songbirds in the springtime was a pleasant sound to hear — now our springs seem almost silent. This I suppose is the price we must pay for other concessions.

Other unfortunate happenings of those early days were the massacre at Seven Oaks and the Rebellion of 1885. As this is already well established history, I will say little other than it seemed to be mostly bungling and poor judgement and in the case of the rebellion, arrogance and indifference. The sympathies of the settlers were mostly with Louis Riel. He was only upholding the rights of his people, and the hanging of this man was an extreme penalty and is a black spot on the history of the west. It is often a question, not of the end accomplished, but how it is accomplished.

I wish now to say a few words in regard to the first North Americans — the Indians. I refer to them as North Americans because we know that these people comprised hundreds of different tribes and speaking as many different dialects, completely covered this continent, I suppose I should say with the exception of the far north, this being Eskimo territory. These two separate races of people never mixed and made a point of keeping away from each other. Climatic conditions would no doubt have been considerable reason for this. Recent excavations seem to prove that these races of people inhabited this continent much earlier that generally supposed. It seems reasonable to believe that entry was made across the Berring Strait from other parts of the world. Some go as far as to say that the Indians are the lost tribe of Israel. The Eskimo are no doubt of oriental or mongolian origin. Perhaps this is too far distant to be proved and one guess is as good as another. We do know, however, that many of these Indian tribes were well advanced in their way of living, at the coming of the first white men. They had their organized councils with leaders elected by popular vote, and also laws and codes that had to be strictly followed. They could be called children of nature and all believed in the Almighty Spirit, the great Manitou, who had supplied all the wondrous things for them, and all this had to be treated with respect. Until the coming of the white men, these people seemed to have been a generally healthy race. After contact with the white man sometimes almost complete tribes were wiped out, due to tuberculosis and smallpox.

It was told by early traders of how the Indians' word was his bond, and that he would not take anything that did not belong to him. We are also told of how many times the white man broke his promised word and resorted to that which amounted to treachery. We know that these people were eventually placed on reserves, and when this land became valu-

able to the whites, the Indians were pushed still further back. During the time that Spain controlled much of the southern part of this continent, the native Indians fared much worse — being robbed, their early culture destroyed and persecuted almost to the point of extermination. The early Indians have been described as barbarious and no doubt have been guilty of massacre. I ask you in all fairness, "has the white man in recent times acted any differently?", living in so-called civilization in a supposedly better environment, when threatened with the loss of his adopted ways of life and the land that he called his home. In referring to the early fur traders, as an example, I have been told that if the Indian wanted one of these long barrelled muzzle loading guns, he would have to stack a pile of beaver skins to the entire length of the gun. In the case of a company storekeeper weighing tea, sugar, flour or salt for an Indian, he had to be careful, always adding to the desired weight. If a scoop or two were added, this to the Indian looked good, but if a little was removed to get the correct weight, he thought he was being cheated. I have been told of a happening that took place at Lower Fort Garry many years ago. An Indian had brought in furs to trade and wanted to get some food. In those days axle grease was put up in round wooden boxes. The Indian thought this was cheese and was given one on request, by the storekeeper, a man by the name of Mr. Dagg. It wasn't long before the Indian was back in again and said, "Mr. Dagg, you've got darn rocky chesses. I don't want any more of it." Another story takes place in the early days of Winnipeg. An Indian had been obtaining credit from a storekeeper and had been asking for more. The storekeeper apparently thought he had had enough, and proceeded to place his boot on that part of the Indian that he used to sit on. At this point the Indian came running out of the store, and laughingly said "pretty darned sore, but worth \$25.00 anyway." Perhaps this was picked up from the white man, and may have been the start of credit buying that runs rampant today.

Another story is told of an Indian who had been educated by the Anglican church. He had reached the point in his education where he was asked to take the service. On this Sunday morning he was preaching of the bible story regarding the devil entering into the swine and causing them to plunge into the sea. At this point he became excited and broke off into his native Cree language exclaiming, "the swine jumped into the water one by one, aspimic, aspimic, aspimic, chimuck, chimuck." All the time he was making the sounds of a stone falling into the water. In the Cree language, aspimic means again and again. On another occasion this same Indian, after concluding the

service at Old St. Andrew's Church, was asked out to dinner by one of a family attending the service. When they were all seated at the table the Indian was asked to say grace. Apparently he had travelled far that morning and as pretty hungry. As the grace ended with (for the Lord's sake) he ran it all in together and said, "for the Lord's sake Mrs. Smith, please pass the potatoes." Also during this meal a bowl of gravy had been set close beside the Indian's place at the table. Without taking time to look around, he thought this was a bowl of soup and proceeded to eat it. Later, noticing his mistake, he said, "looks like I've eaten the gravy, but anyway it was darn good soup."

A story was told of another old Indian called Laughing Joe. He was noted for his terrible laugh. It was known that he would put on a performance if paid. On this occasion one of the settlers, accompanied by his wife, was making his weekly trip into Winnipeg with butter and eggs. On meeting this old Indian along the road, the settler's wife asked her husband to give Joe 5¢ to hear him laugh. Old Joe very obligingly put on his best performace. It was so good that the horse pulling the buggy became frightened, backed up and overturned the rig, breaking the eggs and spilling the butter and cream. The old lady was overheard begging her husband to give Joe 5¢ to make him stop. Needless to say, the trip to town for that week was ruined.

We have had a few laughs with the Indians, now let's have a laugh or two with the white man. In the early days the settlers hauled their produce to market in the winter, on what they called a single sleigh. These sleighs were home-made with two runners made of wood, and carried perhaps 10-15 pounds of hay or a cord of wood, and was drawn by one ox. One man would drive two or three of these sleighs at once. On this occasion this settler had gone into town (Winnipeg) driving three oxen with three sleighs loaded with hay. The return trip would take from daybreak until after dark. After the hay was sold and unloaded this man set out for home. In those days there were several taverns along the way between Winnipeg and Selkirk where any traveller could stop and buy whiskey. Feeling rather dry, this man let the oxen go on ahead while he stopped for a drink. Perhaps he stayed a little too long and his oxen got too far ahead. There was a narrow wooden bridge to cross with a railing on both sides. Apparently two of his sleighs had got caught and the oxen had walked out of the harness. Seeing the sleighs there he said to himself, "the sleighs ain't much good, but it looks like dang fine harness", and with that he threw the harness across his shoulder. Meanwhile the oxen had arrived home a long time ahead of him. On arriving home, the man's wife came out into the yard and

started to scold him for drinking. "Never mind, old wife," he said, "look at the good harness I found". "You old fool," she replied, "that's your own harness." Another story is told of one of the settlers who was noted for his boasting. On this occasion he told his neighbour of a large cabbage he had grown in Scotland. Using his favorite expression, "Sal mon I believe it weighed two ton", The neighbour listened for a while and then started telling of a huge metal pot that had been cast in a foundry in the old country. And what were they going to do with this big pot, asked the other man. The dry reply was, "Oh, this was made to cook your cabbage in."

Another settler's brother had passed away during mid-winter and he was discussing the unfortunate event with his neighbour. "Aye mon, it's too bad me brother died at such an awkward time. The ground is frarze so hard, and there's naw tea in the house." One of the men in the area was handy with carpenter tools and made coffins when needed. It was a well known fact that he made one for himself, and slept in it each night for about ten years before he died. He said he wanted to get used to the feel of it. Now that we have had a few chuckles, we shall return to the more serious side — the Indians.

Although these people seemed to have gotten the short end of the stick, in most cases trading their furs for trinkets and baubles such as coloured beads and cloth, the trading company profited greatly by this, which was the beginning of Trade and Commerce in Canada. I have had many of the Indians and halfbreed people work for me over the years, having farmed at one time 700 acres. I can say that most of them have been good men, and very appreciative of any kindness shown. If it were not for these people today, much of our vegetables would not be harvested. It is a recognized fact that both Indian and Eskimo when educated and given a chance, are just as intelligent as other races, very often excelling as tradesmen. According to my experience and way of thinking, the present question of the welfare and the assimilation of these people into our present society is to treat them as equals, not third grade citizens. The younger generation should be encouraged to learn trades, and do work that they can do well, with some guidance; then their self-confidence would strengthen. Let these first Canadians help build a greater Canada, the country in which they still have a rightful share.

I will now mention a few relative facts in regard to my maternal ancestry, which had some bearing on the past. My mother's parents migrated from Ireland and settled in Port Hope, Ontario. While the family was still quite young they moved to Parkdale. This was about ten miles north of Winnipeg. Later my mother Josephine Fulsher taught at the first school in Parkdale. The schoolhouse was located on the riverbank just south of the road that now turns east off the present highway onto the old River Road. My uncle, Bill Fulsher, was one of the millwrights that set up the machinery for Ogilvie's first flour mill in Winnipeg. Mother's uncle, Fred Fulsher, owned and operated what was known for many years as the Halfway House. This stood on the bank of Park's Creek beside the road that is now known as No. 4 Highway. Halfway House was considered about half-way between Winnipeg and Selkirk.

At this point one of the first post offices in the west was established. At that time mail was carried between Winnipeg and Selkirk. Horses were stabled at the Halfway House and a fresh team was taken for the remainder of the journey. In those days, the mail went through every day, regardless of the weather, with the exception of Christmas Day. After Fred Fulsher's death, his wife carried on this place for many years and was known to all as Granny Fulsher. She was also well known for her kindness and hospitality, and she lived to a great age.

Mother's great uncle, Horatio Fulsher, was a first cousin to Lord Nelson, and was beside him when he fell, mortally wounded in battle at Trafalgar.

People talk of the good old days, yes, they were good days. People had more feeling and consideration for their neighbours. The brotherly and helpful relations that prevailed among the early settlers was a wonder to behold. Neighbour helped neighbour at harvest time regardless of acreage, no money being exchanged. In case of sickness or disability, his work was looked after for him. Food would be shared if through unfortunate circumstances anyone was short. Travellers were made welcome and were fed and given shelter for the night as were their horses, without charge. Company and conversation was appreciated as well as news from other parts, and helped to break the loneliness.

Much visiting was done in the wintertime, especially at Christmas and New Year's; dances and box socials were held. Boxes with lunch for two would be prepared by the village belles, and sold to the highest bidder during these socials. Very often the village swains would know by grapevine when his favourite girl's lunch box came up for auction. His competitors for this girl's affections would bid up the price as high as possible, then he would have to pay for it. The proceeds of these lunch box socials would be used for community projects or other worthy causes.

At the opening of a dance, a floor manager was chosen and he generally called the square dances. Some made a specialty of this and got to be expert

callers. Music was supplied almost entirely by the violin, or fiddle, as it was commonly called and most of the players had learned to play by ear, and those old fast tunes were so lively and uplifting they were a joy to listen to. The dances most commonly engaged in were the square dances, waltz, highland schottishe and the Red River jig. The last mentioned was very fast with many step changes originating, I believe, with the French half-breeds. New Year's was considered the most important day of the year. At twelve midnight sharp, guns with an extra charge of powder would be fired into the air, and could be heard all over the settlement. By daybreak, groups of men of various ages would team up and start calling from house to house. After greetings and good wishes were exchanged, cakes and drinks would be handed around. The callers' visit would be brief, but before leaving, all females from grandmothers to tiny tots had to be given a New Year's kiss. Needless to say, the choice ones, the village belles, made a point of watching through the window and if what they saw coming didn't appeal to them, they would hide until the callers had taken their leave. This was the custom for many years.

Building bees were organized with labour being traded. Mostly straight spruce logs would be used for walls, with corners dovetailed and notched to fit. The sides would be trimmed smooth with a broadaxe. The rafters were made of straight spruce poles. Few nails were used as the structure would be held together with strong oak pins.

When the river lots were first settled, the outer two miles was mostly marshland, much of it a floating bog which could not even be crossed on foot. This was called common land. Adjacent and west of the two mile limit or what is now called McPhillips Street there were some ridges. I may add here that McPhillips Street derived its name from an early surveyor by the name of Phillips. The area at that time, was mostly covered with bush and swamp; it was only the high spots on the better land that was cleared and cultivated. Some of the better land west of the two mile limit was used by the settlers. Shacks were put up for summer use and some of the families would stay out there to attend and milk the cows. Later when the river lots were extended to the four mile limit, these so called squatters were allowed to keep these plots of land that they had made use of. This is how the term squatter's rights came about.

There was no herd law for many years so cattle and horses ran on the open range; crop land and hay stacks were fenced in. Calves and colts were branded in the springtime, and then turned to run loose on the prairie. Some would be lost and much time was spent riding the range in search of them during fall round-

up. The territory could be anywhere from west of Winnipeg to Stoney Mountain and north as far as Selkirk. Eventually a big ditch was dug to drain this marshland, and this was done about seventy years ago. A steam shovel was mounted on a floating barge to dig this ditch. The water was then drained into Park's Creek. Reeds and rushes were the only plants to grow on this land for several years, but it proved to be a haven for all species of water fowl. As time passed, and more ditches were dug, wild grass began to take over. During late August in the year 1914, the haymakers had camped out there for their noon meal, and someone neglected to check on the fire before leaving. The weather had been very dry for a long time previous to this. Suddenly the fire flared up and with a strong wind blowing there wasn't much time to spare to reach safe distance. The hay was all lost and several herds of cattle were in the line of fire. Riders went out to try to herd them to safety. I was one of the riders and it was an unforgettable experience. The clouds of smoke were so dense that I soon became separated from the other riders. Finally I had to ride through a wall of flame, out onto already burned ground. This peat was so hot that before getting out of it, the pony's feet were badly burned. This pony fully recovered, after taking seven months to grow new hoofs. This fire covered many miles and the peat burned in places all during the following winter. The peat was burning to a depth of one to two feet, depending on the moisture underneath. After about two years, this burned land was completely taken over by fire weed. This had us all puzzled, as no one could explain how the weed got there. From that time on foxtail and thistle took root.

During the summer of 1917, I decided to try to do something about the situation. (Being a farmer, my land had to show profit.) I ploughed one hundred acres, using a waterloo, coal-oil burning, two cylinder tractor. Gasoline was used for starting until the motor warmed up. The coal-oil was turned on also a small amount of water, according to the sound of the motor. Steering was done by a chain attached to a worm and tightened by the steering wheel, according to the direction of travel. There was only one gear ahead, and one reverse and the speed was governed by the throttle, which at best under load, was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ m.p.h. This machine pulled two 14-inch ploughs, rather a far cry compared to tractors today.

This, I believe, was the first attempt to grow grain crops on peat land and I must admit it wasn't very profitable. Crops were uneven and patchy, and seemed to be lacking in necessary minerals. I made several unsuccessful attempts to the governmental authorities to have soil samples tested. Finally most of this land was seeded to various kinds of cultivated

grasses and good crops of hay were produced. Ashes persisted in the burnt peat for many years, and on a hot day made you feel as if you were on fire. With the advent of plentiful supplies of proper fertilizer, hundreds of acres of this one time useless bog land are producing heavy grain crops. When first ploughing this land, many buffalo skeletons were turned up and the fresh furrows would be white with snail shells.

Well do I recollect election days. Feelings ran high and votes were gained or lost by fair means or foul; some of the events were most comical. Many meetings were held in support of a candidate. Biscuits, cheese, cigars and whiskey would be supplied in abundance. The tempo of the meeting would soon run pretty high. One over-excited party was heard to exclaim, "they smoke our whiskey and drink our cigars, and then vote against us." One supposedly strong party worker in this area always made sure that he was given a large supply of fire water for the purpose of influencing votes. His supply always seemed to last until long after the election was over. One particularly hot party worker was kept up a tree all day, by his neighbour's bull. In those days, cattle pastured at large and it wasn't until the cows decided to return home that the bull left the tree. Needless to say, that man lost his vote. On another occasion, a voter was tricked into going to the far pines — he was left out there to walk home. Needless to say, another vote was lost, as the man was too exhausted from his long trek.

The majority of cities, lakes and rivers across the North American continent were originally named by the Indians. All had a particular meaning in the Indian language. The Indians also learned to make use of many herbs, bark and roots for medicinal purposes. Many of the medicines of today have been basically derived from the same source and have been given a fancy name. Dried puffball, or sometimes called devil snuff, was used to stop bleeding, and if this was mixed with unslaked lime, would stop the flow of blood from a severed artery. (I have used this successfully on a horse's leg.) These children of nature, being exposed so much to weather conditions, learned to watch for many signs indicating weather changes. Much of this information was passed on to the early settlers. As for long range weather forecasts, they were perhaps more accurate than those who are paid for this purpose today, and who have the help of modern equipment.

Some mention should be made concerning the early flour mills of the Red River Settlement. Tait's Mill was built and operated at a spot where Park's Creek entered the Red River. Hay's Mill was located between Old St. Andrew's Church and the rapids. Clouston's Mill was located some distance north of

the fort. These mills were in operation shortly after wheat was grown to any extent by the settlers and were the first in the west. Little or no money was exchanged as each customer gave the mill operator one bushel out of eight for grinding. A bushel of wheat would produce about forty pounds of flour. The rest would be bran, shorts and a small amount of wheat hearts that were used as breakfast food. Some had their wheat ground as whole wheat flour. No loaf bread was made in those days — only bannock was used. This was made by mixing flour, water, lard and salt and rolled into a flat dough about one inch thick, to any size required. When browned on the top, it was cooked. I can assure you that bannock, properly baked, was quite tasty and substantial, but had to be fresh each day as it would become hard. At times, catfish and bannock was the steady diet. Catfish were large and flaky and when cooked were snowy white. They were also known as Manitoba Salmon.

The Davis house still stands about one mile south of the old church. Being a large building and built of stone it was known as Miss Davis' School for girls. In the early days the Hudson Bay Company employees sent their daughters to this school, and left them in charge of Miss Davis to be educated.

The old stone parsonage still stands within a few yards of the church, and over the years served as home for many Anglican ministers for various periods of time. The John Reid mansion stands on the banks of the Red, a short distance north of the church, and opposite the rapids, long since silenced by the Lockport Dam. I am sure that if you listen closely on a quiet morning you will hear the roar of the rapids as they were in those far off days. The Reid mansion was once the home of Captain William Kennedy, a notable man and well known of the north. He went on an expedition in search of Sir John Franklin and through this, lost his own life. Later this same house was the home of the widow and daughter of John Norquay, one of the early premiers of Manitoba. Mrs. Norquay or Granny Norquay as she was known, was formerly a Setter, and first cousin to my father. These three old houses, as well as the Scott house, were built around the same time.

I hope that those of you who have taken this trip with me into the past may have had some pleasure on our travels. So here we are back into the realities of the present, and our destiny of the future.

Ed. note: Clifford died in 1969.

The Settlers' Homes by Anne (Philpott) Carter

The settlers' homes were built with a loft which served as a storage room for their provisions such as

wheat, which was ground into flour, with a quern. This was an ancient form of a mill. It consisted of two large round stones. The upper stone was turned round by hand, while the lower stone was in a fixed position. There are still a few of these querns in this valley. They were used by our early settlers. Mrs. John Norquay, my grandfather's cousin, left one in the "Dunallister" house at St. Andrews, and another one made by John Clouston is in the area too. Barley was prepared to be used in making broth; today we buy pearl barley in the stores. They used a scoopedout block of wood that would resemble a bowl, into which they would put some barley. They used a longheaded wooden hammer to pound the grain and a wooden spoon to stir the grain as it was being pounded. Oats were also stored in their lofts. The oats were taken to the miller, who rolled them. There were always bits of straw and chaff in it, which would have to be picked out by hand. There were a few mills in the settlement. They were water driven. The grinding stones were about four feet in diameter, and were made of granite stone.

There were shelves in these lofts that held many things such as cheese, candles and sinews and many other necessities.

My grandfather, Alec Setter, was the son of James Setter and a grandson of Andrew Setter who came from the Orkneys in 1836, in the service of The Hudson's Bay Company.

My mother, Margaret (Setter) Philpott remembered, as a child, when she could just run out on the prairie and pick a wild onion when one was needed. My Mother-in-law (Mrs. Tom Carter) came from Ontario. She used to send the children out to pick wild hops along the creek. These hops were boiled with water for one half hour, then strained and cooled. This she used as yeast for her bread baking. The wives of our early settlers were very busy. They made everything they ate or wore. I've heard my father Frank Philpott speak of what was called "Beef Shoes". The hides of cattle were tanned with willow bark in a large tub, or a hollowed out canoe, which served the same purpose as the tub. After the hides were cured the women would cut out shoes and sew them together with buffalo or cattle sinew. The buffalo sinew was the best.

In June, the sheep would be sheared, and the wool was used for several things. As a child I remember helping mother teasing wool, until we had enough to make a comforter just as the settlers had done before us. Those who had carders, would card the wool instead of teasing by hand. Some had spinning wheels and made wool, which was knitted into socks, mittens, sweaters, toques and scarves. Those who had looms, could weave blankets and

homespun cloth. Our thrifty, hard working ancestors could produce anything that was needed.

Late in the fall the meat supply had to be made ready for the approaching long, hard, cold winter. They would slaughter the animals, and everything was saved and prepared. This meant a great deal of hard work for the women, but they didn't mind, as it gave them a great deal of satisfaction to be able to accomplish what they had to do. They scrubbed and scraped, then boiled and dried the tripe. The blood was made into black puddings. My mother once showed me how they used to make starch. The potatoes were ground, then pressed through a straining cloth, which was placed over a dish — half full of water. The starch would settle to the bottom of the dish. I imagine the settlers would have used a large vat or tub when they made starch; because of the quantity of starch needed in those days of many ruffles and stiffly starched shirts.

The inner bark of the red willow was called Kinikinck, and was used as a tobacco or mixed with tobacco.

The men worked hard too. They were a pretty rugged class of people who pioneered our Red River Valley. My mother spoke of her father ploughing his land with an ox or oxen pulling a one furrow plough. Sometimes a neighbour, his cousin, who lived on Dewar's place, (his name was also Alec Setter) would come over and walk up and down the fields chatting with my grandfather as the ploughing was being done. They did their visiting while they worked. After the day's work was done in the field, and they had had their supper, they would go out and milk the cows. Then there would be calves to feed the milk to. The cream was made into butter, and they made a cheese as often as it was needed. They made their rennet from the stomach of calves. Rennet was used to make cheese.

One can well imagine how busy the women would be, with all the sewing that was to be done. Everything had to be done in season, because every new season brought a fresh supply of jobs. There were gardens to look after, berries to be picked and made into jams, jellies and preserves. A lot of their fruit was dried for winter use. The settlers made their own soap for doing the laundry; using the fat from the animals, and making lye out of wood ashes. They made the lye by filling a barrel with wood ashes and pouring several pails of water over it.

All was not work; they still had time for visiting and many happy times and parties were held at Red River.

As these kindly, hard working folk looked into the future, they must have had visions of a very exciting horizon; and a great future for their descendants who fill our land, which holds such great promises in our great under-developed Northland, in the not too distant future.

My grandmother always made her own baking powder; four part Tararic acid and five parts bicarbonate of soda mixed with nine parts baked flour. They must all be weighed and all be absolutely dry and pulverized very fine. Then mixed by sifting repeatedly. It was then stored in corked bottles, and you used two teaspoonsful to each pint of flour in your baking.

To make yeast — on Monday boil up one eighth pound of hops with one gallon of water. Boil for one half hour, strain, let stand till cold. Then add a small handful of salt, a cup of sugar. Beat some of the liquid into one pound of flour and then mix it all together. Keep in a warm place. On Wednesday — boil up three pounds of potatoes; mash the potatoes and add them to the yeast. Let stand until the next day. Then it was settled, and ready to use. It had to be well shaken before using. The yeast had to be stored in a cool place until it was all used.

From Wavey Creek Road

Remember when:

- Seven girls used to smoke Old Chum Fine Cut roll-your-owns in the various outhouses around "The Corner" and thought their parents didn't know they smoked.
- Coral and Kim used to phone each other to meet half way down the road and they each would dawdle hoping the other would have to walk the farthest in the dark.
- The kids found a pack of cigarettes and smoked them in the Dorosh's play house and all were deathly ill (ages ranging from five to eight years old).
- Joe took his horse and stoneboat to school and as he passed the various houses along Wavey Creek Road, kids would attempt to catch a ride, often resulting in Joe being pushed off and once the horse ran away.
- On severe winter mornings children would stop at Palan's, on the way to school, to wait for Wilda, knowing full well Mr. Palan would give them a ride in his warm car.
- The "Ghastly Gigglers" met at St. George's Rectory for confirmation classes under the direction of Reverend and Mrs. Grant and had to walk home past the darkened cemetery, telling ghostly tales and Betty could outrun them all.
- There were skating rinks on the creek and snow forts in the drifts by Stanley's and a winter road built in Art's field; rubber boots and gum rubbers left in the ditch at the highway, to be put back on for the

walk down Wavey Creek Road, in the spring, and all the favourite swimming holes along the creek.

- When there were enough kids to dance two squares in Nanny's kitchen and the uncles took turns playing the fiddle, calling off, and chording on the piano, and teaching the intricate steps of the Square Dance.
- When Auntie Nellie used to read "My Friend Flicka" and "Thunderhead" serials from the "Country Guide" every Friday night to all the kids.
- The kids got together at Uncle Stewart's for a New Year's Eve party and tasted the home-made wine?????
- When early one spring night, Uncle Alex thought he was jumping over the ditch and instead was jumping further out into the rising creek.
- When Christmas Eve, 1946, a sleigh loaded with good wishers, drove three miles to sing carols to a lonesome English war bride.
- When Doreen and Janet spent an hour cracking a bowl of hazel nuts to pass to the company, but instead of passing the bowl on to the next person, their great-uncle dumped the nuts into his hand, thanked the girls and handed them back the empty bowl.
- When the kids put on a Wavey Creek "St. Louis Fair", with tight rope walker, bare back riders, dancers, singers and clowns and raised \$2.17 for the needy children of other countries.

A Year's Work at Netley Fur Block in the Early 1950's.

Before describing our work on the Netley Fur Block to you, I should try to show you something of the marsh set up. Some of you no doubt are fairly familiar with the Netley Marshes and others may not be. However I have a map of the entire area here which I hope will help you to understand the area.

First when I speak of control points I mean these camps namely Matlock, West Camp, Netley Ferry, Libau, and Whittle's Point, each of these camp sites has a living cabin for at least two men, and a fur shed for the storing of muskrat pelts, and it is at these camps that the trappers check in or out when leaving or returning to their trapping crew area. You see a trapper must not leave his trapping crew area without checking out through his designated control point, and there may be up to thirty-five or forty trappers working from one control point.

You can see that the entire Marsh is nearly open to Lake Winnipeg by channels, creeks, etc. Due to this we have a very great fluctuation of water levels, and the water in the marsh is rising and falling almost constantly and very seldom stable for more than a few hours at a time, depending on winds; for instance a north-west wind of twenty-five to thirty miles per hour can raise the level three to four feet in twelve hours, also a south wind can lower the level in the same period of time. At times the level can vary nearly six feet in forty-eight hours from extreme high to extreme low, and during the high-level period the wave action will destroy all muskrat houses in its path. This generally takes place at freeze-up each year which destroys many rats and leaves thousands without houses, the majority of these find shelter under the hanging ice left by receding water levels and remain there throughout the winter.

However to attemp to describe a year's work at the Netley Marshes, I think the best time to start would be at the time of taking the muskrat house census, as soon after freeze-up as ice conditions will permit. Generally four men are employed in the taking of the census, two men on each side of the Red River, transportation used in the past has been mostly motor toboggan, which we have found is by far the best machine for the job, jeep truck, and foot are also used, but none are as practical as the toboggan. The census is generally complete and submitted to Winnipeg office by Christmas, and also during the time patrols are maintained re poaching of rats by spearing and trapping.

Following this, January and February are spent in general patrol by motor toboggan and snowplane. Checking on winter conditions and control of predators by use of coyote getters, and checking predator trappers some mink trapping is carried on also. However, Netley Marsh is at present a very poor mink producer and a total winter catch of mink may not exceed twenty animals, but a considerable number of weasels are taken by trappers.

By the end of February we are arriving at the setting up a spring trapping program and considerable time is spent in the calculation of the number of rats to be trapped, and the number of trappers to be employed; when this is arrived at the entire block is laid out in trapping crew area with a crew of six or eight trappers in each area and a senior trapper in charge of each crew, at this time we also arrange to open control points.

About March the 10th preparations are made to issue permits generally day by day at the following points, at which notices have been posted a week in advance of the time of issue, and on these days the trappers come to their nearest points to receive their permits and at this time they are shown which crew and what area they will be trapping in, Matlock, Peguis, Libau, Grand Beach.

When the season opens, the trappers move in and set up camps and prepare to start trapping in the area to which they have been allotted. At each control

point we have a control-point-man who checks in the fur, gives information to the trappers, and stays continually at the camp, and a conservation officer who supervises a given number of trapping crews and patrols regarding law enforcement of general regulations governing the block. Also checking any trapping operation outside the fur block boundary in surrounding districts.

At the close of the season, generally at the end of April, the fur at all control points is bagged in individual sacks for each trapper and trucked to Winnipeg to the fur auction houses, where it is sold by public auction. At this time we close down the control points with the exception of the Conservation Officers who carry on patrols over the entire marsh to prevent after trapping, and to prevent poaching along the boundaries. This patrol is carried on until about May 15th, or until the danger of poaching is over, dependent upon whether the season is late or otherwise; also during this time Conservation Officers on the outside areas do a great deal of patrol in protection of migratory birds of which there are heavy concentrations in surrounding areas and grain fields while the heavy migration flights are on each spring.

During the months of April and May we work in co-operation with Ducks Unlimited in the carrying out of a controlled burning program during which time all burning of hay claims and private hay land is burned over before the ducks begin nesting. This burning is finished or completed by a set date depending on the season if it is late or otherwise; this program has worked out very well and in the past few years we have had no late spring marsh fires which do great damage to nesting waterfowl and other wild life. Following completion of the burning program D.U. also maintain a patrol of three or four men on the marsh to aid in fighting any fire that may start or get out of control. These patrols travel mostly by water and one patrol is equipped with a power pump with a capacity of 10,000 gallons per hour; it has been found that this pump can put out enough water to stop any type of marsh fire, including a fire in flag reeds. These men are also equipped with portable sprayers and hand pumps, to combat grass fires.

When the need of these spring patrols ceases we turn to our general summer work of repairing and painting boats, canoes, cabins, and all types of general repairing and cleaning up in and around campsites. Also we have a number of duck transacts which are run by boat, also a continuous patrol of the block is maintained regarding muskrat conditions, waterfowl, etc.

During the entire summer patrols are maintained to check angling parties in the block regarding the illegal use of power boats and carrying of firearms. Some time is also spent in the destroying of crows' nests, and in the past few years hundreds of crows' eggs have been destroyed and dozens of adult crows have been shot and trapped.

As the summer goes into fall, ducks start moving into the grain fields, the illegal hunting starts and at this time more patrols are put on depending on conditons. Also supervision of permits issued by the R.C.M.P. to farmers upon whose crops migratory birds are feeding, to stop misuse of the permits and to protect birds feeding in areas where no damage is being done to crops, this generally goes on until the opening of duck season.

With the opening of duck season we generally start the season with six or seven conservation officers on patrol over the entire marsh and surrounding grain field areas, three of these men operate by canoe or boat in the interior and the others cover the boundaries and outside areas.

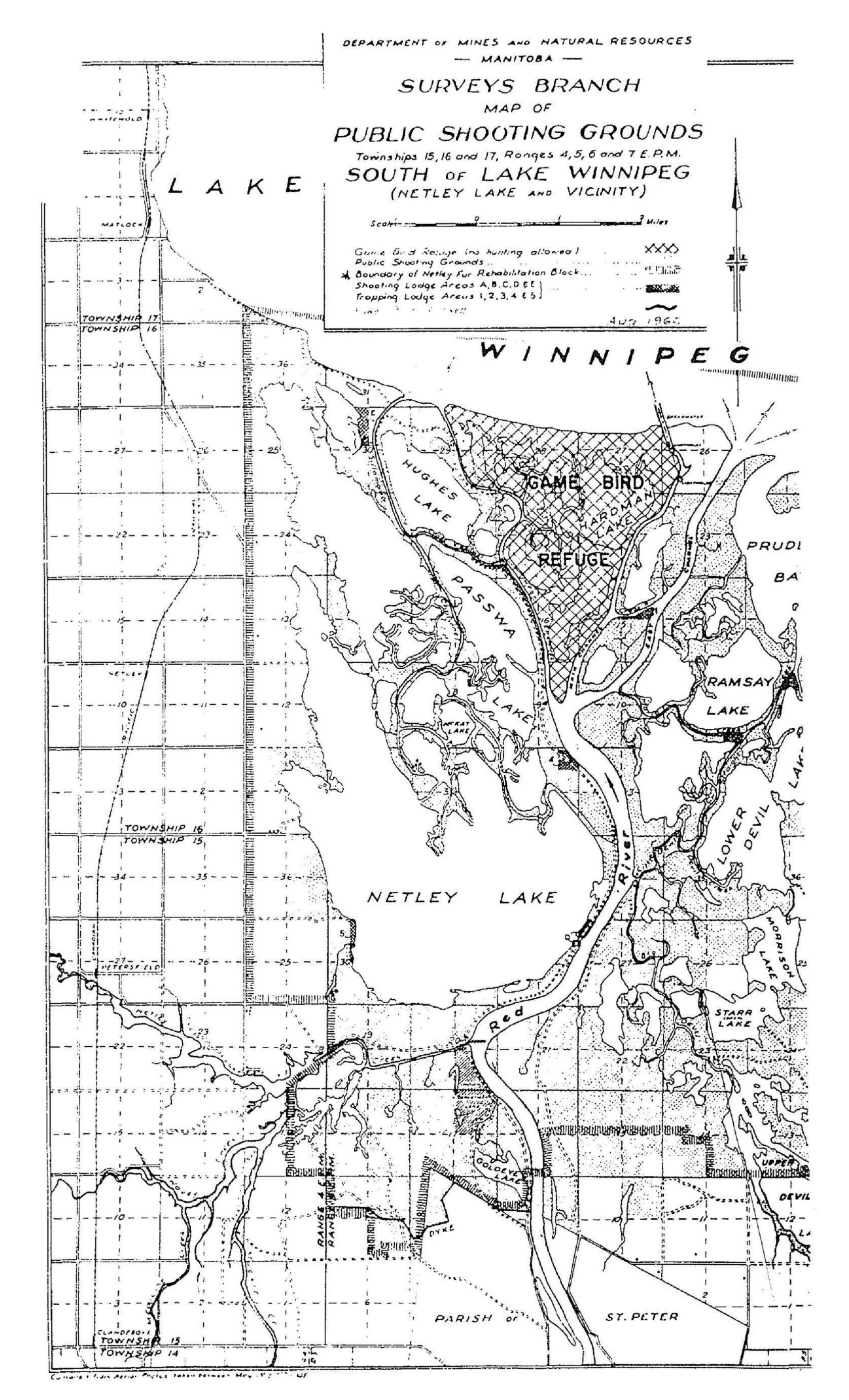
When the duck season opens hunters appear to converge from every direction by the hundreds, on this marsh which is located so close to Winnipeg and Selkirk. Hunters can leave Winnipeg, come out have a morning shoot and get back to the city in time for work; also the paved highway from Winnipeg runs within two miles of the marsh at nearly every mile; this makes the hunting area very easy to reach, and a hunter can be on the marsh hunting within an hour after leaving the city.

I believe that the Netley is probably the most heavily-hunted area for waterfowl in Manitoba, however at times the bags are not too large, and it is only the more experienced hunters who have camps established in the interior and are equipped with boats, motors, and plenty of other equipment, such as decoys, who have any fair shooting.

During the duck season, conservation officers are gathering information regarding hunting pressure, bags, etc., muskrat conditions, and also during this time a considerable amount of fall muskrat trapping is carried on in shallow areas on the boundaries of the Fur Block where it is deemed the rats would not survive the coming winter. This is all supervised by conservation officers and upon application by the person owning the land it is investigated and if found to be an area where the rats could freeze out, a permit is issued for the owner to trap the area down. Also at times trappers are employed to trap crown land area in the block where there is a danger of the rats freezing out.

Shortly before freeze-out, a predator trapping program is laid down and permits for this are issued to each trapper who is given a certain area of his own to trap upon.

A fairly concentrated patrol is carried on over the entire marsh during the open waterfowl season which generally lasts until freeze up, and following freeze-up as soon as ice conditions permit, we again start the muskrat house census.



Today

by Mary Elizabeth Bayer From her book of poems "Responses"

They said you should have seen the colours of a week ago

When they were at their peak. They challenged me

With yesterday and glory gone, as if my joy Could be retracted with regret for what might have been —

The moment is, and will not change

To time before, or prophecy succeeding time

As fast as film, surprising as the sun Rising over hills, or morning glory closing in the shade

So will the colours change, and new light emphasize

New contours and new qualities;

Do not abuse rejoicing with remorse For other days or other sights or sounds; The gift is now.

Cloverdale stories of the Past

In the 1930's times were hard in our area, as they were everywhere else. One young man, through hard work and perseverance, managed to buy himself a truck and went into business. He hauled grain, livestock, etc., for the farmers near and far.

One winter day a farmer hired him to haul some hay from Netley Marsh, a distance of 15 miles. There were no pick up balers in those days, so the hay was stacked loose. On this particular day it was snowing and blowing up a storm. However, as bad as the weather was they had got some hay home. But by dark they still had one load left in the marsh. If they left it overnight it would take hours to dig their way in to get the remainder of the hay. Although they were not too keen on starting back at that time of the day they went anyway. By the time they got to the marsh the storm was worse. After much groping around in the dark, they loaded the last of the hay on the truck and started for home. Now they had another problem. Their trail had drifted in and everything looked the same. However, the truck owner being a resourceful fellow was able to find his way back to the road out of the marsh that led to the highway.

By now he knew his gas tank was almost empty, as it happened they got as far as Muckles Creek when the truck stopped. The driver got out and with a gallon can he always carried in the truck, went to the creek and filled it with water. He then poured it into the gas tank. He got back into the truck, waited a few seconds for water to separate from the gas, stepped on the starter, and the faithful old truck started immediately and they were able to get home with the hay and back home himself.

Cloverdale Stories of the Past Gordon A. Norquay

The moral of this story is: you have to be a gambler or a genius or both when you can pour a gallon of water in the gas tank of your truck and make it run, especially at 9:00 p.m. on a cold, stormy winter night, ten miles from home.

I might also add that in those days the outlet was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches above the bottom of the gas tank. Filters as we know them today were unheard of.

* * *

One other story of an event that happened in the early 1920's gives one an idea how some of the pioneers dressed for the trip to town on a cold winter day. Sometimes they would over-indulge. One older gentleman was in that state when a younger man who was a friend, decided he should come to his rescue. The older man was driving a spirited horse and his friend thought he had better get in that cutter and drive the horse home.

It was late at night and bitterly cold, so the young man stayed over. On retiring the older man was getting undressed — first he took off 3 pairs of outer pants and underneath he had on heavy ribbed pure wool underwear. The young man looked at him and said: "You would not freeze if you laid out all winter!"

This is a true story as the older man was my grandfather.

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