in Spring the whole world knew about it. Their raucus shouting and laughter awoke all sleeping creatures. Such a gang of fun makers! It was interesting to watch them teasing one of the flock, shouting and yelling at the poor cringing bird until something else distracted them. Catbirds have a musical chatter that was soon heard after the crows and larks. The only thing unpleasant about them was their habit of singing all night when calling for a mate. It was just too bad if one perched outside your bedroom window.

Grackle and king birds were the aggressive ones. They fear neither man nor beast when nesting. Our dogs were afraid when the grackle would swoop at them as they passed the nest tree. King birds used to build in one of our fir trees, and it was a case of "hang on to your hat" when you passed by their tree. Though a small bird, when they flew at your face, beak wide open, red comb raised, they really were frightening. It was a joy to watch the black and gold finches, also the wild canaries flitting among the trees. A pair of orioles built their lovely basket nest in our trees one year. We could see the mate preening beside the nest while the other one brooded.

PART 2

CHAPTER 4

At one time you saw nests in every tree, large or small. All beautiful examples of architecture. They are not so often seen now. No doubt because many trees have gone, and the noise of machines at work on the land has disturbed the birds. At Lake Max where the log boom had been, pieces of wood stuck up out of the water. These were used for perches by dozens of small gulls. They kept up a constant chatter. When a boat came in to the dock they would take off into the air, sweeping in great circles around the little bay, screaming and shrieking. As soon as the passengers had landed they all settled back on their perches. They were such a pretty sight.

So many birds and animals have gone from the prairies now. In some cases it had to be, for instance the gopher had to be eliminated before the grain fields could produce. When farmers first sowed their crops, these little rodents swarmed over the land eating every grain that was planted. If by chance some did grow it was eaten off at ground level promptly.

At last in desperation farmers soaked their seed in "blue stone", this put an end to the "varmint" but was a lot of extra work. However, the millions of gophers were reduced, so there was no serious crop loss. Now it is a surprise to see one of the "wee beasties."

I do not remember any other real menace that had to be destroyed by men to such a dire extent. There was bounty on the gophers for many years. Children used to hunt them, and got 5 cents a tail. We got our milk from a house nearby, Mother noticed it was not keeping sweet as long as it should, also that the boy was late delivering it. So I was told to watch for him and see what was going on. I discovered the boy and several other lads were having a gopher hunt on a field near our gate. The milk incidentally stood in the blazing sun while the hunt was in progress. There was some discussion between the mothers and the hunting was off, while the milk was being delivered anyway.

PART 2

"THE BUFFALO WALLOW"

CHAPTER 5

When I was a child the regular Sunday afternoon outing was to walk to the top of the "Big Hill" south of the village. Sometimes we would go on to the top of the next hill where there was a "buffalo wallow". It was almost hidden, overgrown with badger weed, wolf willow and tall grass. The scooped out wallow was about 20 feet across, with a huge rock in the middle. As there was no such rock anywhere on the prairie, it must have been brought there during the ice age.

I loved to climb about on the rock, tearing my stockings and dress as well as getting bruises and scratches. I did not mind because I had a vivid imagination, and could picture the great shaggy buffalo wallowing in the mud after a rain, rubbing against the rock to get the dead hair off their backs and shoulders. How they must have revelled in the coolness of the mud!

There were numerous buffalo skeletons lying on the prairie, bleached white by the sun. We had eight or more skulls around the foundation of our house for many years.

The "Big Hill" is no longer big. It was graded down to form part of the famous "C to C" highway which when completed will run from the foot of the Statute of "Christ of the Andes" to Churchill, Manitoba, on Hudson Bay. This great highway has been nearly completed in Canada and South America. There is a road from the Pas, Manitoba, continuous as far as a point near Panama, and I understand there is also one from "Christ of the Andes" to a point near Colombia, South America.

Building the #10 section of this great highway destroyed the buffalo wallow. Nothing is left of the great rock to mark the time when mighty herds of buffalo ranged and roamed over the prairies where Boissevain stands and great grain fields sweep away to the horizon.

Returning from our walk we passed the "Big Slough", quite a large body of water though shallow. Bull rushes, tall water weeds and grass grew thick around the edge. Muskrat lodges stood out in the middle like small islands. In Spring the slough was the gathering place and focal point for hundreds of migrating and local birds. Such lovely music rose from birds "tuning up" for the mating and nesting season. Red winged, yellow headed, and plain blackbirds poured out their love in song. Bittern, pee-wee, song sparrows, ducks, frogs and toads all sang their courting vows with vigor.

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CHAPTER 5

As I passed this spot recently I saw there was no water, no birds, no waterweed nor bull rushes. Instead a storage area for second hand farm machinery marred the land. My heart wept a little for the "thrum-thrum" of the bittern and the shrill sweet call of the blackbirds. All are gone from this ancient breeding ground and shelter, with them went some of the good earth's peace and harmony.

Whitewater Lake was a water bird sanctuary. Huge flocks, thousands of birds, used to fly over our house on their way to Whitewater Lake where they settled down to rest and feed on land and water, preparing for the great journey north, some to the Arctic Circle to nest and raise their young. Thousands of geese, many different breeds, blue geese, Canada geese, waveys (white with black wing tips), pelicans, white and sandhill cranes passed over, all talking loudly about their affairs. The air rang with the clamour of their voices. Ducks by the hundred, all different kinds flew by. They are not as talkative as the geese. Often it would take an hour for these great flocks to pass out of sight.

I knew all their different calls, the pelicans' deep throbbing notes, the sandhill cranes lyrical trilling song. Geese have all much the same voice and call. Ducks do not chatter so much in flight as geese.

When the railway went through to Deloraine, it passed quite close to Whitewater Lake. Men soon heard about the wonderful hunting prospects there and used to come out from Winnipeg 195 miles away in droves. The train would stop and let them off at the lake, then continue to the end of the line, turn round and return so the train crews could have a chance at getting a bit of hunting too. They all slept on the train and went back to Winnipeg the next day.

In later years what with drought, prairie fire and such like calamities, Whitewater Lake dried up several times so the flight patterns of the migrating flocks of water birds had to be changed. Those that fed on land found newly harvested fields very satisfactory. They began landing in millions on grain stubble. As long as the harvest was finished they were welcome, but when there were stooks or stacks still standing out, the birds did tremendous damage, pulling the stooks to pieces and scattering the sheafs far and wide.

PART 2
"HAPPENNINGS ON 90 ACRE ISLAND"

CHAPTER 6

Returning to the "cabin with the red door". The path led up from the dock through large trees and hazel nut scrub, ending between two big trees, an elm and an ash. The elm was about forty feet high and had a strange bent over top as though it had been caught under something while young that prevented it from growing up straight.

Someone had the idea that a platform might be built on the bent over top which would be high enough to see the mainland dock. Arthur Aitkins and Dad made a rough ladder which they fastened to the elm about twenty feet up. While on this ladder Arthur struck a branch stump about 18" in circumference with his hammer and it broke off, crashing to the ground. It was all rotten inside so they decided most likely the tree top was somewhat the same and abandoned the platform idea. The tree is standing with the ladder still attached. It must be at least sixty-five years since it was put there.

Some boys found an eagle's nest on the ground near our camp with two well grown young ones in it. The hissing noise made by the young birds attracted the boys so they looked for the source. It seemed so strange these birds would nest so near habitation and on the ground. We never saw them over our location though there was nearly always a pair soaring over Eagle Island. I used to like to watch their wonderful flight, never moving a feather as far as one could tell. They seemed to rest on the air. Such calm and stillness, and yet great power and flexibility.

Dad found the engine bed from the sawmill engine room in the course of his prowling along the shore. He was so delighted and at once incorporated it into our dock. It was part of what must have been a very large oak tree, ten feet long, four feet wide and eighteen inches thick. As it was thoroughly impregnated with oil and grease it was very slippery when wet, or the sun shone on it. Many a time I nearly landed in the "drink" when I ran out onto it carelessly. I have wondered what became of that engine bed. Perhaps it was carried out on the ice and sank in deep water. I hope so. It would be too bad for it to have been chopped up for fire wood by someone who did not know its history.

After the mountain was burnt over the logs left in the sawmill log boom got water logged, one end would sink into the mud. In Spring when the ice melted they were sometimes carried out into the boat lanes as the ice went out, thus becoming a menace. Dad would get one or two men and a row boat, and go "dead head" hunting. Sometimes I was allowed to go along.

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Fixing a slip knot on the end of a rope Dad would approach the log with the greatest care to prevent the wash from the launch causing it to sink or sway. He would slip the loop over the log as far as he could reach. As these logs were very slimy, ten chances to one it would slip off as soon as strain was put on it. This brought forth much cussing. After several tries the men would get into the boat and try to drive a nail into the log to prevent the rope slipping off. Did you ever try to drive a nail into a floating log? It is a really difficult job! When the loop finally held the log was towed away and if possible hauled up on the beach to dry out.

One time when Dad went to the lake before the camping season he found there were dozens of turtle nests in the clay bank going up from the boat dock. He first saw little turtles crawling around, then holes where there were eggs just hatching out, the eggshell like heavy damp paper. Dad brought sixteen of these tiny creatures back with him and I had them for a long time. The female turtle digs a hole with her back foot, lays the eggs, then covers the hole with a mud lid. Unless you know what to look for you cannot find these lids. No one had seen turtles up to this time, later some quite large ones were found. It was interesting to go very quietly along the water's edge and see them sunning themselves.

During the camping season Dad took the launch around promptly at 7.00 a.m. every morning and at 7.00 p.m., picking up those who had horses or cows stabled on the mainland, for feeding and milking. All the family went along on the evening trip whether they had stock to attend to or not. While the regular chores were being attended to people wandered about, picking raspberries, fighting mosquitoes, talking and the children raced about and had a wonderful time. When Dad thought the work must be done he would roar in his best sea going voice, "Aboard!" Everybody knew they better get going or be left behind. All who wanted to go home were deposited on their own dock and those who wanted a boat ride stayed on board. Dad would run out into the middle of the lake and with a dead engine drift on a lovely purple and rose and golden mirror.

Nearly always someone had a musical instrument of some kind, soon singing would begin. Many had fine voices and lovely part songs rose on the evening air. Such old favorites as "Old Black Joe", "Juanita", "Tenting Tonight", "My Old Kentucky Home", "Good Night Ladies". After awhile rowboats and canoes appeared from the shore line to listen and take part in the concert. Those were days of simple and gentle entertainment. People found enjoyment and a feeling of security from being together in lovely surroundings.

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One evening Dad called as usual at the Morrison camp which was situated on the west side of the Island at the south end. There was a large family, and usually one or two guests from town or Winnipeg. As the house was small the men and boys slept in a large tent. Mrs. Morrison and the girls had the house themselves. Bob Morrison, a son, knew Pauline Johnson the Indian poetess, and she taught him to paddle a canoe. So of course he had the first one on the lake.

One evening everyone was on board and Dad was about to cast off and pull out of the dock when down the path and steps from the house came Fred Davis (a son-in-law) wearing on his head a granite "jerry pot", with a bunch of flowers attached to the handle, and work gloves on his hands. He came mincing along looking like the Easter parade. His wife took one look and tried to jump overboard, friends had to restrain her. She was truly "fit to be tied" with fury and embarrassment. It turned out there had been some thieving going on regarding "pots" so Mrs. Davis painted "Ivy Lodge" in green on all the house pots. This was too much for Fred. He determined to bring her artistry to the fore so everyone could appreciate it.

We all had a good laugh at the "funny man" and Fred got a great kick out of his nonsense. Mrs. Davis was soothed and comforted by her family and friends.

The Davises had a son, a nice little lad, friendly and outgoing. He had a tremendous admiration for his aunt, the youngest Morrison girl. She played the cornet very well and often brought it along when out on the launch. Little Bert used to ask people if they had heard his "Auntie Babe make bootiful music on the tornet".

He had a bull terrier with double jointed back legs and the most amazing way of walking. Poor animal, it was rather pathetic to see him stagger along but he seemed quite happy as long as he was with Bert. He was white with black spots all over him so they called him "dice".

At the north end of 90 Acre Island four bachelors set up a camp. They were George King, Bob Ritchie, Jim Wilson and a man named Fergusson. They had a double fly tent for sleeping and a large one for living and eating, also a cook-house with a stove.

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They came to the lake every weekend and sometimes stayed longer. Frequently a barrel of beer came with them and was concealed in a hole dug in the bank above the water, and well hidden by scrub and underbrush. It was always spoken of as the "cow" and frequently had to be milked. I was very interested in this "cow" I so often heard mentioned. I could not figure out how it got to the Island. It was not until the camp was moved to another location that I discovered what and where the "cow" was concealed.

Sometimes due to bad weather the stage which made tri-weekly trips to the lake with supplies for the campers was prevented from coming in. This made grub run low at the bachelor's camp, and they would have to go "scrounging" with the result someone dubbed them "starvation" camp and the name stuck for many years.

Eventually six girls pitched a tent and made a camp there on "Starvation camp" site. They were Winona Howell, Agnes Weir and her mother, Irene and Pearl Bradley, Hattie Hryniewski and myself. Mrs. Weir was "chaperone", a person no longer heard of. We all had a happy holiday even though we too ran low on grub sometimes.

Alex and Dave Embree who had the next camp site and a good log house were much concerned about us. They felt we were not getting proper food. Alex suggested if we girls would do the cooking for them they would supply the food. The plan proved satisfactory for all concerned. Dave and Alex were kind, generous men and seemed to like having a flock of girls to care for.

At 8.00 a. m. Alex would come out in front of the house and bang madly on the dish pan, shouting "Wheatie! Wheatie! Wheatie!" at the top of his voice. This meant he wanted pancakes for breakfast. As they always had a large can of "real" maple syrup on hand it was no hardship to make pancakes.

Agnes Weir felt "starvation" was an unpleasant word to use for such a nice camp location. So she scouted around and found the Indian words for the situation. It was "NIP-AN-HOC-AH-TEE-SUN". She painted this on a piece of tarpaulin eight feet long and ten inches wide, stretched it on a plank the same size and set it up between two trees over the path, a house had been built by this time. The sign caused much interest and many questions as to meaning and pronunciation but the name stuck.

Winona Howell was a wizard at making soup out of next to nothing, a valuable asset under the circumstances, so they all got their heads together and made up a grace which was

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solemnly asked for at each meal. It was accompanied by table pounding, hand clapping and the words shouted:

"BOOMA- RANG! BOOMA - RANG!
HOOPLA! - HOOP!
STARVATION! - STARVATION!
SOUP! SOUP! SOUP!

Many times guests were startled at this daft performance. However, it had a way of bringing forth laughter and breaking through shyness and self consciousness. In fact it was a good mixer.

PART 2"MY CAREER PIN POINTED"CHAPTER 7

The first telephone I ever saw or used was one Dad, Arthur and Frank Aitkins somehow got hold of and set up from their house to ours about 200 yards apart. This was in 1900. The instrument consisted of a box about six inches high by eight inches deep at the base. The front slanted back, so the top was about three inches wide. On the slanting face was a large hook on which the combination transmitter and receiver hung when not in use. To call out you pressed a button on the base. The whole thing was activated by a large glass wet battery.

The line to the Aitkins' house was a piece of clothes line wire strung on poplar saplings, which were neither high nor substantial, with the result the cow frequently came for milking with the wire draped on her horns, thus causing a "service failure," of course.

From this introduction to telephones I developed a great desire to be an operator. In 1908 I had the opportunity to try my hand at it. The first telephone switchboard had been set up in Hilton's drug store some years before I started work. Miss Rosa Saults was the first operator. When the office was opened, it was only for long distance and the operator was only on duty from 6.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m.

When I began to work the office was in an old house near the Masonic Hall. Miss Norma Tuck was chief operator.

"Central" was the source of all general information. She knew if the doctor was in or on a call. If Willie was on his way home from school. If Grandma Jones' cold was better, and if Mary's baby had come yet. The telephone office gave real homey service to the community. "Central" called people in the morning. Let them know if the train was late, also if it was time to take the bread out of the oven. She helped in any emergency be it fire, flood or a hunting accident, even when a murderer was lurking in the vicinity. She sent help in case of sudden illness or home accident.

Electric storms were a problem. Lightning coming in on toll or rural lines could be dangerous. A bang in the ear from a flash of lightning could damage a girl's ear permanently.

Many years later when I was working in the toll department of Manitoba Telephone System in Winnipeg the building was struck by lightning. There had been a referendum that day and the returns were coming in to the commercial department office in the same building. A full toll staff was on duty, also the office staff of the commercial department who were receiving the returns in the next room to the toll department.

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A severe storm came up. Many of the operators were nervous, and one became hysterical. I had been to the rest room to care for this girl as I was a supervisor. When I was returning to the operating room a ball of blue flame fell in front of me. There was a terrific crash of breaking glass, then silence and total darkness. I thought I was dead and waited to feel my wings begin to flutter (?) or unfold, or whatever they are supposed to do.

Suddenly the silence was broken by men shouting, girls screaming, general pandemonium broke loose. I decided I was not dead and better get cracking and see what was going on. In a flash of lightning some one located the chain to the gas emergency lights, so that eased things a bit but what a mess. All the windows behind the toll board had been broken and the rain was pouring in. After awhile order was restored and work went on. Everyone was badly shaken. When you can smell lightning and there is no thunder, you are too near the centre for comfort!!!!

After this we used to disconnect the girls from the board when a bad storm was over the city. Very few girls are involved in the operation of telephone service now. Automatic and microwave equipment have taken the human personal touch away and there is mechanical protection from lightning. When I joined the Manitoba Telephone System in Winnipeg in 1917 there were 96 toll operators. When I retired in 1956 there were over 300. It was a great thrill to watch the long distance service grow and spread until a person really has the "world at his finger tips." It was an interesting time.

When the rural telephones were installed out around Boissevain it was a real boon. No one was isolated any more. Neighbors had a wonderful time discussing crops, prices, etc. Everyone knew what was going on in the countryside, and about everyone else. It was a grand time for all.

The small brother of a friend of mine was so fascinated by the fact that one heard voices after the bell rang, he simply could not resist the urge to listen no matter what the signal was. One day after he lifted the receiver he heard two ladies talking whom he knew. So he spoke to them passing some remark concerning what they had been talking about. Recognizing his voice one lady said, "Victor, you get off the line at once." He replied in a small voice, "I am not on the line, I am on a chair." (To him "the line" meant the clothes line.

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While the rural lines were being constructed near our house, I had a hallowe'en party. A number of young men and girls came and we played games and had fun. The next day when Aunt Edie and I went to town we discovered our gate had disappeared. It was a large wooden gate designed like one at Dad's home in England and it was very heavy. As we walked along the road we spotted the gate hanging on the cross arm at the top of the telephone pole.

Dad was away at the time, so we were alone and somewhat non plussed as to how we could recover the gate from its perch. Aunt Edith was very clever some times. On Main Street we met some of the young folks who had been at the party. With much laughter she told them about the gate, adding that it was going to be quite a show when we got busy retrieving that gate, well worth seeing, she thought. The gate was replaced next day. Nothing was ever said about it and no questions were asked.

PART 2

"MURDER! BLOODY AND BRUTAL"

CHAPTER 8

There was a brutal murder committed in the Waubeesh district in 1900. A man named Gordon who worked for Mr. Leonard Thompson as hired man, later had a farm of his own and coveted a farm nearby owned by a man named Daw. Daw did not want to sell his place, and refused to consider Gordon's offers. So Gordon killed him and took the farm saying he was looking after it while Daw was on a trip to England.

A neighbor of Daw's named Smith came to visit Daw and when told he was away was very much surprised because there had been no mention of any trip coming up when he had last seen Daw. Something did not seem quite right about the whole set up. He asked a lot of questions, so Gordon chased him across a field and shot him.

After killing Daw Gordon dropped his body down an old well. He put Smith's body there too. Daw's dog kept hanging around the well head howling, so Gordon shot it and put it down the well. He then moved the pig pen over where the well was, perhaps hoping to conceal the odor from the remains in the well.

Mr. Tom Wilson, a friend of both Daw and Smith, began making enquiries concerning the two men. He was really persistent and Gordon got the "wind up", and took off for United States taking Daw's horse and buggy.

Mr. Wilson was very disturbed about the disappearance of Daw and Smith. The whole thing struck him as mysterious and wrong. He contacted the police who told him he had no concrete evidence that anything was unusual in the happenings he took so much interest in. Not satisfied he went to Daw's farm and found the place deserted. Animals turned loose, horse and buggy gone. He saw the moved pig pen and wondered why that had been done. Finally he dug around where the well head was and found the dog's body in the well. He then called in the Royal Northwest Mounted Police who dug further and found the bodies of Daw and Smith also in the well. Word was received at this time that the horse and buggy had been located, abandoned in North Dakota.

There was an inquest at the farm and Dad attended. I remember the terrible odor from his clothes when he came home. They had to be hung out on the line for several days before he could wear them.

Daw and Smith were buried in the same plot in Boissevain Cemetery. Smith had no family and so Daw's people asked that he be buried with their son, and put his name on the same grave stone they erected.

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There were a tremendous number of rigs following the two hearses. Hundreds of people attended, being deeply interested in the men who were well known and liked in the whole district.

It took a long time to bring Gordon to trial. He managed to keep moving so no one knew much about him. Eventually the police got word that he had enlisted in the army in British Columbia and was to go to South Africa. They caught up with him as he went aboard a troop ship at Halifax. He was arrested, returned to Manitoba, tried and condemned to hang. Tom Wilson attended the execution. He said he wanted to see the end of such a wicked man.

Tom Wilson was the man who managed my Uncle Charles Hurt's farm at Whitewater, Manitoba. If he had not been so persistent in his search for Daw and Smith it is doubtful if their murder would have been discovered and their killer been brought to justice.

When Gordon worked for Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Thompson they found him a friendly sort of man and liked him. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were friends of Mother and Dad. We used to stay with them on the farm. It was always a great day to me, because I was daft about horses and on the farm I was allowed to ride. Mrs. Thompson was a real animal lover so there were always pets to play with.

They had a particularly "intelligent" pig named "Poig". She was the last born of a large litter and was small and sickly looking, so Mr. Thompson threw the poor wee beastie out on the manure pile. Mrs. Thompson came by presently, saw the piglet and thought it looked alive, so she took it into the house, wrapped it in a piece of warm blanket and put it in the oven. It seemed to revive somewhat so she fed it from a baby bottle she had. "Poig" proceeded to repay her for her kindness and grew big and strong as the weeks passed. As she had spent her babyhood in the house with Mrs. Thompson and the two small boys she felt she was part of the family and would have nothing to do with those "low" pigs in the pen.

One Saturday Mr. Thompson came home from town and found "Poig" lying in the children's bath which Mrs. Thompson had pulled outside the kitchen door after bathing the boys. From then on the bath had a distinct "spread" in the middle.

"Poig" always knew when it was tea time and would climb the veranda steps and stand with her snout pressed against the screen door so it bulged in the middle. Her pleading grunts and snorts always softened someone's heart so she got a tidbit.

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I visited the farm with Mother when "Poig" was full grown. She was quite a large animal and very much part of the family. She kept a watchful eye on the two small boys. Mrs. Thompson always knew where they were by the constant contented grunts from "Poig" as she waddled around with them.

When I was there we found she would let us ride on her back. Then she would trudge down to the end of the garden where there was a clump of trees. The youngest boy aged two sat on her neck and held on to her ears. I sat in the middle and held him. The older boys sat backwards and held her tail. When we were all set we would kick our heels and shout for her to get going and away we went, "Poig" grunting an accompaniment to the children's chatter.

When we reached the trees she would flop down and we fell off. We then found bits of stick and scratched her back and sides. When she had had enough on one side she would turn over so we could continue on the other. When she was ready she would stand up and we all piled on again for the return trip to the house. Arriving at the kitchen door we begged scraps to pay for our ride, and also to satisfy our own appetites.

Eventually Mr. Thompson decided she was a nuisance always hanging around the house so he put her in the pen with all the other pigs. She was desolate and would not eat or do anything but pine for her "family". Before long she died of a lonely broken heart. A loving "piggie" heart that wanted so much to be with humans all the time.

* * * * *

I had harness for one of our dogs. "Sing" was a lovely pure bred collie, black, white and tan. She was born with a broken tail so it was cut off. In winter I used to hitch her to a light sleigh and she would pull me down the drive and up the road in great glee. When she had had enough she would stop and come back and wait for me to get off the sleigh. Then she got on. Nothing would induce her to pull me back home. That was my job. She loved riding in the wheel barrow too. She would sit there looking like the Queen going to open Parliament. In summer her favorite occupation was catching frogs. She would dive right under water and come up with the little bit of tail she had held high, her ears perked and eyes dancing and a frog with its legs dangling out of her mouth. The frog did not seem to mind. It would turn around and hop out when it was ready. She held them ever so tenderly, and I never saw her hurt one in any way. I think she liked to feel their coolness in her mouth.

PART 2"THE CORONATION"CHAPTER 9

June 26th, 1902, was the date set for the crowning of King Edward VII. There was great excitement abroad in the land and particularly in Boissevain. A grand parade was planned. The Royal Coach with the King and Queen seated in it was a special feature. There would be carriages galore, soldiers, some mounted, some on foot, sailors too hauling a very fine and business like cannon. It was a work of art as such things go. Set on wheels, it made an impressive picture with a squad of sailors in full uniform, pulling it by white ropes.

Soldiers just back from service in South Africa were to take an active part in the proceedings. Many riders had wonderful costumes planned for the parade. Dad was to be the King because he wore a beard cut the same as Edward VII favored. It was called "Imperial style". Mother was to be the Queen because she wore her hair the same way, and had a fur lined cape that could pass for ermine turned inside out. There was also a strong resemblance in features and appearance.

On the whole it was to be quite a day. People were coming from miles around to join in the fun. Arthur Aitkins and two other men went to the lake to build a huge bonfire on the highest point of the mountain. It was to be lighted at dusk on Coronation Day in the hope it would be visible in the village far across the country side. He was to put a wooden gasoline barrel on the top to add to the flames.

Well! After all these preparations, plans and excitement the King developed appendicitis and the Coronation had to be postponed. What an awful let down!

As Arthur Aitkins and the other men had gone to the mountain several days ahead there was no way of letting them know about the postponement. The plan was that Arthur was to send up a rocket at a certain time and if it was seen in town Dad would send one up too.

Sure enough, we all saw the rocket sail up and explode high above the mountain. Everyone cheered madly. Then Dad sent off his rocket. Soon we saw the fire burning brightly. It really showed up well. We all felt we had had some thrill even if there was no parade.

The Coronation finally took place in August. There was no celebration in town, nearly everyone was away at camp and the village was deserted. We were at Lake Max. It was a dull cold day, miserable but not raining.

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CHAPTER 9

All the campers congregated on the mainland in the morning of Coronation Day to help build a bonfire on the bank above the main dock. Everyone worked with a will and gathered up a large bonfire piled high and solid.

Someone had the bright idea of making the party a "taffy pull". A large copper wash boiler was set up on stones over a fire. Everyone contributed all the brown sugar they had, some gave butter and other ingredients necessary for "pull" taffy. It was all put into the boiler and stirred with a canoe paddle, which added interest if not flavor.

When it had boiled the allotted time, we were all told to butter our hands, then got a gob of hot taffy which had to be quickly pulled, rolled and twisted, then pulled some more, until it became a light gold colour and was getting hard. Lastly it was quickly pulled out thin and cut with a pair of scissors into small candies ready for eating. It was really awfully good too. Everyone enjoyed it immensely.

"Taffy pulls" were a form of home entertainment at that time. Girls had their boy friends in, gathered others together and had fun and laughter over sticky hands. I have not heard of such a party for many years. No doubt barbecues, hamburgers, coke and pepsi-cola have taken its place. Another favorite thing to do was making maple cream candy or fudge. Such rivalry as there was among the girls as to who made the best fudge, sometimes there were small contests. Cooking was taken seriously in those days, a girl who could cook was pretty sure of having lots of boy friends.

My Aunt Edith Shaw was a very good cook and loved to have a lot of young folks around. One day after there had been a heavy fall of soft snow, she said, "Call your friends and tell them to come for a pancake party." This I did. "Now go out and get a large pan full of that lovely soft snow". This I also did, I had no idea what she wanted the snow for. When the crowd arrived, Aunt Edie, or "Tantrum" as all my friends called her, got a large heavy bowl and proceeded to make pancake batter, using the snow instead of eggs. Resulting pancakes were light and delicious. Everyone had fun tossing them. One boy tossed too hard and the pancake stuck on the ceiling of the kitchen, coming down plop on his face.

PART 2

"UNSEASONABLE SNOW STORMS"

CHAPTER 10

On Sept. 13th, 1903, a terrific snow storm struck all over Manitoba. The weather had been fair and warm so most of the harvest was completed. Suddenly it turned cold as a violent blizzard blew up. It caught everybody with very little fuel on hand. September was considered too early for putting in coal and cordwood ready for winter. I know we had next to no coal or wood and I had to wear my mitts in the house, and put on "long johns."

Trees were bent down and often broken from the weight of the snow, as the leaves had not yet fallen they caught the snow. Many farmers lost live stock, especially sheep as they were all out in pastures, they bunched together and were covered by the wind driven snow, smothering under it as if it was a blanket.

A large herd of cattle broke out of their corral and stampeded before the wind right into Whitewater Lake. Even though the lake was not deep the weight of those pressing in behind drowned a hundred or more. After the storm, locating and rescuing those still alive, also getting the dead ones out of the lake was a lengthy and costly operation.

Grain fields were buried and it took many days before the ground was dry enough for machines or horses to go on to finish up the harvest.

We had another unseasonable storm and snow in June, I do not remember the year. Mother and I had been invited to the Leonard Thompson's for the birthday of one of the boys on June 7th. It was a beautiful day when we drove out on the 5th. All sorts of preparations were in progress for a big party. Children from all around had been invited.

During the night of the 5th it turned cold when a stiff wind came up. By noon of the 6th it began to snow. Next morning there was a foot of snow and still falling. It cleared on the 7th but the wind was strong and very cold.

Needless to say the party was off. As there was no telephones at this time it was just a case of no one arriving. We three children had our fill of jelly, blanc mange and cake. The fact there was no party was a great disappointment. I wept because I so seldom had a chance to go to a birthday party on a farm. The boys were desolate because they had been looking forward so much to playing with lots of other boys. I was only a girl so did not count as a playmate.

PART 2"MICE AND A MOTOR CAR"CHAPTER 11

In 1904 Dad bought an Oldsmobile "runabout". It was such an "itsee-bitsee" machine with a lever steering gear, and seats back to back when carrying four passengers. Really it was a neat compact turnout and caused a lot of interest. Everyone wanted to ride in it even though there was, as one lady said, "A terrible smell of blow-up."

Dad had a huge garage to house his pride and joy, including a work bench, a hen house, pigeon loft, "out door plumbing", and coal bin. When Fall came and it was too cold to ride in such an open car he put the "Bile" to bed, tipping the seat up against the back and put a large tarpaulin over the whole thing.

Come Spring, he decided to get things going, overhaul the engine and attend to anything needing attention. When he folded back the tarpaulin he discovered that mice had taken over the seat as residence, maternity hospital, the lot. Picking it up he went outside and gave it a quick sharp shake. A rain of mice! All sorts, ages, relationships, grandmas, grandpas, moms, dads, aunts, cousins and brand new pink ones.

The cats and dogs, hens, geese and ducks dashed into the fray and feast. Mother got into the wheelbarrow, I climbed the ladder, (Mother had an affinity for mice, they ran to her by "instinct"). What a circus!! The cat had a mouse under each paw and one in his mouth, with eyes blazing, tail lashing he cursed and swore seeing all these millions of mice running around. The dogs would snap up a mouse, shake it and throw it over their back, grabbing up another. The hens went for the pink ones, swallowing them as fast as they could. When their crop was full, also their throat, a tail hanging out was grabbed by another hen and up came a mouse. The ducks shovelled them up the same way. When no more would go down they just looked puzzled, flicked their beak and out would come two or three small mice. This left space, so the duck went at it again. The geese took bigger ones and ate until their neck was stiff with knobs all the way down, when they could get no more down they looked frustrated and wriggled their crop to pack it down a bit. If a tail showed, a hen would jump up and catch it.

Dad was laughing so hard tears ran down his face. Eventually he shook the seat and more mice poured out. Even the pigeons flew down to find out what all the excitement was about. Such carnage! Dead mice strewn over the ground, birds and beasts exhausted from the over abundance of the fresh meat and murderous effort. It was one of those hilarious happenings that would make a super movie cartoon. Walt Disney would have made it a classic.

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Mr. A. S. Barton and Mr. Robert Musgrove hitched up their horses, one took a cutter, the other a buggy and went to the top of the Big Hill, where they had a fine photo taken showing the village in the distance and the field with stooks under snow.

Weather conditions on the prairie were never predictable. Even so it was the source of livelihood to many hundreds of settlers and many prospered, in spite of snow, hail, wind, rain and drought. That wonderful dry cold is invigorating. The sun shining on frost jewels in the air is unforgettable. I once experienced 60° below zero, my eye lashes froze as I winked. Mother was so afraid I would breathe the extremely cold air into my lungs.

PART 2CHAPTER 11

After this episode Dad hung the seat out of the reach of "mouses", hung it by wire so they could not climb down to it. The dogs were never interested in mouse hunts after their experience. I was never afraid of mice but I did not like the way they sort of slid around. Poor mother had the horrors at the mention of such a beast. She had had them in bed with her and up her skirts so no wonder.

* * * * *

Before motor cars became popular in Boissevain, the highway that turns west off #10 just south of town was a very high and very narrow grade. Two rigs had trouble passing on it and there were often accidents. About a quarter of a mile west, Cherry Creek meandered under a high narrow wooden bridge. Thick willows formed a bluff along the banks, concealing a slaughter house. An offensive place. Horses often refused to cross the bridge and if forced to do so would bolt with dire results.

Each summer Indians came and camped near the creek. Ten or more tee-pees would be there for weeks at a time. The squaws went from door to door in the village selling bags, moccasins and such like made of buckskins and beaded or embroidered with sweet grass, or porcupine quills. They did some nice work and made very attractive articles.

Often the Indians would collect offal from the slaughter house and hang it on the barbed wire fence to dry in the sun, ready for winter use. It did not look at all appetizing but they no doubt had ways of preparing it that was tasty to them.

In the Spring Cherry Creek always went wild flooding the road into town, the highway, and the hay meadow that ran along the road. Later when it had dried up the meadow would be a mass of mushrooms. Great big fat ones tender and luscious fried in butter. We gathered them in bushel baskets and feasted, with home made bread. Real bread, not purified until there was nothing left of wheat, then all sorts of vitamins added to make it more expensive and less tasty.

When people in town and country began to buy and drive cars the high grade was rebuilt wide and safe. A good substantial cement bridge was installed over the creek, so horses were no longer "spooked" by the sound of their own feet when they crossed.

Part 2CHAPTER 11

Before this was done Dad was driving along minding his own business in the "Bile" when suddenly the whole side of the road collapsed, depositing him and the car in a four foot ditch. Fortunately a man came along quite soon with a team, wagon and of all things a logging chain. He quickly hitched the horses to the car by the chain and soon had it up on the road safe and sound, none the worse for the nasty experience. As there was no harm done Dad got in and drove home rejoicing, after thanking the man with the chain.

As a rule horses threw a fit at sight of the "Bile" or even just hearing it. One team of white bronchos, owned by Mr. Walkinshaw, always put on a big show. He said he had learned to take to the fields when they began to act strangely, because he was sure they could smell the car before he saw it.

One day we were driving along near the "Buffalo Wallow". It was rolling country and the road followed the contour of the hills. Suddenly we came face to face with the white team and Mr. Walkinshaw. Both horses went up on their hind legs pawing the air and squealing, then took off in opposite directions, one up, one down the hill, ripping the harness to pieces and breaking the tongue off the rig, leaving poor Mr. Walkinshaw sitting there looking bewildered. Dad had turned quickly up the hillside to avoid the horses. Suddenly the car began to roll backwards and I saw the drive chain lying on the ground ahead of us. Dad jammed on the emergency brake. What a "kerfuffle!!" I do not know what happened to the horses or Mr. Walkinshaw, but I do know I spent some time on my knees hunting for the bolt that held the chain together, and found it. Dad was able to make emergency repairs and we arrived home safely.

Mr. Jim Patterson (senior) had a team of heavy horses that resented the smelly thing that went along without horses. So whenever they saw it they gave chase at full speed. Mr. Patterson told me there were times when he was afraid they would really catch up and damage the "poor wee machine". After all, it could only go 25 miles an hour.

Many of my "memories" go back so far. I am now thinking of "Hurt's Pepper Pot". This was a seat made in a hollow tree found at the lake on the Island. It was completely hollow when found and still growing. About six feet in circumference at the base, it had been cut off at eight feet from the ground. A circular shingle roof rising to a peak really made it look quite like a pepper pot. With cushions on the seat it could be quite comfortable, but unfortunately when the sun shone on it, it was very hot. We had it for many years, when I left Boissevain it was still in the garden.

PART 2"THE MILL FIRE"CHAPTER 12

In the autumn of 1906 Mother and Dad had some friends in to play cards. I was sent on some errand into town. I went off on my "bike" and got whatever was needed, then rode down Main Street to the corner of Mill Road and Main. This was close in front of the flour mill that filled the end of Main Street. I turned left and continued two short blocks to our gate. I put my bike away and went into the house. As I passed the pantry door I thought I saw flames reflected in the window pane. When I looked out I saw the mill was enveloped in flames.

I rushed into the sitting room screaming that the mill was on fire. No one believed me. One of the guests got up, looked out and exclaimed, "My God, she is right, it is on fire." Everyone rushed out and up the road. It was a fearsome sight, flames pouring out of every window on all four floors.

At the back of the mill was a warehouse where flour was stored ready for shipment by train. As there was a lot of flour waiting there, a call went out for volunteers to move at least some of this flour to a safe place. The wind was blowing the flames away from the warehouse so a number of men, including Sandy Crawford and Stewart Williams volunteered. This in spite of the fact Sandy and Stewart who had been guests at the party wore their best suits. Those who volunteered had to carry 100 pound bags of flour to a location safe from smoke and flames. It was a tremendous undertaking.

There was also a piece of new equipment for drying damp grain, that had not yet been installed, housed in a small shed on runners like a stone boat, out behind the mill. It was very expensive and in grave danger from the fire. A call went out for Jim Burns and his trusty team of heavy dray horses. He soon came along, hitched on to the runners under the shed and drying machine, with the aid of many shoulders and arms laid to the back end and the fine co-ordination and wisdom of the horses the whole structure was moved to a safe place.

Smoke and sparks enshrouded those horses. It was a great sight to see them when Jim shook the reins and said, "Come on, let's get out of here", set their shoulders against the collars, put their full weight together, stretching their back legs in a mighty effort that did the job.

The men moved nearly all the flour from the warehouse before they were told it was no longer safe for them to work there, because the mill wall might fall at any time. It was time they stopped. Many were on the point of collapse from exhaustion. Faces smoke blackened, their clothes covered with flour, hardly able to stand or get their breath, they were a sad sight. The fact they had done such a tremendous job successfully helped to buck them up.

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CHAPTER 12

The burning of the mill really hit me hard. It had been a place of great interest all my life. Uncle Charles Hurt owned it at one point. I used to be taken to see him when quite small in my "pram". Tom Brodie, the bookkeeper, used to run away with me and hide candy under my pillow, much to mother's concern. He always called me "Little Miss Hurt", and as soon as I was old enough he took me all over the mill and showed me how the flour was made from wheat to make bread and cookies.

The wheat smouldered and stank for a year after the fire. It was decided after much investigation the fire was caused by an explosion in the dust containing tank. This was dust drawn off the wheat as it went into the rollers for grinding. It was thought there must have been extra dusty wheat put through that day, the tank became too full, then heated, causing spontaneous combustion, and fire. I was thankful it did not explode when I was so close a few minutes earlier on my bike. It must have been working up to it right at that time.

Many years later another mill was built on the same site. Strange to say it was also burnt down. I was not living in Boissevain at that time.

There were two very tall chimneys on the mill engine room, they were made of iron or steel, I do not know which. Anyway, they were braced by guy wires attached to a collar about half way up. After some years the metal rusted, or became "fatigued" where this collar fitted, and when a bad wind storm came it broke and the top half of the chimney would fall. One time when this happened, the broken metal did not separate so though the top fell over it still remained attached in one place and hung in a dangerous way. There seemed no way of getting the broken section of the chimney down.

Tom Brodie said he would try to shoot it down. He was a crack shot with a rifle or shotgun, had numerous trophies, and was a skeets champion of Manitoba and other provinces. Well! he really studied this chimney caper from all angles. At last he felt he had found the right direction for his shot. It might take more than one, but he hoped to make one clean cut. The day and time were set, and everyone was warned to keep out of the direction area. Of course, everyone was tremendously intrigued by the whole idea. To get the right light at the right angle Tom got up very early when no one knew. He got into the mill and from one of the windows fired one shot and brought the broken chimney down.

This took place so long ago, it is doubtful if anyone remembers the happening. I suppose I was specially interested because of my friendship with Tom Brodie, and the mill.

PART 2

"Locomotive In A Mud Pie"

CHAPTER 13

About 1907 the C. P. R. built a new siding between the main line and the one serving the elevators, by this time there were nine elevators strung through Boissevain.

This new siding was laid in the late Fall and not used very much before winter set in. When Spring came and freight traffic increased, heavy engines were used to haul the mile long freight trains that used to often pull into town from the West. On one occasion one of these heavy engines was switched on to the new track so another train could pass. When the engine reached the middle of the siding it suddenly nose dived into the mud pack resulting from the frost coming out of the underfill in the siding's foundation.

The engineer quickly tried to back out, but by this time the cars had sunk with the track. "What a mess!" The cow catcher was out of sight in the mud, the drive wheels were buried up to the axel shafts.

An S.O.S. brought a wrecking crew out from La Rivier, Manitoba, as soon as possible. They tried several methods of raising the poor defeated engine all to no avail. It just quietly sank deeper and deeper as the hours passed. Finally they decided to lay a spur track from the engine to the main line, and let another locomotive pull it out. To do this it was necessary to raise the front of the engine so it would be on the level instead of headed for China down under.

They dug down below the lines that the wheels were on, piled heavy ties along the track, and with heavy jacks on these managed to raise the front trucks from their downward course to level ground.

It took ten days working twenty-four hours a day to get things ready, so the spur could be swung over from the main line. When everything was set and ready Bob Emerson who drove the regular freight gently backed out on the spur and the connection was made to the "victim", then he carefully hauled it out of its mud bath. I did not witness this final stage, much to my sorrow. It was quite a heart break to me. I was so very interested in the whole thing.

All went well and the cars were pulled out backwards, they had not sunk so badly. Later the whole siding was torn up and balasted with tons of gravel before any other train was allowed on the track.

PART 2

"Men - Hounds and Horses"

CHAPTER 14

Farmers had trouble due to coyotes at one time. These very sly and clever beasts preyed upon sheep, young calves and poultry. They would take great risks to get in to hen or turkey house, often just killing for the fun of it. Several men in town and in the country bought packs of greyhounds to hunt the villains. Mr. A. S. Barton had greyhounds and a stag hound, a fine animal named "Geleat" after a famous dog of European legend and history. Mr. Tom Wilson also had a pack and Mr. Bob Musgrove had an English bulldog as well as several hounds.

Farmers who were having trouble would let one of these men know and they would go out hunting in that area. The greyhound could easily run a coyote down and the bulldog did the killing. When Whitewater Lake was dry as it sometimes was, they would chase the coyotes on to the dry lake bottom and confuse them in strange terrain, often catching several at a time. When the greyhounds brought one down the bulldog would jump from the rig where he rode and carry out the kill. One time Mr. Musgrove was a bit late and "Geleat" did the kill before the bulldog arrived. This so enraged the bulldog he sprang at "Geleat" and nearly killed him before Mr. Musgrove and Mr. Barton could get him off. Poor "Geleat", he was a very sick hound for many weeks, unable to walk let alone run. After this they never took these two out on the same hunt.

There were many keen horsemen in Boissevain. Mr. Musgrove had a beautiful dark dappled bay team of drivers. He had a handsome cutter with a buffalo robe hanging over the back seat, and another over his knee. With all sorts of lovely toned bells on the harness it was a real pleasure to see such turnouts driving up and down the street.

Mr. John Morrow and Mr. William Willson also had lovely teams of high steppers. There is nothing can give me more pleasure than seeing beautiful horses well driven in a smart cutter or rig. Cars are so lifeless, so glaringly mechanical in comparison.

A group of interested men got together and had a one mile track built just south of town off what is now #10 highway. There was a high board fence all around it, a grand stand, judges tower, stables and all other necessary buildings. For many years it was known as the "Boissevain Driving Park" and was very active with trotting race meets twice a season, as well as exercise driving every day.

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Eventually the Driving Park became a sports arena, the track was no longer kept up, with no more driving the Park passed away and out of existence. There is no sign of it now, has not been for many years. There may not be many living in Boissevain who remember it. I used to like to watch the drivers exercising the horses from our field where the memorial hospital now stands.

Horses played an important part in the life of the community in the early 1900's before cars had come on the markets. Men used to go to the Turtle Mountain to cut wood for fuel. There were "Shantie" towns in various areas along the mountain, these were groups of small cabins where men could spend a night or two while cutting and loading wood to haul to town or to their own place for fuel. Besides cabins for men there was a shelter for the horses. When they left they replenished the wood supply by the stove and left any food they had over, so the next men would find something there when they arrived.

It was quite a sight to see these loads of wood wind slowly down the Big Hill. Men and horses weary from the sixteen miles haul, and the cold. Often it was 30° below zero, or perhaps a blizzard blowing, great icicles hanging from the horse's nostrils and the men's moustaches, frost rime covering the coats of man and beast.

Sometimes there were bad accidents, cut feet and legs due to frozen mittens slipping on the axe handle. It was a hard and dangerous job calling for courage and fortitude. Men sometimes went out not knowing anything about how to swing an axe. They thought it sounded like a quick and easy money return. They had no understanding of the cold and danger. One young Englishman I knew went out sure he could do it, others could. He had just come out from England and had no idea what to wear to withstand the cold. He gashed his foot badly and had nothing to use for bandage or disinfectant. The frost got to the wound resulting in him having his foot amputated.

Wood cutting called for "know how" and determination even just to "keep the home fires burning", and the pantry shelves replenished. It also called for willing, sagacious horses. Often the men, worn out from the hard work and long drive, fell asleep on their load and it was up to the horses to get them home or at least to a place of safety and care.

Men used to go around town with a "saw horse" on their back, and "buck saw", cutting wood for a small charge. If the logs were large a steam engine and circular saw was brought around. How different today! with gas, oil or electricity all one does is turn the switch on or off as you desire.

"WHEAT! WHEAT! WHEAT!"

CHAPTER 15

The first threshing machine I saw was driven by "horse power". Three or four teams going round a capstan connected by a long steel rod to the separator. These horses were blindfolded no doubt to prevent them getting dizzy, or from getting a fright that could injure them or break the machine. The next outfit I saw was using an upright or bottle type boiler and engine, having a fly wheel connected to the separator by a belt. It was owned by Mr. Fred Blankenbach of "Hillside Farm" near Boissevain. Fired by straw it kept a man constantly stoking to keep enough steam up to drive the engine and separator.

On the rear of the separator was a sort of ramp, over which ran an endless belt of slats fastened together. This carried the straw from the separator and dumped it on the ground at the back. When the pile reached the height of the ramp it was hauled away by a "straw buck" consisting of a long log with a horse hitched at each end. A boy would drive the horses one on each side of the straw pile and haul it to the engine, or out onto the stubble for cattle to browse from during winter months.

Moving a threshing outfit from one farm to another was quite an undertaking. First came the "caboose", a cabin like structure on wheels in which the men slept while on a job. Then the noisy clattering separator scattering chaff and seeds along the way. These and numerous wagons and wracks were followed by the engine, all were pulled by one (or in the case of the engine) maybe two teams of horses. If the road was going to be good and level, perhaps one team would pull the engine; if there were hills to be navigated two would be needed. There was also a very necessary water tank along too. It made quite a parade and always interested me very much as it slowly progressed down a road.

When the first traction engine came to Boissevain it really caused a stir. Everyone turned out to see it and marvel at its size and power. When some sort of work was being done on it at the machine shop Dad drove it home for dinner. I was terrified when I saw the huge snorting, blowing monster at the gate. When Dad blew the whistle I took off under the bed.

At threshing time every one, neighbors and friends gathered round to help provide for a gang of hungry men, usually 30 or 40. It took some planning and arranging. Three big meals a day with two snacks in the field had to be provided. The women were up at 5.30 a. m. Breakfast served at 6.30 a. m., porridge, ham and eggs, potatoes, mountains of bread and butter, gallons of tea. The mid morning snack consisted of buttered buns, cookies and tea. Dinner at noon from huge roasts of beef or pork, quarts of gravy, three vegetables, bread and butter, pie or pudding, sometimes both. Mid afternoon snack, more buns or hot biscuits, cake and cookies, tea. Supper was whenever the men came in from the field so had to be something that could be kept waiting.

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Women from the village and district all rallied around to help, baking bread, cakes, pies, churning butter, preparing desserts, in fact any job that was there to be done and would help provide for a tired, hungry threshing gang. It was a time of real co-operation, everyone giving of themselves to serve others where and when needed. That spirit of willingness to give all without count of cost or return, seems sadly lacking now. People seem to suffer from the "Gimme's."

The next operation after threshing was the long haul from the field to the grain elevator. When the railway went through "Cherry Creek" in 1885, the name was changed to Boissevain, after a Dutch financier who had contributed towards the building of the railway. He had come from New York to travel on the first train out from Winnipeg. Recently a letter was received from Amsterdam, Holland, from the only surviving grandson of Adolphe Boissevain for whom the town was named. The town has progressed and done honour to the good man's name.

The first elevator was built by Dad and Mr. E. B. Tatchell when the railway came through. A special siding was put close behind the elevator so cars could be loaded with grain and shipped out. Soon more elevators were built, and it was a common sight to see ten or more loads of wheat waiting on the street to be graded and bought. Dad and Mr. Tatchell were both grain buyers. Each load had to be examined and graded before buying. There must be no evidence of frost, few weeds and no smut spores in any sack. Smut has a strong unpleasant odor, I learned to detect it at once when passing a field or in the elevator.

The wheat was put into bushel bags at the separator, and tied in a certain way to make two long "ears" one on each side for easy handling. Unloading was all hand labor. The farmer drove up the dumpway to a small trap door in the wall of the elevator at wagon height. This was opened from the inside and lowered out to the edge of the wagon, making a small platform. A sack was lifted onto this platform by the farmer. Dad swung it to the edge of the bin, peeled off the string and emptied the wheat into the bin in one rhythmic movement, laying the empty sack on the wagon edge. It was back breaking work and went on for hours at a time. When the sacks were all empty and tallied a grain ticket was made out for the amount due at the day's price. This ticket was as good as cash to the farmer.

In later years an automatic dump was installed, and greatly appreciated by all concerned. The grain was threshed direct into the wagon box. At the elevator the wagon was driven on to two plankways, which were tipped wagon and all so the grain ran direct into the sunken bin. Emptying, weighing and filling out the grain ticket took about twenty minutes.

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The railway would "spot" a car on the siding behind the elevator under a large spout coming down from the main bin high in the elevator. After special grain doors (really barricades) were set up in the car doorways the spout was opened and the golden wheat poured down. As the car filled the grain had to be shovelled to the ends of the car. This was a really bad job as clouds of lung destroying dust rose. Dad had a bad cough for days after loading a car.

One night he came home late and tired from such a job and was talking to mother as he sat on the bed beside her drinking a cup of tea. Suddenly she sprang up saying, "There is a mouse in the bed, get the cat. I have it in my hand." "Quiz" was located and alerted to a hunt. Mother wriggled out of her nightgown and put "Quiz" in. There was a scuffle, then out came Mr. "Quiz", eyes blazing, tail lashing and the mouse in his mouth.

"Quiz" was a huge pure white Persian cat, savage as all get out. He was found by John Nicholson on his way back from Brandon, a tiny half starved kitten. Some settler may have camped, and the kitten strayed away. He grew into a beautiful animal, and lived to the age of 16 years. When he was young he would stand up to any dog in an argument.

Dr. Tomlin of Deloraine was at our house one day. His hounds were with him, and mother was very concerned because "Quiz" was out. The Doctor said, "Oh! you need not worry, the dogs will soon put an end to him". Presently there was an awful commotion outside and a dog yelling in pain and terror. Everyone rushed to see what was happening and saw a hound tearing across the field with "Quiz" straddled on his back. After a while the cat came back!! but that hound would not even pass our house from then on.

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned "grain doors". It reminds me of an occasion when Mrs. Bush (whose husband Sanger Bush was station agent at the C.P.R. depot) was perplexed by the fact that her youngest son was constantly minus the seat of his pants. One day she said to him, "Don, what are you doing that rips the seat of your pants?" He replied, "Just playing 'p'raps'". "Now what on earth is 'p'raps'", asked his mother. "Well!! you slide down a grain door, and p'raps you get slivers in your bum, and p'raps you don't", was the reply.

Youngsters and some not so young get marvelous inspirations in times of stress. A teen aged friend of mine had taken on the responsibility of keeping house for her father and the hired man on a farm while her mother was away. She was very proud of the trust but at the same time very nervous.

PART 2"MAIN STREET FROM THE WEST END"CHAPTER 16

Main street really began at the Mill, beyond there was prairie road. The Mill had been built in 1889 of the local blue sandstone. Across the road from the Mill was a bake shop operated by Mr. and Mrs. Lumax. They were connected with the Mill demonstrating the superior quality of flour produced there. I was always envious of the Lumax children because I thought they could eat as many cookies and buns as they wanted at any time. I was very fond of the sugar cookies and currant buns made in the bakery.

My godfather, C. W. Plummer, had a lumber yard near the bake shop. I used to like to walk between the piles of lumber and sniff the nice tangy turpentine smell of the fresh wood and cedar shingles.

Certain stores, buildings and people connected with them stand out in my memory. Vrooman's Furniture Store for instance. They sold also coffins and caskets and had them on display upstairs. I was scared to even pass the stairs, having a very unhealthy fear of anything pertaining to death, coffins and graves. However, Mr. Vrooman also had a small library and I was very fond of reading, so I learned to put my foolish fears away when I wanted a book.

"E. Nichol and Son" had a store, grain elevator and lumber yard. All very handy and compact. Mrs. Nichol ran the general store, the son the elevator across the street, Mr. Nichol ran the lumber yard behind the store.

They did business with the farming community. We rarely went into their store. One very good thing they did was have a stove where the farmers could get really warmed up before starting out on the long cold drive home in winter.

I was very much afraid of Mrs. Nichol, she had a loud harsh voice, and piercing black eyes. I thought she looked like a witch. She was considered somewhat of a "penny pincher" by those dealing at the store, and the menfolk never hesitated to let her know that fact. One of them came into the store one day and said he had had a dream about her that bothered him. In this dream she had died, and gone to heaven. At the pearly gate St. Peter looked over his record and could not find her name. He suggested she try the "other place". Off she went and knocked there. Lucifer also said he had no record of her name. She persisted so at last St. Peter suggested they better toss for her. A coin was produced and St. Peter made the toss. Mrs. Nichol grabbed the coin in flight, and beat it, never being heard of again.

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The day came when bread had to be made. She knew all about the ingredients and method, etc. so completed the preparation O. K. but failed to keep it warm. Next morning it had not risen at all and she was in a panic. She did not want her father to know of her failure, so she took the dough out to the pasture and stuffed it down a badger hole. Feeling much relieved she set another batch of bread, which turned out alright.

A few days later she overheard the hired man telling her father about a tremendous puffball he had seen in the pasture. "It was three feet round and two feet high", he said. Poor Joan guessed it was her dough that had risen well in the warmth of the sun.

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The office of the weekly newspaper "The Recorder" was near Nichol's store. Mr. Arthur S. Barton was editor for some years before he and his family moved to British Columbia. Then Mr. Wm. V. Udall took it over. Charles James was the "printer's devil" or typesetter. I always wondered why a man doing his job was called a "devil". Maybe because he was usually black with ink. Mr. Barton had twin boys, Walter and Willie, and a daughter Daisy, they were all older than me.

There was a hardware store run by "Davis and Wilson" in this area. Fred Davis was the local prankster and ringleader in any nonsense or mischief. His partner, Jim Wilson, was a quiet soft spoken man, an American. He could step dance which the children thought wonderful. He used to help out driving for the livery stable when they had an extra long drive to make like to Lake Max with camper's effects.

He was a very kind man, often making whistles for us kids, or finding cherry sap "leaks" to make chewing gum. When driving he kept up a conversation with the horses all the time. They seemed to understand what he was saying and kept their ears turned back to listen regulating their pace accordingly. When we started off he would say "Hurrah!" "we're off", and away they went, tails high and ears pricked, stepping out high and handsome, even though they might be a couple of "plugs". He would say quite casually, "It's getting late" and the horses would quicken their pace, or "Easy does it" and they would slow to a walk for a while. It was an education in "horse sense" sitting beside Jim Wilson driving a team of horses.

"James A. Wright's" drug store was an important place in the town. Mr. Wright was a very fine "Mixer of potions, pills and syrups". He also owned Wright Hall, a barn like place, but never the less the only hall in the village that could be used for meetings, dances, concerts or plays, in fact any form of entertainment. I saw my first "drama" there, "Quo Vadis" (of all things) put on by Harold Nelson and his travelling company. I was simply enthralled!!

When Mr. Wright sold his store, a butcher opened a shop there. It was a dark dingy place with rather a nasty "pong". Once I saw a huge blue bottle walk down one of the artery openings in a beef heart. I was so revolted I could not eat heart in any form for years.

"The Ryan House" hotel was built and operated by Caleb Ryan. In 1889 it was burnt down. Everybody wanted to help when the fire broke out, and rushed in throwing whatever came to hand out through the window. Furniture, crockery, bedding, clothes, all went flying into the street. After the fire was out a man found a lady's crinoline, put it on and paraded the street, causing quite a stir. The hotel was rebuilt and many years later Mr. William Saults bought and operated it.

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When in 1895 Mother, Dad and I returned from a trip to England some person with kindly intent ordered a livery rig to meet us at the station. It was some distance from the station to our house on the outskirts of the village. Unfortunately, the team of horses used were bad actor bronchos, and when the train started to move they bolted. Jack Elliott who was driving was thrown out into the ditch and his leg broken as they cut a corner on to Main Street. The horses driverless now raced down the street to the corner by the Ryan House, they turned the corner so fast they lost their footing and fell, upsetting the surrey completely. The fall and ensuing scramble broke the tongue off freeing the horses fortunately, otherwise we would most likely have all been killed by their flying hoofs. Mother, Miss Pelley and I were in the surrey top under seats, baggage, etc. at the back door of the hotel kitchen.

Mr. Saults a very big man standing six feet two, and weighing over three hundred pounds, stooped down and very gently lifted me out from under all the jumble in the canopy top and carried me in to the hotel kitchen. I was very frightened but not badly hurt. Mother had wrapped her cape around me, so only my knees were bruised. Mr. Saults comforted me with loving care, a glass of milk and some cookies. As I was only four years old it was all rather an ordeal for me, with his care I recovered quite soon and well.

No one was seriously hurt, Mother and Miss Pelley were badly shaken and frightened but no bones broken nor lacerations resulted from the accident. After seeing the state of the rig next day the doctor came to the house to make sure no one was suffering from delayed reaction. It was many years before any of us could enjoy a drive behind horses again.

"Robert Morrison and Sons" "General Merchants" had a store near the Ryan House. There were dry goods and groceries on the ground floor, with a dress making, millinery and tailoring department upstairs. Mr. Bailey was the tailor and a friend of mine, I used to visit him while mother shopped downstairs. He always sat cross legged in the middle of the big table, his work spread out before him, and all his pins, needles, spools and scissors handy. Sometimes he gave me scraps for making doll clothes. Mrs. Moles was the dressmaker, and an exceptionally clever one too. Everything she made was a work of art inside and out, perfect fitting and beautiful design. Her daughter was the milliner.

The first bank in the settlement was owned and operated by a Mr. Cowan. The business was carried on in the warehouse of the elevator Dad and E.B. Tatchell ran, as this was the only building available in the village at the time. The walls where the desks had stood were all spattered and splashed with red

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and black ink, where the clerks had shaken their pens after dipping them in the ink well. At that time ink was thick and gooey and unless wiped or shaken would blot. The Commercial Bank took over from Mr. Cowan and amalgamated with the Union Bank when they built the stone building (now the Garden Cafe). I was very puzzled when I opened my first bank account at the Union Bank as to how the men behind the counter got ink on the walls of Dad's warehouse!

Robert S. Barrow was manager of the Union Bank. He was a very handsome man, dressed well, rode horseback and played tennis. All the young ladies were very interested in him but he had eyes for only one, Miss Moles the milliner. One Hallowe'en some of the young blades took the sign from the bank which of course showed "Union Bank of Canada" and exchanged it for Mrs. Moles dressmaking sign, putting the Bank one in place of Mrs. Moles'. There was an awful row next day. Of course everyone was full of concern and sympathy for those involved in such a "dastardly" prank!!! Mr. Barrow was not amused!!!

The Queen's Hotel, owned and run by one Jake Kettle, had a wide veranda across the front, it was raised about four feet above the sidewalk. There were a dozen or more "Captain's" chairs always out there when the weather was warm. It was a meeting place for men from village and country to discuss business and things in general, also watch the ladies and girls passing by. One day I was passing wearing a pair of high rubber boots of which I was very proud. They were wide at the top and the surface was pebbled so it made a delightful "swish-swish" as I walked. (I was about seven years old, I think). Anyway a man standing on the veranda said, "Hello, where are the boots going?" I was furious and disdained even a glance at the "rude" man. Men looking for work gathered at the Queen's, also men wanting help. It was somewhat of an adventure walking past there, would you or would you not be caught in the cross fire of tobacco juice which flew over the railing almost constantly.

Another interesting character was Mr. McCausland the butcher. He was a very fastidious man. Always wore a huge white apron which never showed any soil of any kind even though he was constantly handling great sides of beef, whole pig and sheep carcasses, as well as cutting at the "block".

Above McCausland's shop Mr. Charles Sankey had his veterinarian office. Mr. Sankey was a friend of mine. He used to tell one long tales about a locust he knew. (At the time he was making a study of locusts for a Government research project). They had long conversations and Mr. Sankey asked "Bill's" opinion on matters of great importance and "Bill" waved his "antennie" in reply. I was convinced much valuable information was made available in this way.

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When Mr. McCausland sold his shop Mr. Fred Fox bought it and opened a confectionery and cafe. Mr. Sankey left and the Hahn sisters, Lizzie and Pauline, had a music studio where he had had his office. They had a large class and many girls went on to teach music from there.

PART 2"PEOPLE AND BUILDINGS ON MAIN STREET"CHAPTER 17

Mr. John Morton moved his store from Wassewa into Boissevain. He ran a sort of general, all round "anything you want we have" sort of place. He had his own way of handling merchandise.

While Uncle Charlie was still living on his farm at White-water, his housekeeper Mrs. Wilson asked him to bring home three dozen jam jars from Boissevain. There was an abundance of wild fruit in the coulee below the house and on the prairie which she picked and made jam and jelly for winter use, pin cherries, high bush cranberries, Saskatoons, any fruit available. He made a note of the jam jars on his list and when he got to the village he handed the list in at Morton's store and asked that it be filled and packed ready for him to pick up later in the day before starting home.

He was late getting back so did not see Mrs. Wilson until the next morning. She asked why he had not brought the jam jars. He said he had done so, but the box was too heavy to move without help. Later he had the wagon brought to the back door and a man helped him unload a huge wooden box. After some effort they got the top off and found three dozen "jerry pots". Mrs. Wilson was furious. Uncle then remembered Morton saying he had no jam jars, but had substituted something that would do just as well that he had on hand.

Mrs. Wilson used those "pots" for years and found them quite successful. I visited "Bleak House" twenty years later and saw a row of them still on the shelf in the cellar, at threshing time they were always used for jelly, or stewed fruit in large quantities.

The store had suffered from the move in from Turtle Mountain, and the roof leaked badly. Mother was there one day when it rained heavily. Mr. Morton and his assistant at once produced a pile of "pots" which they deposited wherever a leak showed up, to catch the water. Mother was rather amazed, but accepted it as the usual procedure in this extraordinary country.

Twice a year Mr. Morton went into Winnipeg. He would locate where there were bankrupt sales and offer a price for the job lot of merchandise sight unseen. He often got some peculiar things but said there was always a "use for everything" as he proved in the case of the "jerry pots". He had a gross of them shipped with one lot he bought.

Mr. Holiday built the stone building that now houses the Royal Bank. It was the largest and most up to date store in the village. There was a millinery and dressmaking department up stairs, also carpets, rugs and other floor coverings. Mrs. Pilkington was the first milliner. Miss Currie took over from her and later became Mrs. George Aikin. The grocery department was considered very special. They carried many

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imported items like Cheshire cheese, Cross and Blackwell pickled walnuts, and many other things for those with special tastes such as preserved ginger and marmalade.

I loved the dry goods, bolts and bolts of bright coloured materials all beautifully arranged to show them off in the best light. The shoe department took up one side of the store and had everything in foot wear, to fit any foot. Slippers, shoes (Laced) boots, moccasins, gum boots, waders. You want it, they had it!!

Where the post office now stands in Boissevain there used to be several small shops, a tailor, a barber and a watch maker and jeweler, the latter owned by Mr. John Grimmett. It was a fascinating place. The walls covered with clocks of all sorts and sizes, all going, many striking. It was a hive of sound, tictocs, wig-wags, click-clacks. When they began to strike all at once you had to wait until they finished before you could hear anyone speak. Mr. Bucham was the tailor, a busy man with several assistants. The barber shop was another busy place. It was a rendezvous for all the town gossips. News flew around from there all over the village.

"Woodrow's Confectionery and Ice Cream Parlour" was my favorite place. Mr. Woodrow was a big man with a big handlebar moustache, very black. He had a big "fruitee" voice. I always associated it with watermelon. Indeed I still think of him when I eat watermelon. He made the most delicious ice cream in the world, real cream and smooth as silk on your tongue. For 5 cents you got a dish full. Simply gorgeous!!

Mrs. Woodrow had beautiful long brown hair. It hung below her knees and was a truly nut brown colour. She also had a parrot that was a familiar character about the village. She knew everybody, liked some and hated others. When a favored one came into the store she would shout "Polly wants a cracker", cuddle up to the bars of her cage and carry on a sort of crooning conversation, looking sweet and sentimental. However, if it was someone she disliked she would scream and shriek, snapping the bars, ruffle her neck feathers up and look like a fiend from hell until the customer left or Mrs. Woodrow covered the cage.

"James D. Bain and Co. General Merchants" was the store next to Woodrow's. Mr. William Venables was in charge of the grocery department. A tall Englishman who had learned his business in England. He knew all about groceries and how to serve and display them. To see him operate the big coffee grinder was an inspiration. Or measuring sugar from a hundred pound sack, or tea from a big chest shipped from India or China. The scoop would pick up the exact amount required. He would blend tea for you too.

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There were always large wooden pails of "stick" candy, gum drops or chocolate cream drops. The sticks and gum drops in gorgeous colours. Barrels of ginger snaps, "fly" biscuits, thin flat biscuits with raisins pressed into the dough, tasting good and looking like flies. Then there was a huge Cheddar cheese on a marble slab with a wire cutter attached to a piece of wood, and a tremendous glass cover to go over the whole thing. Crates of lovely brown eggs and big rolls of butter the farm wives brought in to exchange for groceries. I remember Mrs. Shillabeer bringing in a five pound roll of butter covered with cheese cloth and wrapped in rhubarb leaves to keep it cool on the long drive to town. Mr. Venables would taste it on a toothpick carefully, if it met with his approval he put it in the ice box.

The dry goods and ready to wear department was good too. There was footwear and some fur coats for women and men, racoon skin, wombat and grey lamb. All moderate priced, grey lamb and possum were very much in vogue. A grey lamb coat could be bought for \$50.00 or \$60.00. Now it is very expensive. They also had the Hudson Bay coats for children, dark blue duffel (with a hood) lined throughout with scarlet flannel, and a woven or knitted red sash around the waist and brass buttons. They were very popular for girls and boys. Many men had Hudson Bay coats for curling too. They were most attractive, and warm, also wore a long time. I always longed to have a Hudson's Bay coat but I never did.

Joseph Birbeck had a hardware and tinsmith business near Bain's store. He carried every kind of stove available at that time. Also all farm needs such as pitch forks, spades, milk pails and milk pans, water pails, churns, hoes, rakes and clothesline. Mr. Birbeck was a master tinsmith and did a big business along this line too.

Donald Sutherland had a variety shop. It was a fascinating place. I loved to go and browse around among the toys. He had wallpaper, china pens and pencils, ink, glassware, books, writing paper and candy. Anything you could not get anywhere else you would most likely find at Sutherland's.

Further along the street was a Chinese laundry. It was the only laundry in the village. I was very much afraid of the men who worked there. Chiefly because they wore long pigtailed and looked different. Unfortunately the many good qualities of these people were never explained to me. Sometimes they would coil their hair in a sort of beehive on their head and put a Derby hat on the top of the pile. It called for expert balance to walk along in a wind with this towering headdress. However, they seemed to manage alright, I never saw them have any accident.

Mr. and Mrs. Venables lived next to the Chinese laundry. I liked to visit there because they had a wonderful screen Mrs. Venables had made as a girl. The background was black oilcloth which was covered almost entirely with pictures and Christmas cards

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of all sorts and sizes. It was a real work of art. There was a pattern to the arrangement of the cards, etc. Tiny bits of card or picture were woven into the pattern. At the end of Main Street stood a very fine Methodist Church. Built of local sand stone, with a high spire, quite an imposing place.

The main thoroughfare of Boissevain was a mud road, almost a bog in Spring. It was an undertaking to cross the street at that time. The sidewalks were plank and about eight feet wide, with a hitching post about every ten feet on the roadside. On the far side of the road there was a six foot deep ditch to drain the road, and spaced along the ditch were four huge acetylene street lamps hung out over the street on iron arms from high poles.

One afternoon mother and I were walking down this street when we heard a terrible commotion, men shouting and bangings. Then we saw a team of horses tearing down the street with a driveless delivery dray crashing and bouncing behind them.

It was the village constable's job to light the street lamps each evening. Joe Young had just lowered one ready to light it, when the runaway horses came racing down the road. Instead of continuing down the centre of the road, the horses swerved to the side and went one on each side of the lowered lamp. Joe Young jumped the ditch to save his life. Needless to say the lamp was carried away on the tongue of the wagon. This really scared the horses in to an even madder gallop on to the end of the street, and up over the mill railway siding which was built up somewhat across the road. When the wagon hit the top of this siding it flew to pieces, and the lamp fell off. What a sight!! Boards, wheels, sacks of bran and shorts flew in all directions.

Somehow the horses remained attached to the neck yoke as they continued their mad race out into the country. I never heard what happened to those wicked horses. They were notorious bad actors, and had nearly killed several drivers. They were bronchos, and so could never be trusted. For some reason many people had bronchos, perhaps they were cheaper to buy because they were so wild. If they had oats in their diet it seemed to have the effect of drugs or alcohol and they went beserk.

The poor banged up lamp was on display for a long time. Perhaps as a warning not to drive bronchos, or not to light street lamps!!

PART 2"HARVEST THANKSGIVING 1914"CHAPTER 18

The St. Matthew's Church choir from Boissevain was asked by the rector to sing for the Harvest festival at the All Saints Church near Turtle Mountain ten miles out in the country. The church was built by the people who settled in the district and were members of the Church of England in 1898. Many relatives of these people contributed in cash and kind to help the small parish become self-sustaining and active. Much of the furnishings, such as pews, lectern, pulpit and altar came from overseas friends, also linens, lamps and other fixtures were donated. Mr. Fred Blankenbach provided the organ and played it until he left the district with his family to live in British Columbia.

As I was playing the organ at St. Matthew's I went along with the choir. We were driven out by car, about 14 of us. The service went well and there was a good congregation. Beautiful flowers, fruit and vegetables added to the wheat and oats used for decorations.

After the service I was invited to stay over night with my friend Margery Holditch at "Hillside Farm" about 1/2 a mile from the church. One of the choir members offered to play for me at the evening service in town so I was able to stay. Several of us decided to walk back to the house through the pasture beside the creek running along the bottom of the coulee. We started off through the woods, Margery and her three brothers, Reg, Leslie and Laurie, also George Lindsay and myself. As we went along the cow paths we saw the wild plums were dead ripe and falling on to the grass and leaves covering the ground. With one accord we fell on our knees and began eating the delicious fruit.

After a little while a family of pigs joined us, also enjoying the plums. For sometime there was not a word spoken, the only sound was the ecstatic crunching and grunting of the pigs eating plums, and the slurping and munching of the humans also eating plums.

Suddenly the humour of the situation struck us all at the same time and a roar of laughter burst forth. The pigs took fright and fled for their lives, leaving us rolling on the ground convulsed with laughter. At last we gathered our wits again and started for the house where a delicious supper was waiting for us. This we all enjoyed despite the feed of plums we had consumed.

World War I had recently been declared and everyone was feeling tense and anxious. While the dishes were being washed the men went out to do the farm chores such as milking, feeding and cleaning the stock. We girls gravitated to where the creek flowed through the yard. We found boxes and pieces of wood to sit on and waited for the men to join us when they finished their work.

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Presently a gorgeous harvest moon came up in a lovely sky with rose and gold bars from the setting sun. We were all feeling quiet and serious after the supper conversation, anxious about the war in Europe and the possible effect it might have on Canada.

One of the lads produced a mouth organ and began playing old favorites, so we relieved our pent up feelings by singing. After awhile those who had farms of their own or worked on other farms took their departure. When they had gone we strolled back to the house, Margery said to me, "You know "Hon", I have a feeling we will never have another time like we had today. That we will never be altogether again. It has been such a good time."

She was prophetic, we never were. Three of the boys went overseas with the Canadian troops. Laurie died over there. The others were away a long time and when they returned had to make a new life for themselves. Only two of the group are left now, and the years grow heavy.

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"THE DIRTY THIRTIES"

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I received a letter from a friend inviting me to spend my holidays with them on the farm. She also told me about the lovely crop they had. It stood tall and was filling out well and fast. It would be the first really good crop they had had since they were married and there were vague plans germinating.

My holidays began the following Saturday, and when I got off the bus at Boissevain I saw at once something was wrong. My friend looked distraught. When we were in the car I asked what was the matter, she replied with one word "Rust".

I had a vague idea what that could mean. When we drove past a field near the house I saw the horrible sight. Her husband was cutting the beautiful thick tall crop with a hay mower, and where he had cut looked as though a giant brush had swept across the field with red paint, in mid straw of the wheat. It was red rust alright, the straw bent over and broken where the level of the rust showed.

The dust rising from this was so devastating the horses were coughing and tossing their heads,, as they traversed the fields. The driver's eyes were running and he was coughing too. When they had travelled across the field he had to turn the horses' heads into the wind and let them stand a few minutes to get their breath.

It was the tragic result of an over night shower that had fallen straight and softly into the grain, sinking deep into the heavy growth. There was no breeze at all and the sun rose to a humid atmosphere which hung still and heavy all day. Three days later the evidence of the damage was visible. Many farmers suffered the same heart breaking experience and lost their whole crops.

Fortunately shortly after this, rust resistant grain was developed so the red killer was overcome to a great extent. The scars of those bad rust years took a long time to heal. Some gave up grain growing and took to cattle or pigs, or both instead.

In spite of many set backs my friends did well and raised a family. They moved to another farm that was nearer the highway so not cut off in winter. They practiced real husbandry and have had good return for their efforts.

I went to Boissevain again five years later in the "Dirty Thirties". On the bus going out I was shocked by the look of the country side. It had always been so lush and green, a vast expanse of grain fields, pasture and rolling prairie. Now it was all brown, the ditches full to the top with blown top soil. Fences were piled to the top of post and wire strand

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with soil caught in piles of tumble weed. Not a blade of green showed anywhere, nor were there leaves on the trees and bushes.

A constant flow of moving soil crossed the highway like millions of tiny snakes all going in the same direction. As the main roads were all hard topped the hideous "crawling" nightmare continued mile upon mile.

In the Turtle Mountain area where the cattle had been famous for beef, milk and butter fat production, the dreadful sight of animals like skeletons, walking wild eyed and often tongue lolling out, last winter's dung still clinging to their withered flanks, sickened me to the point of vomiting.

A friend met me at the bus depot, the wind was blowing from the West and the air and sky were thick with dust. We drove into the wind and with the windows closed tight. The car was full of dust and awfully hot. We could not tell where the road was unless tall grass and weeds had grown along the edge of the ditch. Often we had to stop and wait for a gust to pass because it was impossible to see ahead, and the force of the wind would stop the car's forward movement.

After we left the highway we were on the old horse and buggy three track country road. These tracks were in some places eight inches deep from long use, now they were level with blown soil. The car was stopped entirely, by the soft fill in, several times we would have to back up and take a run at it to get through. At one place we crossed a coulee on a grade. I knew the place well, the grade was about eight feet high. Now it was quite level across the coulee. Animals walking in this soft earth sank above their fetlocks and weak as many were they gave up the struggle, lay down and died.

When we reached our destination we were black faced and red eyed. The sun was a dim red disk in the brown swirling sky. Over the night the wind dropped and we could open windows and doors. You could not get fresh air, but it was cooler. In the morning the sun came up clear in a blue sky. However, by noon that terrible bank of dust was rising again in the West. Soon the torture of the constant screaming wind began again.

No one could use soap to wash hands and face because all water must go to the animals and poultry to drink. Small wonder some people became mentally ill, while others left everything and struck out for British Columbia, or anywhere there might be green grass and trees with green leaves.

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One man I knew loaded stock and implements in a box car and with his son to help him headed for the Pacific Coast, while his wife, daughter and another son drove out by car. When they reached White Rock, they stayed there, bought land and settled.

Thank God the good land of the Turtle Mountain area recovered and came back into production. When the ditches were ploughed out the farmers planted wind breaks across the fields to hold the precious top soil and things began to return to normal. Cattle are once more a joy to behold, fat and sleek.

The early settlers had their share of disaster too. Prairie fires were a constant threat, and could sweep down destroying everything in its path. Everyone had a strip of plowed land around their buildings, hay stacks and machinery. Even these were of no use if any grass had been allowed to grow on them. It is a terrifying sight to see fire for miles and miles especially at night. If it was not fire, hail, smut or rust plagued the farmer in pioneer days.

PART 2"Manitoba's Hundredth Birthday Year 1970"CHAPTER 20

Boissevain (once known as Cherry Creek) through many trials, tribulations, ups and downs, has with the whole Turtle Mountain area become a place of considerable importance in Manitoba. The pioneers who settled along the Old Commission Trail came mostly from Eastern Canada and the United Kingdom. They brought with them skills and the wisdom of experience, with willingness to begin again, and make a home on the virgin prairie and make it productive. Their courage paid off.

Many men and women of great ability born in Boissevain gave their lives in two world wars, serving in the Navy, Army and Air Force. Some contributed through medicine, education, agriculture, law and politics. Men like James Johnson, Richard G. Willis, George McDonald and Alex Welch served in Parliament and the Legislative Assembly for Turtle Mountain Riding.

Errick Willis, son of "R. G." (as he was known) entered law, became a member of a prominent law firm in Winnipeg, was a member of Parliament, also raised pure bred cattle on his farm near the foot of the Mountain. Later he became Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba.

"R. G." Willis was one of those who brought pure bred Clydesdale and Percheron horses in the district, heavy draught horses for farm and draying work, beautiful beasts with fur "frills" around their feet and huge dappled rumps. Proud animals, as well they might be. A six or four horse team of such animals well harnessed and driven was a grand sight. Sad to say no longer seen on the roads or fields.

"R. G." also was interested in harness racing and had several very fine and valuable trotters in his stable. They too were a delight to watch on the track, one of the noted ones was "Dan Patch" who won fame and money for his owner.

Robert Willis was keen on harness racing too, he had one famous sorrel mare named "Molly May" who won many races in the Province and gave her last ounce of strength in her last race, falling dead when she had crossed the line.

The International Peace Garden is near Boissevan. On top of Turtle Mountain, I was privileged to go on a drive through the bush searching for a spot that might be developed to take such an honoured position as a memorial to one hundred and fifty years of peace between two nations living side by side.

Mr. William Udall invited Dad and me to go on this drive with him. It was a tour of discovery. We went over the most awful roads, really little more than old winter wood trails and deer paths. We drove through streams, over logs and trees, up hill and down dale. Often I expected the car to groan to a stop and break in half, but it was valiant and kept going.

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We found numerous small lakes concealed in charming hidden valleys and among lovely rolling hills. Open spaces with distant vistas that took one's breath they were so lovely. Everywhere showed the vast potential waiting to be developed. All natural, no need for man to make artificial beauty, here. It was all part of the Turtle Mountain that had been burnt over so long ago. The timber was all second growth, quite large and vigorous, ash, elm, birch, poplar, oak, alder and willow with fruit trees included.

Mr. Udall took the information he had gathered that day to the committee considering the Peace Garden project. He laid it all before them and a team of men able to evaluate the over-all possibilities was sent out to look over the whole location. They were satisfied that it was an ideal spot, and lent itself to all the desired points, also had many other advantages. So the land we scouted that day was chosen for the International Peace Garden.

As the garden began to develop people from many countries heard of it and wanted to contribute so sent trees, shrubs, plants, also undertook to develop special areas and sections of the garden. Clubs and other groups also sponsored picnic areas, or quiet restful spots under trees, flower gardens and places where it was possible to make tea, etc., all began to take shape.

Now the whole garden is enjoyed by thousands of visitors and tourists from all over North America, Europe and Asia. There is no border line in the garden, though part is in North Dakota and part in Manitoba. It is the garden of the people of North America. Plans for the future development are magnificent. There are two very attractive tea houses built on a wide paved terrace with a sunken garden and pools below a balustrade.

The natural amphitheatre for concerts, meetings, church services, etc. seats a large number of people. Fine log buildings fully equipped for serving banquets, luncheons or whatever are needed for conventions.

It has pleased God that the Mountain should again be "with verdure clad". It demonstrates that peace and beauty can be restored even after disaster strikes by fire. The famous "C to C" highway passes by the gates of the Peace Garden and an all weather road climbs to Lake Max, six miles west of the Garden. No more corduroy there. Even the gumbo of Boissevain's Main Street has gone, replaced by pavement with parallel parking for cars instead of the old "hitching posts". The sidewalks are paved too. In Spring it was a real undertaking to cross the street, even your rubbers were apt to disappear in the mud.

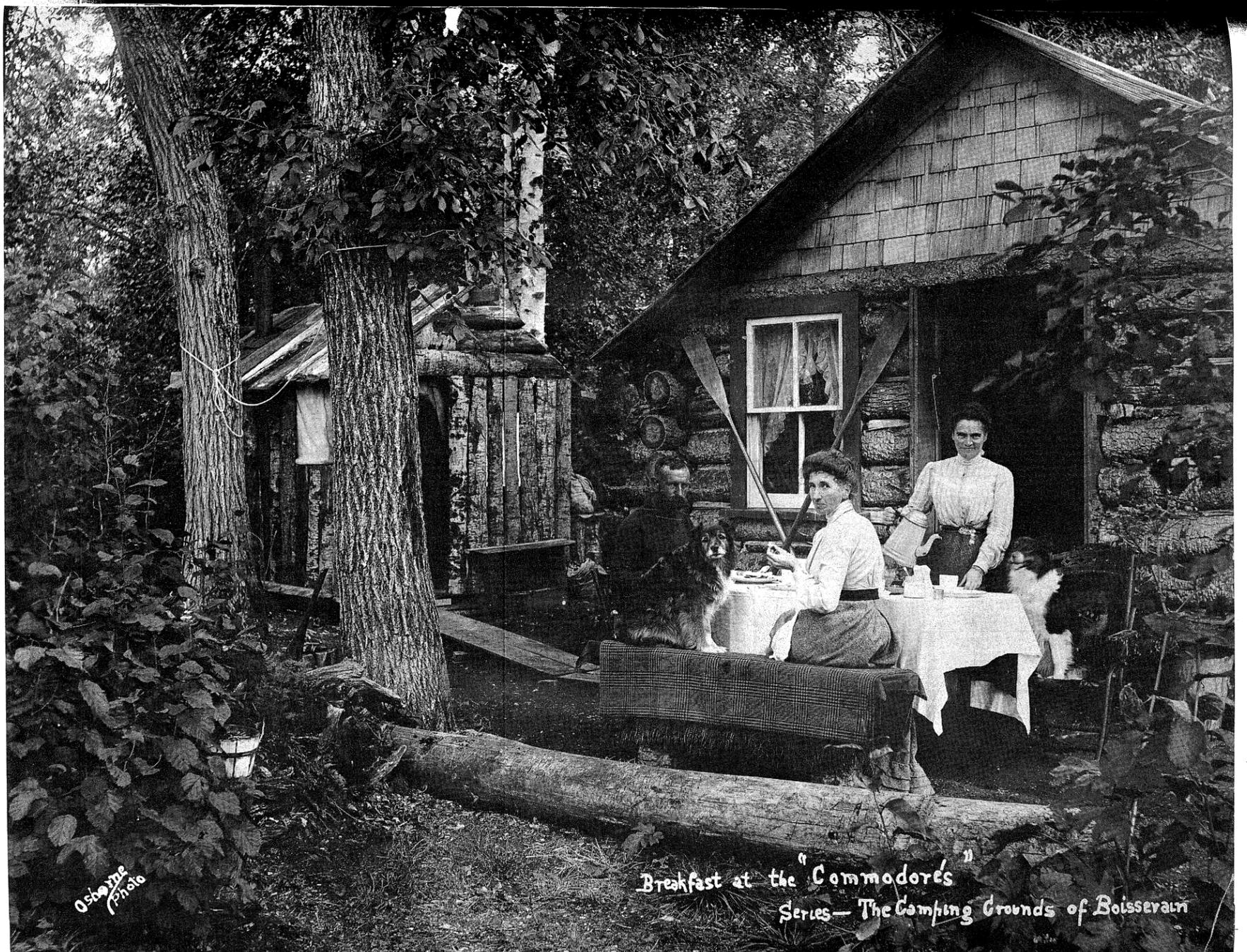
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Hydro provides electricity for lighting and industry. Water works provide ample water for human consumption and industry as well as water sports. Motor cars have replaced Oxen, horse and buggy and the train. There is no passenger service on the railway now. Bus and car transport cover it all. The only really important thing is that people are able to get to places where other people are and that there is unity of purpose and good-will among the inhabitants. This is the true value of progress and change.

Boissevain has a fine hospital, swimming pool, curling and skating rinks, sports fields, museum, library, and a residence where those who have given their time and strength in their prime and now want to take things easy can reside. "Westview Lodge" is a place the town can be truly proud of. When years pile up on one's shoulders it is good to have a place where there is congenial companionship and caring, so one can relax and enjoy entertainment in peace.

This is Manitoba's Centennial year. It is ninety years since those two young lads left home and family in England to seek their fortune in a strange "Infant" Province. There is no plaque or memorial to Robert and Charles Hurt, other than what now stands on the prairie they helped to bring into production. Vast grain fields and mines, oil wells, lakes teeming with fish, the natural resources. Manitoba's gold-eyes were shipped to New York by train loads, being considered very "special" by gourmets.

Each of the lads as men gave a valuable contribution in his time towards the development of the country, and wove his part in the "fabric" of the "Turtle Mountain Corduroy". Canada as a whole benefitted by the fact two young lads ventured forth alone and settled in Manitoba's Turtle Mountain area so many years ago.



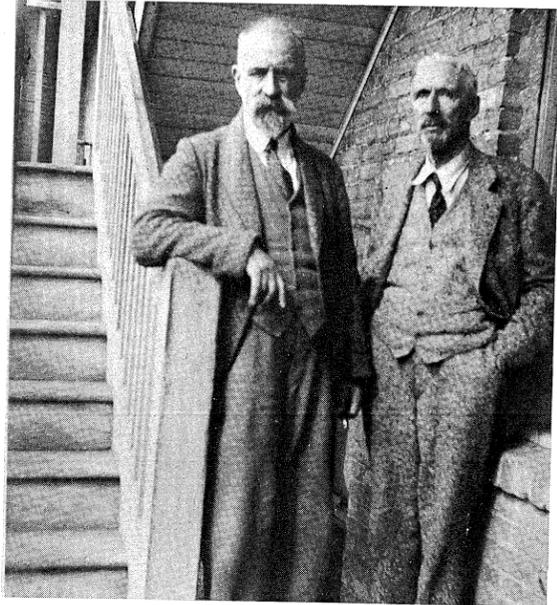
Oshawa
Photo

Breakfast at the "Commodore's"
Series—The Camping Grounds of Boisvert

The cabin with the Red Door — Robert and Minnie
Hurt, Caroline Pelly. "Badge" and "Sing".
Part 2, Chapter 3, Page 3.



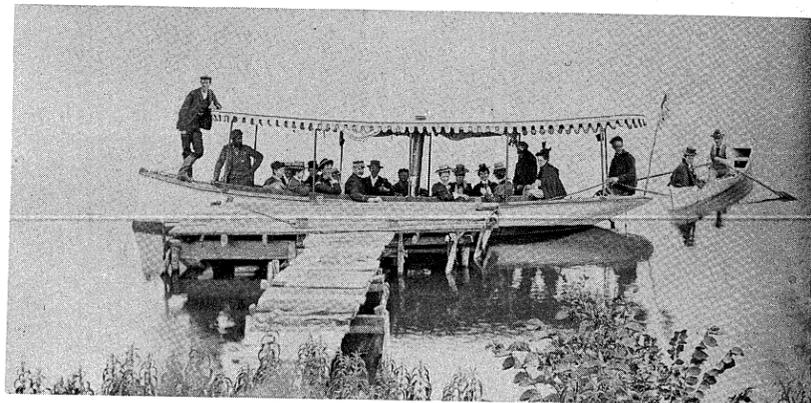
Chase Cliff, Whatstandwell.
"Chase Cliff" where Robert and Charlie lived as small boys.
Part 1, Chapter 1, Page 1.



Robert and Charles Hurt in Winnipeg, 1932.
Part 2, Chapter 2, Page 3.



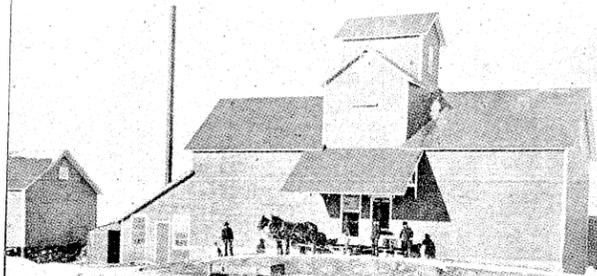
Robert and Minnie Hurt,
on their return from honeymoon.
Part 1, Chapter 4, Page 2.



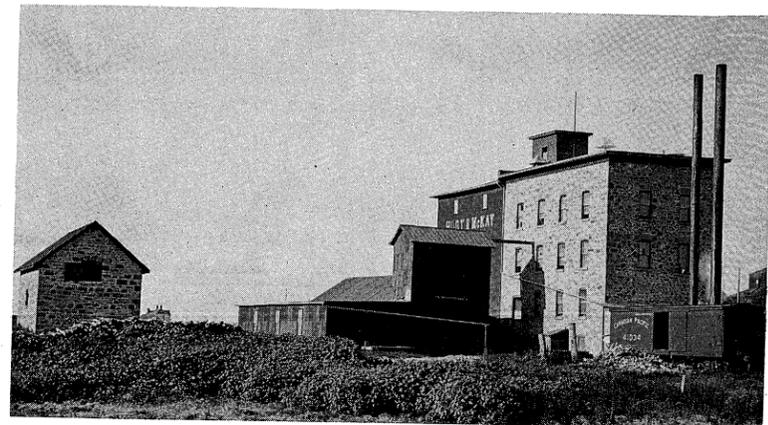
"The Lady of The Lake" at the main land dock.
Robert Hurt at helm. Frank Aitkins standing. Arthur
by engine.
Part 2, Chapter 3, Page 2.



Our house, Mother, Dad and Miss Pelly. "Badge",
"Sing" and I in foreground.
Part 2, Chapter 10, Page 1.



Boissevain's first grain elevator, 1886.
Warehouse where first bank was located.
Part 2, Chapter 15, Page 2.



"The Mill" showing the warehouse and stable. Also
chimneys, one of which was shot down by Tom Brodie.
Part 2, Chapter 12, Page 1.