

school was the outlet for fun and craziness. One must remember Rossdale was in a different time and cultural space than anything that resembles modern culture. In those either days, play was an all too infrequent privilege to be excitedly anticipated long before and savoured long after the occasion. In our present society, many consider recreation a deserved right to enjoy at any time. Such was not the case in this early period. Yet, the annual school Christmas play, the barn dances and socials and the Rossdale soccer and baseball games seemed enough to satiate any desires for enjoyment and laughter. The importance of these events, however, should not be underestimated. These events were Rossdale. The running, dancing, singing and drinking were all part of a spirit, a unique attitude people revelled in to escape the worries and tribulations of their lives.

School ground picnics and baseball games coached by Fred Kowalchuk were all special occurrences but perhaps the most cherished even in the entire year was the annual Rossdale School Christmas play. This was the one event which absolutely no one dare miss. All the parents and relatives, attired in the most formal of formal wear, would come in joyful expectation, to see and hear their children perform. A stage, constructed inside the school specifically for the performance, only served to accentuate the importance of the occasion and intensify the nervousness of the young performers. The teacher played a piano off to the side and would lead the school choir through beautiful renditions of traditional Christmas carols and spirituals. Some kids would impersonate members of the opposite sex in a series of skits, all the while suitably attired. The most imaginative performance involved five or six children who enacted a car getting a series of flat tires. Four kids would each make believe to be a tire and would "inflate" or "deflate" their bodies corresponding to how fast the frustrated driver could pretend to pump them up. The climax of the evening was the arrival of Santa Claus (usually played by a young man) who distributed gifts along with apples, oranges, and peanuts to all the children. The gifts were really from the children's parents who had sneaked them to Santa a day earlier but to the excited children St. Nicholas and his reindeer were solely responsible.

The cooperation and communication of the Rossdale community were never so apparent as they were at harvest time. Marge Chamberlain further explains. "In the middle of August, the people of the area would have a 'Hayday'. Usually, all the farmers in the area would go to a farm to stook and harvest the grain. On some of the bigger farms, as many as fourteen teams of horses might be working at the

same time on the fields with threshing machines. Oh, I remember those threshing machines causing a lot of accidents. Often the horses would get frightened and some men might get their fingers or arms trapped in the machine. I heard that one fellow even fell right into the machine — it must have torn him to shreds. But despite all these dangers, everyone in the area got along and helped everyone else. If a farmer owned something he was more than willing to share it."

The horrors of the 1930's eventually lifted and some semblance of normality and sanity returned to the prairie climate. Yet, as the skies cleared and soils regenerated, another storm was gaining momentum on a distant horizon. The madness of Nazi Germany had slowly festered into a holocaust of unimaginable brutality and innocent young men the world over were quickly summoned to oppose it. Once again Rossdale was drawn into the conflict by sending its boys and young men to sacrifice their arms, legs, eyes, minds and lives for the sake of freedom. Marge recollects what they tried to do at home to help the war effort. "The first thing you had to do at wartime was to try not to get too upset and just accept it. You realized there was nothing you could do to change the way things were. We tried to do what little we could by holding Red Cross meetings in our house about once a month during the war. My mother, Anne, would have about fifteen women in our kitchen working on a big round table. They would knit socks, mitts, scarves and such to include in Red Cross packages to send overseas. We also sent a lot of food parcels to England throughout the war."

The first organized non-religious activities in the community date back to 1916 when Rossdale played Lockport in a football (soccer) game. However, unorganized activities the like of alcohol consumption probably go farther back than that, as making and drinking moonshine became a near obsession with many of the Rossdale folk. Almost every farmer seemed to have his or her own secret recipe and ingredients for creating the ultimate in liquid refreshment. Yet, there existed one individual notorious for his intricate brewing methods and calculated distilling techniques. His name was Harry Gudz — a part-time gravedigger and full-time moonshiner. His 100 proof homebrew was considered the best for miles around and sold for five dollars a gallon. Lesser brewmasters in competition with him would often try to sell potato water with javex added as an adequate substitute. The majority of the buying public were not to be fooled, though, as they preferred his unique white whiskey, derived from potatoes, raisins and fruits, over any other brand. Harry also had an unusual storage and distribution centre: a fence post

hole in the back of the school yard. One might consider this crude, but for people at the time his moonshine was a perfect complement to Bernie Smiegel's violin playing on many Saturday night barn dances.

Mike Cheslock further elaborates on the social and extracurricular activities of the era. "Booze was a part of everyday life in Rosedale. As soon as a kid was out of school he was considered old enough to drink — that's about thirteen or fourteen years of age. I remember running for a school board election and unless you served liquor while you were campaigning you were sure to lose — that's the way things were. Parents were very lenient with their kids concerning liquor, but dating — dating was something else all together. Parents were very, very strict about any pre-marital hanky panky.

Eaton's Service on No. 8 Highway in the 30's

submitted by Isabel McDonald

We did most of our shopping by Eaton's service on the range line (No. 8 Highway) in the summertime from May 24 until September 15 — when they went to the beach for the summer campers. We only went to the store once a week, if necessary.

We would put an order (big or small) on a post with a red flag and a stone on it. Eaton's driver would pick it up on his way back to Winnipeg about 1 p.m., and we would have our order delivered to our door at 7:30 a.m. If they were out of what you ordered, they would always substitute something much better.

Some of the prices I remember were:

Coffee —	5 lbs. for \$1.00
Sugar —	100 lb. bag \$5.00
Print —	8¢ a yard
Chuck Beef Roast —	3¢ a pound

Of course, all we had to shop with was a cream cheque, about \$2.50 or \$3.00. If the grade was good, maybe we would get a bit more. Eggs were 10¢ a dozen.

The Fabulous Netley Marsh **Ed Chesley**

The "Netley Marsh", — this vast area consisting of approximately one hundred square miles at the south end of Lake Winnipeg, conjures up stories of the past and the present with its activities, its humour, its tragedy and its industry. It brings to mind thoughts of the great future of this vast area of marsh, creeks, rivers, lakes; its flora and fauna. This area houses most every species of waterfowl known to the northern hemisphere, and is the summer home to the white pelican, gull, heron, grebe, tern, the yellow-headed and red-headed blackbird and many others. There are

diamond willows, red willows, gray willows, maples and grasses taller than any man, the bullrushes and flagweeds. There are jackfish, perch, pickerel, sauger, sucker, maria, goldeye and catfish. Summer cottages and permanent homes line the various streams. Water skiing, tobogganing, swimming, hiking, exploring, boating, canoeing and birdwatching, duck hunting, fishing and trapping are some of the activities of this region.

The best known waterway of the area is Netley Creek (also known as Netley River and Jackfish River on old maps); but known as Dead River long ago. It was so named in a map "to show lands at Red River conveyed by the Indian Chiefs to Lord Selkirk in 1817." It was also shown on a map of Alexander Henry, 17th. of August 1808, as Riviere de Morts. It was also known as Nepowin Sysi (Death's River) an Indian name. This name was explained by John MacDonnel as due to the fact that a large camp of Assiniboils (Assiniboines), Krees (Crees) and Saulteaux were massacred by the Sioux or Naudewessi at the mouth of Netley Creek (Death River).

However, as M. Muckle in a letter from Clandeboye 19th. of November, 1891 wrote: "The river was not given this name because of the massacre but for the reason that when the Saulteaux first came to the mouth of the creek, they found abandoned tents along the bank; also on going up-stream, where they found human remains inside and out and got its name Ne-Poo-Win. One boy was found alive, Pockwa-Now, known to the Selkirk Settlers which would make it about 1813. The Saulteaux then took possession of the land, after killing or adopting a few Mandans who lived along the Red River.

The present name came from the name of a Hudson's Bay Co. officer.

This should be enough of history, but before leaving this most fascinating subject, mention must be made of Fort Maurepas, five leagues up the Red River from Lake Winnipeg where the marshes end and the banks of the River rise high, which site was never identified, but must be the mouth of Netley Creek. There was also Lake Fort between Netley Creek and Selkirk in 1770 and an Indian settlement opposite Netley Creek created by Rev. Wm. Cochrane in 1832. Then there was Capt. Wm. Butler who jumped the steamer (International) at Red River, and fearing Louis Riel, sought safety among the Indians of Netley Creek. There were dug-outs built into the ground, cribbed with poplar trunks, first found by the writer only steps from his home. These were the homes of the Settlers during the winter of 1869 because of the war-like stance of Cuthbert and Riel. The account of a Mr. Robertson describing the Hudson's Bay cattle ranches at Netley Creek and

Cook's Creek of 1860 is very interesting. (At the foot of Lake Winnipeg among the marshes and low-lands are the cattle ranches of the Company, the high prices making it profitable and suited to the native herdsmen.)

We must not forget Peter Fidler of the Company writing in 1819 regarding the first post (Hudson Bay store) as being two or three miles up Dead River, now reasonably established as being at the confluence of Wavey and Muckles Creeks, as recalled by Mr. Cou-
ture.

One of the earliest settlers, Mr. R. Guilbert, a former merchant of Petersfield spoke of loading cordwood hauled along the Gimli Colonization Road to the banks of Netley Creek at his homestead.

Today the area is tourist orientated with resorts catering to Winnipeg, Manitoba and American visitors. Chesley's Resort is known throughout the United States and eastern Canada as the best equipped duck hunting camp. Petersfield Park is now a subdivision for cottages and Forall Campground is a trailer park. Jack Maloney and his "Netley Queen" also catered to the "shooters". There were others now forgotten. Where there was once an Indian settlement is now the site of "End of Main Snack Bar", catering to the fisherman along the creek banks. A very active industry also has developed by seining minnows (shiners) as bait for the fisherman. It is perhaps the largest activity of its kind anywhere and the bait is sold throughout Manitoba and Western Ontario. Plans were contemplated for a Japanese cannery using minnows.

Ice fishing was carried on by Chesley's Resort for fifteen years. How many remember the winter ice fishing carnival with its angling, rat-skinning, wood-cutting and snow-shoe races? Mrs. Minnie Walters arrived at the camp by airplane, dressed as the Marsh Queen in Musk rats only, escorted to the lodge by radio personality and M.C. for the occasion, Fred Whiting. A crowd standing along a red carpet received her warmly. It was 20 degrees below! Many fish were weighed in, mainly Perch, Pickerel, Jackfish and Catfish. Five hundred dollars in prizes were awarded. Over fifteen hundred holes were drilled through as much as three feet of ice the previous night.

Some of the well-known Indian residents were Norbert and John Greyeyes, whose father, Alex Greyeyes was chief of the Saulteaux. It was "Old Alex" who taught the writer what a "coy" and a "rat" was, and that "coots" made an excellent soup.

What of the future? An idea or two has already been broached.

One of the most intriguing dreams is ocean-going vessels taking the short cut from Europe (as tourists

now fly over Hudson's Bay) through the Arctic, the Bay, up the Nelson River through Lake Winnipeg up the Red and Mississippi Rivers, passing through Winnipeg, Minneapolis and to New Orleans. Atomic ice breakers now are capable of breaking up to seven feet of ice.

Perhaps we should not dream too wildly! Why not put a dam around the lower end of Lake Winnipeg, thus maintaining a constant level in Netley Marsh and growing wild rice? It is very possible and very lucrative.

Lastly, lest we forget, should we not engage ourselves more vigorously in locating and marking these historical sites, our heritage, before all is lost? It must be done! We live in one of the most renowned historical areas of North America and the Netley Marsh is its centre.

The Fairfield Woollen Mill Margaret (Fairfield) Luckhurst

When my family moved to Little Britain shortly after the First World War, they had no idea that a few years later they'd be involved in the woollen industry. For one thing, Hugh C. Fairfield, our dad, was the school principal at Stonewall, toiling back and forth every school day on the creaking Selkirk street-car. At that time he had no intention of going into the manufacturing business, even though his meagre salary had to stretch to cover the needs of a family of ten. Also, the house they had bought had been built as an hotel in the late nineteenth century, and it needed a lot of renovation to convert it to family living. While its purpose had been to serve weary travellers on their long journey from Winnipeg to Lake Winnipeg, its large kitchens, dormitory-sized bedrooms and grubby saloon did not lend themselves to family convenience. In consequence our mother directed and supervised the older members of the family in a re-building project which kept them busy in their spare time for three or four years.

Eventually, in about 1924, the older boys acquired a half dozen sock machines and began turning out heavy work socks and selling them to local buyers for twenty-five cents a pair. The origin of the machines has been lost in the mists of Time but the sock prices will never be forgotten! This pocket money was very encouraging and seeds of an idea began to grow in the minds of these five resourceful young men. In due course, after much careful searching, in 1925 they were able to arrange financing on the machinery of a small, defunct woollen mill in Winnipeg. The machinery was freighted to the siding at Lower Fort Garry and hauled the half-mile to its new site behind the family home.

While this was taking place, hiring of local men

began and the first factory was built and ready for business within the year. Unfortunately however, industrious and ambitious as everyone was, nobody had the slightest idea how to operate any of the machinery. But, not to worry. While it was being set into place, our Dad scurried about western Canada in an effort to find someone to help them get established. He was fortunate in acquiring the services of a very elderly Englishman who had been a weaver in England all his life, and was currently visiting relatives in Canada. The good man moved in with the family and over the next few years trained the first of the staff who were to become talented spinners, carders and weavers.

The depression years were difficult for everyone, but the mill struggled along gaining more customers every year, chiefly because it advertised an ingenious gimmick that was easy on the slim wallets of its clientele. People were encouraged to bring in their worn-out woollens, which were put into a machine that reduced the fibres to a fluffy state making it easy to be handled as pure wool. For about seven pounds of old discarded woollens, a new blanket was produced, costing roughly \$2. It was an interesting idea which caught on across Canada and was profitable not only to the family but their customers as well.

Success has its demands however. The Second World War pressed all woollen manufacturers into producing goods for overseas use, and the time came for the Fairfield Woollen Mill to expand. New and much larger buildings were found out by the Winnipeg airport, and over a period of time the gradual transition was made from Little Britain to Winnipeg.

In personal reflection I can recall the day the chickens had to move over to make room in the chicken house for a strange machine that was to be used to wash wool. It was a time when there were flocks of sheep on many farms, and trucks full of bags of raw wool would trundle into the yard to be traded for yarn or blankets. I recall the terrible night in 1944 when our beloved old house caught fire and burned to the ground. We all cried a lot of tears the day we moved into Winnipeg and left Little Britain behind. It was, however, the end of an interesting era, along the Red River.

Flooding of the Red River

In 1941, the Fey family moved to the Parish of St. Peters. In the spring of 1942, as the Red River was breaking up, the river overflowed its banks, filled the slough to the east of their home and invaded their yard. Not a major disaster to overcome! The one thing this family did not know was that this was not the full extent of the flooding in this area!

In 1943, they experienced their first major flood.

Not being fully prepared for the damage that could be caused by flooding, the family suffered great losses. Bags and bags of potatoes that were kept under the house in a small cellar, were spoiled as the force of the river's current caused the cellar walls to cave in. The water also invaded the chicken house. The water caused the straw that was covering the floor to float. In the morning, the unsuspecting chickens flew from their roosts onto the floating straw and were all drown. Also badly damaged were many personal belongings and household furnishings. As the house and yard were soon engulfed in water the family headed for higher ground. The family, then consisting of ten children, went by horse and wagon to the home of Alex Chyborak, situated on higher land further south. That same year neighbours to the north, the Kelly family, were also surprised as the water came in so fast. Three girls from there were on their way to catch a bus, which was the only link with Selkirk at that time, when they were suddenly trapped in the flood waters. They were stranded on the flooded road and could not go back. They made their way through the swift water, sometimes being forced into the ditch by the rushing current. They eventually arrived at the Fey residence, with scratches and cuts on their legs; they were wet, cold, and very scared. Their family later picked the girls up by boat and took them home.

In 1945, extremely high water lifted the ice on the slough and carried it in a solid chunk, thirty-nine inches thick, over the road and near to Bill Bird's farm. After the water subsided the ice was left covering the road as well as resting on top of fence posts. Members of the Fey family remember fence posts sticking through the ice as it slowly melted. It remained there blocking the road north for many, many weeks. Other neighbours to the north, the Dutka family, had to carry their young children on their shoulders through deep water, to safety at Otto Fey's house. All were forced still farther south to Alex Chyborak's house to spend the night, as the water also flooded the Fey's house. Mr. Bird was not at home when the flooding began; he soon found out what was happening and insisted on getting to his farm. Mr. Fey and two of his sons, took Mr. Bird by horse and wagon, travelling quite a ways south to a high ridge behind the farms, before getting north to Bill Bird's farm. The Fey boys remember seeing rabbits sitting in tree crutches three to four feet above ground level to escape the rushing water. That year Feys once again lost all their chickens and alot of personal belongings with the water raising higher then ever expected.

The flood of 1960, has left lasting memories in many minds. Being prepared for the flood did not

help too much that year! Everything in the home of Otto Fey, was elevated about twelve to eighteen inches. Water levels were measured to be about ten inches deep in the house during past floods. Severe ice jams in the river caused the water to rise even deeper than in past years. Water fast filling the cellar under the house caused the jars of preserves that were kept there, to bob out of the cellar door and come floating across the floor. A neighbour, Buddy Monkman, that came to help, was catching the jars and putting them in a large tub. As the water rose even deeper the family was forced to leave, again going by boat to Mr. Alex Chyborak's home. The raging current of the flooding river kept forcing the boat north, banging it into the garage walls. After much struggling against the current, the family arrived at the Chyborak house. Chyboraks never had water on their main floor before, but that year water came a mere one inch from being there. Suddenly a bang! Chyborak's deep freezer had lifted and overturned in the water filled basement. Frozen meat and vegetables were set afloat in the filthy water. The electricity was not working as large ice flows had cut down the hydro poles farther south. With no lights and no heat the families tried to keep warm. There was nothing to do but wait out the invasion. To hear animals bawling from standing in icy water a foot deep in the barn, was a terrifying experience. For the men to try feed and milk them was even a more difficult task! The water left that year as fast as it had come, leaving thick mud over everything, and many weeks of cleaning up to do. Relatives, friends, and even strangers, eagerly came to help with the many hours of preparing sand bags before the flood and the cleaning up after. Mud was shovelled from the floors of the house and everything had to be washed and rewashed, to rid it of the grey river mud and the stench of the flood waters. Losses to the Fey family were great that year, as mattresses, flooring, and furniture, were soiled and warped from the water, which left stains twenty-two inches high on their inside walls. This was a lasting reminder of the 1960 flood.

In 1965, Fred and Margaret Chyborak, had more water than they had expected. Water had entered their pig barn, and as it kept rising higher and higher they were forced to move all the pigs to higher ground — to the hay loft above! Imagine the work involved! That same year a large chunk of ice, about two and a half feet thick, floated from the slough, across their yard, and banged into their house. Fortunately, damages were minimal. Feys were once more forced to evacuate, this year going to the home of Ken Fey situated across a field to the south. Having a small boat and fighting a fierce current, it took many trips to get everyone to safety. It was ten o'clock at night,

pitch black out, and the cold river water made an icy chill in the air. Chyboraks had planted corn in the field the season before and corn husks were floating all around. In the darkness the corn husks floating looked like land and the family dog kept trying to jump out of the boat, almost tripping it over. Ice had once again knocked down hydro poles and cut off the electricity. The night was spent in darkness, a close watch being kept on Ken Fey's three young children, whom at the time had measles. At six o'clock in the morning Ken Fey awoke to find water very near to the front of his house! It had never come so close before. More sandbags were then filled and placed around the foundation of his house. Would the water invade yet another home? Donna Fey and other neighbours sent food to help feed the stranded people. Otto Fey and Fred Haberman, returned to the farm early in the morning to milk and feed the cows. It was then a call for help was heard. The police were notified, but a neighbour, hearing about the call for help, was first to act. Tony Berthelette came with a boat, and along with Ken Fey went to the rescue. The calls had come from Mr. and Mrs. John Pahko, of Lot 111. They were found stranded, sitting on the roof of their house, waving a mop to try draw attention. They had spent the entire night on the roof in the cold temperatures to escape the water that filled their house. They had cut a hole in the roof to keep warmed from the heater inside the house. However, as the water level rose it soon engulfed the flames of the fire leaving the Pahkos to the mercy of the weather. Mr. and Mrs. Pahko were taken to a neighbour's house until the water subsided. That same year high water caused the ice on the slough to float onto the road. When the water finally returned into its banks, it left ice about three feet thick on the road and blocked traffic for days. A large bulldozer was needed to clear the thick ice away.

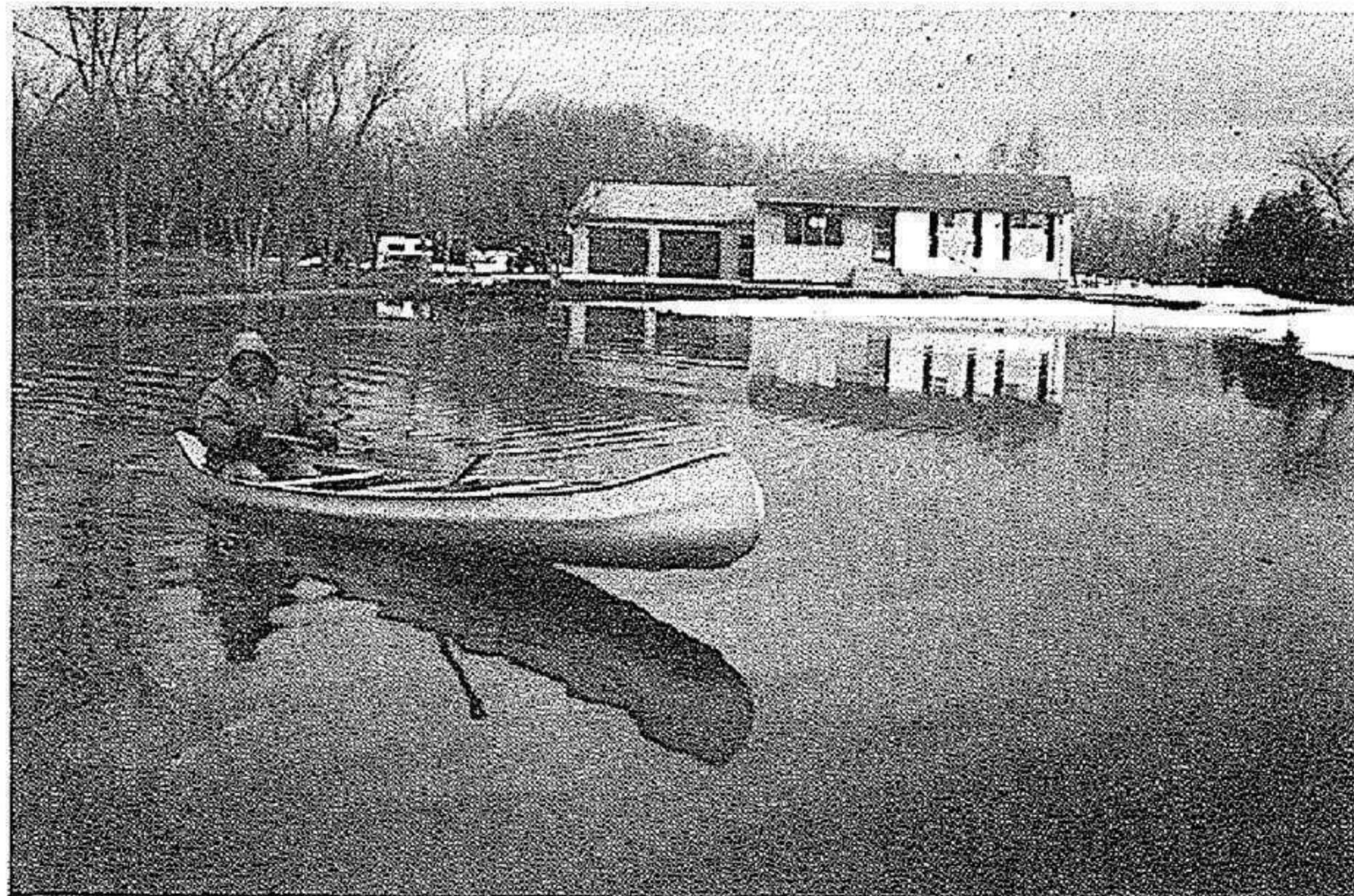
In 1966, the Stefanishyn family survived a terrifying experience. Mr. Stefanishyn had gone out to check on his animals when the floodriver suddenly engulfed his yard. The water came so swift that he was unable to make it back to the house. He climbed onto a fence, clinging for his life until help came. Calls were sent out to all the neighbours for help to rescue him. Emil and Andrew Kelly, hearing of the neighbour's plight, set out in a fifteen foot boat, late in the evening to rescue Mr. Stefanishyn. On the way, a sharp object hidden underwater punched a hole in their boat. Stuffing a mitt in the hole they proceeded on. After that incident they proceeded carefully in the darkness, cutting the fences as they came to them until they reached the Stefanishyn farm. There they found Mr. Stefanishyn still stranded on the fence, frightened and very cold. He was taken to the house

by boat. Mr. Stefanishyn luckily suffered no lasting ill effects but no doubt has memories he will long remember.

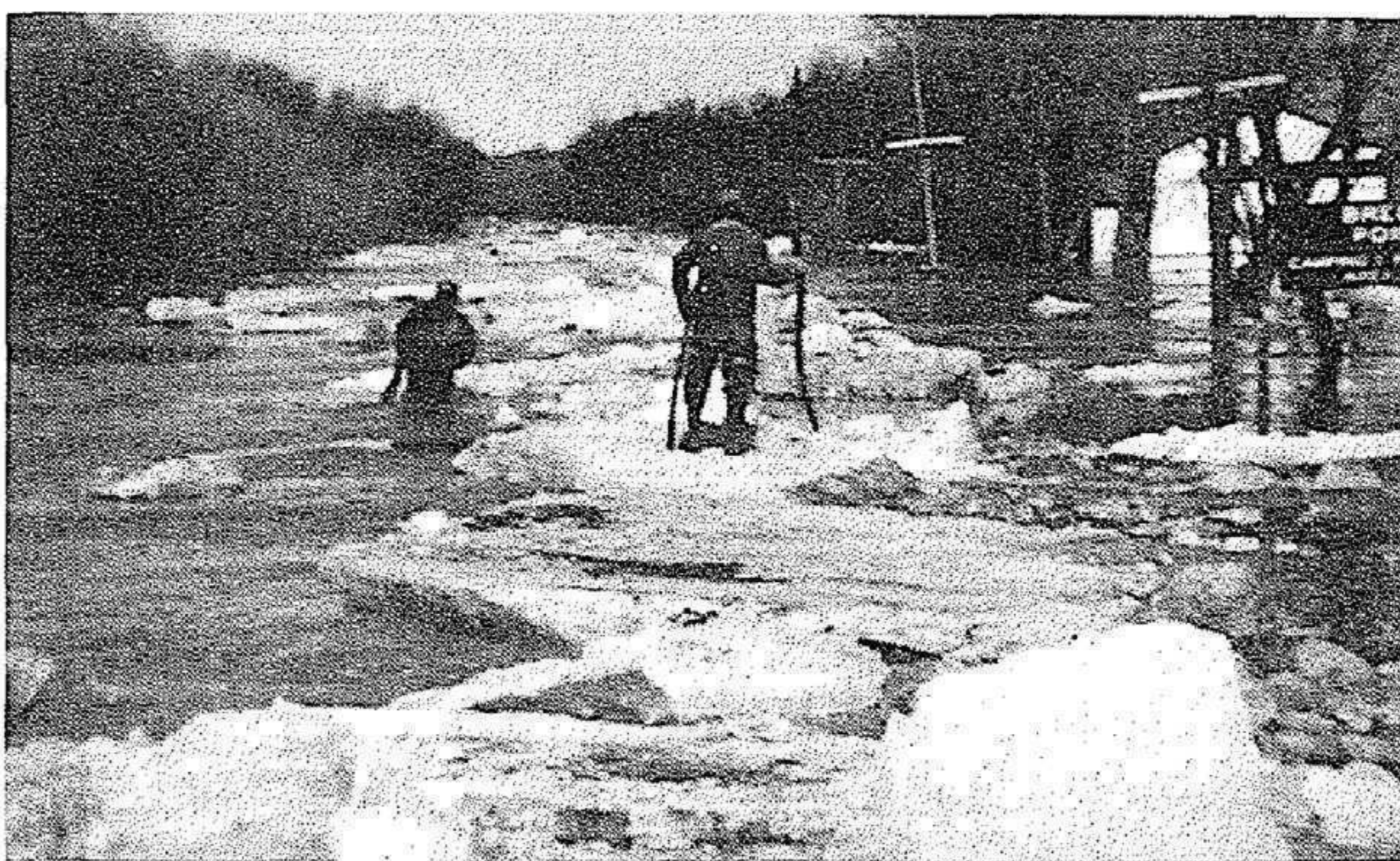
That same night some people from the Fey's residence were also on their way to the rescue. The water was so deep in the fields they were able to take a motor boat right over the fence posts. While enroute to the farm a pin in the motor was sheared and their boat was fast being taken with the current. They grabbed onto the fences and pulled themselves along



Spring Flood, Breezy Point, 1979. Chester Schofield's home and "End of Main" Snack Bar after flooding.



Spring Flood, Breezy Point, 1979, Ken Fey's residence.



Spring Flood, 1979, Breezy Point Road.

and were able to reach the garage. Here they were able to make a new pin. The men talked about holding onto rafters in the garage to keep the boat steady as the current kept pulling them with it. Mr. Stefanishyn, they found had already been rescued. They then took him by boat to the barn to check his animals. News spread fast of the flooding and the next morning found many people standing to the south of the flooded area. Many were taking pictures and were shaking their heads in disbelief. The water left early that afternoon, leaving the usual debris behind.

Of all the floods experienced in this area, the 1979 flood waters were the deepest ever remembered.

The Flood of 1966

As April approached, and the spring thaw began, it was time for the Red River to break up. Once again there was the threat of flooding in lower, northern regions of the Parish of St. Peters.

The ice was thick that year from severe winter temperatures and the river was already badly swollen with extra run-off waters, due to the snow storm which piled snow drifts as high as roof tops in our area. The extra thick ice caused extensive ice jams as the Red River broke up and started its journey, north to Lake Winnipeg. The thick ice was driven by the great forces of a river gone mad. It turned and tumbled, often piling up as high as ten to twelve feet and jammed deep down to the river bed. This dam of ice caused the water to back up and soon the Selkirk Dock and Park were filled with the fast rising water.

It was a few days before the high waters had any effects on other people in the area. As the river inched its way northward, the Breezy Point and Netley Creek districts were quickly engulfed in the flooding water. The low river banks in that area were quickly overrun and the cabins were soon surrounded in water high above many of the floor levels. The rushing current washed away barrels, boats, lawn chairs, tables, and everything that was not secured. Many cabin owners looked on in disbelief from higher ground, south of the Breezy Point Park, unable to protect their belongings from the raging river. Large ice flows attacked, crushing walls and pushing cabins off the foundations. The Breezy Point Store was also hit by ice, leaving it twisted and tilted off its foundation. The ice piled high around it, as the force of the river drove the mighty chunks ashore. All anyone could do was watch, as the raging Red River took its toll.

Many families north of Selkirk were next to be flooded as the ice-jammed river rose higher and higher. Many families in the St. Peters area, having

experienced past floods, realized the oncoming danger and began to prepare for the disaster that could possibly strike. Lot 103 the home of Otto Fey, came alive with friends, relatives, and even strangers who had heard the call for help in the sand bagging of their home, their only protection from the devastating flood waters. Much of the furniture was elevated to a height of two feet, a little higher than the depth of the worst flood in 1960, which had invaded their home. Beds stood high on five gallon pails, the fridge and stove towered on cinder blocks, as the family fought to save their possessions. Outside, everything that could float or be moved by the swift current had to be secured. The milking cows were tied in the barn, which was then also sand bagged to try keep the water out. The remaining cattle would find their way to higher ground as the cold, icy water slowly crept into the pasture and then into their corral. Hundreds of sand bags were filled to build a three foot wall around the house. Many hands were sore with blisters from shovelling sand, and backs ached from bending and lifting, as the people worked late into the night, running the race with disaster. Would they be finished before the swollen river spilled over its banks and into their yard, and possibly into their house? Late that night the wall was finished, surrounding the house like a fortress. Morning came and the river slowly inched nearer. Extensive ice jams at the large bend in the river near the Cochrane farm, caused the rivers flow to be diverted into the slough, which is located on the east side of the road from Otto Fey's residence. The slough grew larger and larger as the water level rose; eating up its banks and the ditch along the road. It then spilled over the road near the Albert Wonsch homestead. It formed rushing falls and washed large gaps in the roads edge, as the water escaped into the fields on the west side of the road. People that were at Breezy Point trying to get to their cabins, were alerted to the fact that the road was fast disappearing and that they should quickly flee from that area. Many cars drove dangerously through water as high as their head lights, using only the tree line, along the fast disappearing road, as a guide. Residents of the area who had walked north to check on the water level, found themselves in rushing water up to the tops of their knee-boots, as they made their way south. Mice and rats climbed high into the nearby shrubs and trees to escape the cold rushing waters that invaded their homes.

By late afternoon all the fields to the north of the Fey farm had become one vast lake; the water level, still rising, began to trickle over the road in front of their home. The trickles grew into rushing falls that filled the shallow ditches on the west side of the road,

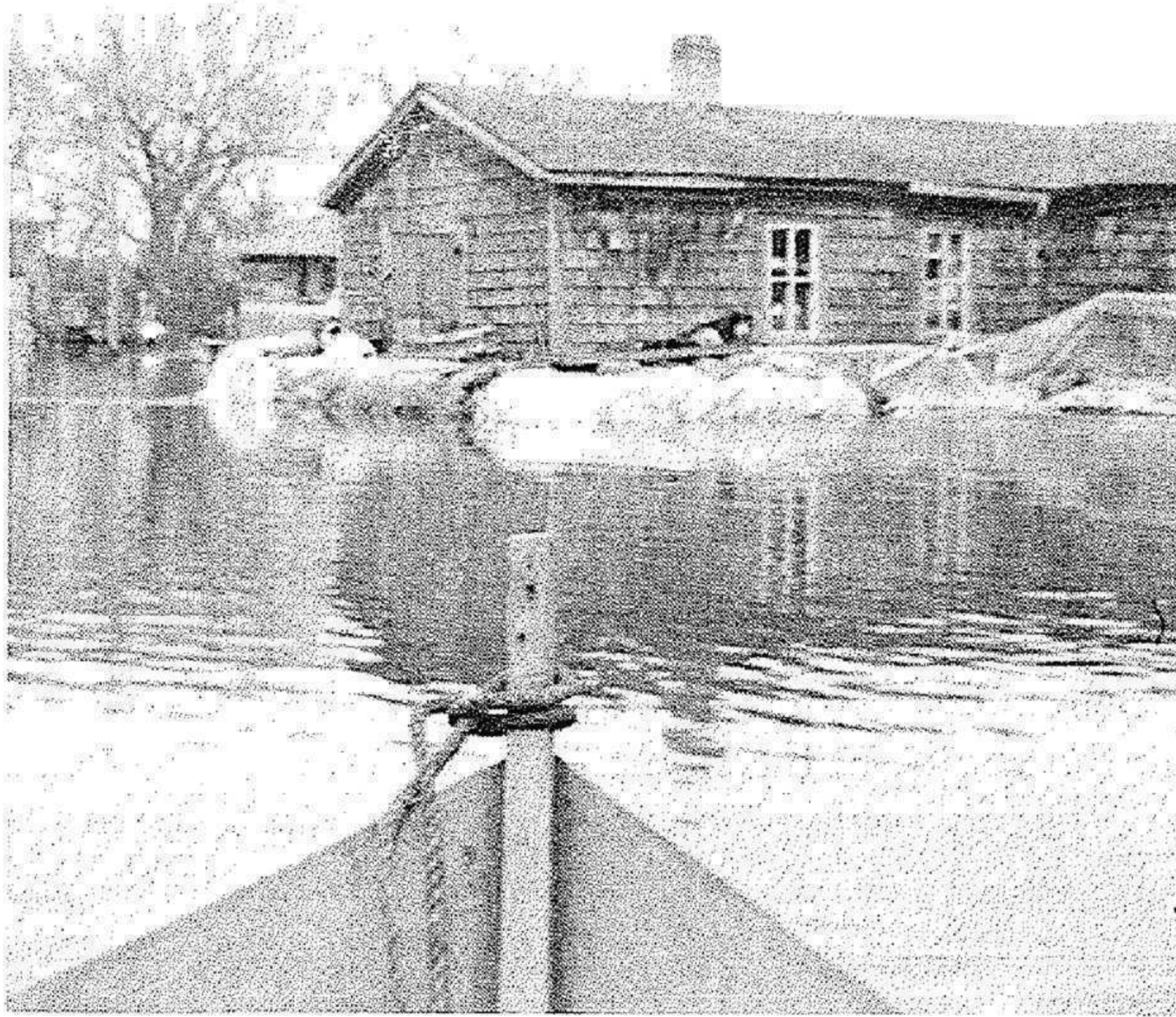
and slowly swallowed up the land as the water crept nearer to their home. From past experiences the family knew that when the ice jams broke loose they would get the full brunt of the flooding river, with the built up water coming in a sudden gush. There was nothing to do now but wait! The strain from the tension showed on many faces. The family was burdened with thoughts of what was yet to come. A small boat and motor was tied near the back door, ready for use, should it be needed. As the family was preparing for supper, it happened! The ice jam had broken loose and was moving again! The water came fast; pouring over the full length of the road and across the yard like a miniature tidal wave, surrounding the house with water levels rising to three-four feet deep, swallowing everything in its path. The raging current of the Red River tore through the yard. The cattle could be heard bawling with fear as the water forced them to seek higher ground. Unlike past floods, when the water remained only a few hours, it stayed for thirty-nine hours. This was caused by ice jams near Breezy Point, which dammed the river and held the water back. The Fey family was forced to evacuate, as the pressure of the swift current and the floating ice made it to dangerous to remain in the house. Everyone went by motor boat across the field to the south, to the home of Ken Fey.

The following morning the water was as far as the eye could see, from Ken Fey's, to the north. No longer was it rushing and churning, but now leveled off, all was still. The cold temperature the night before had formed a crust of ice on the water and it

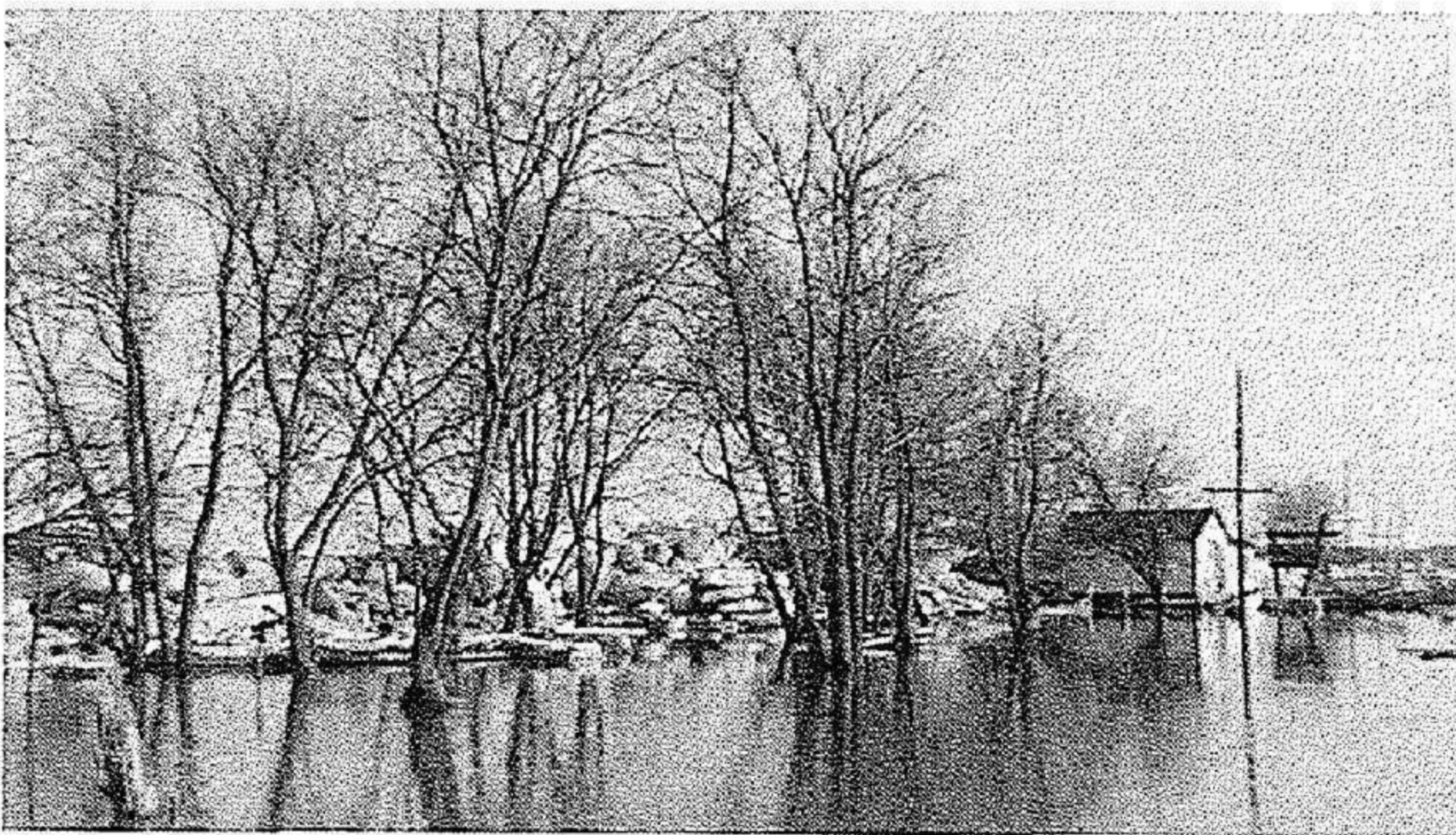


Walter Zador's residence (old Chyborak place) Breezy Point, Spring flood April 9-11, 1966.

now appeared to be a vast, frozen lake. Early that same day the ice jam again broke loose and the water slowly vanished; returning to the river from where it came. The only traces that it had been there were large, jagged chunks of ice, which had floated from the slough and had been trapped on the land when the water subsided; there was rubble and reeds caught in shrubs and bushes and the slime of the Red River mud covered the ground. The 1966 flood was over, leaving only the mess to clean up, and many memories for the people that were involved in its devastation.



Otto Fey Residence, Breezy Point, Spring flood April 9-11, 1966.



Spring Flood, Breezy Point, North of store, April 9-11, 1966.

The Luchka Family A Grandson's Perspective

A common oversight in the history discipline, or any discipline for that matter, is a rudimentary explanation of the purpose and meaning behind the particular science. How will studying dates, names, and events so far removed from the present in time and/or

space be of any concern to me? I have my own immense personal, family, business and assorted miscellaneous anxieties to contend with apart from pondering the crusty accounts of a boring historian depicting minute, irrelevant details of human beings long since deceased. How can these nobly-researched, distinguished historical essays, spewed forth by literary diarrhetics, make me a better human being? John A. Macdonald was Canada's first prime-minister. Who cares? The province of Manitoba became a province within confederation in 1870. So what? These are piercing, stubborn questions that haunt any field of study unless they are quickly and properly answered. One could even argue the atrocities of history have been continually repeated to this day because many have not more rigorously questioned the true purpose of the history lesson.

Ultimately, history is a reservoir of past experiences, tribulations, failures and triumphs that can be applied in our daily life. We will not live long enough to commit all the possible humanly errors, so we must learn from the mistakes of others, be they in the present or past, to greater enrich our own realities. Additionally, to examine past lives is a reaffirmation that we are not alone. Isolated within ourselves and our time period, we often forget other people, past or present, have known the exact sorrows and joys we experience. A broken romance hurt as much in 1591 as it does in 1982. A young child screamed with equal disdain in 1829 with his first spanking as one at present. Many felt the same worries and confusion in 1907 as they do now. Unfortunately, too many historians omit these crucial elements of emotion and feeling and the reader is forced to search for himself the material for a more intimate and broader perspective. Imagine yourself in past circumstances. Imagine people of the past living your own life. Would you do what they did in their situation? How would they react in your circumstance? Thus, history is a fascinating discipline that, if fully explored, can link the evils and truths of the past with the present making us more aware of ourselves and our surroundings.

The first step in achieving a greater awareness of who and what we are is to learn more of our family - our biological predecessors to whom we are mysteriously linked. Their experiences and hardships should be well documented in our minds for we may be doomed to undergo similar situations. The life of John Luchka is a unique, but not a typical, story shared by many of our fathers and grandfathers in their efforts to achieve happiness and prosperity on the Canadian prairies. We now live off the fruit of their labours and to know their lives is to greater know our own. Hence, the study of John Luchka's

life in Austro-Hungary, his immigration to Canada and his eventual settling in Rosedale typifies many of our parents realities and our heritage.

As human beings have endeared a happy home life, history has carelessly dichotomized the family through continual external and internal crises. Nations have murdered millions in a quest for riches, pleasure and power only to be crushed in ensuing days or decades by a more tenacious hypocrisy. Countries have enslaved their own citizenry by shackling them in rotting dungeons or chaining their rights to political and economic freedom; such was the situation of the Ukrainians in Austro-Hungary and Russia at the end of the nineteenth century. The Ukrainians were one ideological nation and people divided amongst two empires. Their culture, religion, politics, economics and family were controlled by tsarist regimes of opposing imperial powers. The tides of revolution in the mid-nineteenth century had encouraged many Ukrainians to proclaim their disgust with the ever-burdening political and economic suppression of the day. Their pleas for justice, however, fell upon deaf ears amongst the authorities. The Ukrainians were aggrieved but soon sensed even their unique "Ukrainianness" was in danger of extinction if they could not escape from that cultural vacuum. Out of this sea of social discontent emerged one man, one Ukrainian confused and frightened at the events in his life and country. He had just been "requested" to report for military service and serve the Austro-Hungarian government. He was aghast at this proposition and he would never fight for a government he despised so he then proceeded to escape from the country.

So began the immigration experiences of John Luchka, as a boy of nineteen running from the army in the hope of gaining entry into Canada. He was in search of a new life, a new home in a new country. Upon his eventual arrival in Canada, he travelled extensively for over twenty years before acquiring a farm and marrying a wife to start his home. He was to work countless hours and years to achieve security and happiness for his wife and future children. The presence of his two children, five grandchildren, and three great grandchildren today is a testimonial to his success as a man, as a Ukrainian and as an immigrant. He remains alive today, weak in body but very much passionate and understanding in spirit. John Luchka's story is one of humour, sadness, courage and strength as a man searching for a life on the Canadian prairies; a search which would find him laughing and crying with his friends and family as they worked, played and prayed together.

John Luchka-Wochuck was born on August 21, 1892 in the village of Dolhe in the Galacian province

of the Austro-Hungarian empire, He was borne to Pearl Swystun Luchka-Wochuck and John Luchka-Wochuck, the third youngest of four children. Sofat and Jim were his two older brothers and Maria was his younger sister. John and all his family were extremely poor as they lived on a small subsistence farm. All the while they were under strict government control in all their duties and work. He was able to complete grade two but was forced to quit under pressure to help support his family. As a youngster around five years old he remembers being allocated the "easiest" job of milking and caring for the cows. He was later forced to work long days on the Austro-Hungarian common farms once he got older. This seemingly unforgiving and harsh existence dims in the mind of John, however, when he jovially recalls the several "good times" he experienced as a child. He recollects walking back to his home after a full day's work on the common farm and being the subject of many a practical joke. Ghost stories, pranks and controlled craziness seemed to occupy the hearts and minds of all young people of his time. He still carries fond memories of his youth despite it being extremely hard and oppressive.

During his mid-teens he recalls encountering "old country" agents who had been to Canada and were now trying to encourage immigration there. They offered free transportation and promised land and jobs to all those who braved to come over. Zonia Keywan, in her book *Greater Than Kings*, vividly imagines what probably occurred during these Canadian crusades:

"Come to Canada! Be your own master on your own land!" In the last decade of the nineteenth century the call went out throughout Europe. Scores of posters and leaflets, printed in a dozen languages, exhorted the European peasant to give up his present life of poverty for a better future in the rich lands of the Canadian West. Canada's propaganda campaign came in the wake of the government's decision to open up the vast spaces of the western plains to immigration. To make the prospect of homesteading as attractive as possible. Canada offered those people 160 acres of land for the nominal sum of ten dollars. It was a policy designed to work to the benefit of both parties. Canada would be assured of a large supply of strong backs to turn the western soil; in return, the immigrants would have an opportunity for greater prosperity than would ever have been possible in their homelands.

The peasant farmers in the western Ukrainian provinces of Galacia and Bukovina, which were then under Austrian rule, heard the call and lost little time in taking advantage of Canada's offer. The great poverty and oppression, for which there was no prospect of improvement. Canada offered them a hope for the future.

After working endlessly for some fifteen years, John seemed convinced Canada was a land of promise. Yet, he still felt obligated to his family and continued to work at home and on the government common farms. On the day before his nineteenth birthday, however, he decided his only future was to be in Canada. A few days earlier he had been con-

scripted for military duty and deemed even the thought of fighting for Austro-Hungary as ideologically repulsive. The fact that his older brother Jim had emigrated to Argentina a year previous combined with his desperate, poor economic situation merely reinforced his decision. He was a young, strong man who held greater ambitions than to toil and pay high taxes for a regime he despised. Martin Coles further discusses this idea of leaving one's homeland:

The decision to relocate to a foreign country halfway around the world was not an easy one to make. The age of large-scale mobility had not yet dawned. For the Ukrainian peasant to break ties with the village his family had inhabited for countless generations, to leave forever his friends and relatives, was a painful step. But the situation at home was hopeless. Desperation was powerful motivation.

So, one morning after informing the authorities and friends he was going to Germany to visit some friends, he was escorted outside the village by his mother. John remembers the final embrace of his mother as she quietly wept in his arms. She knew where he really was going and she knew she would never see him again. Saddened, but not undaunted, John journeyed to Germany whereupon he received falsified passport papers. He was able to board a ship and subsequently arrived in Canada in the spring of 1912.

As he got off the port at Montreal, he was told each immigrant must possess at least ten dollars to be allowed in Canada. Unfortunately, he was absolutely penniless and for a while feared he might even be deported back to Galacia. However, a friend he had met on the boat devised an ingenious plan to overcome this seemingly difficult situation. His friend was to line up first in the row for inspection by the Canadian immigration officials. He passed their scrutiny and showed them a ten dollar bill thus allowing his entry. He immediately went to the back of the line and secretly slipped John the same ten dollar bill. This practice, although highly illegal, was probably undertaken with much regularity as many immigrants were financially desperate upon arriving in Canada.

The exact number of Ukrainian immigrants the like of John who came before World War I is rather uncertain. Ol'Ha Woycenko, in her book *The Ukrainians in Canada* further explains:

It may never be possible to determine the exact number of Ukrainians who arrived, or were born in Canada, prior to the 1921 census. According to the "Ukrainian Voice" an estimated 200,000 Ukrainians arrived in Canada prior to World War I, but they were not recorded as such in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics: they came under various names such as 'Galacians, Bukovinians, Ruthenians, Austrians, etc.,' even as 'Poles' and 'Russians', depending on the region or the province of the Ukraine from which they emigrated. Not until after World War I was the term Ukrainian

popularly used and accepted. This confusion can be attributed to the Canadian Census authorities' classification and tabulation system at that time, and to the immigrants themselves, many of whom were illiterate, and, moreover, after centuries of domination by alien powers, were not nationally conscious. But they had a strong feeling of ethnicity and were drawn together by language, customs and traditions; albeit they did not correctly designate themselves by one name - Ukrainian.

John remembers being intimidated somewhat as he entered into a strange and foreign world known as Canada. He spoke a different language, he upheld different customs and more, but he was now cast into a new social and cultural ocean. Fortunately, he did not go unaided in his confusing quest to find a job and a home in this new land. Some previously landed Ukrainians were stationed at the Montreal port and helped greet all the new immigrants. They would provide translation services if any language difficulties arose but more importantly they offered a referral service, of sorts. They gave John an address in Winnipeg where he could find enthusiastic assistance in dealing with many of his immigrant problems. He thanked them for their help and proceeded by train to Winnipeg in search of this location. It should also be noted that John's boat crossing from Germany to Montreal, his train ride to Winnipeg, and all his meals on both trips and in-between were entirely paid for by the Canadian government. He recollects from boarding the boat in Germany to stepping off the train at Winnipeg, he did not have to pay or spend a cent; a fortunate situation considering he did not have a penny to spend.

The morning of April 9, 1912 was a beautiful spring day with many people lounging outside to catch the warmth of the sun. Such was the scene on Aberdeen Street as John Luchka looked nervously for the address he had been told of in Montreal. He remembers looking for the assigned house for over half an hour and he was still unable to find it. He then approached a household where several people were sitting and talking on the outside porch. He told them of his lack of success in finding this specified house and he asked them if they could assist him in any way. To his surprise, they informed him that this was the house he was to report to. They immediately invited him in and gave him a meal, some new clothes and a bath. He found these Ukrainian boarders very friendly and receptive to all his problems and was allowed to live there for free until he received employment.

From the moment of his arrival in Canada, John had also imagined he would save enough money to eventually return back to the old country. His entire life in Canada had been under the assumption that one day he would finally return to his old family and friends. His feelings were not uncommon as Zonia Keywan suggests:

Overwhelmed by homesickness and disappointment, many Ukrainians spent their first days in Canada in tears, wondering why they had allowed themselves and their children to be brought to this God-forsaken land. Of course, not much time could be spent in emotional self-recrimination. To go back was impossible. Most families sank every penny they had in the journey to Canada. Now they had no choice but to turn their attention to carving out a life for themselves in the new country.

Even as they set about to work, many immigrants still cherished the dream of going back home. A few did return, but the overwhelming majority stayed on. As they settled into the new routine of their lives on the homestead, as their families grew larger, the possibility of going back grew more and more remote. Nonetheless, the feeling of exile from their native land lingered with the immigrants for a long time, with some, for the rest of their lives.

John may have had some fleeting moments of homesickness but he was more concerned with where he was and what he was going to do with his life. His first job was that of a labourer for the Canadian Pacific Railway for fifteen cents an hour. He usually worked in "work trains" which rode across C.P.R. track in Canada making any necessary repairs or building new track. On these trains worked a wide variety of nationalities and men of differing languages. John recollects Germans, Bulgarians, Czechs and Ukrainians all labouring together on these trains to squeeze out a paltry existence. Surprisingly, almost everyone got along rather well considering the mass diversity of varied ethnic groups concentrated so closely in the days and weeks of working on the rails. Martin Coles further discusses the many problems an immigrant had in finding work:

Eventually, the man found a job, on a work gang or on a farm. He knew no English, but chances were that wherever he worked there would be other Ukrainian men who would help him. Before long he learned enough English to understand his orders, then, to carry on a conversation. Apart from providing him with a weekly wage, working out proved very useful to the immigrant, for it gave him an opportunity to learn English.

When Ukrainian men first began to seek employment, they were met with some hostility by employers and fellow workers. But in a short space of time, they showed themselves to be good and reliable workers.

An example of favourable opinions on Ukrainians labourers is expressed in a letter by Robert Waters, a roadmaster of a railway company:

. . . I have had under me and my foreman on the M & NW Railway about 500 Galicians and Doukhobour labourers employed during repair and construction work. About 60% of the above were Galicians . . . The Galicians are first class men and have given perfect satisfaction. . . Some of these Galicians have been with me for the last three summers. They are improving all the time. I would not want better men. . . .

Hence, John and Ukrainian countrymen earned their respect from initially skeptical native Canadians and proved their worth as good workers.

John found his happiness in insecurity. Following his first job at C.P.R., he wandered around the entire country looking for adventure and, if he could find it,

a job. Between his arrival in Canada at age nineteen in the year 1912 to his marriage at age thirty-nine in 1931, he was an endless drifter on the Canadian soil. Every new job he would start, he believed would be his final vehicle to save enough money to travel back home. Yet, his lifestyle was not conducive to the accumulation of any significant bank account. Every penny he would earn was pooled with his travelling companions; usually Ukrainians he had met in Canada whom he had known from his old village and area. As groups of twenty or less, they looked for work, be it in the nickel mines of Sudbury, the docks of Fort William or on the Saskatchewan prairies helping with the harvest of a large scale farm operation. They could spend hours, days or months at any particular location so long as their stay was exciting and brought with it some "good times". He was a man who worked hard but played with equal if not more hearty vehemence. The various groups he associated with all lived to share. If one person had two dollars, it would be used to buy food and alcohol for the entire "gang". If they ever encountered a friend or relative who owned a home, it was taken for granted everything in the house would be willingly shared.

Riding the rails of the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways was exciting if only for his continual attempts at outwitting the railway police. His friends and himself would often ride and sleep in the box cars, but the fun was in not getting caught. John remembered one night when his friends and himself were unceremoniously removed from a train in station by several members of the railway police. After being scolded, they packed their little belongings and left only to hide in the bushes a few yards from the train. Once the train started moving, however, they merely jumped on the same train and resumed their route on their accustomed mode of transportation. In essence, he was a drifter, a "desperado" who ran away from everything in the search for something better. He loved the companionship and fellowship this lifestyle afforded him — one which allowed him to roam, to work, to drink and to laugh. Maybe it was out of desperation for want of riches more tangible, they drank and partied heavily. Wherever they were, no matter what time of day or year was justification enough to break open a bottle and engage in some form of merry songfest. Strangely, women did not play a substantial role in John's mid-life or that of his travelling companions. As men, it is certain they were not without particular needs and desires, but laughter and liquor seemed to soothe any sudden passions a woman's charm could unleash.

One can imagine him spending many a moonlit night around a campfire as he shared some "home-

brew" and food with his friends. We can almost picture these ceaseless drifters as they sang, talked and pondered their unfortunate past or uncertain futures while gazing moodily into a colourful, dancing fire. These romantic envisions, however, must be contrasted with other images of the same men desperately stumbling on a snow covered prairie with their skin shivering and their bellies grumbling for a warm refuge from the fierce winter winds. John was in the company of desperados who knew the pains and pleasures of their nomadic existence and that the laughs and tears would always mysteriously balance out enough to justify their continued lifestyle. Another perspective of this wandering life is expressed in Edmund Bradwin's *The Bunkhouse Man*:

What are the social out-croppings (of a wanderer in Canada?) Time spent around any of the frontier towns reveals this in all its crudeness. The situation is simple, Men, both English-speaking and foreign-born, are deprived during months at a stretch of the companionship of women, of home ties, and all that elevates life in a man; they are starved by isolation and monotony. When they again reach the outskirts of civilization the frontier town with its "aurer" lights, its music and noisy hilarity entices them from their deepest resolves. Vice too frequently pervades such places and, in divers haunts, drugged potions aid in "rolling" the victim.

The all-night orgies, the drunken sprees lasting for days in some top room of a hotel or lodging house; the busy rigs with pimpish outriders who ply their ghoul, the snake-room with half a dozen forms crouched upon the cot or dirty floor, spuming and snoring off the poisons of a protracted drunk; and then the group silent, sore, sick, and seamed with debauch, rounded by a "pilot", who gather in the zero weather late of a December night to catch the train enroute for months more of life at camp, such is the vicious circle in which these men are held helpless — the obverse of life conditions in camps and shacks through previous months of work. It is a characteristic of Canadian life which produces a shudder; the curse of hardness overspreads it, and the price of hardness is hideousness.

John was to travel Canada for over twenty-five years all the while not having a single penny to his name and living the life just described. Upon questioning about his views on the depression, he enthusiastically replied he was never aware of any national economic crisis as he himself was always in a state of fiscal depression. He was very poor but one could contend he was very happy. He would live for today, live for the present, and live for the moment for many years; and to this day he has no regrets and only numerous fond memories. He was merely following a path he had chosen for himself and life was too short and precious to waste it in moments of self-belittlement.

In the year 1927 at the age of thirty five, John received news from the old country that was to change him for ever more. He had been informed his loving mother had passed away a week earlier in the same village where she had given birth to him. To make matters worse, he suddenly remembered he had been on an all-night drinking bout the same night

his mother had died. He felt guilty and ashamed at the thought of him happily shouting in a drunken stupor at the same moment of his gentle mother gasping her last breath. He was emotionally crushed to the extent that he would radically alter his lifestyle and philosophy. No more stealing rides on trains to destinations unknown; no more ceaseless drinking that often spilled into the morning light, instead he would start to look for a home and a wife. Thus, he soon quit drifting and settled in Winnipeg to search for steady employment and a greater income. In the year 1930, he met a young lady he had known only as a baby in his birthplace of Dolhe. Her name was Anne Drozdowski, now an attractive and sturdy woman of twenty four years, and she was to be John's bride in the next year. On April 25, 1931 they were married in Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Winnipeg, presently remaining at 965 Boyd Avenue.

John Luchka was now thirty-nine years old and had started a new chapter in his life story. Whereas before he had been a wanderer carried by the four winds, he now had obligations thrust upon him. He remembered he held claim to a piece of land back in Galicia in his home village and through some legal help he was able to sell it. The money he received from the land was to be used for capital in starting a farm, even though he did not own any property at the time. Fortunately, he soon became aware of a government sponsored program which offered lands to immigrants. With the help of some Winnipeg priests who acted as liasons between John and the government he was able to secure forty acres of property some thirty miles north of Winnipeg for four hundred dollars. He was allowed to repay this cost over a space of twenty years without interest. He was to receive title to the property, however, only after he had cleared five acres of land and started to construct some farm buildings. So, assisted by his wife and driven by their innate enthusiasm, they were able to clear the land by hand and gain title to their property. The other problems they experienced on their new homestead are discussed by Zonia Keywan:

Finding food was an ever-pressing problem. Until some land was brought into cultivation, no food could be produced on the homestead. To the extent that their resources allowed, the settlers purchased supplies of food, hauling them over great distances from Winnipeg to their isolated homesteads. But few had the money to buy all they need to keep them alive. So they subsisted on what nature could provide; rabbits, prairie chicken, fish, wild berries and mushrooms. It wasn't enough to stave off all pangs of hunger, but at least starvation and serious illness were kept at bay.

The mammoth job for which the Ukrainians had been brought to Canada, clearing and cultivating millions of acres of western land, had yet to be tackled. During their first summer on the land, the settlers began the work that would take them many years to complete. Their progress at first was painfully slow. The immigrants couldn't afford to buy any machinery to help them in their work. Even teams of horses and oxen were beyond the means of

most; they had only their own muscle power to rely upon. Armed with simple tool — axes, grubhoes, spades and hoes, the settlers began to hack out the first acre of land. They dug out trees, picked roots, hauled away heavy stones and broke the virgin soil with spades. . . .

John and Anne had only primitive tools and a feverish desire to work even in the absence of any farm machinery, animals and sometimes food. John deliberately chose a spot heavily wooded as he believed forested areas, once cleared, would make for superior agricultural land. His reasoning behind his land choice was in keeping with many other Ukrainian farmers as Paul Yuzyk in *The Ukrainians in Manitoba* suggests:

In choosing land, the Ukrainian pioneer settlers showed a decided preference for bush country and wooded land in the vicinity of lakes, rivers or creeks. This gave them a sense of self-sufficiency, since in the old country they had sorely lacked wood which was the guarded monopoly of the landlords. Here, they could have their own wood to build their homes and to provide an abundant supply of fuel. To their dismay, however, many of these hard-working settlers found that, after the trees had been cleared, the land was either too rocky or too poor to provide a decent living.¹⁴

In John's case, it took his wife and himself ten long years of perserverance to completely clear their heavily wooded land. In their homestead's early phases of incessant poverty, they were forced to clear bush and cut trees with homemade axes and tools. After these first lean years, they were able to plant a vegetable garden and produce a grain crop enabling them to slowly raise their standard of living. They were not alone, however, in this natural battle as numerous Ukrainian families in Manitoba experienced equal hardships:

In their struggle for survival in the wilderness the Ukrainians employed various methods. The wits of both men and women were engaged to combat a formidable physical environment. Both sexes felled the trees, rooted out the stumps, cleared the stones, dug the garden, plowed the land with the help of a horse, planted the seeds, cut the grain with the scythe or sickle, and bound, stooked and flailed the sheaves.

The women were perhaps more ingenious than the men. Besides helping her husband in regular farm work and tending the cow, pigs and poultry, the woman fed and clothed the family. She produced a variety of vegetables in her carefully cultivated garden, and with the children picked berries and nuts. Many of the vegetables and berries were hydrated or pickled. She made delicious bread in clay bake ovens. A variety of inexpensive but nutritious food such as pyrohy, holubtsi, creamed borsch, jellied pigs feet, sauerkraut, blood buckwheat and meat sausage, cottage cheese, pickled fish, poppy-seed buns, rabbit stews, mushroom soups, and noodles were served regularly. Thread was spun and woven into linen which was sewn to make clothes or embroidered for decoration. The woman also made warm feather quilts and feather pillows. She collected seneca root, dried it, and sold it to obtain ready cash. Indeed, the woman's share of the work on the farm was greater than the man's.

Anne and John were able to clear the land with the help of horses, and within a decade they had built their first home out of logs, constructed an enclosure for their recently acquired livestock and poultry, hand-dug a thirty-foot deep well, and produced suffi-

cient grain to secure a growing income. As they became more financially stable, John was able to purchase machines the like of seed-drills, binders, threshing machines and wagons to further complement his growing homestead agricultural production. John and Anne's ingenuity and nearly unfathomable work undertakings had reaped adequate dividends so that by the early 1940's they were reasonably well-fed and clothed.

The nearest conveniently accessible village to the Luchka farm was Rossdale, a close-knit farm community which provided much needed social, educational and religious services to the area. The locality was named after John Ross, who along with eight others from Chamberlain, Scotland became the first white settlers in the area towards the latter half of the nineteenth century. By the early 1900's however, many immigrant Ukrainians decided to locate in this location. The village soon grew to the extent that a school was built in 1916 and a Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was constructed in 1917. In 1923, another one room was added to the school with one full-time teacher instructing twenty to thirty pupils in grades one to eight. The school and the church became the centre of many worship, recreational and sports events for a multitude of Ukrainian families throughout the early and mid-twentieth century. The village was a communal and spiritual focus which drew people out of the obsessions and anxieties of operating an individual homestead and provided essential activities which often eased the pains of many an immigrant prairie existence.

John had undergone a short-lived business partnership previous to the building of his homestead with a fellow Ukrainian named Mike Antochiw. They attempted to start their own farm but certain personal problems effectively negated any further business ventures. The wives of these two gentlemen simply could not co-exist in the confines of an isolated homestead. Anne Luchka's inability to get along with Mrs. Antochiw was severe enough to justify John's decision to dissolve the partnership. Yet, this episode is significant if only for the fact it was incredibly traumatic for Anne. This incident had been merely one more forewarning of the inevitable mental and emotional breakdown of Anne. To fully understand Anne's condition, one need not look any further than at her tumultuous upbringing. She was born in 1908 in the village of Dolhe, the same location John had been and raised some few years earlier. She was the youngest of six children, having four older brothers and an elder sister. Anne was just three years old when her mother, while only in her late thirties, died while working in the fields. The responsibility of her care was taken over by her father, who,

subsequently died seven years later when Anne was still only ten years old. At this point, she became the unwanted property of eldest brother and his wife. Here, she at the mercy of her unforgiving sister-in-law who treated Anne poorly and refused her access to any schooling. Her own children took obvious precedence over any of Anne's smallest wishes. Anne was relegated to performing the dirtiest, most labourious tasks. She remained in this living hell until 1928, when at the age of nineteen she gained passage to and into Canada. The despicable events that she and countless other immigrants before and after her had to experience in the hope of reaching Canada is best expressed in Myrna Kostash's *All of Baba's Children*:

As it was, the immigrants' journey was a pilgrim's progress. They ran a gauntlet of Prussian border police, fraudulent money-changers, greedy steamship agents and careless dock workers — more than one emigrant lost cash and baggage before embarking at Hamburg; they endured seasickness, the discomforts of steerage accommodations and stale food; they were herded through custom halls, immigration halls and land offices. Upon entry to Canada (or at any point after that until they were naturalized) they could be deported, sent back where they came from.²¹

Almost immediately after her distressing journey, she began work as a domestic servant for mostly Jewish families who located themselves in isolated towns throughout Ontario and Manitoba. She would usually work eighteen hour days as she steadfastly cleaned house, cared for the children, washed the clothes, and prepared the meals. During a brief work respite, she travelled to visit her previously immigrated older sister in Redditt, Ontario. Once there, while attending a party given by her sister to all the new Ukrainian immigrants in the area, she met John. The details of their courtship remains vague, but they were to be married after only a few months of engagement. Hence, from the time of her birth to her wedding, Anne was a woman engulfed in situational despair and tragedy. Both her parents' early deaths, the incredible neglect wrought by her sister-in-law, the shock of travelling to a foreign country alone, and once arrived, to be only exploited and abused were all elements combusting and seething within Anne's mind. She was to endlessly hope her new marriage would lead her to happiness, an emotion she had been deprived of all her life, yet even this wish was to tragically vanish.

Anne gave birth to daughters in 1932 and 1934, adding two more precious lives to the Luchka homestead. The two children also brought with them a new multitude of worries and concerns for Anne as she struggled with her regular chores made more difficult now with the infant care. Zonia Keywan accurately describes the conditions she would have encountered as a Ukrainian mother on the prairies:

The pioneer woman's work didn't end with the heavy homestead chores. She also had to attend to more traditional women's work: keeping her family clean, fed and clothed. . . . There were no modern conveniences to lighten her load. Everything had to be done the hard way, by hand. . . . It wasn't always easy to put together a meal from the scant provisions she had on hand. On many occasions she would go hungry herself to allow her children to have a little more. Late in the evening, when no outside work could be done, the pioneer woman sat for hours by a dim light, mending and re-mending her family's well-worn clothing.

A typical day on the Luchka homestead would find John and Anne rising at 5:00 A.M. to start a fire and faithfully perform the numerous chores on the farm. Following the completion of these early morning duties, they would eat breakfast only to resume their farm work after cleaning up the kitchen. Anne was also responsible for journeying into Winnipeg at least once a week to sell the farm's excess vegetables, cream and milk. On such a day, she would awake at 4:00 A.M. to harness the horses and travel the twenty-five miles to the markets in the city. If for some reason the markets were without enough customers Anne would take the produce door-to-door in the hope of earning as much income as possible. Once finished her selling, she would return the twenty-five mile route and arrive back at the farm around 11:00 P.M.

These weekly journeys must have been very disheartening for Anne as she was forced to leave her baby daughters behind, but knowing she was depended upon to bring enough money home to buy their vital farm equipment, tools and clothes to keep their homestead operating. However, on one such journey back to the farm after a day's haggling in the streets of Winnipeg, the wagon Anne was riding was destroyed in a collision with an automobile. Although the horse was uninjured and Anne only received a sore neck, the mishap was important in that it was the last event that preceded Anne's serious mental disorders. John somehow believed that single event mysteriously caused her ensuing mental sickness, but that reasoning seems highly unlikely. Her life had been one of extreme hardship to that point and the accident was merely the one traumatic experience that took her to the breaking point. Her mental symptoms grew steadily worse following this near-tragic occurrence. At first, she had problems with sleeping, but in time she became erratically critical and suspicious of the neighbors who lived near their farm. In this peak of emotional disorder, she would see visions in the middle of the night that "instructed" her to "clean the clothes". She would then proceed to start a midnight bonfire throwing her assorted apparel into the flames. This act alone stubbornly convinced John to have Anne committed to the mental hospital in Selkirk in 1943. She was diag-

nosed as having a "persecution complex" of which prescribed medication and hospitalization were the only medical treatments. Anne remained in the hospital for three months, after which, against the advice of the doctor, John took her home. When in the hospital, Anne would incessantly plead and beg the doctors for permission to go back to her children on the homestead; however, they kept refusing her requests for her own good because they knew she was a very sick woman. During her hospitalization, John was to receive much negative public pressure for having committed Anne. Mental illness and mental breakdowns were simply not discussed, accepted or believed during the 1940's and 1950's on the Canadian prairies. John was to be caught in the middle in that he was concerned for his wife and he knew she needed care, but criticism from his neighbors coupled with the fact she was sorely missed on a homestead with young children and unfinished chores, convinced him to take her out of the hospital. So, she returned home, continued to take her medication and lived her life as best as possible for a woman in her condition.

John would later readmit Anne for three months in 1950 but it became a sad repetition of the first scenario with John succumbing to public and personal pressure and pulling out Anne once again against the doctor's advice. She entered the hospital for her third and final time in 1953 when she remained under care for an entire year. She returned home after twelve months, but in this instance she was granted the doctor's approval. Anne went back to a relatively normal life and so long as she received her medication, she remained active and hard-working. The response of her two daughters and John concerning her illness was one of unbreakable faith and hope for her health. Their daughter Valerie vividly recalls kneeling with her sister Pearl and John as they would pray together nightly under a haunting portrait depicting Jesus on the Mount. The three would kneel and recite prayers daily for the release and well-being of their mother. Hence, the three became a close-knit, faith-bound family while crying and wishing for the return of their loved one. Furthermore, although John was a loving and affectionate father, his daughters admit he was not a good husband. John, and not Anne, was the one who would touch and hold the children spending many hours recalling old stories and songs for their delight, yet he took a completely different attitude towards his wife. Indeed, he loved her but he deemed it his duty to literally do all of her thinking for her. He would tell her what to say, what to do and how to act. John was not being cruel but his unforgiving methods were probably all he understood in how to treat a woman and a wife.

Hence, both Anne and John were victims of their own circumstantial upbringing — Anne was to withdraw into herself to escape a world she could not understand, whereas John would lovingly embrace his children only to alienate and dehumanize his wife. Thus, both dealt with their own fears and emotions in their own unique ways.

Amidst all the anxiety and concerns for Anne's well being, the homestead operations had to be steadily continued and improved. John's work was seemingly endless as he constantly repaired, built or altered the equipment and enclosures on his farm. His horses were an integral part of his farming operations for nearly ten years through their noble efforts in ploughing and providing transportation. These horses were John's vital links in carting his grain to the elevator in Beausejour. The twenty-mile trip would take several hours and once in town, he took his wheat to the only grain company in the area. John recalls that the monopoly situation enjoyed by this company made for a low return on the farmer's grain. Yet, he knew he was in no position to argue — either he sold it to these "businessmen" at their offered purchase price or he would not sell it at all. His farm's livestock, vegetable and milk production, however, were sufficient to sustain the family if they ever encountered any monetary shortage. In addition, the crops. John remembered one year when a mass of grasshoppers ate a majority of his crops along with most of the tree leaves and grass. One must consider in those years, poisons, herbicides or pesticides were just not available, so the average farmer was often at the mercy of these insect enemies. John also faced periods of drought and flood but he deemed it as a mere occupational hazard in a farmer's life. He knew that to be a farmer meant good weather and bad weather over which he had absolutely no control. Instead of persecuting the local weather forecaster or even God himself for the bouts of climatic irregularity, he would only work harder to perform everything humanly possible to insure a better yield, a richer crop and a more comfortable life for his family. John's ceaseless efforts and those of his Ukrainian contemporaries, had made life more fertile not only for their own families, but for all Canadians as well. Paul Yuzyk continues:

The Ukrainian farmers have contributed to the development of Manitoba in several definite ways. First, because of their love of the soil, their tremendous capacity for work, and their courageous perseverance, they have opened up for the cultivation and civilization thousands of square miles of virgin soil, the bulk of which was submarginal or of inferior quality and had been avoided by earlier settlers. Secondly, by the cultivation of this soil in the production of grains, vegetables and fruits, and the raising of livestock, the Ukrainian farmers have added millions of dollars to the wealth of the province. Finally, a large percentage of these families have made