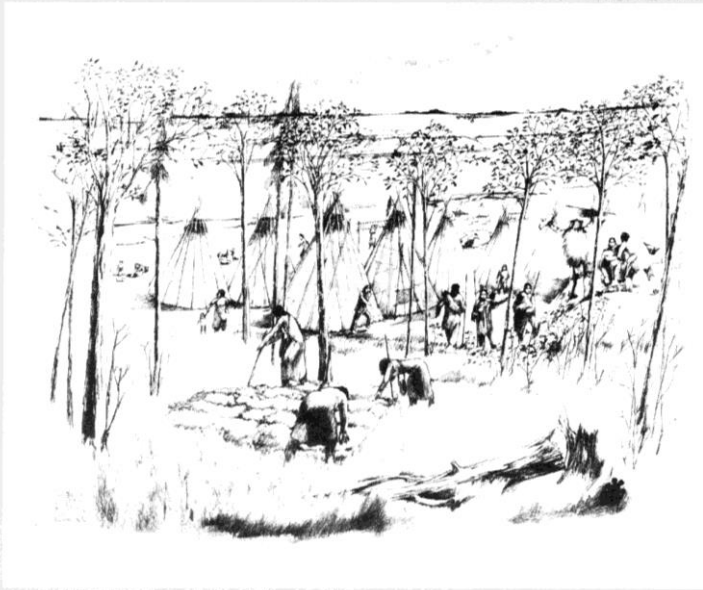


# FIRST FARMERS IN THE RED RIVER VALLEY



In 1400, there was a major drought in the central part of North America which drove many of the early tribes north.

The Lockport area is often considered as the first location for small scale farming as there was abundance of fish at the Rapids and good soil for growing some traditional food.

At that time corn was a common crop which could mature in a 100-day growing season

# Farming in St Clements

- For the new pioneers who arrived in this area in the late 1800s' and early 1900s' they found the soils and climate quite familiar as they could grow many of crops as in Europe.
- Crops such as wheat, oats, barley, hay and pasture and many vegetable crops did very well on the deep productive top soil.
- The major challenge was that much of the land was original sod prairie and bush that had to be cleared. In some areas, stones were a major problem.
- Using very limited resources our early farmers were remarkably successful

- For many new immigrants from Europe coming to this area in the late 1880s and early 1900's, farming was a major source of income and was the principle source of their daily food.
- The new immigrants purchased their new lands usually from Métis people who were often not farmers but fishermen and trappers.
- The river lot system at Lockport area was designed because everyone had to have access to the river. The lots were long and narrow often going back from the river four miles.
- The soils of the area was a heavy clay, usually very fertile but often had many stones, poorly drained and had some dense tree cover.
- Breaking this land and carving out a productive farm was very difficult.



Aerial photo – 1923 showing well developed river lots on the west and less development (Metis lots) on the east side



Many of the new settlers of the 1880's came to farms that were original prairie sod.

- This is an 8 bottom plow in use at the Van Horne Farm pulled by a steam tractor
- Most new settlers had to use much smaller equipment

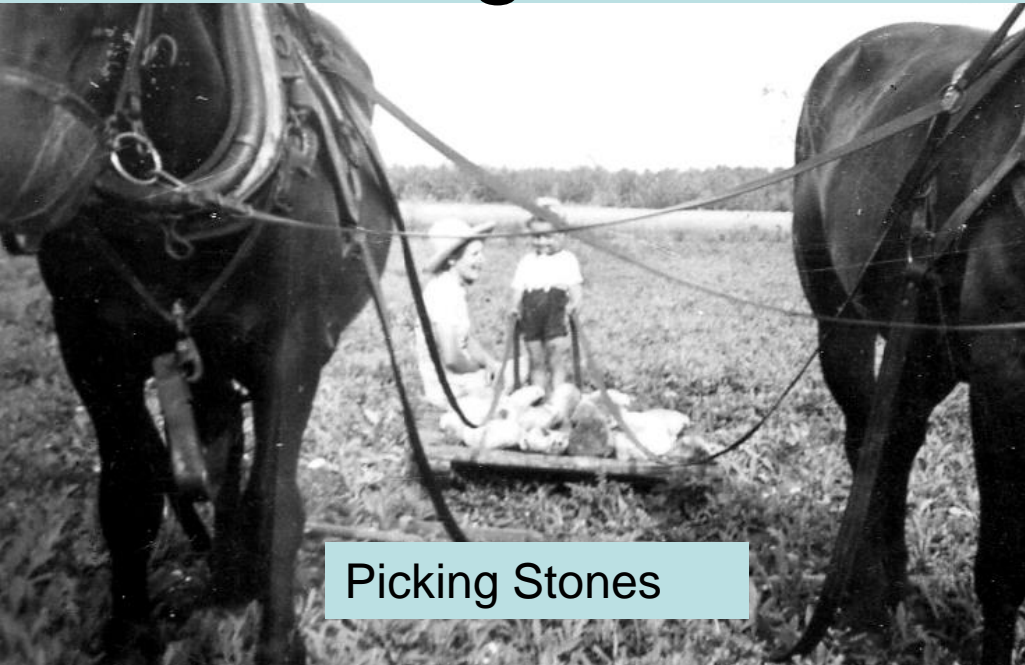




Most Farms had only single furrow plows to work the heavy clay soils



# Breaking the Land



Picking Stones

Breaking land at Harrison's  
1931

(nose bags on the horses for fly control)



*Breaking land 1927 - Kaluzniak*



**Bulldozing trees on Kossacks' 1952**  
there is a cutting blade on the bottom of  
the dozer blade to shear the trees off





**Hugh & Jacob Jonasson  
breaking marsh land with an  
8 bottom plow**

# Breaking the Land



**Advance-Rumley – Gas Pull Farm Tractor**



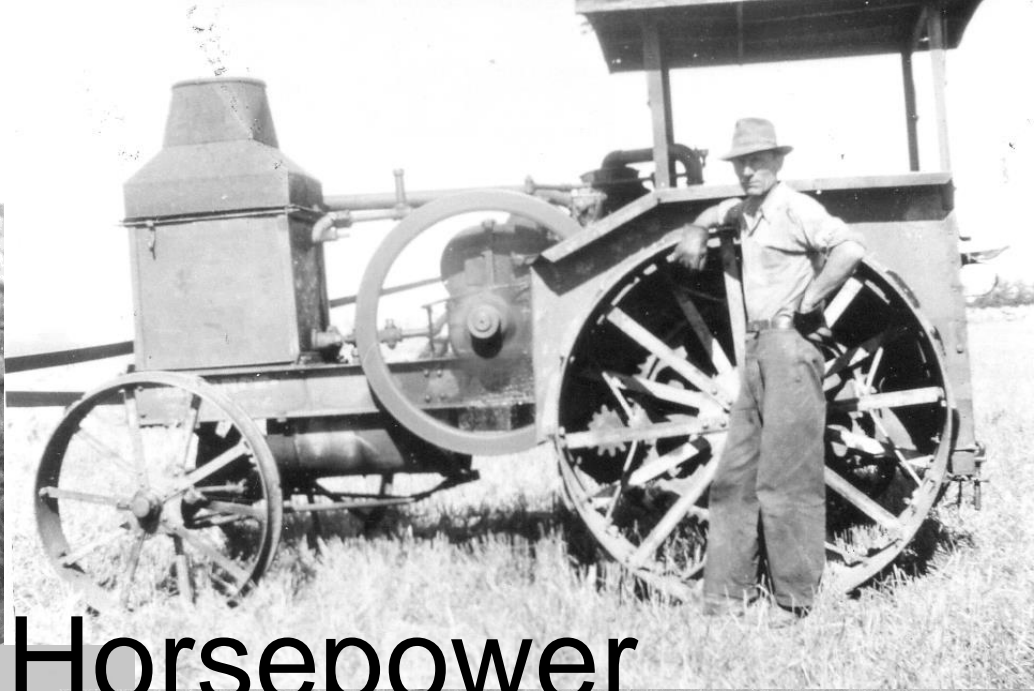
THE FIRST FURROW



Plowing Matches were quite popular to test the skill of the farmers on how to plow an even furrow – this is a two furrow plow

match held at the Van Horne Farm





# Early Horsepower



George Hrechuk, son Walter on Titan tractor – 1935.

**Reeves Cross Compound Steamer**





Reeves Compound Steamer – Van Horne Farms



Wm & Mildred Fewchuk 1937



Rozmus tractor 1946



Horanski threshing



# Spring Seeding

Spring Seeding



Seeding 1935



Michael Komodowski Cultivating



# Kosack Farm – old & new farming methods





Plowing with some neighborly advisors



Hauling manure - 1938



# Harvesting Grain at Gonor

William Kirkness



1905 harvesting at Gonor



- Some of the new settlers had limited resources
- Used a scythe to cut the grain
- Then used a hinged stick and like a flail would beat the grain from the straw

Grain was cut with a binder, tied in a package called a “sheave”. These are dropped on the ground - picked up by hand and placed upright (heads at the top) in a teepee type (stook) formation to dry the grain before it can be threshed – this is usually a “family” event



Time out for lunch — threshing Bill Bird's farm, Norwood district.



Stooking Oat Sheaves 1917 — St. Andrew's. Mrs. Fred Goldstone, Jim and Myrtle and visiting Aunt.



# Grain Binder being used on the Hoffman Farm near Libau – 1920's







Oastler girls on their Massey Harris Binder



Harrison Binder 1932



Stooks of wheat drying in the sun and wind



# 14 binders cutting grain – at the Van Horne Farm



Grain is cut and then tied in to a package called a “sheave”. These are dropped on the ground and are picked up by hand and placed upright (heads at the top) in a teepee type formation to dry the grain before it can be threshed



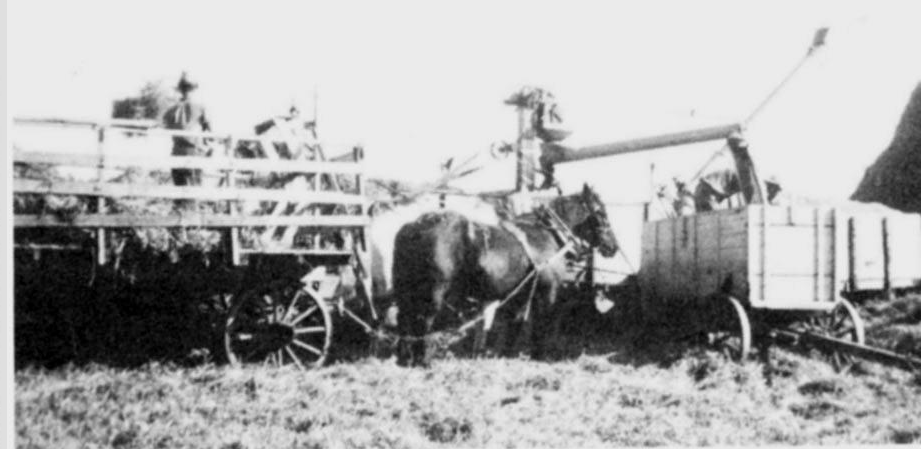
# Threshing Gangs would move from Farm to Farm



Threshing at Fegol's - Narol



George Hrechuk threshing, 1935.



Harvesting, Riese Farm, Little Britain.



# Hauling in the Sheaves to the Thresher





# Threshing in the East Selkirk Area

- Threshing gangs would move from one farm to another to harvest the crop.
- They would bring the threshing machine, the tractor power to run it
- Quite often the horses and wagons to move the grain sheaves to the threshing machine
- Straw was blown into a pile in the field in an area where some of the livestock would winter
- The farm family would be required to feed the threshing “Gang”





# Threshing at the Bob Andrews farm 1943 - Jim Kenny's gang



# Threshing at East Selkirk

Sheaves being thrown into the thresher, grain dumped into wagon at side (would hold 100 bushels)







*Grain handling involved lots of manual labour*

# Threshing Grain - Van Horne Farm







**New steam tractors came in in the late 1890's and early 1900s'**

**This is the Reeves Cross Compound Steamer Thresher & Advanced Rumley  
(Wooden Body) – Van Horne Farms**

# Straw being blown into the loft at Searle Farms - 1939





# Sir William Van Horne 1843- 1915

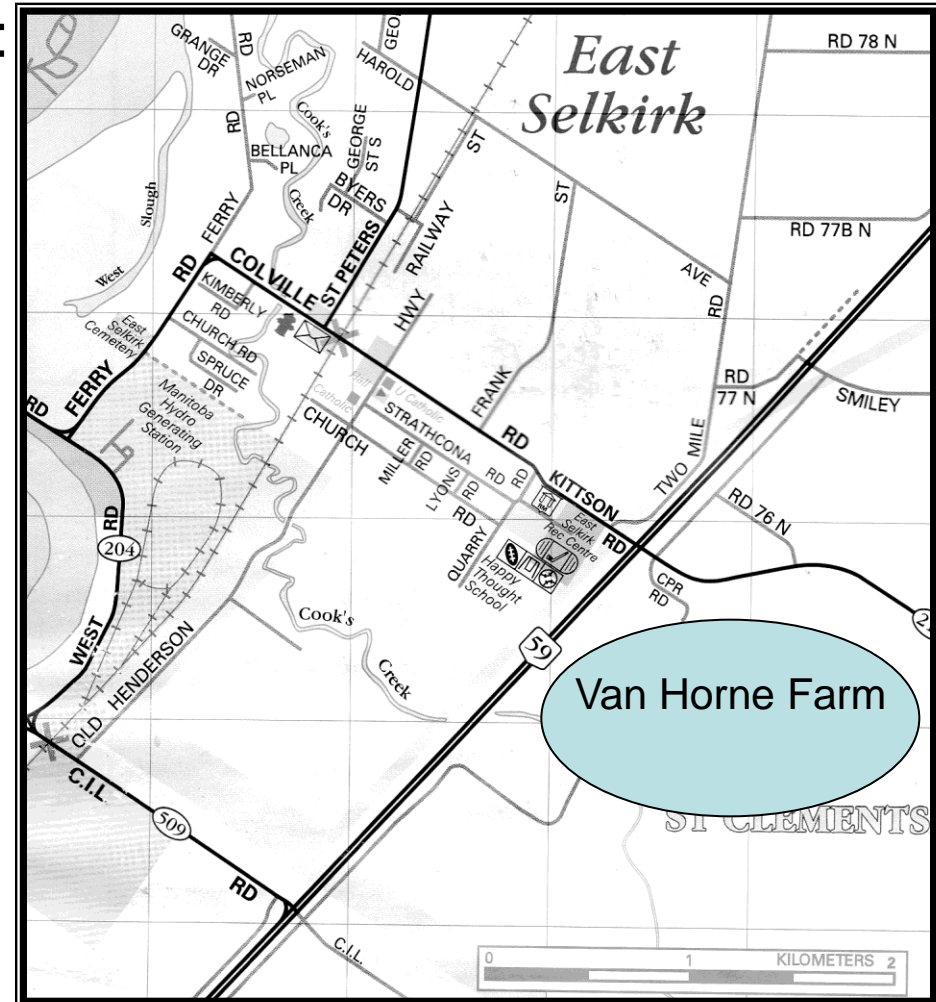
- Responsible for building the CPR to the Pacific and made Canada a Confederation
- Keen interest in farming and established a large farm at East Selkirk in 1899
- Demonstrated new farming technology to new Canadian Immigrants
- Had the best Shorthorn cattle, Clydesdale horses, Yorkshire pigs which were sold to local farmers to improve local stock



“It has always been a profound belief of mine that things which people regard as next to impossible are the easiest things to do. Consequently I have always set myself out to perform the next –to-impossible wherever I have run against it”

# Van Horne Farms

- In 1917 the Van Horne Farm:
  - Cropped 4,000 acres
  - 2,000 head of sheep
  - 60 horses
  - 30 dairy cows
- Farm sold to Searle Grain in 1937 and in 1973 sold to Right Angle Farms
- In 1989 the land was subdivided and sold to local farms and the building site to Buus Construction





Farm in 1913



- Farm produced fine livestock and introduced new farming practices to the district
- Agricultural courses were taught there and students came from the University to learn new technology



# Van Horne Farm

Managers House (left) Boarding House (right)







Van Horne Farm  
Cow Barn, Silo Dairy

# Prize winning Clydesdale Horses - Van Horne Farm

Chauncey Medal with a team ready for the  
Selkirk Fair - 1932





# Another fine example of a fine Clydesdale Team from the Van Horne Farm - 1932



Team of Purebred Belgian Horses & Dump Wagon –  
used to move manure or soil – bottom opening

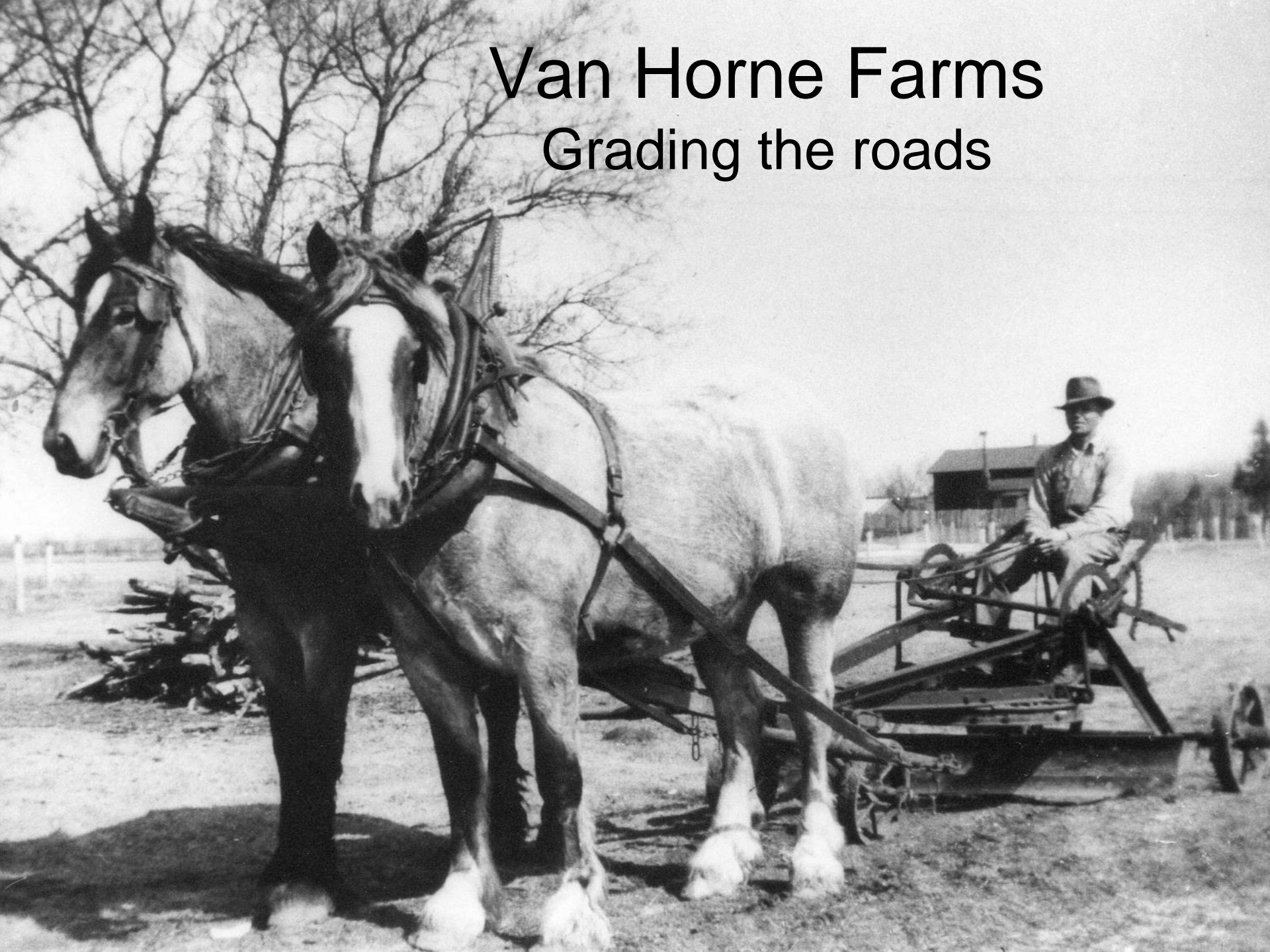
Van Horne Farm





# Van Horne Farms

## Grading the roads



# Unique Farming Community from Germany located at Little Britain

immigrated from Westphalia and Bavarian Black Forest regions in 1927

- March 27<sup>th</sup> 1927, 100 immigrants from Germany's Black Forest Region and from Westphalia arrived at Little Britain to start a farming community.
- Organized by the Canadian Colonization Association and by Dr Jur Schneider, a German newspaper editor
- 3,400 acres of farm land west of the Lower Fort and on both sides of McPhillips, was purchased from an American from Nebraska, Mr Bennett
- Much of the land was unbroken and had standing bush, much of it as oak trees
- Each family was a share holder in the association and had to deposit 5,000 Marks and pay for their own transportation



- a large commune building was built for the settlers
- 16 bedrooms on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- Main floor had a large kitchen, and dining room
- Old granaries and a barn were also converted into living quarters



- There were many challenges to these new farmers and after a few years, many of the original group left for other opportunities with only 12 families staying in the district of the original 30.

- The community building was removed in 1931 and the farm land and equipment divided between the remaining families

- The Wesphalia group settled in the area west of McPhillips

- The Bavaria/Black Forest group settled in area east of McPhillips



- By 1936, in spite of experiencing grasshopper plagues, drought and the depression with low farm prices, each of the original farmers were able to establish their own farms.

- Today, the descendents of this group are some of the “best” and most successful farmers in the district or are very successful business and professional people in Manitoba

# Glenarma Farms

( on Henderson Highway just south of Bunns rd.)



This farm was owned by Jack Sifton whose brother was Victor Sifton, manager of the Free Press. This was a show farm where they raised Polo ponies, Ayrshire cattle, Angora rabbits. It operated until 1933 – manager was Harry Verheul



# Making Hay

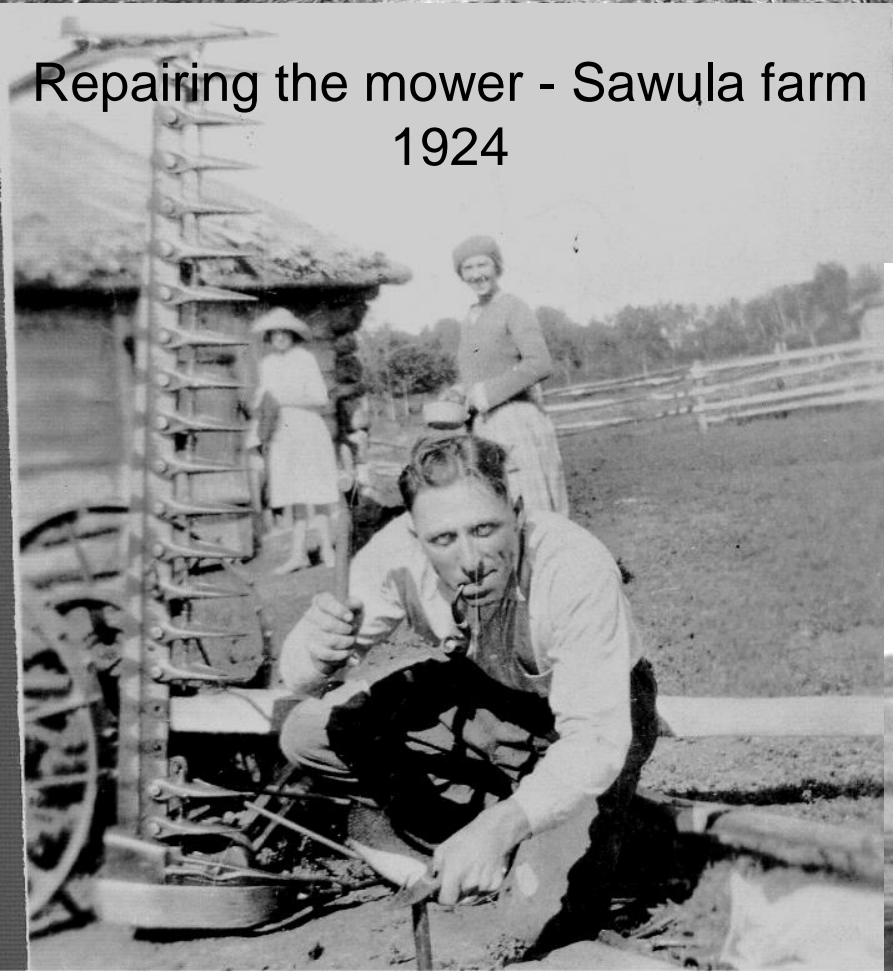
a major activity to prepare for winter feeding

- Hay was cut and dried in the field, then raked, made into stacks which would be taken back to the farm later in the fall.
- Here, a stack is being formed, hay is pushed up using a hay sweep then with a system of pulleys, the hay is raised and dumped into the stack
- Hay stacks need to be properly formed to shed the rain to prevent spoilage
- It was an “art and skill” to make a good stack of hay





Making hay 1932



Repairing the mower - Sawula farm  
1924



Stacking hay





Fred Harrison making hay 1938



Dave Kossack hauling hay in the winter

Hay was often made in the marsh areas  
and then hauled home in the winter - 1938



10 ton hay stack 1932

# Livestock has always been an important part of farming in St Clements

Horanskis' sheep



Mr Kolton of Narol—  
bee keeper at the age of 80



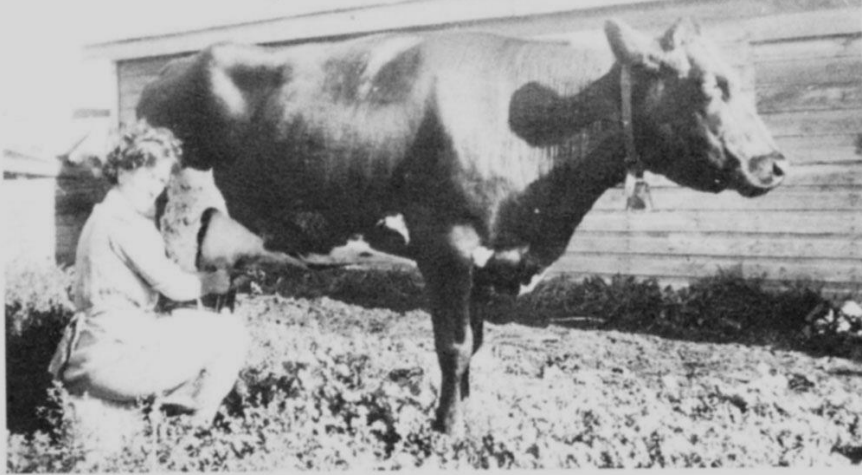
Gordon Burnett registered horned  
Herefords



Sifton Horses



# Most farms usually had a couple of cows to supply their local milk needs or to ship to the local creamery



1934 — cow, Bernice was 23 years old and part of the family. With her tiny curved horns and long practice, she could open any gate. Milkmaid is Mrs. Grace Goldstone.



Joe Kamer delivering milk to the main road for pickup, 1944.



Cream was separated from the milk and shipped to the Creamery



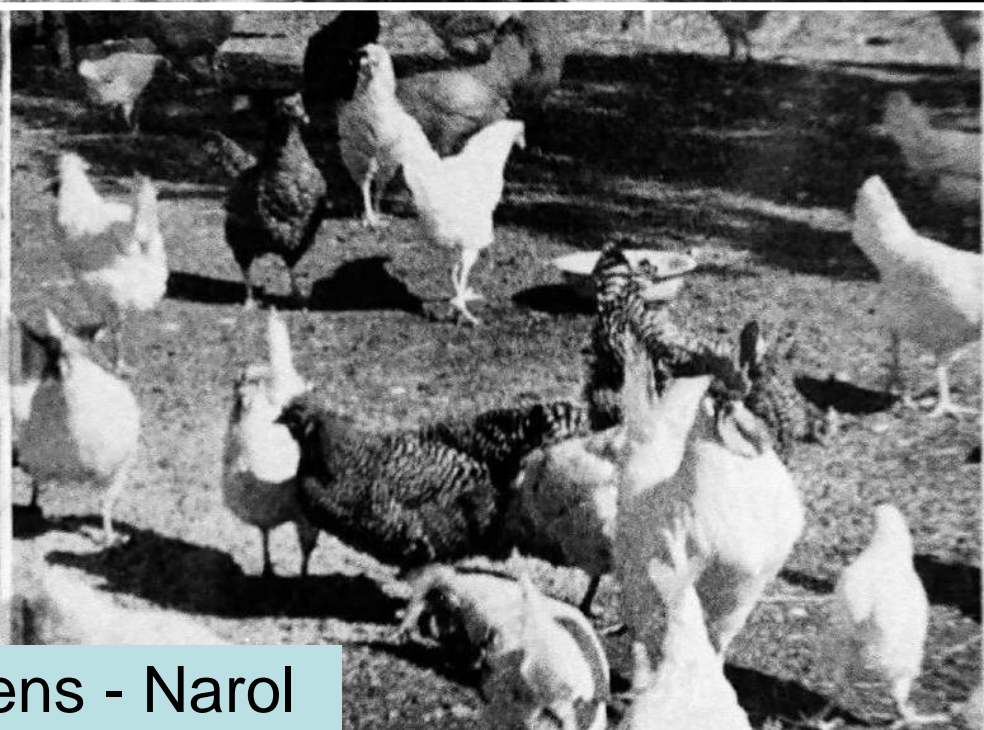
Crescent Creamery Co., Bldg., Clandeboye, built in 1910 at site of present Municipal Hall. Gathering point for local farmers.



Beef animals more common than sheep



Julia Homenick Milking cows 1931



Tonita Kolton feeding her chickens - Narol



# Loading Pigs at the local farm.

In the early years, much of the livestock were sold to Drovers who bought directly from the farm not always the “best price”



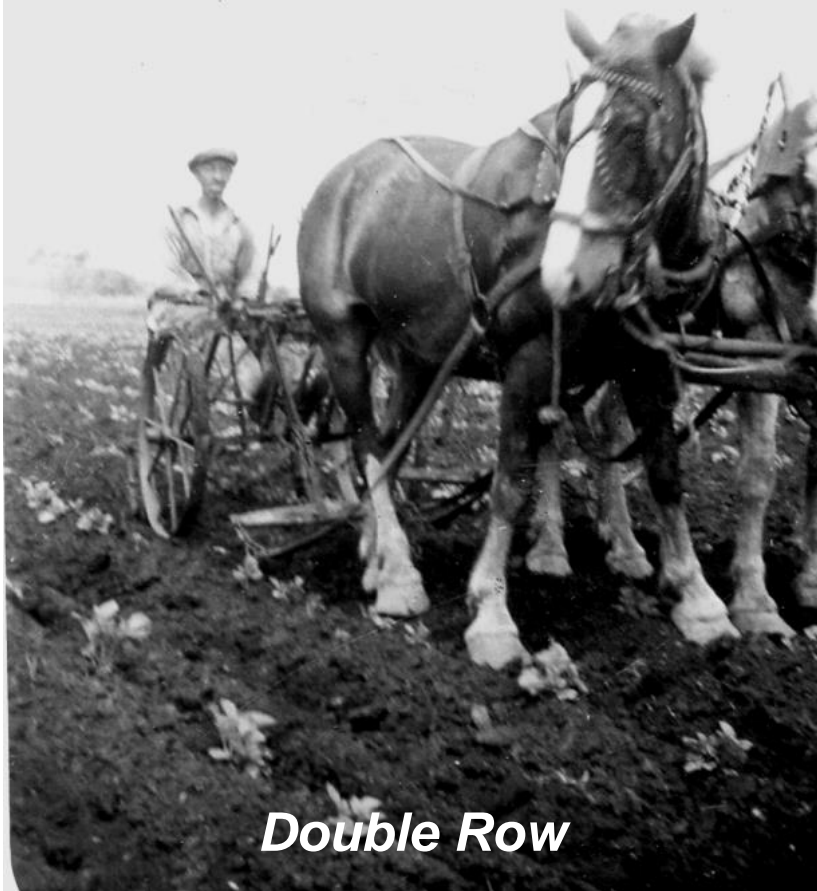
# Eva Rokosh feeding her turkeys - 1930





# Vegetable Market Gardening was a major income for many farmers

Cultivating potatoes 1948



John Miller cultivating by the Red River



## Transplanting celery - 1922



Market Gardening was very hard work – lots of manual labour for the smaller acreages in the early years.

The soils of the Lockport area were very fertile but heavy clay and stones were often a problem



new crop tractor with cultivator attachment.





*Picking potatoes.*



Picking cabbage at Narol

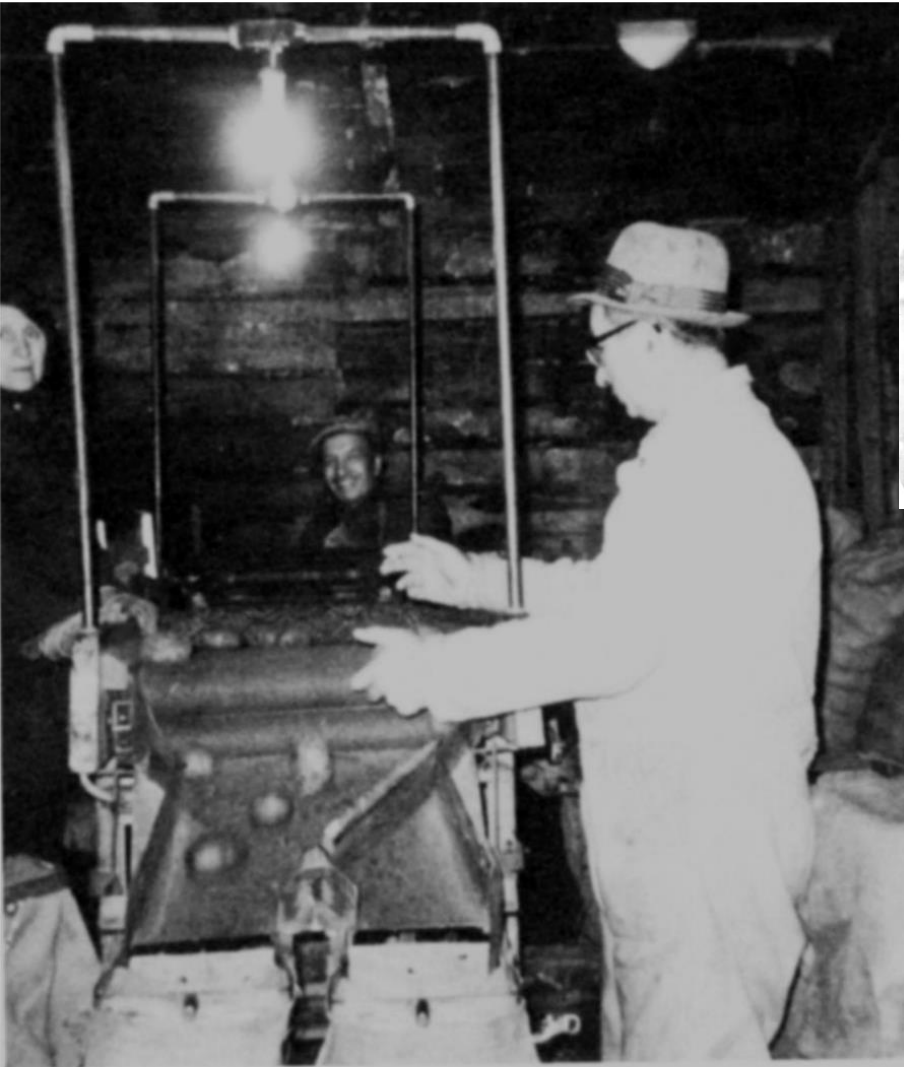


*Gawriluk Potato field.*



Cabbage harvest — Peter Ducheck's farm, Rossdale. L to R: Romka Arzanaviez (from Poland), Tina Zyla, Peter and Millie Ducheck, Margaret Dear.

# Vegetable Marketing was a major effort



Grading potatoes at Joe Preachuk's farm, St. Andrews,



Vacil Homenick  
off to the city



*Picking beets.*



Chorneys' mechanized harvesting 1960s'



Horse drawn potato digger



Harvesting turnips Fegols'



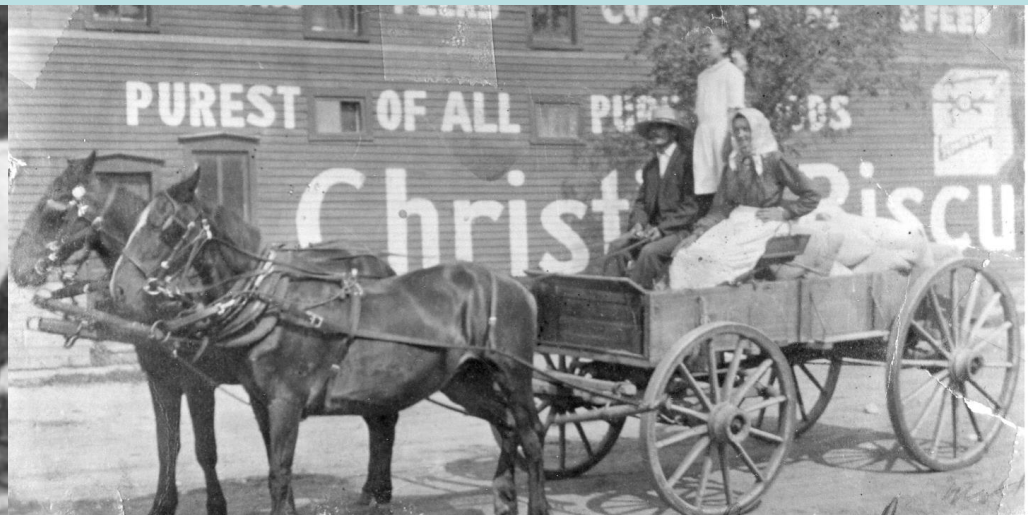


Roadside Stand, Thanksgiving 1953.



Roadside Stand on River Road 1953. Fred Skromeda & sons, Harry & Don.

Some market garden produce was delivered into the wholesalers or the best price was often right off the farm at local road stand markets



Delivering produce to Winnipeg - John Yasyk 1910



# Max Dubas's mother at the North- end Market



The whole family was involved in the direct marketing



Mrs. Gaynor at her Stand





Chorney Family – Manitoba Farmer of the Year - 1976



Delivering produce - John Yasyk 1910



Kuzminski stand 1946