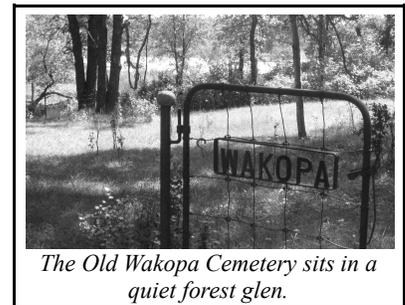


Surrounding Sites and Stories

MANY OTHER FASCINATING SITES AND STORIES WERE DISCOVERED WHILE RESEARCHING the articles that appear in this booklet. These stories carry great weight in the history and heritage of the Turtle Mountain-Souris basin area. Though they are of great importance and interest, at this time these sites and stories fall outside of the borders of the rural municipalities and communities that support the Turtle Mountain-Souris Plains Heritage Association. The TM-SPHA is hoping to represent the entire Souris basin area in our articles and stories in the future.

Old Wakopa – RM of Turtle Mountain

Wakopa was the very first permanent settlement to be established in the Turtle Mountain-Souris basin area. In 1877 B. B. LaRiviere, a Métis entrepreneur from Ontario, set up a trading post and store directly on the Boundary Commission Trail and was firmly in place by the time European settlers began trekking west in pursuit of rich farm land. LaRiviere's store grew into a busy community, becoming a supply centre and stopping place for settlers heading west.



The Old Wakopa Cemetery sits in a quiet forest glen.

Sourisford/Coulter Park – RM of Arthur

Sourisford, as the name suggests, was well known to all prairie travellers as a convenient place to ford the Souris River. In this place, a gravel bottom spanned the width of the river and the soft banks on either side were worn down by herds of bison over years of migrations, offering a less harrowing crossing.



Coulter Park is several miles south of Melita, Manitoba.

The bank of this portion of the river was a popular camping place for First Nations and early explorers, and it eventually became the location of a settler village by the name of Sourisford. Annual picnics at the site began in the summer of 1882 and drew crowds of thousands of people. This site has been preserved and protected as Coulter Park which is still used as a recreation area.

Lang's Crossing – RM of Riverside

Lang's Crossing was a convenient place to ford the Souris River. It was located right at the Elbow of the Souris, where the river abruptly changes direction just downstream from today's Riverside bridge on Highway 10. A ferryman used to live right beside this crossing to ferry vehicles across the river.

Sourisford Linear Burial Mounds – RM of Arthur

The linear burial mounds, found several miles from Sourisford, are remnants of the largest concentration and some of the best preserved examples of mounds in all of Canada. The burial mounds at Sourisford date back to 900 AD – over 1,000 years ago. The builders of the mounds participated in sophisticated, continent-wide trade networks – incredible during a time when travel was accomplished without the horse or the wheel.