

Pioneer Days

On September 2nd, 1882, two homesteaders journeyed across the prairie driving a yoke of oxen and a wagon containing food, clothing and house-furnishings for a car-roofed home, 12 x 14 previously built of one ply rough lumber by Mr. Allan Hobson. The lumber had been brought in by Mr. Fowler.

Following the corner posts of the sections to find their section, 18-4-17, they skirted a shining sheet of water, on which plenty of wild ducks were enjoying their freedom. Nearby this pretty lake on their homesteads were two homes, at the east end that of Mr. and Mrs. A. Robinson and family who provided many a good meal for hungry travellers, and on the north side that of Mr. John Williams and family. This was the beginning of Killarney.

As the homesteaders passed by this lake among the trees, no thought of the future came to them. They were only concerned with their own bit of land, and the tiny roof-tree they were so anxiously hoping to reach before night came. This they did, and unloaded their stove, put it in place, made a fire, had supper and started their homesteading, quite proud of their large acreage, though most everything else was small.

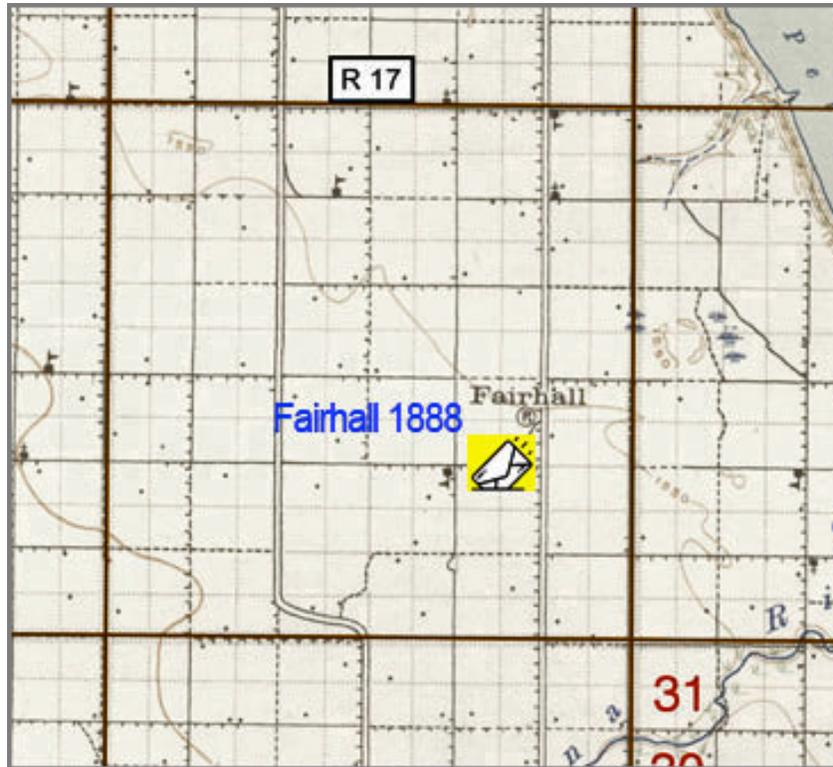
However, here they learned many useful lessons, and found how dependent they were upon others. Their nearest neighbor was Mr. John McKay, who with his young wife had taken a homestead two miles, south of their place. Later on, other homesteaders arrived and during part of that first winter four of them, viz: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Cuthbertson, Mr. A. Squires and Mr. F. Squires lived together in one little house. Sometimes for a little change, they had a bit of bread baked by the wife of the homesteader, who had contrived to bring such a possession with him, but most of the time they were dependent on their own cooking. It would, be hard to say which they enjoyed most, the cooking or the eating. Both were done in a way that only a pioneer of those early days knew anything about. Their next neighbors were three more men, Johnny Martin, Charlie O'Neil and Arthur Reynolds, who brought them books and magazines.

Our first taste of Pelican Lake fish, weighing about ten pounds was brought by Johnny Martin. For this dainty dish we had no salt, as our supply had run out, and we were in the grip of a very cold spell. Never mind, we had some fine meals without the salt for which we longed so much, as well as many other things without which we had to do, in that never-to-be-forgotten first winter which was cold, so cold.

After a while another homesteader arrived. He and his good wife and baby girl, now Mrs. W. J. McKnight of the old neighborhood, came to live with us, and the gladness that came to our small home will never be forgotten. The companionship of others made our world new again and especially after not having seen a woman's face for three months. These homesteaders brought

their mail. The end of February is a long wait for Christmas mail, but it was very welcome even then.

With the welcome company of this little family the memorable first winter soon ended and on March 25th, 1883, the first baby boy in Township 4, Range 17, now W. A. McKnight of Killarney gladdened the hearts, and little home of Mr. and Mrs. H. McKnight.



Township 4, Range 17, home to the KcKnights, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Cuthbertson, Mr. A, Squires and Mr. F. Squires, Johnny Martin, Charlie O'Neil and Arthur Reynolds.
