'Twas Once a Teeming Highway

Historical sketches from along
The Boundary Commission Trail

A Story for Every Mile
Volume 4

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THE OLD TRAIL

A mark there is – 'twas once a teeming highway.
By settlers travel-trod in days of yore;
'Tis sunk with time - a now-forgotten byway,
A faded track, deep hid in leafy mold;
Where one may search in vain and scarcely feel
Old scars of hoofs, and ox-carts creaking wheels.

But o'er the golden fields and prairie grasses
A little ridge yet marks its onward way,
And through old minds the vision often passes
Of long, hard trips they made in other days.
We have our graded roads - our iron rail,
And memory claims "The Old Commission Trail."

This life is but a trail o'er which we wander
On through the years, as swiftly time flies back,
On to Life's goal, towards the bright "Up Yonder,"
Leaving behind - perhaps a fading track,
Perhaps a broad, bright road o'er hill and hollow,
Making a pleasant trip for those who follow.

To you, Old Timer, these rough rhymes are offered,
To you, who knew that trail in days of yore,
To you, whose ready help was ever proffered,
Cheering the stranger, travel-stained and sore;
Trusting that some crude line may hit the spot,
And wake again some memory, half forgot.

-A.O. Berry

The author of this poem was the editor of the Darlingford weekly newspaper, *The Comet*, from 1908-1913. Originally he had come to the community as a CPR employee but in January 1907 was forced to give up his position as the local station agent because of his poor health. He then started a community newspaper, a rather daring enterprize considering that the village had hardly more than two hundred residents. Nevertheless he was able to make it a paying proposition until 1913, when in better health, he accepted a position as a telegraph operator and CPR station agent in Saskatoon.

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FOREWORD

This volume, the seventh published by the Boundary Commission NWMP Trail Association, includes much of the material assembled during the research for the Association's first publication, *A Guide to the Historic Sites Along the Trail*. As noted in the introduction to that volume, Felix Kuehn, founding president of the association, undertook several months of intensive research in order to write the text for a brochure highlighting the history of the Boundary Commission NWMP Trail. In August 1991, upon the completion of this research, the Trail Association published an eight-panel brochure. The text of this brochure utilized approximately 5% of the history collected during Mr. Kuehn's research. This volume is the remaining 95%.

In presenting this material, it is the author's hope that readers of this collection will realize that the history of southern Manitoba does not have to play second fiddle to the annals of any other corner of the world. For old-fashioned romance, heroic undertakings, youthful enthusiasm, heartbreaking tragedy and gentle humour stories from southern Manitoba are a match for those from the Orient, the Deep South, the Australian Outback or the Rhine.

There is, of course, a fundamental difference, one that no one will dispute. In comparison to so many other parts of the world, southern Manitoba has just begun to document the saga of our province's founding and the role played in those early years by our valiantly optimistic pioneers. The histories of many other parts of the world already fill libraries; those of southern Manitoba still fit on one bookshelf.

This volume is made up of two main section. "From the Ancient Past to the Good Old Days" chronologically outlines the history of southern Manitoba beginning with the ancient eras. This is a period whose history is written in the rocks and streams, in the soils and landscapes of the first row of Manitoba municipalities bordering the Forty-Ninth Parallel. These are the narratives of millions of years ago interpreted for us by the geologist and the scientist who can introduce us to the age of the ancient sea reptiles and continent-crushing glaciers. This portion of this study provides the reader, not with a comprehensive history, but rather with a series of insights as far as "the Good Old Days" of the Mound Builders and the Indians and the arrival of La Verendrye, the International Boundary Commission and the Mennonites.

The second portion examines the history of southern Manitoba from a different perspective, Here the narratives begin at the Red River and follow the Trail until it leaves Manitoba. Thus its title is "The Lay of the Land from East to West." After beginning with the story of Emerson, the narrative moves across the level plains of the Red River Valley and ascends the uplands of the Pembina Mountain Country. The next stories are those of the communities of the Rock Lake Country and the prairies to the west. This section concludes with a series of narratives from the Turtle Mountain Country and the Souris River district.

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PART I
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1. CHALK AND ASHES
The Cretaceous Fossils of the Pembina Escarpment

It is appropriate to begin our narrative with a few words touching upon the oldest geological periods evident in southern Manitoba, the Cretaceous dating back, according to the geologists, from 100 to 65 million years. Evidence of this era is especially visible along Hwy. #3 as it descends into the Pembina Valley east of La Riviere. Here the roadway has been cuts through massive deposits of brittle grey shales towering upward, in some places, forty or fifty feet. Often streaked with brilliant orange and red highlights, these shales were formed as deposits on the floor of immense salt seas. These extended from the Arctic to the Gulf of Mexico and engulfed most of the North West Territories, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the central United States. In southern Manitoba the hardest of these ancient shales form the resistant bedrock of the Pembina Mountains and the areas west of them, including the Turtle Mountains. Their hardness has prevented them from being eroded to the level of central and eastern Manitoba.

In some parts of the world, during the Cretaceous Period, huge, warm seas laid down snow-white beds of chalk hundreds of feet thick. "The white cliffs of Dover" immediately come to mind. These were formed from the shells of minute organisms that must have filled these seas in massive, gently floating clouds. Southern Manitoba has no such deposits, but its shales do have a white mineral deposit of an origin no less fascinating. Towards the end of the Cretaceous Period large portions of southern Manitoba were the shore of a huge sea. Sometime during this era, in the vicinity of present-day Montana, intense volcanic activity blasted millions of tons of volcanic ash into the skies over the North American continent. Drifting northward, much of this ash eventually settled onto the surface of the Cenozoic seas. Here it sank to the bottom, where it was eventually was covered with other layers of marine deposits before another series of eruptions laid down another strata of ash.

Today this volcanic ash, in strata usually not more than six inches thick and layered between beds of shale, is a commercially valuable mineral; a creamy-white, slippery clay called bentonite. Because of its high calcium content, it will not expand when exposed to water and therefore is a widely used in the purification of mineral and vegetable oils. When the shale overburden is stripped away to mine bentonite deposits along the Pembina Escarpment, particularly in the Miami area, the skeletons of the dwellers of these fresh-water seas are found remarkably preserved by the bentonite. These include marine reptiles, (including massive turtles) ancient sharks and even the occasional bird. In some instances, because of the glacial erosion of the upper strata of later deposits, these bones millions of years old can be found a little as five feet below the surface.

Some of these remarkable finds are on display in the Morden Museum, where they form the largest collection of its kind in North America. Among the most fascinating fossils of this collection are the reptile remains, in particular the moasaurs and plesiosaurs. The former, growing up to a length of thirty feet, propelled themselves through the water with powerful tails and paddle-shaped flippers. Their skulls are elongated with jaws armed with two-inch pointed teeth. The plesiosaurs had broad, short, turtle-like bodies, paddle-shaped flippers and, in the case of those found near Miami, short tails and bodies. The rarest find is a toothed aquatic bird, *hesperornis regalis*, which grew up to a length of six feet. Unable to fly, it propelled itself through the Cretaceous seas with its rear flippers, much after the fashion of a penguin of the present day.

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2. A THATCH OF RUSSIAN THISTLES
THE COAL MINES OF THE TURTLE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

About 65 million years ago, as the Cretaceous Period gradually became the Cenozoic era, the vast inland seas covering central North America began their final retreat. Their shores became endless marshes covering thousands of square miles. In a warm, moist climate similar to today's tropic regions, lush vegetation thrived. The remains of this vegetation, later buried beneath layers of sand and shales, compressed and metamorphosed, have now become beds of lignite. At the foot of the Turtle Mountains, in the Goodlands and Deloraine areas, these layers vary in thickness from several inches to five feet.

As soon as the existence of these coal deposits were generally known, they became one of the chief inducements offered to prospective settlers to take up land in the Turtle Mountain area. Turning to 1894 editions of the *Deloraine Times*, one may read the following:

> Wood and coal are found in abundance. This section of the country around Deloraine and the Turtle Mountain coalfields is the most desirable place for settlement. Test pits have been put in along the west side of the Mountain for several miles and coal has been found in all of them.

> We can now with confidence, invite settlers to the district, where we have schools, churches, railways, and an everlasting supply of cheap fuel and fine farming land.

Between 1883 and 1892, several small mines were established. Essentially back-yard operations, they were undertaken with very limited capital and certainly no specialized equipment. The flooding of these shallow mines was a constant problem and none of these attempts became paying propositions. However, in the "Dirty Thirties," when a world-wide agricultural and economic depression combined with a devastating drought pushed many southern Manitoba farmers to the brink of bankruptcy, mining coal in the Turtle Mountain Country became one way to earn enough money to survive. Perhaps even more than fifty years before, capital was hard to find and so these mines were set up and operated on shoestring budgets. Every penny saved was important. And so we read that buildings at the George Cain Coal Mine near Goodlands, constructed of rough lumber sawn out of timber off the Mountain, were roofed, not with home-made shingles, but rather with a material then in endless supply – Russian thistle!

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3. AGATES AND PETRIFIED WOOD
The Pre-glacial Rivers of Southern Manitoba

If the first settlers along the Trail were not collectors of "curios," their children were almost certain to be. Those who lived in the vicinity of the Pembina Valley were regarded as especially fortunate. Here collectors often picked up specimens that were rarely found in other parts of southern Manitoba, fragments of petrified wood, often showing the most magnificent area of colours, and translucent agates varying in shade from a slightly clouded amber to tones of the deepest, richest oranges and goldenrod yellows. Turning these richly coloured rocks in ones hand, one questions immediately come to mind; where did they come from?

These southern Manitoba geological specimens are especially fascinating because they are evidence of the geological period following the Cenozoic era. This was the Tertiarian Period that extended from about 65 million years ago to about 2.5 million years ago, an age in which modern animals appeared. During the more recent portions of this period Manitoba was channelled by massive rivers flowing towards Hudson Bay. As they flowed out of the Rocky Mountains, they cut through deposits of agate and petrified wood formed in the earlier portions of the Cenozoic era and carried them downstream for hundreds of miles. Across the province, portions of these deposits eventually came to rest in the beds of these Tertiarian Rivers. Then,

during the Ice Age, these channels were buried deep beneath glacial deposits. The Pembina River, one of the glacial streams that drained the meltwater lakes formed at the face of these continental icefields, sliced through one or more of these pre-glacial river channels. As it did so, it carried these water-worn agates and fragments of petrified wood downstream and re-deposited them throughout the valley hundreds of miles from their place of origin to await their discover by collectors.

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4. ENTER THE GLACIERS AND THE MAMMOTHS
The Mammoth Fossils discovered near La Riviere and Boissevain

Those who make a speciality of the study of climate, tell us that we have been having bad weather for approximately the last two million years. It has been so bad, that these scientists have suggested that it be called the Ice Age, or in their terminology, the Pleistocene Epoch. During these periods, massive glaciers, often several miles thick, covered major portions of the northern hemispheres. Because so much of the earth's water was frozen in these glaciers, the level of the oceans fell an average of four hundred feet. This dramatic lowering of the sea level former land bridges in various parts of the world, including one across the Bering Strait.

Although there is no consensus as to the fundamental cause of these periods of intense cold, there is more general agreement that the relatively warmer intervals between these glacial periods was the result of a shifting of the prevailing airmasses from the High Arctic to the warmer areas of the Pacific Ocean. Of course, as the glaciers slowly melted northwards, billions of tons of icy water formed into a network of streams. In many areas, the lay of the land was such that vast lakes formed at the foot of these glaciers. The soils and subsoils of the Red River Valley are reminders of one such glacial lake. Because a towering barrier of glacial ice prevented the natural drainage from southern Manitoba northwest into Hudson Bay, meltwater off the glacier accumulated in a huge lake covering 110,000 square miles of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, North Dakota and Minnesota.

Named in 1877 for the Swiss-American naturalist Louis Agassiz, during one period the present location of Winnipeg was flooded by six hundred feet of water. When Lake Agassiz was this deep, it overflowed east into Lake Nipigon and Lake Superior or south via the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico. The silts and sediments in this lake continually settled to its bottom, where they became the gumbo and clay deposits of the Red River Valley. In the Emerson-Gretna area these are one hundred and twenty-five feet thick.

Approximately 16,000 years ago, North American temperatures gradually began to rise and the huge glaciers began to melt. Nevertheless it still took about 5000 years before this ice had melted back north sufficiently to uncover southern Manitoba. The Turtle Mountains were the first areas to be freed of this massive ice pack and by 11,000 B.C. the Tiger Hills are believed to have been ice free. As the ice receded northwards, vegetation grew quickly on the newly exposed ground. Stands of spruce can establish themselves on glacial debris within fifty years and ash, poplar and birch soon followed these.

As the climate gradually became drier, these forests were eventually replaced across most of the central plains by prairie grasses. During the warmer intervals, vast areas previously covered with glaciers ice and then glacial lakes became ideal pastures for a variety of now-extinct animals; ancient horses, camels, huge bison, giant armadillos, massive ground sloths, four-horned antelope, mammoths and mastodons. Perhaps the most spectacular reminders of this period are fossil mastodon and mammoth remains discovered in fifteen separate locations in Manitoba. Two of these are in southern Manitoba. Within the last ten years a section of mammoth tusk has been recovered from a gravel pit near Boissevain and taken to the Brandon Museum. A wonderfully preserved mammoth tooth found in a gravel pit near La Riviere is now on display in Pilot Mound Museum.

The date of the arrival of humans in North America is still very much a matter of debate among specialists in this field with estimates varying from 14,000 to 35,000 years ago. Some authorities suggest that the land bridge across the Bering Strait also allowed the first native people to make their way from eastern Asia into North America during a period estimated from 18,000 to 16,000 B.C. Native people have an entirely different point of view for all their legends state that they originated in this part of the world and never lived anywhere else. Some natives have facetiously pointed out that white anthropologists have been mislead by the moccasin prints coming south from Alaska. According to these native elders these are *not* evidence of their ancestors coming into North America from Asia, but rather their return from having gone north to look over to Asia and then coming back when they discovered that there was nothing better there than they already had here. This was the origin of these moccasin paths coming from the north to the south!

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5. BEFORE THERE WERE BOWS AND ARROWS
Paleo-Indian Culture in Southern Manitoba

The various cultures of Native people have been named for the configuration of the stone points with which they tipped their weapons. Contrary to popular assumption, none of these earliest stone points are arrowheads. In comparative terms, bows and arrows are a relatively modern invention in North America for most evidence suggesting that they were unknown prior to 200 A.D. How then did the first Indians hunt? Spears were their principal weapons, but the killing power of this weapon was considerably increased by the invention of the spear thrower. This simple tool, consisting of a stick with a notched end into which the butt end of the spear was placed, increased the strength and velocity by which spears could be thrown. There is speculation that the spear thrower was so efficient in hunting mammoths and mastodons that this weapon contributed to the extinction of these mammals on the North American continent.

The oldest, well-defined archaeological culture of these ancient Indians, technically called Paleo-Indians, is the Clovis Culture, named for a town in New Mexico where the artifacts of these people were first found. These natives developed distinctive, finely made stone spear points that were sharp enough to penetrate the thick hides of the Ice Age mammoths and bison they hunted. Generally "Clovis Points" are four to five inches long with nearly parallel sides close to the base. Carefully thinned and extremely sharp, near the base the edges are deliberately dulled

in order not to cut the lashing used to attach the point to the shaft. Particularly characteristic is the thinning of the base of the point where the split spear shaft was hafted to the point.

Because Manitoba was largely buried beneath glacial ice during the period of the Clovis Culture, approximately 11,000 years ago, its artifacts are understandably rare in this province. Only four or five Clovis points have been discovered in Manitoba. One of these was picked up on 36-1-8, eight miles south of Darlingford. This flint point, only a little more than three inches long, is the earliest evidence of man in southern Manitoba.

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6. BURIAL MOUNDS AND UNDERGROUND SEPULCHRES
The Mound Builders of Southern Manitoba

Almost without exception the numerous museums of the southern Manitoba will give the visitor an opportunity to see for himself a wide cross section of weapons, tools, ceremonial items and handicrafts, all evidence of perhaps as many as ten thousand years of native habitation in southern Manitoba. However, if one had visited the Southern Manitoba a century ago, it would not have been the little collections of "Indian relics," that almost every pioneer regarded as the most important reminders of the "Red Men." No - the settlers would have rather pointed to several prominent features of the landscape that dot the countryside west of the Pembina Escarpment. These were the burial and ceremonial mounds that many early settlers found of almost magnetic interest.

The most famous of these is Calf Mountain a mile southwest of Darlingford. There are very few early maps of what is now Southern Manitoba, which do not show its location. Farther to the west, and, together with Calf Mountain forming the vertices of a huge triangle, are Pilot Mound and Star Mound. The largest collection of burial and ceremonial mounds in western Canada will be found approximately one hundred miles to the west, in the extreme western corner of the province and overlooking the Souris River. Because an ancient Indian trail, which the settlers knew as the Commission Trail, appeared more or less to link these sites, the pioneers assumed that the builders of these mounds had known this route. What name did they give to these ancient tribes? The Mound Builders, of course. Around that name are clustered some of the most famous "stories for every mile" of southern Manitoba.

One concerns Pilot Mound. Rising almost two hundred feet above the prairies, it offers the visitor one of the most fabulous panoramic views in southern Manitoba. In spite of the fact that such a location would offer some challenges to securing an eventual railroad connection, the first settlers to the region selected this hilltop as a town site. According to local tradition, when one drove a heavy wagon along some of its streets, a dull, hollow rumble could be heard far beneath its wheels. This was taken as indisputable evidence that a vast "Mound Builder" sepulchre chamber had been constructed deep within the heart of this forty-acre edifice. Unfortunately, for the sake of the story, later archaeological investigations proved that the man-made construction of the mound was confined to, comparatively speaking, tiny burial mounds on the western slope. Geologist tells us that Pilot Mound, like Star Mound, is a glaciated uplift of the surrounding rock shales.

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7. THE STAFF OF LIFE
Buffalo

All of the Indians of the Southern Manitoba lived off the buffalo. They were the source of their food, clothing, tools, weapons, fuel and homes. In numbers almost beyond calculations, the buffalo roamed back and forth across the prairies. When the first white men visited what is now southern Manitoba, they found it to be the domain of the Assiniboine Indians. Related to the Sioux, they were even known as the "Stony Sioux", not – as many people believe – because of their stone weapons and tools, (remember all Indians used stone for these purposes) but rather because, in contrast to most other tribes, they used *stones* to cook their food.

To prepare their meat, a section of buffalo hide or a buffalo paunch was suspended on four sticks or placed in a depression in the ground. After the paunch had been filled with water and the meat placed in it, red-hot stones would be pulled out of the campfire and dropped into the container until the water boiled and eventually the meat was cooked. One suspects that using this procedure, it might have taken longer to cook supper than to kill it. This certainly would have been had conventional hunting procedures with weapons been varied by driving them over a steep bank, possibly with the aid of fire. In the Southern Manitoba, two such buffalo jumps are known; one north of Cartwright along the Pembina River and the other at Sourisford along the Souris River ten miles south of Melita.

Visitors to the Southern Manitoba often ask when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country. Guides have been known to facetiously remark, when the question has been posed by someone from Ontario, that "it was about the time that everyone from "Down East" started coming to Manitoba". Although really meant as a joke, it is almost literally true. Although it was still possible to buy buffalo meat in Emerson stores in the last years of the 1870s, this had been secured from stray buffalo hunted near the Turtle Mountains or the Souris River. During the winter of 1881-1882 what are believed to have been the last three were shot in a ravine east of the Turtle Mountains. About ten years before one of the last buffalo hunt in what is now the Southern Manitoba took place near Star Mound west of Snowflake.

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8. FORGERY FOR THE SAKE OF LOVE
The Saga Of The La Verendrye Cairn

Our schoolbooks told us that civilization began to arrive in North America with the coming of the fur traders and the explorers. Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, better known as the Sieur de La Verendrye, was both and he is believed to have been the first white visitor to the Southern Manitoba. In 1913 a lead tablet picked up by a schoolgirl near Fort Pierre, South Dakota, stimulated a renewed interest in western Canada in this great explorer. Historians in every community speculated whether La Verendrye had passed through their community, and if he had, what route he had taken. Of course, everyone hoped that some memento of his trek would turn up in their district to confirm their speculations.

Many residents of southern Manitoba, and not a few visitors, are aware that a lovely, little wayside park at the junction of Hwys. #3 and #31 southeast of Darlingford, a granite boulder and bronze plaque commemorates La Verendrye's 1738 visit to Calf Mountain, a mile to the west. Very few are aware that a stone discovered ten miles northwest of this cairn in July 1938 created a local sensation and was taken a definitive evidence of La Verendrye's presence in this portion of Manitoba. Eventually this discovery resulted in the placement of the bronze plaque by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the creation of La Verendrye Park and the re-naming of this section of Hwy. #3 as the La Verendrye Trail. A dozen years later, Manitou historian C.H. Vrooman documented the details of this discovery in his *The Story of Manitou*:

> The first written records that have been found have a much later date. Some years ago, a Manitou boy, Murray Rowe, who was interested in such things, on the ridge just north of the big shale pit, picked up a flat piece of stone, roughly 8 by 10 inches, on which were cut the letters "LA VERANDR" and below this figure "174". The stone was broken off just beside these letters, but evidently at one time "YE" had been attached to the word and some numeral to the figures. We know that La Verendrye came across this country in 1738 on his historic trip to the Mandan country of South Dakota and there is a strong possibility that this stone may be a relic of some later expedition across this district and this marker was either left here or has been carried by some means from another place. In any event it is a reminder of the strong men who opened up this land.

An additional insight into these events came to light some years ago when the author of this study discovered the following fascinating letter in the Manitoba Provincial Archives:

Dear Mr. Dupasquier,

> With respect to you letter of 21 March 1968, I was surprised to learn that there was any record of my "stone collection."

> The collection was inspired by a visiting museum that came to Manitou in charge of a tall, blond Scandinavian woman, by the name of Johanson as I recall. I admired both her and her collection of Indian artifacts. As a boy of 14 or 15 years, I wanted a collection like hers, but numerous trips to the nearby fields were non-productive, so I set out to make them as I figured the Indians would have done. Unfortunately, some adults learned of my "finds" and proceeded to prove that they were authentic. It got completely out of hand when the curator of the museum in Winnipeg examined the items and decided that they were probably authentic. As I recall, my collection included various tablets with "Indian writing" inscribed thereon, a tomahawk with a mysterious swastika engraved on it, and the so-called La Verendrye Stone. When the adults participating in my hobby got out of hand, I admitted that I had made all the items, and threw out my "collection."

> I left Manitou when I was 17 years old to join the Air Force, and didn't realize that some people still considered the items to be authentic. It is regretful that this has gone as far as you have indicated and I appreciate the opportunity to set the record straight.

- M.E. Rowe

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9. CASH OR THE CANADIAN WEST
HER MAJESTIES NORTH AMERICAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION

If all of North America had remained British territory, there would have been no boundary between Canada and the U.S.A. and consequently never any discussion where such a boundary should be located. That, of course, became impossibility during the American Revolution. Unfortunately, the Treaty of Paris signed in 1783 bringing that conflict to an end addressed the matter in a rather off hand manner by attempting to divide central North America on the basis of the watersheds of the Hudson's Bay and the Mississippi Rivers. Using a map drawn up in 1755 by John Mitchell, the authors of this treaty stipulated that the boundary was a line west from Isle Royal in Lake Superior to the most northerly point of the Lake of the Woods and then due west to the Mississippi River.

It was not long before the inaccuracy of Mitchell's map became evident. More careful surveys soon showed that the source of the Mississippi was not on the same parallel as Isle Royal, but some one hundred and fifty miles south at Lake Itasca in what is now northern Minnesota. Therefore it was only natural that in 1792 Britain suggested that the boundary west of the Lake of the Woods be adjusted south to the Mississippi. Understandably, American interests did not warmly welcome this suggestion and so the matter was left in limbo for another quarter century. In 1815 the Treaty of Ghent ending the War of 1812 left the concerns of both countries regarding the boundary unaddressed but in 1818 the matter was settled at the London Convention. This fixed the boundary as a line from the northwest corner of the Lake of the Woods due south to the 49th parallel and from there westward to the Rocky Mountains.

In one section of British territory this decision was received with considerable misgivings. In the Red River settlement located in the vicinity of present day Winnipeg there was a good deal of grumbling since it gave to the USA thousands of square miles of land that had been Hudson's Bay territory for almost one hundred and fifty years. In 1811 the Hudson's Bay Company had granted the southern watershed of Lake Manitoba to one of its principal directors, Lord Selkirk, a territory given the name Assiniboia. Much of this was south of the new boundary line. Nevertheless, after a short period of initial concern, the boundary question again faded into obscurity. Then, in the last half of the 1860s, it looked like the Canadian prairies might be seized by the Americans.

During the American Civil War Great Britain, although officially neutral, favoured the interests of the south because the Confederacy. The south supplied England with the thousands of tons of the raw cotton it needed to maintain its massive textile industry. Although direct intervention in favour of the south was out of the question, the English public and in particular the nation's moneyed interests provided assistance in two ways. One was by the purchase of Confederate bonds, securities purchased with great enthusiasm by British millionaires, particularly those with interests in the cotton industry. The other was by the building or outfitting of ships in British ports for use by the Confederacy. The most famous of these was the Alabama, built in Birkenhead, England and equipped in the Azores with guns from two British vessels. In twenty-two months it sailed 72,000 nautical miles and captured or ransomed more

than sixty Northern vessels.

During the war this vessel, and nine others, inflicted millions of dollars of losses to the Union. British assistance to the South had been a very sore point among Northern army officers and politician, so much so that upon the conclusion of the conflict, President Grant demanded restitution from Great Britain for these losses. Voices were raised in Washington demanding that if England refused to harken to these demands, the US would be justified in seizing British territory in the central plains as compensation. Railroads were being pushed into the western states with great vigour and the neighbouring British territories, almost without any inhabitants and certainly no military forces to defend them, could be annexed without too much difficulty.

Fortunately cool heads prevailed and on 8 May 1867 the two countries signed the Treaty of Washington settling the points of difference between them. Among its stipulations was a provision for the surveying of the Canada-US Boundary from the Lake of the Woods to the height of the Rocky Mountains (from this point west the 49th parallel already had been surveyed and marked in the early 1860s) and the marking of its location with iron posts. This monumental task was assigned to the International Boundary Commission. Since there had been several Indian uprisings in the northern states, it was judged prudent to carry on most of the work of the commission on the Canadian side of the line. A location on the west side of the Red River three miles north of the boundary was chosen as the site for the British headquarters of the commission. It received the name Dufferin after the current Governor-General, the son-in-law of Queen Victoria. Later generations gave it a name unknown to the Boundary Commission, "Fort Dufferin."

The British portion of this expedition, Her Majesties North American Boundary Commission, was much more than just a survey party. To a considerable extent it was also a scientific fact finding-mission designed to secure precise information about western Canada, especially its suitability for pioneer settlement. Therefore, in addition to the astronomers and surveyors needed to plot the 49th parallel with absolute accuracy and to map a belt from the border six miles north, it also included specialists instructed to prepare lists of all the animals, plants and minerals found and to collect representative specimens of each. The skins of larger animals were to be salted; smaller creatures preserved in alcohol. A special report was to examine all aspects of the Indian question, for "No subject is of more penetrating interest, or of more pressing importance...than the future of the Indians."

The British Boundary Commission arrived at Dufferin during the summer of 1872 and after freeze-up completed the survey of the 49th parallel from the Red River to the Lake of the Woods. At any other time of the year this would have been an impossible task because of the impenetrable expanses of swamps and muskeg and the clouds of murderous mosquitoes. The following year the Commission surveyed and staked out the boundary between the Red River and Roche Percee, in what is now southeastern Saskatchewan. In 1874, work was completed to the Rocky Mountains. Along the trail laid out as a supply route, storage depots were established at convenient points. Two main depots were located in the Southern Manitoba; the first at the foot of the Pembina Mountains and the second at the foot of the Turtle Mountains. The Turtle Mountain Depot, later known as Wakopa, soon became the centre of the surrounding pioneer settlement. Because traffic between the Commission's headquarters at Fort Dufferin and the various depots was continuous for two years, the trail became a well-defined road that could

boast of having the first bridges in southern Manitoba.

Although official reports document all aspects of this expedition, some of the most fascinating insights are to be found in a little book published in March 1894 by Mr. L.P. Hewgill, a former member of the commission then residing in Regina. He called his account *In the Days of Pioneering: Crossing the Plains in the Early 70's. the Prairie black with Buffalo* and writes:

The Boundary Commission was formed in 1872, and our commissioner, Major Cameron, built at Dufferin those substantial buildings, which are standing there today and largely used as quarantine quarters. They consist of a large house facing the Red River, used as headquarter offices, quarters for the men and their mess room. A large number of one-storey buildings were also built for the staff, having accommodations for about twelve, with mess room and kitchen, barracks for the company of Royal Engineers and quarters for the teamsters, axemen, etc., etc. A large quartermaster's store was also built, under the charge of the present Lieut.-Col. Herchmer, Commissioner N.W.M.P., and to these were added blacksmiths, carpenters, photographers, harness makers, wagon makers, and many other shops for the use of the commission.

A large farm was also established with Mr. Almond in charge, and here all that was necessary for our party was grown, both for horses and men. A canteen was also established with the very best of liquors brought directly from England, free of duty, for the use of staff and men, and where everything could be bought at the moderate rate of five cents a glass. Many luxuries were to be had, such as Crosse & Blackwell's potted meats and pickles, anchovies, etc., etc. Everything was sold at a price to pay running expenses, and what small profit was made went to improve our library, etc. Our food was of the very best, and the amount more than could be used, even when we were many hundreds of miles away from semi-civilization.

Such was the good management of our commissariat that a complaint in regards to the provisions was seldom, if ever, heard, and this may in great measure account for the very successful termination of the work, as it is a well known fact that a hard day's work is soon forgotten over a good dinner, and none are so apt to forget it as an Anglo Saxon. Everything in the way of clothing suitable for the work we were going into was provided and sold very cheaply. Every man was given a plug of T. & B. [pipe] tobacco weekly, and also three plugs of chewing [tobacco] if he required it. In winter a leather suit of clothing, with all the moccasins and mitts required, were served out to those going on a journey. In the matter of bedding we were most liberally provided, a large oil skin sheet, buffalo robe, two pair of four point Hudson's Bay blankets being served out to all. By this it will be easy to see that we might have hard times in store, yet those in authority had done all in their power to look after the comforts of one and all on the commission.

...The Commission, as already intimated, was formed in 1872; our Commissioner was Major Cameron, R.A., (now Major General Cameron, in command of the College at Kingston), four officers of the Royal Engineers, Major Anderson, Capt. Featherstonehaugh, Capt. Ward and Lieut. Galway, with these officers was a company of the same corps, but they wore no uniforms, and to all intents and purposes were civilians, as amongst them we had photographers, carpenters, astronomers, surveyors and many other trades. We had two Canadian surveyors, Col. Forrest and Mr. Alexander Russel, a brother of the late

Surveyor-General Lindsay Russel, a large number of young Canadians and Old Countrymen were on the staff of the respective parties and added to these were axemen, picketmen, teamsters, cooks, etc., the total being something under 300 men.

In 1873 the Commission, completing the work east, started from Fort Dufferin on the Red River, west and at the close of the summer they had established the boundary to a post in the Grand Couteaus of the Missouri, some few miles west of La Roche Perce. From here the Commission returned to Dufferin, their headquarters.

In 1873 we established depots at convenient points, if possible from forty to sixty miles apart and our transport wagons were continually on the road between these depots and headquarters so that our trail became a well-defined one. We drove our own herd of cattle till we arrived in buffalo country. It must also be remembered that the United States Commission consisted of some 250 civilians under Mr. Campbell, Commissioner, Major Twining and Lieut. Green, U. S. Engineers, two troops and five companies U. S. Infantry were on the same line, though doing every alternate tangent. The consequence was, though we were in close proximity, we did not see very much of them, except when travelling, when we generally used the same trail. The Commission was, I think, without doubt the best-organized and conducted expedition that ever went out in this country.

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10. THE NORTH WEST MOUNTED POLICE
From Moscow To Melbourne

Although the work of the International Boundary Commission was of incalculable international significance, it is little known outside of southern Manitoba and, to a lesser degree, southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. By contrast, the next travellers along this same route are a universally recognized symbol of Canada from Moscow to Melbourne. Dufferin was the first headquarters of the North West Mounted Police, today better known as "The Mounties," although their official name is the "Royal Canadian Mounted Police." Their journey through what is now the Southern Manitoba was the first 197-mile leg of a 941-mile journey to bring law and order to western Canada.

By September 1874 the British contingent of the International Boundary Commission had completed their work of surveyed and marked the forty-ninth parallel as the border between Canada and the United States. On their way back to Dufferin, where they were to be decommissioned, in the Sweetgrass Hills of southern Alberta they met a force of scarlet-coated riders. These were the newly formed North West Mounted Police on their way to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to bring law and order to the Canadian west.

The credited for first having advanced the suggestion for the formation of the first police force in western Canada may be given to a commission appointed by the first Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, Sir Adam Archibald. They concluded that an armed force of some kind was absolutely necessary to maintain law and order in this vast territory and to bring an end to the havoc being wrought among the Indians of the plains by the American whiskey traders. In May 1873 the Canadian parliament passed "An Act respecting the Administration of Justice and

for the Establishment of a Police force in the North West Territories." With a few months, one hundred and fifty men were recruited in eastern Canada and sent that fall to Lower Fort Garry where they spent the winter. The following spring another one hundred and fifty made their way to Fort Dufferin via Detroit, Chicago, St. Paul and the Red River.

On 8 July 1874 the long march along the Commission Trail began. Included in the expedition were 275 members of the North West Mounted Police, some 339 horses, 142 draught oxen, 83 cattle for slaughter, 114 Red River carts with 20 Metis drivers, 73 wagons, two nine pound muzzle loading field guns, two brass mortars, several mowing machines, as well as portable forges and field kitchens. The force spent fourteen days in marching through the length of the Southern Manitoba. In what is today Manitoba, their campsites were:

> July 8; on the south end of Lake Louise, northwest of Emerson;
> July 9; on the first bend of the Marais River west of Emerson;
> July 10; on the north side of the Gretna Golf Course;
> July 11; southwest of the village of Reinland;
> July 12; the Pembina Mountain Depot south of Morden;
> July 13; southwest of Darlingford;
> July 14; northwest of Purvis;
> July 15; on Badger Creek north of Cartwright;
> July 16; at the Turtle Mountain Depot southwest of Killarney;
> July 17; at the ford through Turtle Head Creek southwest of Deloraine;
> July 18 to 20; at the First Crossing of the Souris River south of Melita.

In January 1875, a few months after the completion of this march, Commissioner French recalled, *"All true Canadians may well feel proud...of such a march". It was, to again quote Commissioner French, truly an epic trek: "A Canadian force, hastily raised, armed and equipped and not under martial law, in a few months marched 2000 miles through a country for the most part as unknown as it proved bare of pasture and scanty in the supply of water."*

The Mounted Police Blue Book for 1874 contains a fascinating description of what the force looked like when they left Fort Dufferin.

> *...We camped the first night, after a twenty-mile march, on the Murray [Marais] River. On our first start we had, of course, the usual difficulties of balky horses and unruly oxen to contend with, but after a few days we had but little trouble in this respect. Our train was, I suppose, the largest ever seen in these parts; closed to a proper interval it was a mile and a half long, but from advance to rear guard it was more nearly four or five miles, owing to the uneven rate of the horses and oxen, and the breaking of wheels and axles of that imposition of the country, the Red River cart.*

> *The column of route presented a very fine appearance. First came "A" Division with their splendid dark bays and wagons. Then "B" with their dark browns. Next came "C" with their bright chestnuts drawing guns and small-arms ammunition. Next "D" with their greys, "E" with their black horses, the rear being brought up with "F" with their little bays. Then a motley string of ox carts, ox wagons, cattle for slaughter, cows, calves, mowing machines, etc., etc. To a stranger it would have appeared an astonishing cavalcade - armed men and guns looked as if fighting was to be done. But what could plows, harrows, mowing machines,*

cows, calves, etc., be for?

But that little force had a double duty to perform - to fight if necessary, but in any case to establish posts in the west. However, we were off at last, the only man in Winnipeg who knew anything about that portion of the country to which we were going, encouraged me with the remark, "Well, if you have any luck you may be back by Christmas, with forty percent of your horses." By the time the force left Dufferin the comparatively large number of thirty-one men were absent without leave, the Sioux murders of St. Joe, thirty miles to the west, having the effect of quickening the movement in several respects. I anticipated the backing out of a certain number, and fortunately brought twenty spare men, so that the force would not be shorthanded as some suppose.

A cairn two miles north of the Emerson customs office along old Highway #75 commemorates this departure from Fort Dufferin of the force which has since become an internationally known Canadian symbol. Its inscription reads:

NORTH WEST MOUNTED POLICE

On the 8th of July, 1874 the newly formed North West Mounted Police consisting of 300 officers and men, having assembled at the Dufferin barracks, headquarters of the Boundary Commission, left to its assignments to various posts in the North West Territories. The record of this distinctly Canadian Force in policing the plains is a source of pride to the people of Canada.

Rather strangely, this handsome cairn gives no indication that a few hundred yards to the east along the west bank of the Red River three decaying frame buildings date back to 1874. Two are stables once used to house the mounts of the original NWMP; the third was last used as an farmhouse but originally it was "a large house facing the Red River, used as headquarter offices" by Commissioner Cameron and then as Commissioner French's residence. In addition to being some of the oldest structures in southern Manitoba, these buildings are also tangible reminders of this "astonishing cavalcade" that made its way along the Commission Trail during the summer of 1874. In a very real sense, this is the birthplace of the Mounties, after Macdonald's golden arches, the most recognized symbol in the world.

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11. The West Mennonite Reserve
Over The Stove To The Baby

The same month that the North West Mounted Police marched west, the first Mennonites, Anabaptists from southern Russia with their roots in East Prussia and, originally, Holland, arrived in Winnipeg. They first settled on land reserved for them east of the Red River, but here soon discovered that much of the soil was too poor to make a decent living. The following year, 1875, they began moving west across the Red River. By 1880 the exodus had assumed major proportions with many East Reserve residents dismantling their homes and barns, hauling the lumber to the nearest railway station (usually Niverville) to be forwarded by rail to Emerson. From here they carted their disassembled buildings west onto the prairies of the Red River Valley.

In 1876 the Mennonites were allotted seventeen townships west of the Red River, land that became known as the West or Boundary Reserve. During spring evenings of 1876 the Anglo-Saxon settlers of the Pembina Mountain, looking out to the east, could see the twinkling fires in dozens of Mennonite camps. Initially these Russian German settlers bought what they needed and sold what they could at the Hudson's Bay post at West Lynne. However as Emerson, directly across the river from West Lynne, grew in importance, and particularly after it secured a railroad connection with the United States, this became the centre of business for the Mennonite settlers of the West Reserve.

Within two years, the West Mennonite Reserve was dotted with picturesque villages bearing some of the most poetic place names in the province: Kronsthal –   "Valley of the King," Schoenweise – "Beautiful Meadow," Reinland – "Pure Land," Osterwick – "Easter Vetch," Blumengart –   "Garden of Flowers," Rosenfeld –   "Field of Roses," Gnadenthal – "Valley of Grace" and Kronsgart – "Garden of the King." Because these Mennonites brought with them farming skills developed on the treeless steppes of the southern portion of Ukraine, they quickly transformed the Red River Valley into some of the most productive farmland in the province. Roads linked the various "colonies" with each other and a single main road east and west across the Reserve followed the general route of the Boundary Commission and the North West Mounted Police. The efficient Mennonite authorities soon had this road marked with tall posts along its entire length from the Pembina Escarpment to the Red River. When windblown snow could eradicate tracks in a matter of minutes, these prevented winter travellers from losing their way. Although this route was likely named in honour of the road through the main Mennonite settlements of Russia, the route in which the *Post* that is the "mail" came to each colony, the present tradition states that it was from the posts that marked the route that it received its name - the "Post Road."

The Post Road became the eastern section of the Boundary Commission Trail when the settlers of southern Manitoba travelled back and forth between their new homes and Emerson, their closest centre of civilization. As settlers streamed into southern Manitoba via the Post Road and the Commission Trail, vast numbers of these weary travellers were more than happy to accept the hospitality offered by the Mennonites of the various villages along the first leg of their journey. For their part, the thrifty Mennonites were happy to get the cash that came their way from these guests.

By our standards rates were modest. Some homes charged as little as five cents per person for a place to sleep and something to eat in the morning. Others chose *iene slup* - literally "a sleep"- at a group rate, sixty cents for the whole family with stabling and feed for the horses or oxen included. To place these prices in their historic perspective, it may be helpful to recall that during this same period, a man could earn as much as 50 cents a day sawing logs by hand into lumber.

Accommodations were not luxurious. The sleeping quarters were generally the main room of the house; beds were often a layer of hay or straw scattered on the floor on which the house guest laid whatever bedding he or she preferred or had available. After leaving Emerson or West Lynne the colony of Edenburg was a favourite stopping place for travellers, who found it a convenient point to spend their first night on the trail. It was twelve miles from the Red River and thus acquired the nickname the "Twelve Mile Village". When heavy rains turned the Post

Road into a series of swampy ruts, this first twelve miles might require eighteen hours to cover. In the 1920's a former resident of the Twelve Mile Village wrote of her experiences as a young married woman in Edenburg in the early 1880s:

> *"Some nights our rooms were so full that we could not step out of bed without stepping on a sleeping traveller, and if I wanted to tend the baby, I had to step over the stove to reach the crib. The place was constantly astir with someone brewing "prips" (coffee) or someone arriving or another traveller preparing to leave."*

PART II
FROM EAST TO WEST

1. Emerson - House Brand Cigars and a University

2. West Lynne - Meeting on a Historic Site or A Forged Proclamation in a Blizzard

3. Brown's Grand Central Hotel – Pretty Steep at $2.00 a Day or Champagne at $5.00 a Bottle

4. Stodderville - At the Foot of Allard's Point or The Archbishop's Uncles

5. Mountain City - The Last Spike or The County Town of Hamilton County

6. Alexandria - On the Banks of the Great River Euphrates or In his Loneliness in the City of Alexandria

7. Calf Mountain Hotel - Of Modern Architecture with Something of a Rustic Appearance

8. Calf Mountain - What's in a Name? or All Roads lead to...a very Curious Hill

9. Darlingford – Confusing Complexities of Nomenclature or A Mine of Happiness in a Dug-Out

10. Pembina Crossing - So Near, and Yet, So Far or Lots of Singing every Night

11. Ruttanville - W. D. Ruttan or Service without Delusions

12. Treble's Halfway House - A Doorstop with a History

13. Crystal City - A City Large in the Determination of its Inhabitants

14. Clearwater - The Long River Depot or Outrivalling even the ambitious Brandon

15. Cartwright - Perpetuating the Fame of the Great Mixer and Muddler

16. Pancake Lake - Supper Along the Trail or Six Men in a Bed (With a Chair on the Cookstove)

17. Wakopa - The Turtle Mountain Depot or The White Father First Along the Trail

18. Desford - A Dominion Land Office in a Tent

19. Wassewa - So Let Your Light Shine before Men

20. Whitewater - The Boiler Trail or The Detour around Skull Swamp

21. The Turtle Mountain Land Office - Turtle Mountain Fever or A Two-Day Wait

22. Deloraine - A Barrel of Pork, A Barrel of Flour and a Hair's Breadth from a Scalping Party

23. Montefiore - Northern Italy in Southern Manitoba or The Lord Mayor of London?

24. Sourisford - The Best Laid Plans o' Mice and Men or The Director of the Bank of Glasgow

25. Butterfield - Thirty-eight Days and Seven Gothic Arches

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1. EMERSON
1-1-2E
House Brand Cigars and a University

Emerson, Manitoba, the Gateway City, bears the name of Ralph Waldo Emerson, (1803-1882) the American poet, lecturer and essayist, and leader of the group of New England idealists known as the Transcendentalists. In his famous 1837 address at Harvard entitled "The American Scholar" he stated that the independent scholar must not only interpreted the culture of his day in his writings, but must actually lead it. The Americans who established Emerson, although anything but scholars, as men of action, were unquestionably followers of his example or, to use the jargon of the 1990s, "the movers and shakers" of their generation.

In its hay day, Emerson was a place of unlimited optimism – there was, it seemed, almost nothing the town fathers were not willing to undertake. Turning to the 27 January 1881 edition of the *Emerson International* we find a typical example of the daring-do of Emersonites of that era. From that journal we learn that the establishment of a university was under consideration in connection with the local Methodist Episcopal Church. Discussions such as these in the town of approximately the size and population of present day Killarney (i.e. about 2,000) tell us volumes about what kind of community spirit existed in the first townsite along the Commission Trail. Emerson was also the home of a corp of prominent citizens who would go to almost any lengths and expense to promote their hometown. Again we turn to the *International*, its edition of 14 October 1882, which informs patrons of the Emerson House Hotel that they now would be able to enjoy the finest Obscuro cigars *especially* manufactured for them in London, England. Where any still in existence, these cigar boxes would make a splendid memento of Emerson's golden age for each one featured a picture of this widely reputed hotel on its lid.

Emerson's nativity was unique. In the spring of 1873 two American business men from Wisconsin wrote to Manitoba's Lieutenant-Governor Adams G. Archibald inquiring about the possibility of securing land for the establishment of an American settlement in Manitoba. His Excellence was interested, responded, and in August Thomas Carney and Wm. Fairbanks again wrote, this time asking for a colonization grant of four townships and six hundred and forty acres of land for a townsite. Messrs. Carney and Fairbanks were not the sole originators of this scheme. Among their wide and influential circle of acquaintances was the American railroad legend, Mr. James J. Hill. Born in Ontario, in 1856 at the age of sixteen he had gone to St. Paul, Minnesota, and a dozen years later organized the Red River Transportation Company. In the early 1870s, his company was laying the first rails for the line that was eventually to become the massive Great

Northern Railway. It was "Big" Jim Hill's intention to extend this line northward along the east side of the Red River right into the heart of Manitoba. Therefore it was natural for this Canadian-born "Empire Builder" to draw the attention of his two friends to the future economic advantages of securing land along the path he had chosen for his railroad into western Canada. At least for Mr. Carney, the suggestion considerably alterred his plans. Prior to this it was the intention of this Civil War veteran and Indian fighter to do some exploring in the western states instead of getting involved in Manitoba real estate speculations.

The American colony the two Wisconsin gentleman attempted to establish never got off the ground and even the town they laid out made a very slow start. In 1876 it was not even a place of sufficient significance to merit a mention on James Cleland Hamilton's famous map of Manitoba. By the beginning of January two years later it still did not have its own post office; the few hundred residents had to get their letters and journals across the river at the old Hudson's Bay post at West Lynne. But the boom was just about ready to burst forth. The land rush to the Pembina Mountain and the Rock Lake country was underway and in May 1878 the Dominion Government opened a land office in Emerson under the management of Mr. George Newcombe. In the first month claims to 105,000 acres were filed and during business hours on 1 June 1878 6,000 acres were registered as homesteads and pre-emptions!

Henderson's Directory for 1878-1879 describes the town and lists its pioneer residents thus:

EMERSON

The town of Emerson, situated on the east side of the Red River, is a very promising place. The streets are well laid out, and the lots of a good size. Several churches, stores, hotels, shops, &c., are already established, and the place has become the commercial centre of the surrounding country. The Pembina Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway will have its terminus here. The Dominion Lands department has a branch here. Has no post office yet, the nearest being West Lynne, on the west side of Red River. Mail Daily.

Allan, George G., carpenter
Almon, Cotton M., real estate agent, res. Dufferin
ASHDOWN, J.H., of J.H. Ashdown & Co., res. Winnipeg
ASHDOWN, J. H., & CO., dealers in hardware, agricultural implements, &c.
Benson, J.A., storekeeper
BRADLEY, F.T., sub-collector of customs, office, West Lynne
Broder, Thos., baker
Carmichael, Hugh, carpenter
Carmichael, John, blacksmith
CLARKE & McCLURE, lumber dealers, head office, Winnipeg
CLARKE, N.P., of Clarke and McLure, res. St. Cloud, Minn.
Cooper, John A., carpenter
Copland, John, carpenter
DOMINION LANDS OFFICE BRANCH, George Newcombe, agent
Duesing, Louis, tailor
Evans, David, tailor
Fairbanks, W.N., gentleman
Fawcett, T.G., farmer
Galloway, G., cabinetmaker

Gibson, John, farmer
Hamilton, William D., plasterer
Hutchison, William P., hotelkeeper
Jasper, Theodore, tailor
JUKES, REV. M., Church of England
KILLER, CASPER, of J.H. Ashdown & Co.
Lewis, H.F., postmaster of West Lynne
Lucas, John, shoemaker
Lucas, William, farmer
Martin, William, hotelkeeper
Mortiman, Sidney, tailor
McLure, M., of Clarke & McLure, res. St. Cloud, Minn.
McCrea, Kenneth, blacksmith
McDonald, Robert, farmer
McDonald, William, farmer
Nash, W. Hill, barrister &c.
NEWCOMBE, GEO., Dominion Lands agt.
Parker, George, storekeeper
Perry, Charles, butcher
SCOTT, REV. JOHN, Presbyterian church
Walton, Perry, farmer
WINKLER, ENOCH, assistant immigration agent
Young, A.M., farmer

The last half of 1878 was a momentous six months for Emerson. In November the Emerson post office was finally opened and by October the station grounds were being laid out. Strangers, according to the *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, expressed surprize at their magnitude; they were a half-mile long and three hundred feet wide. On 11 November the sound of a steam locomotive whistle was heard in Manitoba for the first time – the railroad had arrived in the keystone province. Via Emerson and St. Paul the Commission Trail now had a railroad link with the outside world and with the ready availability of goods brought in by rail, Emerson became the trading centre for an area stretching as far to the west as settlement extended.

The following month brought another historic development, the establishment of the *Emerson International* newspaper, the first outside of the city of Winnipeg and one serving the entire Emerson trading area. Thus its columns featured news from as far west as the Turtle Mountain and even beyond to the first crossing of the Souris River. In addition to being the strongest voice for the Conservative cause in southern Manitoba, the *International* also constantly promoted its native city and by New Years Day 1879 it could describe Emerson in this synopsis:

Dominion Government Land Office
Post office, telegraph office, express office
Brick yard
Steam gristmill
2 weekly newspapers
Library Association with its own building
Military Company (infantry)
Brass Band

Lodges of Masons, Good Templars, Orangemen, Foresters
Numerous stores with large stock of goods
Many substantial dwelling houses
Several lumber yards
Blacksmith shops, wagon and carriage shops
Furniture shops
Three large hotels and several private boarding houses
Lawyers, doctors, dentist

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2. WEST LYNNE
2-1-2E - Montcalm Municipality
Meeting on a Historic Site or A Forged Proclamation in a Blizzard

On 21 January 1989 the fourth meeting of the Boundary Commission North West Mounted Police Association was called to order in Emerson's Maple Leaf Restaurant. Situated along Highway #75 just northeast of the Canadian customs on the border crossing, a meeting on this site in 1880 would have taken place within the walls of one of southern Manitoba's most important historic sites, the North Pembina Hudson's Bay post. It was situated at a very important cross road for it was here that the Post Road intersected the Pembina Trail linking Fort Garry and St. Paul on the Mississippi River.

The earliest Hudson's Bay post in this vicinity was established in the first years of the nineteenth century at the junction of the Red and Pembina Rivers. It was the hope of the officials of the company that a post here would draw a portion of the fur trade away from the nearby North West Fur Company establishments. In 1822, three years after the London convention establishing the 49th parallel as the boundary between U. S. and British territory, the last of these Hudson's Bay forts on their original location was abandoned. Surveys of the boundary proved that these posts had been almost two miles within American territory.

The next post, known as North Pembina, was built on land then judged to be north of the boundary. About 1850, after early surveys indicated that it too was in Dakota Territory, this post was replaced by another a few hundred yards to the northwest. For more than twenty years it was also called North Pembina, but in the mid 1870s West Lynne became the more frequently used name. The importance of the post here as a fur trading centre was soon replaced by the role it began to play as a stopping point on the trade route between Red River, some sixty miles to the north, and Minneapolis-St. Paul, three hundred and fifty miles to the south. The earliest trade was overland but in the spring of 1859 steamboats began supplanting oxen. The first riverboat, the *Anson Northup,* named for its owner, made the trip down the Red from the mouth of the Cheyenne River near Fargo to Upper Fort Garry. As the steam boat era continued firewood became more in demand than furs at the Hudson's Bay North Pembina fort and logs for the boilers of the flat-bottomed boats plying the Red River of the North became the main item of commerce at this post.

This fort was the setting for an incident that could very well be made into a western Canadian drama, perhaps even an opera, a comic opera. It was 1869; the year the control of the Hudson's Bay territory of Ruperts Land, that is virtually all of western Canada, was to be transferred from

the Hudson's Bay Company to the two-year-old Dominion of Canada. In anticipation of this transfer, Sir John A. Macdonald had designated one of his most faithful supporters as the first Lieutenant Governor of this vast territory. The Prime Minister had selected his Minister of Public Works, Wm. McDougall, for this honour. The inhabitants of Ruperts Land, including even the officials of the company residing here, had been given no say whatsoever in any of the negotiation. They were even more dissatisfied with the treatment they were receiving from Ottawa when they learned that a disreputable party hack had been appointed their governor. They suspected his intentions would be to make western Canada a colony of Ontario as quickly as possible.

On the last day of October, a full month before the transfer of authority was scheduled to take place, McDougall attempted to enter Red River in order to take possession of his territory. His reputation had arrived before he did and just south of St. Norbert the over anxious governor-elect was met by a group of Red River settlers who gently invited him to go back home. He went back as far as Pembina, Dakota. Here, a month later he forged a proclamation and, fraudulently giving it the authority of Queen Victoria, announced his ascension to the office of governor of the Northwest Territories. Such a momentous announcement, he felt, could not properly be made on American soil and so with six companions and two dogs he set out in a blizzard north from Pembina to the abandoned Hudson's Bay Fort across the boundary.

Here, in the centre of the deserted courtyard, in the words of an American newspaper, "shivering like a group of frightened puppies," the drama unfolded:

McDougall fumbled with his heavy overcoat, found a Dominion flag, handed it to an aide. The latter held it with some difficulty for the gale tugged at it incessantly and whipped it across his stinging face. McDougall stepped into the center of the circle, wrestled again with his coat and drew out a sheet of parchment. A man stepped forward with a lantern and others moved in to shield their chief from the icy wind. The parchment scroll was hard to hold through big fur mittens and in spite of them McDougall's hands shook with cold. He fumbled the sheet, lost his place, reread, but somehow the "eloquent young man" got through it, shouting his forged proclamation to the wind. A little to the rear, out of the direct line of his vision, stood the saturnine Alexander Begg, who had come along just for the h--- of it, the only one of the company who knew how to be comfortable in a blizzard. While the ceremony proceeded, he sucked on a bottle of Scotch. McDougall rolled up his parchment, put away the flags, called the dogs. The men scrambled back in the carriages and rode solemnly home. Before they were back in Pembina the wind and snow had effaced their tracks in Ruperts Land.

The entire performance was a farce - disgraced both in Ottawa and in the Canadian Northwest, McDougall, as invited by the people of Red River, did return home. A Metis balladeer put the fiasco to music. He had come to seize a throne and now returned from whence he had come, his only throne, a seat in a privy!
Strange Empire, (Joseph Howard, 1952) page 142

In October 1871 the post was attacked by a small group of Fenians, the popular name for the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a secret organization established in Ireland in 1858 for the purpose of overthrowing British rule of the Emerald Isle and to replace it with republican self-government. In Manitoba, led by that "idiotic Irishman, obnoxious O'Neill," they succeeded

in capturing and holding the fort for a short while before the U.S. cavalry and the Fort Garry militia retook it. After this episode British sovereignty over the post was forcefully emphasized by the placement here of a Canadian government official, a customs officer, Mr. F.T. Bradley. The original site of his customs house, the first in western Canada, was a few yards north of the main building of the post. Today it still stands a few hundred yards from this site.

By 1872 this customs house acquired additional importance when it became the first telegraph, express and post office in that part of the province. Mr. Bradley was in charge of these additional duties and, in an unofficial capacity, also served as "colonization agent and advisor to newly arrived settlers." Then, in the late 1870s, noting the rapid development of Emerson just opposite across the river, Hudson's Bay officials decided to develop their lands in the vicinity of the post. On 25 July 1879 a town site twenty-four blocks long and three and a half blocks wide was laid out on upwards of two hundred acres and registered under the name of West Lynne. The streets running north and south were numbered, the main avenues east and west were named International, Brydges, Goschen and Dallas.

By December 1879 the new town already had three stores, a hotel, several large granaries and a number of private residences. The old HBC post was still standing but was to be razed as soon as the new brick store being built to replace it was completed. In April 1880 the historic structure was demolished. The highest bidders for its purchase were the Mennonites of the West Reserve who had offered a trifle over $500 for the building. According to the conditions of the sale, it had to be removed in ten days. Taken apart and hauled west along the Commission Trail, the material was reused by the Mennonites. That same month, the *International* reported that Mr. J.S. Dennis, Jr., a son of Col. Dennis, Surveyor General of Canada, intended to build a large hotel in West Lynne. This was just one of some eighty buildings erected that year in the town at a cost of some $75,000.

Two years later West Lynne was incorporated as a town and the members of the first council elected were J.F. Tennant (Mayor), E. Depencier, Mr. Lewin, W.B. Robinson, J.E. Tetu, Wm. Mills and Harry Wexelbaum. In July of the following year, West Lynne became part of the town of Emerson only to become independent again three years later. It was once again reunited with Emerson in 1889 and although the name West Lynne still appears on a few maps, it is still part of the five thousand acres officially constituting the Emerson town property.

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3. BROWN'S GRAND CENTRAL HOTEL
11-1-3W, Rhineland Municipality
Pretty Steep at $2.00 a Day or Champagne at $5.00 a Bottle

In an article included in *Corner Stones of Empire*, Pilot Mount pioneer, Mrs. George Farquaharson, recalled a December 1880 trip through the West Mennonite Reserve. In it she mentions "a Canadian" who "kept a stopping place for the accommodation of travellers." Unfortunately, she does not provide us with his name nor does any other account we are familiar with. However, his successor left a much more indelible mark upon southern Manitoba history. A pioneer of the Clearwater district recalled the following in this same volume:
The return trip to Emerson would take a week, and any time spent in Emerson would be over

and above that. Later on there was a good hotel set up 25 miles from Emerson which was called "Brown's."   This was a good house and at that time considered pretty steep at $2 a day.

According to the *Emerson International* of March 1881, "The Grand Central Hotel in the Mennonite Reserve is now under the management of Mr. Brown, late of Winnipeg."   Mr. Billy Brown soon acquired a wide reputation for the quality of his hospitality. A traveller who stopped here in June of that year noted that it was twenty-five miles from West Lynne and here "parties travelling the road will find it a good stopping place, cleanly and well kept, and will receive all attention for either man or beast."

Located on 11-1-3W, a school section purchased by Mr. Brown in 1888, his hotel was in great favour among the more affluent traveller's along the trail who did not care to partake of the hospitality offered in the Mennonite homes. They long remembered "Brown's Inn." Among these was a Mr. Robert Pugh, in the early 1880s a resident of Mountain City where he was a partner with the Nelson Brothers in the management of their mill. His recollections of the Grand Central Hotel are recorded in the souvenir program of the 1931 *Re-Union of Old-Timers and Ex-Students of Morden*:

About halfway between Mountain City and Emerson "Billy" Brown squatted on a school section in the Mennonite Reserve – much to the disgust of the Mennonites – and put up a good, large house, commodious barns and granaries and farmed extensively. He had been a hotel man all his life in Ontario and Manitoba, and in Winnipeg, it was stated, he ran the Davis House for a while. He continued his hotel, keeping on the school section, accommodated travellers with meals and beds, and shelter and fodder for horses and oxen. He also furnished all kinds of beverages, alcoholic and non-alcoholic to the thirsty, for he had a regular license to dispense spirituous and malt liquors and had a well-equipped bar and a typical bartender. His place was known as "Brown's Half Way House," and was a great boon to the weary and often storm-battered travellers, especially in the wintertime when a blizzard was not uncommon. Billy was almost an exact replica of the pictures of Santa Claus so widely displayed at Christmas time, and his stature was about the same as given to the artist of the children's saint. His legs were short, and always encased in top boots reaching almost to the knee; he generally wore a red vest as a sartorial decoration; his waistline was capacious, and his hair and long beard were white. He was a great host, and the travellers putting up with him for the night, and especially the youthful ones, enjoyed him immensely. The "boys" sometimes got hilarious and reckless, and ordered champagne at five dollars a quart. Then it was a sight for the gods to see Billy ascending from the depths of the cellar, and holding in his hands before him, as if he were performing a solemn and sacred rite, a cobwebby, dust-encrusted bottle, which one of the unsanctified, with brutal frankness, was heard to declare was nothing more or less than gooseberry wine.

He must have been wealthy for at one time he held two years crop of grain, and obstinately refused to sell his wheat under a dollar a bushel. He resembled the rich man in the parable described in Luke, Chapter 12, verses 17 and 18, who had no more room in which to bestow his fruits, though Billy did not pull down his barns like the rich man, but built additional granaries and it is believed eventually had to take a price far less than that originally demanded. After several years' negotiations with the government, he was allowed to purchase the school section and after his death his heirs sold it to sixteen Mennonites who divided it among themselves in forty acres each.

The large vestige of Mr. Brown's remarkable enterprize in the heart of the Mennonite Reserve was his large barn, a structure that remained on its original site until 1974.

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4. **STODDERVILLE**
10-2-5W, Stanley Municipality
At the Foot of Allard's Point or The Archbishop's Uncles

For the most part, the earliest settlers of the Pembina Mountain country established themselves in well-sheltered locations at the foot of the escarpment. Many of them chose homesteads through which flowed the streams draining this upland and many of southern Manitoba's first communities were located on these little rivers and creeks. In the north the town of Carman was founded on the Boyne River, Miami is on Tobacco Creek, Nelsonville was established on Silver Creek and Dead Horse Creek still flows through the western suburbs of Morden. Most of the pioneers who settled on the Boyne and Tobacco Creek came in via the Missouri Trail from Winnipeg; the majority of the settlers from Dead Horse Creek south came in from West Lynne or Emerson via the Commission Trail.

Township 2-5W can boast of having hosted the first settlement in the vicinity of the Commission Trail. Walter and David Beatty, who had surveyed it during the second and third weeks of August 1872, had been impressed by "a belt of very fine oak, say 30 chains in width (i.e. 4950 feet) through the southern tier of townships in which are laid out 26 wood lots."   It was within this southern tier of townships that Mr. Nelson Bedford filed for a homestead on 6 July, 1874, two days before the NWMP set out from Fort Dufferin along the Commission Trail. Mr. Bedford, a native of Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England, had originally settled with his parents in Huron County, Ontario, near Goderich. He located his buildings at the foot of a prominent landmark, Allard's Point, known as far back as the days of Alexander Henry Jr. as one of the finest lookout point along the Pembina Escarpment.

Just to the south of Allard's Point, the Plum River flows down out of the Pembina Mountains. Mr. Bedford located his farm buildings just north of this stream directly along the St. Joe Trail linking the future site of Mountain City and St. Joe, now Walhalla, North Dakota. On his abandoned yard site one may still see the ruined foundation of one of the largest barns ever built in southern Manitoba. Some one hundred and twenty feet long and sixty feet wide, it provided stabling for some two hundred head of stock until it burned in the early 1920s. His younger brother, Francis Bedford, followed him to the Pembina Mountain country two years later and selected the farm just north of his brother's homestead, today the Roy Friesen farm. On the prairies some three miles east of Allard's Point, the Plum River joined another little stream we today know as Glencross Creek but occasionally referred to in pioneer records as "Calamity Creek."

Two miles from the Bedfords' homesteads, the Commission Trail crossed Calamity Creek and here former citizens of the Emerald Isle established themselves in sufficient numbers to justify the district becoming known as "an Irish settlement." They gave Calamity Creek the beautiful and appropriate Irish name, the River Liffey, after the stream that flows through the county and city of Dublin. Township 2-5W, Stodderville Township, took its name from the various members of the Stodder family who settled here, particularly the brothers John and James Stodder, pioneers of June 1875 and natives of Antrim County, Ireland. Mr. Alex Johnston, another Irishman, took up land that same year. James Wilson, Joseph Johnston, Hugh Hassard (or Hazzard) and Hugh

David Stodders secured their land in 1877.

Mr. John Stodders made his home available as accommodations for travellers along the trail. It soon became a well-known stopping house and in 1878 the Stodderville post office was open in his home and he became the first postmaster. It was also in 1878 that the settlement also acquired another notable settler in the person of Mr. Wm. Winram, a mechanical engineer originally from England, but previous to his coming to Pembina Mountain, a prominent farmer and successful businessman of Simcoe County's village of Stayner. He was accompanied by his eldest son, Jim Winram and the following March, Mrs. Winram and the six other children of the family arrived at Stodderville. The Winrams, although of Scottish rather than Irish ancestry, were, like most of their neighbours, staunch members of the Church of England and fitted into the new community very well. So well, in fact, that in December of 1879 Mr. Winram was elected by acclamation to the Manitoba legislature for the newly established constituency of South Dufferin where he was a supporter of Premier Norquay. When he passed away in 1891 he was the Speaker of the House and was a resident of Pembina Crossing.

In July of that same year, Mr. Winram and Mr. John Stodder, in concert, with their neighbours, Messrs. Johnston, Wilson and Hazzard, made strenuous efforts to induce the Nelson Brothers of Nelsonville to move their mill from Silver Creek to their own Calamity Creek. They were not successful and when the Nelson brothers relocated, it was to Mountain City rather than Stodderville. In compensation the little community went into the hospitality industry and by 1880 stopping house facilities in Stodderville included not just Stodder's, but also Johnston's and Hazzard's. All were recommended as accommodations forty-five miles from Emerson.

Stodderville post office remained open until the fourth decade of this century, but by then the Irish, English-speaking settlement had long since disappeared as the farms of the original settlers, one by one, were acquired by their Mennonites immediately to the east. The Stodder family dispersed to various parts of western Canada with perhaps their most notable memorial in the district being the finest Queen Anne home in Morden, the former Mary Currie residence on the corner of Highway #3 and Nelson Street. This lovely towered structure was originally built for Mr. David Stodders. Daniel Bell Stodders, a younger brother of John and James Stodder (various members of the family spelled their name differently; Stodder, Stodders, Stoddert, or Studdert) became a pioneer of the Clearwater district. After proving up his homestead he entered the ministry of the Anglican Church and later returned to serve his former neighbours at Clearwater as their priest. His grandson is His Eminence, the Rev. Walter Heath Jones, ninth Archbishop of Ruperts Land.

We shall conclude this article with two excepts from the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* of 1878. The first is of significance since it records the formation of the first agricultural society in this section of southern Manitoba. The second, a reprint from a well-known Methodist paper, is an example of the type of articles that sparked the interest of Ontario residents and induced them to consider relocating to Manitoba.

New Agricultural Society

From a Correspondent

A meeting was held on the 16th instant at the residence of Mr. John Thompson of tp. 2, range 5 West, in order to take steps towards organizing an agricultural society in the east riding of the county of Marquette. Mr. John Stoddard officiated as chairman and Mr. H.P. Bonny as

secretary.

It was moved by Mr. John Thompson, seconded by Alex Johnson, that Mr. Peter Campbell, of the Boyne settlement, be president for the ensuing year. Mr. John Stoddards was elected vice-president; Mr. R.C. Bradshaw, secretary; and Mr. H.P. Bonny, treasurer.

After the election of the following gentlemen as directors, the meeting adjourned: John Graham, of the Boyne; Joseph Johnston, of the Boyne; John Stevenson, Tobacco Creek; George Leary, Belmont; - Montgomery, Belmont; J.R. Bonny, Pembina Mountain; W. Stevens, do; John Thompson, do; Oram Pickle, do; A. Buchanan, do; A. Morden, Sr., do; Alex Johnson, do. The first meeting of the Directors is to be on Feb. 13 at 11 a.m.

- 6 February 1878

Pembina Mountain
A correspondent of the *Christian Guardian* writes as follows:

As the Pembina Mountain is just now the centre of so much attraction, and as there will be many thousands turning their faces towards the "Great Lone Land," this season, we thought a line would not only be of interest but of decided profit to intending emigrants.

We certainly live in the "Land of Promise," for, in respect of beauty of scenery, richness of timber, fertility of soil, purity and abundance of water, its equal cannot be found in Manitoba. Intending settlers, who design visiting this section before locating, would do well to take their tickets to Emerson or West Lynne instead of the great metropolis. Deep ravines cut the mountain and act as natural drains for the land. Beautiful groves adorn the sides, and clothe the rugged hills with verdure. Poplar, oak, and other wood abound. Prairie of the richest quality can be procured for a trifle. Looking from the edge of the mountain, the level plain studded with groups of trees recalls to the mind the scenes of England or Scotland, and bear close resemblance to the hunting parks. The gently babbling brook sings its sweet, ever-changing song, remind the footsore traveller that God has not forgotten to provide for the wants of his creatures. The sparkling rill, where many a proud elk quenches his thirst, allays the burning fever. The warbling songster wakens with life the silent grove, and the evening zephyr plays upon the forest harp.

The modest violet blooms in unblushing ease, and the Divine hand paints the lovely landscape. Even the raging tempest adds to the grandeur of the majestic scene, and clothes the bending shrubbery with a glistening coat of sparkling gems. Words fail, and the pen is inadequate, to do remote justice to this section of the Province. A richer section than that spreading from Boyne southward could scarcely be conceived. Emigrants would do well to start as early as possible that a location may be selected, and a large amount of land prepared for the coming season. If an individual arrives here by the 15th of May, and secures a homestead as early as the 1st of June, 30 acres can be prepared for crop and sown the following year. How much less the settler has to contend with here than did our pioneers in Ontario, where heavy trees must be felled, stumps uprooted before the plough could enter the soil!   We have other objects of interest besides Nature's stately temples."   -   24 April 1878

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5. MOUNTAIN CITY
24-2-6w, Stanley Municipality
The Last Spike or The County Town of Hamilton County

In the mid 1880s, to the unspeakable disappointment of many eager land speculators and avid townsite promoters, the Dominion post office department adopted a new policy for the naming of western Canadian post offices. They decided to refuse consideration of any proposed names that included, as part of the name, the designation "city." For the residents of Manitoba this must have come as something of a shock. Why? Because, during the last years of the 1870s and the first years of the 1880s, when the most popular choice for any new townsite was some sort of "city," our province had become more densely populated with them than any other part of Canada. It was during this period that more than a half dozen "embryo metropolises" were founded; Carman City, Dominion City, Rapid City, Rock Lake City, Darlingford City, and Crystal City. Even Greek variations were attempts, for example *Souriapolis* for "Souris City."

Aware of the value of an optimistic and ambitious-sounding name, most of these names originated in the minds of the enthusiastic promoters and proud owners of these locations. One promoter, Mr. Frederick Thomas Bradley, was the proprietor of two such southern Manitoba cities, Mountain City and Rock Lake City. Although by February 1880 property in Rock Lake City was being sold as far away as Toronto, its development never got much beyond the disposal of a few lots. Mountain City, on the other hand, became the most important townsite along the Commission Trail. For some five years, its founder (and residents) had every reason to be optimistic for its future.

Mountain City was the product of the entrepreneurial foresight of one of southern Manitoba's first public officials and earliest permanent residents. Mr. Bradley was a native of Ontario, the son of Captain Clements Bradley of Ottawa where F.T. Bradley was born in 1845. In 1870 he married and the following year came to Manitoba where he received the appointment of the first collector of customs in western Canada in an office was situated on the grounds of Fort Dufferin. As Collector of Customs he became one of the principal promoters of the province to newly arriving immigrants, most of whom he had the opportunity of meeting as soon as they set foot on Canadian soil.

Within a few years of Mr. Bradley's arrival, southern Manitoba settlement west of the Red River began developing along the old trails crossing this portion of the province. He realized that those who owned land on which the market centers of this new district would develop were almost certain to become the leading citizens of these communities – and wealthy besides. Mr. Bradley was among the first to purchase a piece of land on which he felt such a center of settlement would naturally develop. He chose the land he purchased in the fall of 1875 very carefully. It was the SE 24-2-6W, a quarter section on which the two important trails crossed. Coming from the east, the Commission Trail joined the St. Joe trail from the south. The latter linked the St. Joe settlement on the Pembina River in the vicinity of the present day Walhalla with the communities that were then just getting started along Dead Horse Creek and Silver Creek. Today the site may be visited four miles southwest of Morden where it borders PR 432.

Here he had Mr. John W. Harris survey out a townsite for which he chose the name Mountain City. Although its name suggests a towering elevation with a grand vista, it possessed only the latter. At this point the escarpment is only a long, gentle slope, from the top of which the plains of the Red River Valley stretches out to the east like a colourful map drawn upon an unrolled carpet. This landscape was an unquestionable advantage for the newly-born town for here was

to be found a much easier grade than any point for many miles to either the north or the south. As such it was the natural location for any railroad built through this portion of the province. Therefore, we can well imagine that Mr. Bradley, standing among the stakes of his new townsite, could envision, in his mind's eye, railroads coming up from Grand Forks via St. Joe, passing through his town on its way to all points north; another would come in from the east to linking Mountain City (and all points to the west) with Winnipeg and St. Paul.

The first resident of Mr. Bradley's townsite is believed to have been Mr. William C. Alderson who opened a general store here in 1877 and later became the proprietor of the famous British Lion Temperance Hotel. During the following summer, Mountain City became the site of an important first in the history of this corner of the world as recorded in the *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, 8 July 1878:

<div align="center">Dominion Day at Mountain City</div>

The first picnic ever held in this section of Manitoba (Pembina Mountain) came off on July 1st. More than two hundred people were on the grounds. A finer day for our outdoor gathering could not be; no mosquitoes and a cool breeze. The early part of the day was occupied by a baseball match between Mountain City and the town of Alexandria clubs, in which the latter were victorious. A large and convenient restaurant was erected from which were dispersed provisions of various kinds to all comers by Misses Bedford, Scott, Borthwick and Mrs. John Buchanan. During the day games for the younger portion of the gathering were in vogue, running, jumping, leaping, swings, etc. The Rev. Mr. Borthwick's wagon served as a "grandstand" from which short addresses were delivered by Rev. Messrs. Franklin, Ross and Borthwick and Messrs. John Johnston, F. Bedford, and J.C.R. Wightman.

A collection was taken up for the building fund of the Presbyterian church, Mountain City, amounting to $20.40 which, with the profits from the sales at the "restaurant" will materially aid the object in view. Letters of apology and good will were read from Messrs. Bradley, Mills and Lewis of West Lynne and the Rev. Mr. Scott of Emerson. The proceedings closed with "Auld Lang Syne" and "God Save the Queen" led by Mr. George Waddingham of Tp. 3, Range 7W.

Three years ago this district was an uninhabited wilderness, now Dominion Day has been appropriately celebrated.

<div align="center">"Let Manitoba Flourish!"</div>

That December Mr. Bradley's leading role in the development of southern Manitoba was recognized when he was asked by his contemporaries to accept a rather special honour. The St. Vincent Extension of the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad linking Winnipeg and the rest of the civilized world via the Twin Cities had just been completed. Mr. Bradley was called upon to strike the first blow to the last spike in the line just outside of Emerson where he now resided.

Constantly on the watch for an opportunity to boost his townsite, in 1879 Mr. Bradley was successful in persuading the owners of the Nelsonville grist and sawmill, Messrs. Nelson and Pugh, to relocate in Mountain City. In July 1879 the first birth in the town took place, a daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Alderson, proprietors of the British Lion Temperance Hotel. The town's godfather, Mr. Bradley, presented this newest citizen of Mountain City with a fine corner lot. According to the report of Mr. Tetu, Dominion Immigration Agent at West Lynne, by the end of that year there were in Mountain City, in addition to the mill, two stores, the post office, a Methodist and a Presbyterian church, a day school and several other buildings.

In November 1880 the original quarter section survey was enlarged so as to include a portion of the adjoining quarter purchased in June 1877 by Mr. Bradley's brother-in-law, Dr. Alfred Codd, M.D., of Winnipeg. The town continued to grow, largely under the stimulation of an assumed railway connection with a line coming from Emerson. In 1881 Mr. Bradley undertook to build what was then the largest building west of Emerson, a multi-purpose structure 38 by 46 feet, two stories high, at a cost of some $3000. Downstairs there were offices; upstairs a large assembly hall used for the widest possible variety of dances, socials, entertainments, and meetings, most notably those of a political nature.

As evidenced by the following article, these expenditures definitely made an impression on any visitors coming to town:

I arrived at Mountain City the following day after having passed through a large number of Mennonite villages. Mountain City is situated on one of the highest elevations of the Pembina Mountain. The land in this vicinity is number one and sells from $5 to $10 an acre. Mountain City possesses two general stores. D. N. Embrose has a good assortment of dry goods, groceries, boots and shoes, etc. Men's shoes, $1.50; long boots from $2.50 to $5.00; 8 1/2 lbs. sugar for $1.00. Mr. Embrose will soon be getting in a heavy stock of ready-made clothing, which he intends to offer at very low figures. He buys for cash and sells for as low as possible. F.J. Helliwell keeps the British Lion Temperance House. Jas. Hardy has purchased the blacksmith stand for $300. He is a first-rate workman. The grist and sawmill is a good one. The yard is covered with a large quantity of oak logs.

Mountain City is destined to be, before many years, a first-class town. It possesses good timber and water and the surrounding country is the best in southern Manitoba.

- *Emerson International*, 2 June, 1881

A short stay for dinner and on for Mountain City where we arrived at seven in the evening after driving over some of the most beautiful prairie land in the province.

MOUNTAIN CITY

is situated on a fine rise of ground in the Pembina Mountain Country. Stretching away far to the east on the level prairie below can be seen numerous villages of the Mennonites with whom Mountain City does a prosperous trade. Two general stores, one tin and hardware store, a grist and saw mill, blacksmith shop, a neatly built Presbyterian church, schoolhouse, two hotels with a number of private buildings built within the limits of the town survey, cause Mountain City to present quite a respectable appearance for an embryo city. We found its inhabitants consisting for the most part of sturdy Canadian settlers, well contented with their lot and the future in store for their town. They express great eagerness for a railway connection with the east - with them it is an absorbing topic - and no wonder, considering the heavy expenses their merchants and store keepers are put to in freighting over the "slough of despond" you might call it lying between West Lynne and the Twelve Mile Village. Next morning we bid adieu to our host, Fred Helliwell, one of the earliest pioneers of the Pembina Mountains, and now the proprietor of the British Lion Hotel, Mountain City, and with expressions of good will from our old friend, R. Brown, with whom we spent a very pleasant evening the night previous, we continued our journey on through a partly wooded and fair farming country, now and then crossing a deep ravine generally called a river.

- West Lynne Southern Manitoba Times, 17 June 1881

MOUNTAIN CITY
Emerson and North-Western Railway

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MOUNTAIN CITY
The County Town of Hamilton Co.

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MOUNTAIN CITY
The end of the first division of
the Emerson & North-
Western Railway

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MOUNTAIN CITY
The Town where $25,000 is now
being spent in construct-
ion of Buildings

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MOUNTAIN CITY
The Town that will have a Railway Station inside of
Three Months

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MOUNTAIN CITY
Look out for sale of Mountain
City Lots in the near future

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T.P. MURRAY
Auctioneer
- Manitoba Daily Times, 12 July 1881

     In passing through Mountain City the day before yesterday, I was surprised I was surprised to observe the great change at present taking place. In the northern portion of the town an immense public structure is nearing completion and on inquiry it was ascertained to be for the use of the registry and county court offices, county council chambers, and residence for the registrar, erected by Mr. F.T. Bradley, one of the town proprietors, in accordance with previous arrangements with the Local Government, that no expense should be incurred by them in the establishment of county offices at Mountain City, capital of Hamilton.

     The result of Mr. Bradley's enterprize is apparent, as there is now in the course of erection immediately opposite the public buildings and office and residence of a legal gentleman who proposes to make the city of pure air and water the home of himself and his family, and on a corner nearly opposite are preparations for the erection of one of the most capacious hotels in the Province, so much to be desired by the travelling public, who have heretofore contented themselves with floor room in the overcrowded stopping place of the town.

     The Emerson & North-Western Railway, it is understood, will enter into town along Seventh Street, and curve in a north-westerly direction in order to procure the most favorable crossing beyond. In looking eastwardly, it is evident that this point is the most desirable ascent

for railway purposes.
- *The Manitoba Daily Times*, 12 July 1881

MOUNTAIN CITY
WEST
Grand Auction Sale of
200 Lots!
in this beautifully situated town
<u>The Gateway of the Pembina</u>
<u>Mountain District</u>
The Only Outline for Three Important
Railway Lines Over the
Pembina Mountains
Sale on Thursday and Friday Evenings
the 15th and 16th Sept., at the
QUEEN'S REAL ESTATE
EXCHANGE
Beginning both evenings at 7:00 sharp
Good Speculative Investment

Mountain City is situated 45 miles west of Emerson and 9 miles north of the International Boundary Line and immediately on the Boundary Commission Trail leading from Emerson to Rock Lake, Turtle Mountain and Souris River settlements and in the heart of the great wheat-producing belt of Southern Manitoba.

There are now in Mountain City some 65 buildings, comprising one large steam grist mill and saw mill, two hotels, 2 general stores, 1 hardware store and tin shop, 1 church, (Presbyterian) and two other churches built this season, 1 large grain warehouse owned by Trail & Maulson which last season was filled with choice seed grain grown in the vicinity of Mountain City, and being sold to the farmers westward at $1.25 per bushel for seed.

Mountain City is the County Town of South Dufferin and will be a station of the Emerson North-Western R.R.

Brick clay of a superior quality is plentiful; limestone, lime and sand can be taken from the mountain range some two miles distant from the town. Taking into consideration the high and dry location situated as it is on the high table land, (the second plateau of the Pembina Mountains) and in close proximity to fifty Mennonite villages, the rich tract of farming land by which it is surrounded, together with its future railroad prospects, it has been most deservingly styled

"THE EMBRYO CITY" of southwestern Manitoba.

An important fact in connection with the position of Mountain City should command the attention of every observant buyer of property in the new towns, which have sprung up into existence during the past year or so:

Mountain City is fortunately located upon the Pembina Mountains that from its natural position it absolutely commands the crossing of the whole three of the railway lines which pass over to the fertile plains beyond, there being only a distance of about 2 1/2 which can be made use of for that purpose, Mountain City being in the center of that distance. Two out of three

roads, namely the Canadian Pacific and the Emerson & North-Western have already made their survey into this city and there is not a question or doubt but that the Southwestern will also adopt this route, thus creating at this point the

<div align="center">MOST IMPORTANT RAILROAD JUNCTION</div>

in the province of Manitoba. Upon the face of the mountains and within two miles of the town splendid oak timber is to be had and any quantity of any other first-class building timber is easily obtainable. The site of Mountain City, apart from its business location, is one of the

<div align="center">MOST BEAUTIFUL IN THE PROVINCE</div>

commanding a grand view North, East and South-East for twenty-five miles of the most fertile and populous districts to be seen in the North-West. No less than forty Mennonite villages can be counted from the mountain side. Taking these facts, which are facts and not romances, we would say to all, buy at least one lot in this town, and it will prove unquestionably on of

<div align="center">THE BEST INVESTMENTS</div>
<div align="center">it is possible for a buyer to make</div>

<div align="center">The Title is Perfect!</div>
<div align="center">The Sale without Reserve.</div>
<div align="center">The place of the Sale is the</div>
<div align="center">QUEEN'S REAL ESTATE EXCHANGE</div>
<div align="center">Sale Room</div>
<div align="center">The Terms Very Liberal</div>
<div align="center">The sale will be on</div>
<div align="center">Thursday and Friday Ev'gs</div>
<div align="center">September 15 & 16</div>
<div align="center">The sale will be conducted by</div>
<div align="center">Joseph Wolf –Auctioneer</div>

<div align="center">- *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, 15 September 1881</div>

The railroad from Emerson never materialized and when another line did approach during the summer of 1882, the South-Western Manitoba Colonization Railroad, it bypassed Mountain City. Four miles to the north, the C. P. R. engineers were able to find a grade they preferred to the ascent of the escarpment at Mountain City. Two miles from the foot of this grade, the townsite of Stephen was laid out. It was soon replaced by another location surveyed on Dead Horse Creek just downstream from the trail linking Mountain City and Nelsonville. It received the name Morden and in short order this newly-established rival enticed most of the movable structures from both Mountain City and Nelsonville to surveyed on abandon their original locations. Mr. Bradley's townsite, and the massive expenses he had lavished upon promoting it, came to nothing. Like the sites of several other southern Manitoba "cities," now its only value was as farmland.

If this was not a sufficiently devastating blow, the tragedy that befell Mr. Bradley a few months later certainly had to be. Early in March 1883 the provincial constable arrested him on charges of making away with reports and manifests for coal consigned to the CPR and also for the embezzlement of some $4,700. He vehemently maintained his innocence, and "expressed a firm intention to fight it out, admitting, however, that he was responsible – no matter who was the real culprit." He was taken to Winnipeg and put up in the Queen's Hotel. Here, the evening

before he was to appear in court, he was seized with convulsions which rendered him unconscious and resulted in his death three days later at the home of his brother-in-law, Dr. Codd. He was thirty-nine years of age. His grave, still maintained by the Emerson Masonic Lodge which he founded, is located just northeast of the town of Emerson near a little coulee that bears his name.

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6. **ALEXANDRIA**
20-2-6W,   Stanley Municipality
On the Banks of the Great River Euphrates or
In his Loneliness in the City of Alexandria

Alexandria, the city founded by Alexander the Great on the delta of the Nile River in 332 B.C., has several claims to fame. In ancient times it possessing the world's greatest library. After St. Mark established the Christian Church here in the generation following the death of Christ, Alexandria became one of the five great centres of the Christian Church. Recalling these facts, one might suspect that Mr. John W. Harris, the founder of Alexandria, *Manitoba*, must have been something of a classical scholar. An careful examination of his diary, a remarkably detailed record that he kept from 1869 until 1922, no doubt would give full particulars on this point. According to the *Centennial Collection: Tales of Early Manitoba from the Winnipeg Free Press* by Edith Paterson, "Mr. Harrison was prominent in professional organization, the masonic lodge and sporting circles." She further notes:

John Walter Harris was born Feb. 26, 1845, at Kemptville, Ont. He came to Winnipeg in 1873, where he practised his profession [as a land surveyor] and was one of the founders of the Association of Manitoba Land Surveyors. He was appointed city assessor in 1879, and in 1882, assessment commissioner and city surveyor, a dual position he held until he retired in 1916.

In 1873 Mr. Harris surveyed Indian Reservations from Mapleton south of Selkirk to Fort Alexander on the Winnipeg River. In May of 1875 he sailed south from Winnipeg on the stern-wheeler, *The International*, to survey the Emerson townsite. In 1876 he married Miss Susan Elizabeth Smith, purchased a home on Rorie Street, and in December secured the N1/2 20-2-6W. In July 1877 he purchased the northeast and northwest quarters of the adjoining section, 21-2-6W. All of this property was transferred to his wife's name. During the summer of 1877 Mr. Harris surveyed 53 acres on N1/2 20-2-6W into 13.5 blocks containing 270 lots for the city of Alexandria. This was a busy season for him - that summer he also marked out the townsite of Mountain City.

In June 1877 Alexandria post office, the first west of West Lynne, was opened in the home of Mr. John Thompson, a homesteader of August 1875 on NW 22-2-6W. *Henderson's Directory* for 1877-1878 informs us that the surrounding township, Alexandria as it was known, was well settled and "likely will soon have a post office." Its two businessmen, according to this publication, were Mr. R.E. Brown, a storekeeper and Mr. Alexander Hazelwood, a carpenter.

Mr. Harris' choice for a town site, a beautiful level section of prairie overlooking the crossing of Dead Horse Creek by the Commission Trail, had everything to recommend it. In spite of this advantage, the goodly number of settlers living in the neighbourhood and the "great exertions

being made to make this one of the principal points in this part of the country," (as noted in *Henderson's Directory* for 1878-1879) the growth of Alexandria as a centre of this settlement was not rapid. Recalling his impressions in passing through Alexandria for the first time in September 1879, Fr. Theobald Bitsche, the first resident priest of the St. Leon parish in the Pembina Mountain, wrote:

To my astonishment, I found myself in the midst of innumerable signs indicating many streets and lanes of the future, but I found only a single house serving as the store and place of lodging for the single inhabitant of the place.

"The single inhabitant of the place" was Mr. Thomas McInrue, a bachelor. By 1878, again according to *Henderson's Directory*, Alexandria was also a Methodist church appointment served by Rev. J.M. Harrison of Thornhill, a minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Church who had arrived in Manitoba the previous year. His home was in 3-6, Thornhill Township, not far from Nelsonville.

The year 1879 brought the Richard Sweet Sr. family to the Alexandria district. Early the following year, they purchased an eleven-acre parcel of land on the corner of the Alexandria townsite where they built a home sufficiently large to also serve as a stopping house and store. This doubled the population and business facilities of Alexandria. The 5 February 1881 edition of *The Manitoba Daily Times*, in an article entitled "Southwestern Manitoba; Progress in Three Months as Observed by Two Winnipeggers" outlined the latest developments in Alexandria thus:

The next morning they drove to the "city of Alexandria," a distance of about fifteen miles. About a year ago Alexandria consisted of a single house, inhabited by a single man, a Mr. McInrue, who had not even a dog, cat or other domestic animal to keep him company, but who, in his loneliness, carried on the business of a store and post office. It was very hard at that time even to find the city. During the interval of one year, however, certain improvements have taken place. There is now a second store kept by a Mr. Sweet. Mr. McInrue is still there but he is no longer alone, having taken to himself a wife. There are also two private dwellings - or nearly that number in the "city."

The Sweets were members of one of the early branches of the Methodist denomination, the Bible Christian Church. Several of their neighbours were members of this same faith, the various units of the Elliott family and the John and James Ching families. As soon as the Sweet home was habitable, services were held in it by the first Bible Christian clergyman to come to Manitoba, Rev. John Greenway, brother of the Hon. Thomas Greenway. He lived at Crystal City where he generally preached in the morning; evening services were at Alexandria, thirty miles to the east. At the June 1880 conference of the Bible Christian Church Rev. Silas Cunning received an appointment to Alexandria. Recalled as a popular clergyman and an effective preacher, he made his home with the Sweets and conducted his services in their house. Early in 1880, a decision was made to build a church and thereafter the story of Alexandria largely centers around this church. Lumber was purchased in Emerson sixty miles distant and hauled to the building site on the NW corner of the NW1/4 19-2-9w just across the road from the Sweet home. It was completed in 1881 and dedicated with the name Ebenezer, the Hebrew word for "God is our Help."

In mid November 1882, the Bible Christian Church sent two ministers to serve the Ebenezer congregation. Since the establishment of this denomination in 1816, it had ordained women to the ministry and Rev. Andrew Gordon's wife, a native of Devon, had been ordained a preacher in

the old country prior to her departure from England in 1859. She was then twenty-two years of age. In Canada she was one of the first, if not the first, women preachers. Alexandria now had a parsonage as well as a church, and this was the first home in Manitoba for Rev. and Mrs. Gordon and their six children, three boys and three girls. It was not completed until the following spring and the Gordons spent their first winter in a house that more resembled a granary than a parsonage. Recalling this home some sixty years later their daughter, Annie Gordon, wrote:

Battling with frost was an hourly job indoors but without danger. Breakfast was resplendent within diamond circled walls as every bent-in nail was hoar frosted, giving the walls between the studding the sheen of a fairy palace. In an hour or two the warmer air dissolved the fairy palace and the fairies slid down and turned to ice when they reached the foundationless floor. When this ice, on a warmer day, started to trickle over the floor it was a chore for the two younger boys, Bert and Rob, to carefully chop the ice and throw it out. This task ceased to be fun as the weeks and months of the long bitter winter all too soon changed to milder weather.

Few ministers have left such a powerful mark on a community in which they resided. As long as they lived, the pioneers of the district spoke fondly of Rev. Andrew and Mrs. Ann Gordon. Both were preachers of the Word of God in the most fervent and earnest Methodist traditions. Rev. Gordon was thoroughly Irish and, like many Methodists and Presbyterians of that day, an ardent Orangeman. To the great delight of the Ebenezer congregation and the utter amazement of the neighbouring Presbyterians and Anglicans, she was as powerful in the pulpit as her husband. The Gordons remained at Alexandria until 1884 when they received an appointment to the Manitou Methodist church. The biography of Rev. and Mrs. Gordon, written by their daughter, Annie, (for many years principal of the Riverview Collegiate in Fort Rouge, Winnipeg) is a priceless historical record of this district and period. Like many other newcomers to the prairies, the Gordons were enthralled by the wonderful mirages that occasionally transform the landscape:

One morning shouts from the early rising boys to get a good crackling fire going rudely broke any extra dozes as they yelled up the stairway, "Get up! Dress quickly!" and all were quickly out, snugly dressed, to see a sight which made one breathless with its magic beauty. A mirage! Wonderful magic! Brilliantly beautiful! The whole Red River Valley lay at our feet. The heavy timber along the edge of the hills was subdued and the entire valley rose, dotted directly east by the many Mennonite villages, smartly lifting their one-story buildings to heights unbelievably dignified. Even Emerson, sixty miles east, a sizable town, was lifted to our amazed view as were the scattered farmhouses bordering the Boyne River away to the north. So amazed, so awed were we at the transfigured landscape that we felt like Peter on the Mount - "Let us build a tabernacle here," but steaming porridge dishes and fresh crispy toast brought the worshippers down to the mundane fact that a half hour of the ozone of the early frosty morning had whetted the usual raceous appetites. Before morning prayers the wonder-dream silence was broken, tongues were loosed and the scene relived vocally to be locked in memory's fairyland basket of jewels.

Another call brought all out to see the Stubbins homestead, three miles away and sheltered from view by a bluff. It rose tower-like with the housewife hanging out the family washing and every movement of article and clothes peg showing, as if we might say "Hello" to her and compliment her on her smart housekeeping.

There were a number of these atmospheric marvels, but only one as marvelous as our Red River scene, and that came when we dressed on the double quick after a "Hurry up" call.

This mirage greeted us from the south. The deep swath of forest along the Pembina River had retreated, and a long stretch of Dakota rose, showing the same farm and village-dotted prairie as we had seen when the Red River rose and filled us with awe. All this was God's handiwork in Nature incomparable.

Rev. James Hoskins, Rev. Wm. McKinley and Rev. S.E. Colwell followed Rev. Gordon. In the early winter of 1886 Mr. John Elliott and his brother-in-law, Mr. Wm. White, moved the church from its original location to a new site four miles northwest on NE 26-2-7. It was still known as Ebenezer, but now was associated with Thornhill rather than Alexandria. In addition to serving the Thornhill community, until 1902 it was also the Methodist church for the people of that denomination living as far distant as Darlingford, four miles to the northwest. In 1896 a gradually increasing attendance made it necessary to replace the original structure with a larger one, the Zion Church, a mile to the west on NE 27-2-6.

Although the Alexandria School district #73 was established in 1879, the first school was not built until 1882. That year a substantial structure, 32 x 30, of oak lumber purchased from the Nelson Brothers mill in Mountain City, was erected just north of the trail. A former teacher described its setting in these words:

What a picturesque spot was this site!   Nestled snugly in the valley, amid towering oaks and magnificent maples, it would seem that the little school sought the protection of Mother Nature herself to provide shelter and protection for the children who came. A few rods from the door trickled Dead Horse Creek.

In 1894 the school was torn down, but the oak lumber was salvaged to construct second school on Thompson's Hill a mile to the southwest. Mr. Thomas McInrue remained as Alexandria's post master until February 1882 when he decided to move to Thornhill. The post office was then moved from his home to the Sweet residence where Mr. Richard Sweet remained as postmaster until June 1891. In 1885 the postal authorities recommended a change of name for the office, citing as their reason the confusion arising with Alexandria, Minnesota. Henry C. Sweet, a teenage son of the postmaster, suggested the name Shadedale and on 1 Nov. 1885 the postal department officially adopted this new designation. Three years later, Mr. John W. Harrison, owner of N1/2 20-2-6, had the Manitoba legislature pass a bill cancelling the plan of the Alexandria townsite. He then sold the property to the Sweets who added it to their farm holdings. Alexandria School, later on a third location, perpetuated the name until February 1965 when the district consolidated with Morden. Today, a massive cairn dedicated in July 1988 fittingly commemorates pioneers of Alexandria and the nearby Elam district.

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7. CALF MOUNTAIN HOTEL
34-2-7W, Pembina Municipality
Of Modern Architecture with Something of a Rustic Appearance

Mountain City was located at the crossroads of an important north-south route with the Commission Trail. We now turn our attention eight miles to the northwest – the location of the next intersection of the Commission Trail with another coming from the north. This north-south

route, the Missouri Trail, meets the Commission Trail four miles northeast of Alexandria and two miles from Calf Mountain. In May 1877 this crossroads on SW 34-2-7W was selected by Mr. Spencer A. Bedford as his homestead. His log house built that fall became the Calf Mountain Hotel and two   years later the Calf Mountain Post Office.

Township 2-7 was otherwise known as Mills Township, its namesake being Mr. Robert Mills, one of the two assistant customs collectors to Mr. F. T. Bradley of Emerson. (Mr. Bradley's other assistant was a Mr. E. G. Simcox, a cousin to Mr. R. N. Lea of Pembina Crossing.) In addition to Mr. Bedford, three of his neighbours were the first to take up land in 2-7. Mr. Bedford spent the summer of 1877 living in a tent pitched on his homestead with Ferris Bolton and Martin Nichol. At the time their only neighbor in Mills Township was Mr. Sam Scott. Mr. Ferris Bolton was one of that select band of our pioneers who kept a diary of their activities and experiences during their first days and years in the Great Northwest. His memoirs published in the early 1920s are based on these diaries and today are among our finest accounts of the early history of the community he did so much to establish.

Mr. Bolton began his story with his decision to go west. He left Ontario on the last day of April 1877 and, after travelling by train as far as Fishers Landing in Minnesota, booked a ticket on "the old International, a flat-bottomed, stern-wheeler river   boat" to Fort Garry. On board he met a young man and his sister from Ontario who were on their way to the Pembina Hills of Manitoba, Spencer and Grace Bedford. Another young man with the same intentions, a Mr. Martin Nichol, accompanied them. Messrs. Bedford and Nichol soon persuaded Mr. Bolton to join them in their adventure in the Pembina Mountain country. They docked at West Lynne on Saturday, 5 May 1877, "stepping off the gang plank into Red River mud up to our ankles."   Mr. Nelson Bedford of Stodderville Township met the party and on Monday they set out for his homestead, arriving there on Tuesday. Here   Mr. Sam Scott joined them on Wednesday morning and the four of them started out. Their search was a specific one:

    …of course to find our *Ideal Farms*, with timber on the north for protection against the cold winds, and nice level, rolling prairie to the south. We went so far that day we decided to camp for the night. We had a duck apiece for supper, and a big fire at our feet. After breakfast we hunted for our farms again, but could not locate them.
    Being hungry, we started for the nearest settlers (10 miles away) three brothers, Jim, Charlie and Harry Bonny. We reached their shack at 1 p.m., where our hunger was satisfied on bread and bacon. That afternoon we looked over several sections, but none suited us. I never was as tired in my life as that evening when we reached Bedford's.
    ...It rained the next day, so we had a rest and on Saturday went on a hunt for open prairie farms and were soon suited. We chose Sections 33 and 34 in Township 2, Range 7W and never regretted our choice. We walked to Osterwick, the first Mennonite village, bought a yoke of oxen, borrowed a wagon, filled the box with hay, and took the trip in comfort and ease. We camped in the wagon over night and reached Emerson the next day, May 15, 1877, in time to enter our claims. Sam Scott took the west half of 33, I took the east half, S.A. Bedford took the west half of 34 and Martin Nichol the east half. We also located a 20-acre bush lot on Section 16 and 17 in the same township. This gave us each 340 acres. Some landowners!   All we had to put up was $10 per homestead and $20 for the bush lot. We also paid $160 for pre-emption when we proved up the homestead. When I paid my $160, the agent handed me 15 cents and said there was only 159 and 85/100 acres in that quarter section.

The Commission Trail passed through all four homesteads; the Missouri Trail through Mr. Bolton's and Mr. Bedford's. The former's home was less than 20 rods from the Missouri Trail; Mr. Bedford's almost at the very junction of the two routes. In September 1878 a correspondent for *Manitoba Daily Free Press,* after a visit to Calf Mountain, informed the readers of this Winnipeg journal that the Calf Mountain Hotel was "owned and operated by S.A. Bedford and Martin Nichol, two energetic and enterprizing young men who came in May 1877 from Plattsville, Ontario."   He described it as "of modern architecture with something of a rustic appearance."

There can be little doubt that Mr. Bedford's choice for his yardsite was influenced by the finding of a flowing spring on his quarter, one that could supply all the water any pioneer could want or use. Today that spring (it still bubbles out of the ground at an approximate rate of five gallons a minute) and a few trees are all that bear witness to the former location of Mr. Bedford's yardsite. Some distance away, the exact location long since forgotten, is another site that bears silent witness to the hardships that attended the opening up of our country. In April 1878 a party of ten young men left Paris, Ontario, to seek their fortunes in the Great Canadian North West. Within weeks three of the most vigourous were dead, possibly as a result of drinking from some alkaline slough. After taking ill not far from Nelsonville, Mr. Alfred Dodge of Oxford County asked to be taken to Bedfords at Calf Mountain where he soon passed away. According to the story still current in the neighbourhood, Mr. Bedford buried the young man in a coffin he constructed from the lumber of the youthful pioneer's wagon box.

On 1 October 1879 Mr. Bedford became the postmaster of the Calf Mountain post office opened in his home. He held this position until 1881 when he moved to Winnipeg and the post office was transferred to the residence of Mr. Ferris Bolton, (by this time Mr. Bedford was married to Mr. Bolton's sister) who then became the postmaster. In Winnipeg Mr. Bedford took a position with the Scottish Ontario Land Company for a few years but agricultural pursuits were still his first love and it was not many years before he was able to return to them. He became the first superintendent of the Dominion Experimental Farm on the banks of the Assiniboine at Brandon. Here his outstanding research work eventually won him an honourary doctorate of agriculture degree and finally the position of first dean of the Agricultural College in Fort Garry, now the University of Manitoba.

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8. CALF MOUNTAIN
5-3-7W, Pembina Municipality
What's in a name? or All Roads lead to …a very Curious Hill

Ironically, by a topographical oversight of the first water, one of the most ancient man-made landmarks of southern Manitoba has been omitted from almost all-present day maps. However, when consideration is eventually given to placing it on our official federal government charts, our mapmakers will have a bountiful selection of names to choose from. "Calf Mountain" is its more recent and most popular designation, the one that appears on the Township Survey map of January 1873. However in earlier records this ancient burial mound had been known by a variety of other designations.

Unfortunately, no one seems to have recorded the name by which this landmark was known to our native Indians. It could have been a high and holy one, for, just as in Europe of the Middle Ages all roads led to Rome, for our part of the world Calf Mountain was the central point. In common with the Eternal City it was visited by pilgrims from the four corners of the continent, Indians coming all points of the compass to bring their offering here. From the southeast they journeyed from the junction of the Pembina and Red Rivers; from the northeast the junction of the Red and Assiniboine; from the north it was an overland route from the vicinity of the present day Portage la Prairie and from the northwest, where Brandon now stands, a trail also led to Calf Mountain. Directly to the west the trail came from the Souris River and from the southwest, the Missouri.

The journals of the first white visitor to Calf Mountain bear witness to the reverence in which the site was held by the Indians of his time. Part of the entry in the diary of Alexander Henry Jr. for 13 August 1806 reads as follows:

At daybreak we were on horseback; our roads still worse than yesterday, being marshy for several leagues, until we came to *Tete de Boeuf*, where we arrived at ten o'clock and unloaded. This appears to be the highest land of the mountain. From this elevated station the prospect is extensive in every direction except on the north where strong wood is near at hand. In other directions the land appears to fall in all directions for a considerable distance. There is a small lake, about half a mile in circumference, at the south end of which stands a small hillock in the shape of a beehive. On the top of this the Assiniboines and Crees are very particular to make sacrifices of tobacco and other trifles, and to collect a certain number of bull's heads, which they daub with red earth, and deposit on the summit, the nose always pointing to the east.

In his journals, Alexander Henry, in addition to *Tete de Boeuf*, also uses its English translations, either "Buffalo's Head" or "Bull's Head."   Half a century later, in 1857, Palliser dubbed it "Beef Lodge" and noted it as "a very curious hill." Two years later the Hind Expedition preferred the name "Calf's Tent Hill." The Boundary Commission records and those of Lieutenant French of the NWMP only use "Calf Mountain." If there may have been some confusion as to the correct name for this site, there was no question that, in their natural state, the mound and its nearby lake were places of rare natural beauty. Recalling her visits here as a child, the daughter of Rev. Andrew Gordon of Alexandria wrote many years later:

Another settlement where the settlers were outstandingly fine people was Calf Mountain. This was one of those mounds of a remote Indian tribe whose destiny is obscured in the race of ages. The slough which surrounded it was a favorite stopping place of the ducks going north and in the fall those returning to their southern home. Here Rover, not naturally fond of herding cattle, had an opportunity of proudly showing his special ability in bringing ducks to shore. Here, too, is where we first found the pink and yellow moccasin flower, commonly known as the lady slipper, the wild swamp rose, the dog-toothed and blue violet, the marsh marigold, and on the prairies all the other beautiful prairie flowers.

Many early travellers along the trail were intrigued by "this very curious hill," among them a group who visited the district early in 1881. Their report in the *Manitoba Daily Times* noted:

Calf Mountain is described as being about 50 feet high and about 100 feet in diameter at the base, and in shape perfectly round like a ball. Our travellers ascended it one evening as the darkness was settling down and saw the places where there are said to be Indian graves, and

where the modern Indians hold pow-wows from time to time when they chance to be in the vicinity.

Few features of southern Manitoba aroused the curiosity of travellers along the trail as much as Calf Mountain. The first recorded excavations – by local residents – took place in September 1886 when a number of buffalo skulls, human bones and Indian relics were uncovered. Twenty years later, Dr. Henry Montgomery of Victoria College of the University of Toronto, after investigated the burial mounds at Sourisford and Pilot Mound, dug into Calf Mountain in nine locations. During the thirty days spent in excavations in the fall of 1909, Prof. Montgomery discovered, in addition to large numbers of buffalo bones, twenty human skeletons, "not including the crumbling decomposing remains incapable of removal." Of particular interest was the discovery of beads manufactured from copper native to Michigan and large seashells from the Gulf of Mexico each bearing an engraved human face. Like the burials discovered within another mound opened near Alexandria in September 1879, the skeletons were in an upright position.

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9. DARLINGFORD
6-3-7W, Pembina Municipality
Confusing Complexities of Nomenclature or A Mine of Happiness in a Dug-Out

The name "Darlington" is familiar to everyone knowledgeable about the history of railroads for this town was a terminus of the Stockton & Darlington Railroad opened for service in 1825. One of Great Britain's first successful lines, it is famed for its association with George Stephenson, (1781-1848) its chief engineer. (Nathaniel Lea, father of Mr. R.N. Lea of Pembina Crossing, was one of the surveyors of this line.) Darlington is situated on the Tees River, the border between Durham and York counties and is some two hundred miles northwest of London. In the nineteenth century, settlers from this district immigrated to Ontario's Ottawa Valley where they established a village by the same name. (It does not appear on present day maps.) Then in the 1870s pioneers from Darlington, Ontario, once more transferred the name to the Pembina Mountain Country where they gave this name to Township 3-7W. The name was next used, again in the last years of the 1870s, when Darlington School was built on the southeast corner of SE 21-3-7W, two miles northeast of the present site of Darlingford. When the township's first school district was formally organized in January 1880 the name was once more chosen.

Standing on the top of Calf Mountain and looking west across Darlington Township, one of the most prominent features of the prairie landscape is a little river flowing from the north to the south. This stream is the Little Pembina, a tributary of the Big Pembina flowing through a deep valley six miles to the south. In the 1870s and 1880s some of the worst swamps along the entire route of the Commission Trail were located between Calf Mountain and the Little Pembina. In wet weather, there was only one place where it was possible to get through them and across the Little Pembina, the route followed by the Commission Trail. Such difficulties were experienced by the early travellers along the Trail that this was one of the first sites selected in southern Manitoba for the building of a bridge at provincial government expense. In the summer of 1879 by Mr. Robert Bell of Mountain City expended 7000 board feet of lumber on this structure.

In June 1877 Mr. William McTavish Anderson selected the E1/2 6-3-7 as his homestead, the land on which the Commission Trail ford through, and then the government bridge over, the Little Pembina were located scarcely a mile west of Calf Mountain. This was a natural site for a store, stopping house and, eventually, a townsite. The first entrepreneur to avail himself of the natural advantages of this site was Mr. William T. Alderson, the pioneer merchant of Mountain City, Justice of the Peace of that metropolis and proprietor of the British Lion Temperance House in that thriving center. In July 1880 he established a stopping house on the east bank of the Little Pembina. The bridge over the Little Pembina, and therefore Mr. Alderson's new stopping house, had no specific name and so he gave it one, that of his birthplace. By an interesting coincidence he had been born in Darlington, England.

His partner in this pioneer enterprize at Darlington was a member of the new Manitoba nobility, *Monsieur* Adolf Messner, a wealthy capitalist of Formosa, Ontario, and the owner of the St. Leon townsite fifteen miles to the northwest. Here *M*. Messner had purchased twelve thousand acres of land, was in the process of building a mammoth store and gristmill and had gained the title bestowed upon him by the *Emerson International* – "the King of St. Leon."

In December 1880 Mr. Alderson traded his hotel in Mountain City for a nearby farm worth $2000 previously owned by Mr. Fred Powell, but soon after decided to buy back his business. The name "Darlingford" seems to have supplanted the original one early in 1881. The precise reason for this alteration is no longer known, nor is there a contemporary record of the origin of this new name. One explanation is obvious. It is a combination of the location's original name – Darlington – with a reference to the original ford across the Little Pembina at this point. We encounter the name Darlingford for the first time in an article from the *Manitoba Daily Times* of February 1881. It reads in part:

Darlingford, better known as Calf Mountain, was reached by a drive from Nelsonville upon the Mountain, the distance being fifteen miles. Mr. W.C. Alderson, who owns the as yet unsurveyed town plot, and who at present keeps a stopping place, the only occupied building in the city, is building a store in which business will be carried on by a Mr. Mahaffy. Although the store and stopping place are the only buildings in Darlingford, yet there is one other residence, namely a dug-out, which is occupied by an English family recently out from the Old Country, consisting of the father and mother, one grown up son, and a child. Our prospectors report that they found a mine of happiness in this dugout, and that they spent in its cheerful atmosphere the most thoroughly enjoyable evening of their whole trip. In spite of what one might naturally expect under such conditions they were far from being deprived of the arts and accomplishments of civilized life. The son played for the company upon a large organ, which appeared to be brought from the Old Country, and he was accompanied by Mr. Alderson on the violin. The lady of the household seemed to be far more contented in that dug-out than thousands are in vastly more pretentious mansions, and she was successful in communicating to her visitors a large portion of her spirit of contentment and happiness.

According to another item in the *Manitoba Daily Times*, that same February Darlingford doubled its number of business places. It noted "Mr. Matthews, late of Winnipeg, has opened a well-selected stock of general merchandize."

After the townsite was surveyed that year, it got down to the business of really becoming a center of the settlement. The natural advantages of the site attracted the interest and finances of other parties who felt that they should also get in on a good thing and so the original Darlingford townsite owned by Mr. Alderson became West Darlingford with an adjoining suburb, East Darlingford. As noted in the following newspaper clipping, among these "other parties" were John Norquay, premier of Manitoba, and several of his business associates:

The Calf Mountain settlement with its heavy fertile soil capable of raising anything, its high, dry and healthy situation, and its nearness to a good supply of timber, is, without doubt, the finest in the province of Manitoba. Darlingford, which is in the midst of this fine settlement, must therefore grow up to be a thriving town as it is backed by the very essentials that make it a live one.

So much are the Hon. John Norquay, Mr. Munroe and Mr. Scarth impressed with this conviction that they have purchased of Mr. Bedford the beautiful quarter section adjoining Mr. Alderson's lot and are having it surveyed in conformity with the last named gentleman's site of Darlingford.

Mr. Rombough, who lives between Nelsonville and the Mountain, a Dominion Land Surveyor (and an excellent and careful one) is laying out 80 acres into lots for the above named gentlemen.

With the aid of the settlers and the townsite proprietors, there is not the least doubt that the townsites of East and West Darlingford will be built up so rapidly as to astonish some of our neighbours.
- *The Emerson International*, May 1881

While Darlingford's growth was not so swift as to overwhelm the farm properties of those pioneers living nearby, it was nevertheless steady. In December 1881 the first milestone in its development was reached when Mr. P.P. Findley of West Lynne located his saw and gristmill here instead of at Hamilton in Snowflake Township as he had originally intended. That spring brought the survey of the CPR line and although it bypassed Darlingford by a mile and a half to the north, it was still close enough to sustain and even encourage the settlement's growth in the months prior to the arrival of the first train. For example, a Winnipeg paper reported in July that Mr. J.B. McLaren intended to open a law office in Darlingford. The following lines from a November 1883 edition of a Winnipeg newspaper outline the situation in the town during the month the train arrived:

DARLINGFORD
Special correspondent of the *Manitoba Daily Free Press*
We intend building a large school house this winter and purpose having a first-class man to run it. ...What we want now are grain buyers to come to make us complete. There is lots of business here for them in wheat, barley and oats. Mr. Alderson is building two stores, sixty by forty-four feet, one of which will be occupied by a Winnipeg firm for hardware and tinware. Our village has grown considerable of late. It now consists of one saw mill and grist mill, two general stores, two hotels and a new one in the course of erection, two blacksmith shops, one wagon shop, registry office for the County of Dufferin, one tinsmith shop and several dwelling houses.

I must not forget our worthy friends Messrs. Carney and Watson of Emerson who have heretofore done the lumber business for the Pembina Mountains, and who are determined to

hold on to what is good. They have shipped from Emerson, by the C.P.R. Branch, to Darlingford, thirty-one car loads of lumber.

A livery will soon be running to accommodate commercials and others wishing to take in the Pembina Crossing with its beautiful valley, Crystal City and the fine country around it; Clearwater where the thirsty can get the purest of water; and the Badger, with the rising town of Cartwright on its banks.

Darlingford is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Little Pembina, and surrounded by a fine, old settled farming country. Wood is plentiful a couple of miles south of the village and water is easily obtainable at from ten to thirty feet. The mill well, thirty feet deep, has overflowed. It was dug a year ago.

We are now connected by rail with Winnipeg. This long-looked-for event was accomplished last week by a regular train consisting of one passenger and one baggage car arriving at our village. As we don't get our newspapers until the news is a week old, few people knew that a train was coming and in consequence few passengers returned with it. On the arrival of the second train, however, there must have been twenty-five persons get on from Darlingford to visit the metropolis. One car twice a week will not do the Pembina Mountain business.

On 7 November 1882 Mr. William Van Horne was able to travel by rail as far as the site of their station on NW 7-3-7. This was part of a railway section and although located in a swamp was their choice for a point between Thornhill and Manitoba City. The CPR significantly contributed to the complexity of place names in this district by naming it Darlingford Station, and then claiming that this name had nothing to do with the town across the flats by the same name, but rather perpetuated the memory of a CPR civil engineer whose name, according to the official records of the company, *was Mr. Darlingford*. Whatever the source of the name, none of the businesses of the original settlement saw fit to attempt to relocate next to the CPR station in the swamps of the Darlingford Flats!

The names associated with this settlement was further complicated when, in 1883, the Calf Mountain Post Office was moved from the home of Mr. Ferris Bolton into Mr. Alderson's store *and retained its original name*. Naturally most people assumed the post office in Darlingford bore the same name as the village in which it was located and associated Calf Mountain with the stage station at Ferris Bolton's. This general confusion may note even in *Henderson's Directory for 1884* where the entry for Darlingford wonderfully jumbles up the post office, the hamlet and the train station in the following manner:

DARLINGFORD - A station on the Pembina Mountain Sec. of the C. P. R., distant 96 miles from Winnipeg. Mail three times a week. Has post office, telegraph and express office. Population 50. Stage leaves Darlingford for Calf Mountain, Wednesday and Saturday, 7 a.m.; leaves Calf Mountain, Wednesday and Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Alderson, W.L., farmer
Borthwick, Rev. H.J., Presbyterian minister
Brown, David, hotelkeeper
Coldwell, Rev. S.E., Methodist minister

Connor, Geo., clerk
Connor, William, general store
Connor, Wm., sec.-treasurer, South Dufferin Mun.
Findlay, John, wagon maker
Flemming, N., miller
Fox, John, engineer
Lane, Henry, pump maker
Maxwell, J.R., tinner
May, Capt. W.E., farmer
McGregor, Geo., hotel
McKinnon, - , hotelkeeper
McKinnon, Peter, blacksmith
Pickle, O., livery stables
Pound, H.F., builder
Ritchie, Joseph, grist mill
Vaughan, J.L., farmer

Possibly because Manitoba's premier, the Hon. John Norquay, was a landowner in the neighbourhood, Darlingford was the location of two important offices, the municipal office for South Dufferin and the registry office for the County of Hamilton. Both drew considerable amounts of business to the town. During this period, Manitou, (previously Manitoba City) just six miles further down the track and the terminus of the line, was concerned that Darlingford might develop into a full-fledged rival town. But this was not to be. Darlingford soon lost the registry office to Nelsonville and Manitou eventually proved to have the greater drawing power for the business of the neighbouring area. During the winter of 1884-1885 almost all of the business places of Darlingford were hauled on sleighs from the banks of the Little Pembina seven miles northwest into Manitou. At least one of these, Mr. Findlay's home, survived in Manitou until the early 1960s as the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Duncan. In the mean time the name of the post office was changed from Calf Mountain to Darlingford and in October 1887 was closed. The original Darlingford – "Old Darlingford" –   became a ghost town with its name perpetuated only by the station and the school district.

Darlingford is the only historic site along the Commission Trail that was once a ghost town and today exists, albeit on a different location, but with the same name. In 1898 district pioneer Mr. James Law purchased NW 8-3-7 and had it surveyed into a townsite. Residents of the community, among them Mr. Ferris Bolton, were then petitioned the CPR to move their station three quarters of a mile to the east out of the swamp, over the ridge and into this new townsite. When the CPR agreed to move their station they retained its original name and, in 1900, the postal department accepted the name Darlingford for the post office established in this new town. Then, for the first time in its history, the name "Darlingford" included the village, the CPR station and the post office.

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10. PEMBINA CROSSING
25-2-9W, Pembina Municipality
So near, and yet so Far or Lots of Singing every Night

The early history of most historic sites along the Commission Trail focuses on their attempts to secure railroad connections. This is particularly true of Pembina Crossing for, of the more than two dozen townsites sites along the trail, few came closer to securing not just one railroad, but perhaps even several. And yet it missed all of them.

In the late 1870s and early 1880s most of the travellers making their way along the trail looked forward to the day, in the not too distant future, when they would be able to make this trip by rail. Like the trail, such a railroad would begin, of course, at the Red River or, in other words, *in Emerson*. The Pembina would be the first large valley this line would encounter and anyone with any sense could understand that the crossing should be in the vicinity of the well-known ford. Obviously the route the Commission Trail followed into the Pembina Valley and out of it was too steep a grade for any railroad, but a creek entering the valley a mile north of Pembina Crossing (known since the turn of the century as the Harlow Creek) provided a perfect access. To get out of the valley, the best route was southeast of Pembina Crossing via Lang's Ravine that passed a few hundred yards south of the R.N. Lea home.

As early as September 1878 far-sighted Emersonites had secured land in the Pembina Valley adjacent to the trail. A little more than a year later we find the first mention of a proposed line linking Emerson with all the settlements to the west developing along the Commission Trail. Soon the leading businessmen of the Gateway City were solidly supporters of this proposed railway from Emerson to the Turtle Mountains. In January 1880 a party of Emerson citizens head by Rev. L.O. Armstrong, the newly appointed rector of St. Lukes Church of England in Emerson, made a reconnaissance trip along the trail to the Turtle Mountains. Pembina Crossing was one of the districts that greatly impressed Mr. Armstrong and it was not long before he and most of his party had invested in land here. It was only a month later that a bill was introduced in the House of Commons asking for the incorporation of "The Emerson & Turtle Mountain Railroad."

Two months later it was withdrawn. There was absolutely no chance for the passage of this bill for, in March, Canadian Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald had signed over all rights to his political future to the success of the CPR monopoly. Therefore he saw every hint of opposition to this monopoly as an attack on his government's fundamental policies. For several reasons the Emerson and Turtle Mountain Railroad presented a particularly sinister threat to the well being of his railroad in Manitoba. In the first place Sir John A. feared that it would direct too much trade south out of the province via Emerson into the USA. Besides this, a line along the route of the Boundary Commission Trail would so effectively serve the transportation requirements of this section of the province that there would be no need for the transcontinental to construct feeder lines into this district.

Although forced to withdraw their bill for the incorporation of the Emerson & Turtle Mountain Railroad, Emerson entrepreneurs were not so easily to be put off and the following year another tactic was tried. Perhaps a charter could be secured from the provincial government. Mayor Carney, Emerson's representative in the Manitoba legislature, introduced a bill into the Manitoba house praying for the incorporation of the Emerson and Northwest Railroad. Like its predecessor, the Emerson & Turtle Mountain Railway, the board of directors of this proposed railroad included all of Emerson's leading citizens including Mr. Armstrong. Considerably less enthralled by the CPR monopoly than the federal legislators, the Manitoba government was

more cooperative than its federal counterpart and on 25 May 1881 the bill to incorporate the E & N.W. R. R was given provincial royal assent. The charter's preamble authorized the "construction of a railroad on a point on the east side of the Red opposite Emerson and then northwest to Mountain City, then northwest to a point on the boundary of Manitoba," then just two miles west of Clearwater.

Were Sir John A. and the financial giants of the CPR thwarted? Not likely, for it was one thing to secure a charter; quite another to secure finances. For a town hardly more than a thousand people, this was a mammoth project. Such an immense undertaking would take time. That was all Ottawa required. On 3 November 1882 the axe of the CPR fell on any present and all future opposition to its monopoly. The Dominion government passed railway legislation specifically declaring all existing and future *provincial* railway charters null and void. This effectively killed the Emerson and Northwest Railroad before a foot of track had been laid.

In the meantime another railroad had come and gone. "The Pembina Valley Railroad Company" had filed Notice of Application for Incorporation on 16 November 1881 "to build and operate a line of railway commencing at or near Calf Mountain and running westerly through the town of Pembina Crossing and Clearwater, and thence northwesterly to the westerly boundary of the Province of Manitoba." It got no father than these notices of intent in the *Manitoba Gazette*.

Pembina Crossing was certainly not going to get its railroad from any of these lines, but there was still another that perhaps offered better odds than any of the previous three. In 1879 a group of wealthy Winnipeg business men, including John Christian Schultz, a political crony of Sir John A. Macdonald, had secured a charter from the Dominion government to build a line "southwesterly from the Canadian Pacific in this city to the western Boundary of the province near Rock Lake." The official name of this railway was the Southwestern Manitoba Colonization Railroad, otherwise known as the Southwestern or "The Syndicate." In its edition of 12 August 1880, the *Emerson International* noted that it had been shown a letter stating "that the Southwestern Colonization Railroad had sold bonds for $5,500,000 in England and that the purchasers stipulated that the road was to run via Morris, Calf Mountain and Pembina Crossing."

Two months before this, agents of the line travelled throughout southern Manitoba urging municipalities to vote bonuses to the company to insure that it crossed their lands. On 5 June a meeting was held in Pembina Crossing, then located in Louise Municipality. Other meetings soon followed throughout the municipality and in December the ratepayers of Louise voted 170 to 53 in favour of a municipal bonus of $65,000 to be paid upon the completion of the line through their municipality.

On 16 June 1881 the *International* reported that the syndicate surveyors were a few miles northwest of Morris. On 28 June the survey party under the direction of a Mr. Garden left Darlingford, (this would be the original site of Darlingford at the Commission Trail crossing of the Little Pembina) "to look for a crossing of the Big Pembina." On the 9 July the *Manitoba Daily Times* noted that the surveyors had been at Pembina Crossing. From this point our understanding of the situation is a blank for a week later this same Winnipeg newspaper noted that the CPR survey party was camped at Archibald seven miles north of Pembina Crossing. What was the reason for this? We can only speculate. The fact of the matter is that from Archibald a line was surveyed down the Mary Jane Creek into the Pembina River Valley and then up the

Silver Springs Creek on the west side of the valley. When the line was constructed the following year, 1882, upon reaching the vicinity of Darlingford, instead of continuing on to the southwest towards Pembina Crossing, it struck northwest towards Archibald. The line was completed to the present site of Manitou in December of 1882.

Although railway prospects for Pembina Crossing now looked pretty bleak, there was still a flicker of hope. When the line was continued westward from Archibald, perhaps it might still swing to the south and cross the valley in the vicinity of the old ford on the Commission Trail. These dreams died in the spring of 1885 when grading of the right of way began at Archibald and headed, not south towards Pembina Crossing, but rather west towards the survey down the Mary Jane Creek. After six years that settled the matter: Pembina Crossing would never become a railway centre.

Of course, the history of Pembina Crossing is more than just the tale of its blighted love affair with railroad prospects. So far our narrative has really only told of the final fate of Pembina Crossing. The actual beginning of its story goes back to the time when the first traveller along the trail discovered the advantages of crossing the Pembina at this point. The early settlers of the district suggested that it was the ancient Mound Builders who first used this ford where low banks and a solid bottom made crossing relatively easy. For generations roving bands of Indian certainly did cross the Pembina here and perhaps La Verendrye also chose to do so in the fall of 1738 on his way to the Mandan country. It was also a favorite crossing place for the fur traders, trappers and buffalo hunters who frequented the region prior to settlement. The Palliser Expedition forded the river here on 1 August 1857.

Pioneers of the district were also of the opinion that the *name* Pembina Crossing went back many years before their own arrival in the district, likely to the days of the fur traders, but no record of the use of the name Pembina Crossing has thus far been found prior to 1879. Every reference before the establishment of the post office speaks rather of "the Commission Trail crossing of the Pembina River" or "the ford across the Pembina." The first bridge at the ford was constructed early in 1874 under the supervision of Major Flower of the Royal Engineers, a member of the Boundary Commission. A "substantial" structure, it was no doubt similar to that constructed over the Souris the previous year, a log platform resting on several log cribs filled with stones.

The first permanent settlers arrived in Township 2-9W in 1877. In 1878 settlement began on west of the valley and the following year grew to massive proportions. Traffic on the Commission trail was now sufficiently heavy to justify the establishment of a commercial enterprize near the ford and in July 1879 Mr. John E. Adamson, previously a resident of Nelsonville, but originally a native of Ireland, opened the first store in the district. Three months later the Pembina Crossing post office was opened in these same premises. Not long afterwards Mr. Adamson made his store into a stopping house. By 1878 only traces of the bridge built by the road construction crews of the Boundary Commission remained and the following year it was replaced. Its engineers were several settlers from the Paisley district of Ontario who had taken up land in the vicinity of Pilot Mound.

In January 1880 Mr. Adamson was the host for Rev. Armstrong and his party. Within months Pembina Crossing became a place of importance as it was envisioned as the midpoint of the

railroad linking Emerson and the Turtle Mountains. In April Mr. Armstrong, now the owner of the quarter section on which the stopping house was located, had a townsite surveyed here. The leading businessmen of Emerson were the principal founders of the new town although it was not long before wealthy citizens of Winnipeg also obtained an interest. In 1883 Mr. James Lowe, Dominion Secretary of Agriculture, obtained title to all of Pembina Crossing. The business centre for a large area, Pembina Crossing consisted of several residences, church, a school, the post office, two hotels, (both licensed, one with a saloon) a grist, saw and shingle mill, a butcher shop, a blacksmith shop and a general store selling everything from Sunday shoes to walking ploughs.

The very first years of the 1880s were boom years for the little town and a regular column from Pembina Crossing appeared in the *Emerson International*. One item describes the volume of business in the town as "remarkable" stating that its general store carried the largest stock of goods west of Emerson. The huge hotel built by the town's founder, Rev. Armstrong, boasted of having the first billiard table west of Emerson and the first organ in the district. It was a lively place, especially the hotels, full of activity, "with lots of singing every night," as one contemporary account states. In addition to its railroad connections, Pembina Crossing also dreamed of a steamboat line on the Pembina linking it with Emerson via St. Joe and Pembina, North Dakota.

The boom was brief. As soon as residents and speculators began to suspect that Pembina Crossing might never secure a railway connection, the little village rapidly began to fade away. In 1885, when the railroad crossed the valley seven miles north at the present site of La Riviere, the town was unquestionably finished. The post office closed that November and the following spring its first and last place of business shut up shop. Its first owner had been Mr. Adamson; its last proprietors were Dr. and Mrs. Matthew Young. Today all that remains of Pembina Crossing is St. Lukes Pembina Crossing Anglican Church on the exact site of a store built in June 1880. For almost thirty years the Pembina Crossing School constructed in 1885 was the historical highlight of the Manitou Centennial Park but, after being vandalized beyond repair, it was demolished.

In the 1890s the local paper, the *Manitou Mercury*, carried an article on Pembina Crossing. It begins, "There is no more historic site in southern Manitoba than the old crossing of the Pembina a few miles south of Manitou." Residents of the district suggest that this is perhaps as true today as it was in June 1897, a century ago.

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11. RUTTANVILLE
24-2-10W, Pembina Municipality
W. D. Ruttan or Service without Delusions

Many of the historic site along the Commission Trail dreamed great dreams; some had hopes of even "outrivalling the ambitious Brandon." Other were content to be just what they were, a stopping house, a store, a post office, an assembly hall or, in short, the service centre of their community. Ruttanville belonged to the latter group, those who provided the pioneers of the surrounding community with a business and community centre without indulging in any fanciful speculations of future grandeur. Today Ruttanville is commemorated by a marker erected by the community on the original site a half mile east of the junction of Provincial Truck Highway #324 and the Snowflake Highway #242. As such it perpetuates the memory its founder and sole

resident, William David Ruttan. In April 1879 he and his family left their native Adolphustown on Lake Ontario in the County of Lennox and Addington and made their way into the Pembina Mountains via the Boundary Commission Trail. Seven miles west of Pembina Crossing he selected SW 30-2-9W as his homestead and put up a sod shanty . In December 1880 this was replaced by the first frame building in the district. A neighbour, Mr. Augustus Buchanan, hewed poplar logs into the studding for this two-storey home 20 by 24; the siding and sheeting were hauled seventy-five miles from Emerson by team and wagon.

After being lengthened by a 12 foot, two-storey addition, the Ruttan home became the first store in the district and on 1 November 1880, the site of the Ruttanville post office. An upstairs assembly room was the location of most of the first church services, concerts and political meetings in the neighbourhood. After most of the traffic – and therefore the business – was siphoned off the Commission Trail by the completion of the railroad from Manitou through to Cherry Creek, (now Boissevain) Mr. Ruttan decided to sell out and relocate his business. In February 1886 he took down his building and moved - not to La Riviere six miles away but twice that distance into Manitou where it was rebuilt on Lot 6-111, today the site of Compton Agro. Here it became known as Ruttan's Cheap Store or the People's Store. In 1896 the original structure brought in from Ruttanville was replaced by the first of the full two-storey brick blocks erected on the east side of Main Street.

A good farmer and a fine merchant at Ruttanville, Mr. Ruttan soon became known as one of the most successful and progressive businessmen Manitou. In 1895 the telephone connection between his home and store were the first in the town. After building up a very successful trade, in 1899 he sold out his business to Mr. Charles R. Gordon, later owner and manager of the Charles Gordon Land Company of Winnipeg. Mr. Ruttan is recalled as a staunch Methodist, an avid supporter of the Liberal party and a forceful temperance advocate. Therefore it came as no great surprise to his fellow citizens when, after selling his store, he established a second newspaper in Manitou, one unashamedly reflecting his own opinions. Once again his unusual business abilities were evidenced when he quickly made the *Manitou Sun* a paying proposition in a town of less than a thousand residents. Then, in 1904, he sold his publication to Mr. Clarence Vermillyea and retired to Winnipeg where he passed away in April 1928 at the age of seventy-nine.

His wife, nee Phoebe Emma Norman, was well known for many years as a prominent member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and served as its provincial president. Her views deeply influenced another resident of Manitou at that time, a local schoolteacher, Miss Nellie Mooney, later Mrs. Nellie McClung. She died in Winnipeg in 1953 shortly after her 102nd birthday. She and Mr. Ruttan had been married in 1875, seventy-nine years earlier. During the second decade of this century their daughter Myrtle, Mrs. C. E. Armstrong, was widely regarded as one of the leading concert pianists of western Canada.

Following the departure of Mr. Ruttan from Ruttanville, the post office remained open for another six years in the home of Mr. Smith Joseph Vrooman, the acting postmaster. After it was closed in November 1892, the community was more and more frequently spoken of as the McKenzie district after the McKenzie School opened in September 1882 three miles to the southeast.

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12. TREBLES' HALFWAY HOUSE
22-2-11W, Louise Municipality
A Doorstop with a History

How did traveller along the Commission Trail know that they were half way to the Turtle Mountains? That is an easy question to answer. When they arrived at Section 22-2-11W nine miles beyond Ruttanville and four miles from Crystal City they were an even hundred miles from Emerson and halfway to the Turtle Mountains. In 1879 Mr. Samuel T. Treble, a former resident of Huron, Ontario, and one of the party brought out by the Hon. Wm. Greenway, though that the east half of this section was a good place to locate a homestead. Like many other pioneers, he erected his buildings as near as possible to the Commission Trail. Almost immediately Mr. Treble began extending his gracious hospitality to tired travellers who named their host's residence Treble's Halfway House. In later years the land on which it as located became known as the Centinel Farm.

In 1880 Mr. Treble returned to Ontario and brought back his wife, the former Phillipa Mary Amy Jory, and their small daughter Selena to Manitoba. Just a year later Mrs. Treble passed away. As soon as he was able to do so, Mr. Treble replaced his sod shack with a frame home. Not far from it he mounted a large bell that proved very useful to call hungry men in from the fields at mealtime. His daughter Selena became the wife of Mr. John Heber Beavis, "a red-haired painter and decorator" who had come out from England in 1893. They had five children, the youngest of whom is Mrs. J. Allan Beavis of Crystal City. Samuel Treble's bell has gone the ways of the world, but the clapper is still in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Beavis. This relic of the Centinel Farm and Treble's Halfway House is still in daily use – as a doorstop.

Latimer's Stopping Place
On the section adjoining Mr. Treble's farm to the east another pioneer also offered accommodations to many travellers along the Commission Trail, although more on a casual than a business basis. Thomas Latimer was the pioneer homesteader of 23-2-11E half way between Crystal City and Purves. His farm is also a historic site for, on 19 April 1880, it was the location of a meeting called to organize the Rural Municipality of Louise. The attendance was more than Mr. Latimer's the sod hut could accommodate so the meeting was conducted from the top of a snow bank at the east end of the house.

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13. CRYSTAL CITY
13-2-12W, Louise Municipality
A City Large In The Determination Of Its Inhabitants

Sweet Crystal, loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed.

The month and year were October 1878; the location – Alexandria Township, 2-6W; the distinguished visitor from Ontario? – the Honourable Thomas Greenway, until a few weeks before the member of the House of Commons for South Huron. His topic of conversation was his intention of establishing a settlement in southern Manitoba, one whose pioneers would be his Ontario family, friends, former constituents and neighbours. His hosts? – The John Ching family who had taken up land in this township the previous spring. Prior to their departure for Manitoba the Chings had been Mr. Greenway's constituents, neighbours, friends and fellow church members.

And where might this settlement be located?   Mr. Ching suggested a site along the Boundary Commission Trail in Township 2-12 some thirty-five miles west of Alexandria Township. This was the southern portion of the so-called Rock Lake Country. The northern portion had been spoken for that spring by the advance guard of a group of settlers from the Paisley district of Ontario, but the land between the trail and the boundary was still available. Mr. Ching would guide his friend to this district. Its most famous landmark was a prominent hill rising out of the prairie a mile north of the International Boundary. Today we know it as Star Mound, but it was then more commonly called Dry Dance Hill. The Missouri Trail crossed the southern corner of this district and to the northwest the Commission Trail forded a stream whose hard, shale bottom preserved the sparkling clarity of the springs from which it flowed so perfectly that it was known as Crystal Creek. From Mr. Ching's description this district sounded like just what Mr. Greenway was searching for and it was not long before Mr. Greenway saw for himself that it was every bit as good as Mr. Ching had said. This would be the future site of his colony.

And who was this Thomas Greenway? In 1844, at the age of eight, he had accompanied his parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Greenway, from their native Cornwall to Huron County, Ontario, where they settled near Exeter in Stephen Township, some thirty miles northwest of London. Here he was given whatever educational advantages the community had to offer and when these were exhausted he went to work on his father's farm. He remained there until he was twenty-one when he became the owner and operator of a general store in nearby Centralia. His marked success in business prompted his friends and neighbours to nominate him for public office. In 1867, at the age of twenty-nine, he ran for the office of reeve of the township, won easily and held the position for ten years. Five years later he accepted the Conservative nomination for the riding of South Huron and although defeated, ran again in 1874. In spite of the fact that in this election the Conservative Party was swept from office as a result of the Pacific Scandal, Mr. Greenway was defeated by a small margin. The Liberal candidate, Hon. M. C. Cameron, took the seat by a few votes but when the election was declared void on charges of bribery, Mr. Greenway won the subsequent by-election by acclamation and took his seat as a member of the Conservative opposition led by Sir John A. Macdonald.

However, as a man of powerful independence, he was by no means a slavish follower of "The Chief" and attacked or supported the Conservative position as his conscience dictated. This type of political nonalignment was virtually unheard of in that era and his enraged Tory constituents vowed to unseat him in the next election whatever the cost. In 1878 he officially terminated his support for Sir John A. and declined the party nomination in favour of his former opponent, Mr. Cameron. The September 1878 was a landslide for Sir John A. and his Conservative party across the country, but not in South Huron where the Grit candidate, Mr. Cameron carried the riding. Now out of politics, Mr. Greenway immediately turned his attention to an area of activity that

was the prime item of conversation and interest in virtually every Ontario household, the advisability of moving to "the West." A natural-born leader, Mr. Greenway was the obvious choice to coordinate the establishment of an Ontario settlement in southern Manitoba. Returning home late in 1878 after six weeks in Manitoba, Mr. Greenway immediately set to work organizing the Rock Lake Colonization Society and spent the winter attending to the multitude of details necessary to establish this colony.

Early in April 1879, Mr. Greenway and the first of three hundred settlers he brought out that season arrived in Emerson on their way to the greener fields of the Rock Lake Country. The N1/2 13-2-12W was selected as the centre of the settlement, the townsite of Crystal City and on 9th April Mr. Greenway registered his purchase of this land in the Nelsonville land office. The south half of the same section became the homestead of Mr. Wm. Parr. In its edition of 27 August, the Manitoba Daily Times carried a letter from a reader in the newly established district:

The city is not large save in the determination of its inhabitants, having only one house erected yet, but there are a number of families in tents who will have houses before winter. Rev. A. Stewart, B.A., sent by the Methodist Missionary Society of Canada, reached the scene of his labours only three weeks ago, but logs are already out for his church, which will be erected immediately.

Rev. Stewart was not the only Methodist preacher to take up his work in the district that month. August 1879 also saw the arrival of Mr. Greenway's brother, Rev. John Greenway, of Pawaukee, a thriving town near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was associated with the Bible Christian Church, the branch of the Methodists to which the Greenways belonged in Cornwall.

The arrival of Crystal City's first ministers was soon followed by another important dimension of civilization, the establishment of a post office with Mr. Parr as the postmaster, an appointment that took effect on 1 October 1879. Two months later, the first provincial election in the newly organized constituency of Mountain took place. Mr. Greenway was the victor in this contest and thus became a Member of the Provincial Parliament. This election is of special significance in the history of Manitoba because it was the third, and last, based on the original terms of the Manitoba Act of 1870. By the terms of this legislation, representation in the Manitoba Legislature was based, not on population, but on racial origin. Thus in the twenty-four seat Legislature there were to be twelve members of French origin and twelve of English origin. This provision all but obliterated party lines until 1883 when they were first used in the Manitoba election campaign of that year. In the legislature, Mr. Greenway soon came to be viewed as the leader of the opposition to Premier Norquay's railroad policy, who saw it as a sellout to the CPR monopoly.

The development of the Crystal City district during its first that first year is touched upon in the December 1879 Annual Report of the Dufferin Immigration agent, Mr. Jean E. Tetu. His summary of Township 2-12W notes:

This township was settled last spring by Thomas Greenway, M.P.P. for that electoral division. About 33 buildings have been put up; one store and a bridge across Crystal Creek is being constructed as well as a large hotel. A portion of the township has been surveyed into town lots under the name of Crystal City. It is a very fine locality, distant about 80 miles from West Lynne.

Upwards of 1,000 acres have been broken. A post office has been opened at Crystal City. No settlement in this district has progressed more rapidly than this one. Its promoter, Mr. Greenway, deserves much credit for the manner in which he is carrying out his enterprize.

In 1880 businessmen began to establish themselves in the new "city." Among the first was Mr. Robert Rollins who opened a store; Mr. Robertson, the district's first blacksmith and Mr. J. Johnson, proprietor of the Brunswick Hotel. That year's Dominion Day was celebrated with a "grand prairie social" in the new town, a festival highlighted by the ringing of the new church bell, (the first in southern Manitoba, it was believed) a gift of Mr. Greenway. Throughout the day it peeled out across the happy throng from the belfry of the newly completed Methodist church. That November the Crystal City School District was formed and by July 1882, it could boast of fifty scholars drawn from a population of some two hundred people. Obviously, Crystal City was a young community.

The year 1881 brought further expansion and more improvements. Mr. Greenway had returned to Ontario in December of the previous year and in March 1881 he was back, having completed arrangements for the purchase of the machinery for a mill in Crystal City. In May Messrs. Britton and Daly completed a large two-storey hotel. On 1 September Thomas Greenway and Company published the first issue of the Rock Lake Herald. Its successor, the Sentinel Courier - still in operation - is the oldest newspaper in southern Manitoba west of Emerson.

Our friend "Buckboard" had comments both positive and negative to share with his readers after his visit to the district in June 1881:
Approaching CRYSTAL CITY, the townsite of Mr. Greenway, the founder of the colony, we met with an obstacle called a bridge, (a misnomer) which spans Crystal Creek, and we now had the choice of climbing over the bridge, which has approaches to it similar to a good high rail fence, not quite, but very near perpendicular; on crossing the dirty creek which belies its present name of Crystal Creek most outrageously, in it being very muddy and rather alkali, and fairly stinking when stirred up, consequently we had to give our preference to crossing on the bridge. Leading the horses over carefully, we drove up to the store and post office kept by Mr. Rollins, who appears to be doing a very good business, quite a number of people were here congregated waiting for the mail, which was delayed owing to the bad roads.... Crystal City has not yet got out of its swaddling clothes, but it is making strenuous efforts in its attempts to strike out into vigourous manhood. It is settled by people of perseverance and the town proprietor is a man of energy. A mill is now being built and will be completed for the next season's harvest, the country around is also well settled, there being no less than four surveyed townsites, (independent of such common things as farms) all in easy distance of each other, viz: Pilot Mound, Preston, Crystal City and Clearwater. However, railroad communications will decide the supremacy of these youngsters or rival places. We wish them all and their people success and prosperity. There are resident at Crystal City two clergymen, Methodist and Presbyterian, also the residence of Mr. Greenway, M.P.P., one general store, and blacksmith shop and a few dwelling houses.

For an insight into Crystal City's growth to 1884 let us turn to Henderson's North West Gazetteer and Directory for that year.
CRYSTAL CITY
A post office in Sec. 13, Tp. 2, R. 12.
Mail semi-weekly from Archibald, distance 28 miles. Pop. 50.

Baker, Wm., hotel
Carriggan, Thos., contractor
Duff, D.W., carpenter
Kouk, W.A.C., & Co., hardware
Lundy, C.R., gristmill
McNamee, James, shoemaker
Riddle, Dr., & Co., druggists
Rollins, R., postmaster and general store
Rollins, T., livery
Secord, Chas., general store
Smallcombe, Wm., tailor
Sullivan, Robert, blacksmith
Treleaven, J.G., harness maker
Tweed, W.E., dentist

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14. CLEARWATER
16-2-12W, Louise Municipality
The Long River Depot Or Outrivalling Even The Ambitious Brandon

As might be expected on a transportation route, many of the townsites along the Commission Trail have fascinating connections with each other. For example, Mountain City was founded by a prominent citizen of Emerson; a citizen of Alexandria guided the founder of the Crystal City settlement to that district and the founders of Darlington and the Turtle Mountain Land Office previously were prominent citizens of other locations on the trail, the latter was from Emerson, the former from Mountain City. In the same way, the history of Clearwater is associated with Pembina Crossing to the east and Turtle Mountain City to the west. All three had the same founder and principal owner, the Rev. L.O. Armstrong, rector of the Church of England parish in Emerson, St. Luke's.

Rev. Louis Olivier Armstrong's association with southern Manitoba was a short one – from 1879 when he arrived in Emerson from Montreal until 1883 when he returned. However during this four-year period he played a key role in the development of a considerable section of the province. He deserves to be remembered. This pioneer was born in 1850, studied at Huron College in Kingston, Ontario from 1870 until 1873 and was ordained to the ministry of the Church of England in Quebec. He served in Montreal where he married the daughter of a well-known Church of England priest, Rev. R. Lindsey. It was through his father-in-law that he had his first contacts with immigration affairs and, in association with him, assisted in the settlement of two or three townships in eastern Canada and the sending of some one hundred and thirty people to the Great Saskatchewan district. It was also through Rev. Lindsey that he became friends with Rev. J. Bridger of St. Nicholas Church, Liverpool, a man of considerable personal influence in England and the chaplain appointed to minister to the emigrants leaving via that port.

When Rev. Armstrong arrived in western Canada in July 1879, Rev. Armstrong's personal observations soon confirmed his assumption that Church of England pioneers were a small

minority in southern Manitoba. A man of action, within months of becoming rector of St. Luke's, he was hard at work doing something to alter this situation. He felt certain that many of England's prosperous tenant farmers, as soon as they became convinced of its potential, would welcome an opportunity to establish themselves in western Canada. Therefore Rev. Armstrong began his campaign to attract Church of England settlers to southern Manitoba by putting together a series of lectures or presentations and forwarding these to his brother clergymen in England.

From Emerson on 5 August 1879 he wrote to Rev. Bridger who passed his letter on to the London Times, the Standard and several other leading papers in whose columns it appeared. It was not a long epistle but it had considerable impact coming as it did just when the attention of agriculturalists in the Mother Country was focused on western Canada. Much of this interest was generated by an invitation extended by the Hon. J.P. Pope, Minister of Agriculture, for England to send a delegation of prominent farmers to the Canadian Northwest. Rev. Armstrong's widely circulated letter read in part:
I have been here only one month, having come 2000 miles east; but I am so delighted with the country and climate that I am determined to write and see if we could not induce English Church tenant farmers to come out here...Emerson is the gateway of Manitoba on the frontier next to Minnesota. I would receive them and direct them to suitable lands. A man that can command 200 Pounds Sterling {then the equivalent of approximately $1000] on his arrival in Emerson has every earthly security of becoming wealthy in five or ten years at the outside...Before leaving Montreal I studied very carefully the advantages obtainable by going to New Zealand, Australia or the Northwest. I judged that the balance was in favour of this country and I am now pretty certain I was right.

A few months later several leading Emerson citizens proposed they should build a railroad from their city across the Red and westward along the Boundary Commission Trail to Turtle Mountain. Rev. Armstrong saw this enterprize as a perfect compliment to his plans and he immediately became one of the leading supporters and promoters of the scheme. Early in January 1880, he left on a three-week tour along the trail west as far as the Turtle Mountain. With him travelled four other Emerson citizens, Mr. S. Austin, a land surveyor and later proprietor of Stephen, the original townsite of Morden two miles east of its present location; Mr. Wm. Beech, a land agent; Mr. A.H. Poston, and Mr. J. Boyd, both Emerson district farmers. Immediately upon their return, Rev. Armstrong published an account of their trip for circulation in Great Britain. In March of that year, after he was forced to resign from the ministry for reasons of health, he took up full time immigration work. In June he was appointed a Dominion Land Commissioner and accompanied Prof. Selwyn's party to the Souris coalfields. By this time he had acquired considerable property in southern Manitoba and was either the sole or partial owner of three townsites, Pembina Crossing, Clearwater and Turtle Mountain City. Later he added to his interests another townsite in the Turtle Mountain district by the name of Stanley and land in the vicinity of Archibald, (the townsite northwest of Manitou) and in Manitoba City, the original location of Manitou.

In June 1881 Mr. Armstrong began his employment with the CPR that would last until his retirement in January 1930 when he was eighty years of age. His first appointment was as Land Commissioner and agent for the Southwestern Colonization Railroad then being surveyed from Winnipeg to Gretna via Rosenfeld and from Rosenfeld west towards Manitoba City. He was also an associate of the British and Northwest Colonization Company and his ad in the Emerson paper

noted he had "Farm and City Property for Sale."   Some idea of his success in business may be gauged by the fact that when he moved from Emerson to Winnipeg he rented the former home of Dr. John Christian Schultz, one of the city's most prominent citizens and later the province's Lieut. -Governor.

It was late in March 1880 that Winnipeg and Emerson papers announced "Clearwater is the name of the new town to be started 3 miles west of Crystal City."   Less than a week later further details were given. These journals explained that in January Mr. Armstrong and his Emerson friends had made their trip along the Boundary Commission trail in a large, closed-in van drawn by four horses. Just such a van was to become the first building on the Clearwater townsite. Seven by twelve feet, it weighed 920 pounds and was heated by a sheet iron stove. Upon its arrival at the new townsite, the papers explained, it could simply be lifted off its sleighs and turned into a temporary residence. At the time of his March visit, Armstrong noted that Mr. Alexander McLaren, a pioneer of 1878, was in the process of putting up a frame building for a stopping house. Mr. McLaren was to become part owner of Mr. Armstrong's townsite. In April 1880 it was surveyed and in October the Manitoba Daily Times noted, "Mr. McLaren, who keeps a popular stopping house at Clearwater, is building a stone stable 50' x 40'. He has a valuable limestone quarry on his farm."

November saw the establishment of the Clearwater School District #106 with James Laidlaw, Alexander McLaren and John Coulthard as trustees and Mr. Armstrong as secretary. In December of that year Winnipeg papers reported that the Coulthard brothers had gone to the Turtle Mountain to secure timber for their flourmill, a facility which would have three sets of millstones. These brothers, John and Thomas, had been farmers and millers in Glencoe, Middlesex County, Ontario prior to their coming to the district. By December of the following year the mill was operational. For several months there had been a hotly contested race between Clearwater and Pembina Crossing. Which town would have their mill running full blast first? When the Coulthards won, Mr. McLaren hosted two hundred people to an oyster supper in the newly completed Clearwater schoolhouse in celebration of the grand victory.

As the year 1881 rolled around, business in Clearwater was booming. Mr. Armstrong, in partnership with a Mr. T. Trowe, proposed to erect a $4000 hotel. If the reports in the newspapers were correct he could well afford to do it. In December he had sold $4000 worth of Crystal City town lots to eastern bankers. This brought the total number disposed of to one hundred and fifty. Thus there was no question that 1881 had been a good year but it was 1882 that brought the really big boom to Clearwater. Writing to the Manitoba Daily Times early in March, a resident noting with pride that the Land Registry Office had been moved from Crystal City to Clearwater. He went on to explain, "We entertain the proud anticipation of outrivalling even the ambitious Brandon."   Why?   Because they were "expecting the facilities of two competing railroads!"   At the end of the month the same paper reported "Crystal City and Clearwater, once four miles apart, are now within a mile of each other owing to the mania which prevails in regards to selling town lots."   And how were they sold?   By advertising them, of course:

CLEARWATER
The Crossing of the South-Western
Railroad and Boundary Commission

Trail, over the River Cypress where
a costly Bridge has been erected
CLEARWATER
is celebrated for the lime burnt
there, and for the valuable Limestone
Quarry in the centre of the town
CLEARWATER
has a very valuable waterpower
upon which a mill is now being
erected. It is noted for having the best water
in Southern Manitoba
CLEARWATER
does a large general business, and is
a splendid market for Agricultural Machinery
CLEARWATER
is situated in the centre of 100
square miles of the Best Agricultural
Land in South Western Manitoba
CLEARWATER LOTS
will be immediately upon the
market for the first time
J. F. RUTTAN & CO.
Real Estate Agent
Main St., Winnipeg, 3 doors south
of the Post Office

This advertisement appeared in various Winnipeg papers as well as in the Emerson International in July 1881. It was the last named which carried another article about Clearwater that same month:

CLEARWATER
From an occasional correspondent)

On the first day of the seventh month which is also called July, it being the time set apart by the Canadians to congregate themselves throughout the land to make their obeisance to their institutions, a great multitude assembled at a place called Clearwater, which is situated on the River Cypress, and is a city of much repute on account of the large traffic which is carried on in all manner of merchandize; also for its valiant men and comely daughters. And the chief ruler of the city made an oration, and when he had finished speaking, the people shouted and said, "Great is Clearwater, which shall be the chief city of the West!"   And when the banquet was spread all the assembly partook thereof for the space of two hours. They then arose, and the young men being willing to show their prowess, engaged in all manner of athletic games. And the Judges awarded them prizes in the following order, each man according to his struggle or agility.

Men's Race: 1st, James McNamee; 2nd, D.G. McIntyre; 3rd, A. McTavish
Boy's Race under 15: 1st, Hugh Cauchlin; 2nd, John Cauchlin; 3rd James Widmeyer
Boy's Race under 10: 1st Thomas Cauchlin; 2nd, - McIntyre
Running long jump: 1st, D.G. McIntyre; 2nd, A. McTavish
Putting the Stone: 1st, W. H. Burbick; 2nd, A. McTavish; 3rd, D.G. McIntyre
Running high jump: 1st C. Hogarth; 2nd, Thos. Cauchin

Running hop, skip and jump: 1st, James McNamee; 2nd, C. Hogarth; 3rd Thomas Campbell

Standing jump: 1st, James McNamee; 2nd, W. Gilfus

Three Jumps: 1st, W. Burdick; 2nd W. Gilfus; 3rd, C. Hogarth

In the evening a baseball match was played between the young men of Preston and Clearwater in which the former was defeated three to one.

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15. CARTWRIGHT
34-2-12W, Roblin Municipality
Perpetuating The Fame Of The Great Mixer And Muddler

Politics played such a large role in the early history of southern Manitoba that it comes as no surprise that some of its place names commemorate major figures of the provincial or federal political arena. Cartwright, the only town along the Boundary Commission Trail whose name was decided by the flip of a coin, is one of these. It perpetuates the memory of Sir Richard Cartwright, Minister of Finance during the Liberal regime of Prime Minister Alexander McKenzie from 1874 until 1878.

Originally the settlement was the name of the stream flowing through this part of the country, Badger Creek. Perhaps this name goes back to the time of the fur traders who were able to secure a good supply of badger pelts from this vicinity. These were valued for their stiff hair then used in the manufacture of the best quality shaving brushes. The first settlers reached Township 2-12W in 1878. Among the pioneers of the following year was Mr. J. C. Waugh who filed on the S1/2 18-2-14W in June of that year. By August this gentleman (one of the partners of the Muir and Waugh Company of 546 Main Street, Winnipeg, agents for all types of mill machinery) had ten acres broken and was considering putting up some type of accommodations for travellers along the trail. By January 1880 he already had the stopping house in operation, the first in the district.

A visitor of June 1881 provides us with the following account of his visit to this district:
The valley of   BADGER CREEK is in itself almost similar to the Cypress, but the stream contains a far greater body of water with a more rapid current...In the valley is situated the house of Mr. Waugh occupied by J. McKibbon who has rented the place from Mr. Waugh for the purpose of entertaining travellers on the road. The stream has a stony hard bottom, rather rough, but still a good ford. It is a beautiful camping spot and contains the natural qualifications for its owner becoming proprietor of a town in the Northwest. The stream, full of fish with several good mill sites, runs through a splendid agricultural district with a large supply of timber within easy distance. It needs nothing but the surveyor's stakes, the mill and the town plan to make WAUGH TOWN on the banks of the Badger come into prominence amongst the ambitious sites of the Northwest...The next day we spent with Mr. McKibbon in viewing his farm, 40 acres of which was under crop. Specimens of the soil at different depths were procured by my companion to show in distant lands.

Although a businessman of wide repute throughout Manitoba, (in 1881 Mr. Waugh even contested the riding of Turtle Mountain, unsuccessfully, against Mr. J.P. Alexander) it was not his

townsite in the valley that became the location of the first town in the district. That honour belonged to more powerful, eastern interests who paid the district a visit in August 1881. One of those visitors was Sir Richard Cartwright, a major figure of the Canadian political scene for well over a quarter century. Born in Kingston, Ontario, in 1835, he entered the federal parliament in 1865 at the age of thirty as a Conservative. Later as member for the riding of Centre Huron and mightily dissatisfied with the leadership of Sir John A. Macdonald, he allied himself with the Liberals. The defeat of the Conservatives in 1874 as a result of the Pacific Scandal brought the Liberals to power and made their leader, Alexander McKenzie, prime minister. As a member of the opposition, Sir Richard's gifts had earned him the title "the Rupert of Debate;" now as a member of the government, all his skills were called upon to defend the policies of the government, particularly their refusal to press ahead with the building of the intercontinental railway.

During the early 1870s the constituency bordering Sir Richard's riding was South Huron, held by his close friend and political ally, M.C. Cameron. In February 1875 Mr. Cameron was unseated and the riding won by a Conservative, Thomas Greenway, whose served until 1878. In the liberal landslide of that year Cameron secured his seat once more – Mr. Greenway had declined to run and had instead gone into business with Mr. Cameron. Mr. Cartwright lost his seat to a Conservative. During the spring and summer of 1879 Mr. Greenway brought several hundred settlers to southern Manitoba and early that winter became the first member for the riding in which his settlement was located. The following year Sir Richard and the Hon. Mr. Cameron made their way to Manitoba to see how their former colleague was making out on the Canadian prairies. This was Sir Richard's first visit to Manitoba. The province's Liberals regarded him as much of a hero as did their eastern counterparts and Grits and Tories alike acknowledged his superb abilities as a debater. However there were other aspects of his personality and disposition that were not so graciously commented upon in the media. A "garrulous pernicious 'cussedness' of disposition.... a disposition impervious to all sentiments of modesty," was the terminology chosen by the Manitoba Daily Times. In December 1882 this fervently Conservative journal informed its readers that Sir Richard was regarded as "a semi-divine figure" both by himself and by his political supporters. Remembering all this, it is amusing to read that upon his arrival in Emerson the local immigration agent mistook the haughty Sir Richard for a well-heeled British immigrant!

Messrs. Cartwright and Cameron made their way along the Commission Trail as far as Crystal City. Here they were guests of Mr. Greenway who guided them as far west as what is now Saskatchewan. As a result of this tour, both Sir Richard and Mr. Cameron invested in large quantities of land in the vicinity of Badger Creek where, according to the Emerson International, Mr. Cameron intended to lay out a townsite. Among the properties they secured was the N1/2 18-2-12W, the homestead of Mr. C. McKibbin, and the south half of the next section to the north, 19-2-12W, the property of Levi David Kean and George McFarlane. It was the acquisition of these properties which moved the 13 August 1881 edition of the Manitoba Daily Times to report, "The name of the Great Mixer and Muddler is to be perpetuated in a townsite on Badger Creek. Sir Richard owns some land in the immediate vicinity of Cartwright."

According to local legend, for a while there was a possibility that the new town might have another name. It was Mr. McKibbin's wish to have the site named "Caledon" after his former home in Ireland while Mr. Kean, Sir Richard's agent in the district and a partner of the Winnipeg

Real Estate firm of McFarlane and Kean, naturally favoured the choice of his employer's name. According to this old story, Mr. McKibbon suggested tossing a penny and when it came up "heads" for Mr. Kean, the choice was settled for "Cartwright."

The most notable advance for the year 1882 was the opening of a post office in May with Mr. T.S. Menary as postmaster. The winter of 1882-1883 brought another dimension of civilization to the town, the replacement of the ferry operated by Sandy Waldie and Harry Thomas with a substantial bridge. Erected some distance downstream from the original ford by the proprietors of the townsite, its primary purpose was to divert traffic along the Boundary Commission Trail to their property. The timbers for it were sawn in Mr. Waugh's mill at the west end of Rock Lake six miles north of the townsite.

Henderson's Directory for 1884 provides us with an excellent synopsis of the town's development:
CARTWRIGHT
A post settlement in Tp. 2, R. 14, West. Mail twice a week from Manitou, distance 46 miles which is also the nearest railway, telegraph and express office; there is good water power here on Badger Creek; has Presbyterian and Methodist churches and public school. Pop. 50.

Clark, Andrew C., hotel
Johnson, A.L., of Johnson and Macolmson
Johnson and Macolmson, general store
Keele & Rutherford, wagon shop
McKibben, A., harness maker
Melvin, James, blacksmith
MENARY, T.S., postmaster and general store
Robertson, John, Temperance hotel
Rutherford, Thos., wagon maker
Stirton, J.E. pump maker
Sutherland, H.M., painter
Wallace, John, contractor and builder
Watts, Morris, clerk

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16. PANCAKE LAKE
6-2-16W, Turtle Mountain Municipality
Supper Along The Trail Or Six Men In A Bed (With A Chair On The Cookstove

Twelve miles west of Cartwright the Commission Trail skirted the south shore of Pancake Lake. Today Highway #3 follows exactly the same route and most travellers driving by either know the origin of its name or can guess it; some early visitor to the district stopped here for a pancake supper. However, as to the details whether they were buffalo hunters, surveyors, members of the Boundary Commission, North West Mounted Police or early settlers, the stories vary. One local history states that Mr. Harry Coulter, a pioneer of the district, christened this lake as he sat on its shores enjoying an evening meal of flapjacks cooked over a fire of wolf willow scrub.

During the late 1870s, when the Commission Trail was becoming the great highway to the Turtle

Mountains, the section across the treeless plain between the Badger Creek Crossing and La Riviere's stopping house at Long River in the shelter of the Turtle Mountain was the most open and the loneliest part of the route. During his trip to the Turtle Mountains early in 1880, Mr. Armstrong realized that the total lack of shelter and accommodations of any kind along this twenty-mile section would be a major inconvenience to travellers. So, upon his return, he set about to remedy this situation. In February he went to Ottawa where he contacted Mr. John Lowe, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture in Ottawa, (quite possibly a personal friend) and by the end of the month he had secured from him authorization "to place portable settlers' houses near Pancake Lake in the Turtle Mountain Country."

When he was back home in Emerson, the 11th March 1880 edition of the International announced, under the heading; "Stopping Place for Immigrants" the following:
From Rev. L.O. Armstrong, who has just returned from Ottawa, we learn that the Government intends to put up four portable houses capable of accommodating about 50 people, at Pancake Lake on the Commission Trail to the Turtle Mountains between Badger Creek and the Mountain. The houses will be free for use of immigrants and light and fuel will be provided. It is hoped that immigrants will not injure the houses nor abuse their privileges.

At the bottom of the page, readers were provided with the following additional information:
FREIGHT LINE TO TURTLE MOUNTAIN – Rev. L.O. Armstrong, who is doing so much towards settling up that "land flowing with milk and honey" - the Turtle Mountain Country - among other proposed measures for the convenience of immigrants and settlers, intends to organize a freight line to the Turtle Mountain Country so that settlers may have their freight delivered safely at their destination without trouble and worry to themselves and at the least expense possible. It will be a boon to the people of Southern Manitoba and a 'boom' for Emerson, and a good thing in every way.

The hopes of the International that travellers along the trail would not injure these convenient hostels in any way were quickly disappointed. By July Mr. Armstrong had to write to the department "asking for the appointment of a guardian for the portable houses at Pancake Lake" which it had erected at the then-considerable cost of $534.00.

> Emerson
> July 20 / 80

Sir,

The Government portable houses at Pancake Lake absolutely need protection by a guardian. The roof of one was partly taken away and flooring from another.

Upon hearing of this, I put a man there at my own expense paying him $2 per day; the place is so lonely he would not stay for less. I owe him two months wages. I thought he might take in enough furnishing meals, etc. to pay part of his expenses, in this I am disappointed. I must let him go, as I cannot afford such an expense.

I nearly lost my life there last winter. These houses are absolutely necessary. They are there but they will certainly be destroyed if not looked after. For $25 per month a settler might be induced to homestead there and look after the houses and keep a supply of fuel on hand.

I know the Minister objected to putting a guardian there and on this account I have borne the expense myself. I think that an appointment of any poor man should date back to April 1st. People, though very glad to use the houses, will not pay anything for their use.

> I have the honor to remain,

Respectfully yours,
L.O. Armstrong
Dominion Land Guide

These portable stopping houses served for more than a year. In July 1881 an eastbound traveller from La Riviere's reported:

The next day our stock of horse flesh was increased by an additional pony of more respectable appearance than the "Shaganappy" and with an early start and the kind wishes of our host and hostess, we took the trail for Clearwater, arriving there at 11 o'clock, after driving through one of the most severe and drenching storms it was ever my misfortune to be caught out in. We had made some stops on the road, one at Pancake Lake where we fully appreciated, on account of the day, the benefits of the government hut. We found it occupied on our arrival by another traveller who was making himself comfortable under the circumstances by enjoying a hot bowl of tea.

By September 1881 these "portable houses" had disappeared, (was there only one left by July?) but two months later the Manitoba Daily Times reported that a stopping place had been established at Pancake Lake. The following letter written in 1935 by a pioneer of Old Deloraine recalls an incident that took place fifty-three years before at this location:

To the Editor, Deloraine Times;

Recently I saw an account of the death of Sam Vodden in the Times, which set me thinking of the first time we met. It was on March 7th, 1882.

Mr. Vodden had been up to his homestead, (the land now occupied by Mr. Jack Adolph) at the west end of Turtle Mountain and was returning to the Pembina Mountains, after the big snowstorm of 1882.

I was on my way to get the mail at Crystal City, having the contract for carrying the Land Office mail every two weeks between that place and the Land Office in Newcomb's Valley, Sec. 19-2-22 West.

Mr. Vodden had followed my track and caught up with me at a point 1 1/2 miles south of Pancake Lake, where we were intending to stop for the night.

I had wandered away from the trail on account of the snow being so deep, and was upon a knoll trying to see if I could get sight of the stopping place when Sam called to me and wanted to know if I knew where I was. I replied I thought we were going in the right direction and if we could find a corner stake of the land survey we would be able to locate the log cabin at the lake, and were fortunate enough to find one, and we had to turn a right angle to the north and soon were glad to see a break in what appeared like a vast ocean of frozen billows. We arrived at camp just as the sun went down and were glad we did not have to sleep out in a snow drift when it was twenty below zero, as we had expected to do at one time.

At the stopping place we met James Fleming and M.D. Wright, who had gone to Emerson with wagons the last week in February, intending to get loads that they had left there in '81, but they had to return that long journey of 175 miles with little or nothing.

We also met the late John Nelson and Byron Fraser of Pilot Mound and also a Mr. Grover, who was sent out to register land in the Melita district. The latter was not very well dressed for the weather, as he had on leather shoes without overshoes and a hard hat. The only way he could get warm was to set his chair on top of the cook stove. Six of us lay down crosswise on one bed and went to sleep with all our outdoor clothes on.

The next morning Mr. Vodden and I had the benefit of the trail made by the wagons of Messrs. Fleming and Wright, and arrived at Crystal City in good time. This storm commenced on the 3rd of March, 1882, and lasted three days and what rivers of water it made when it went away! It would be a fine thing if it were repeated again, especially at Deloraine this year.

J. P. Morrison

At the present time we do not know the exact location of this log stopping place or how long this establishment was in existence. However, by 1887 the center of the surrounding community was no longer this log structure but a post office opened some three miles west at Smiths Hill. A school was organized in this district and, like the post office, took its name from a pioneer resident, Mr. William Smith.

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17. WAKOPA
29-1-18W, Turtle Mountain Municipality
The Turtle Mountain Depot Or The First White Father Along The Trail

If Mr. Nelson Bedford of Stodderville Township was the first to permanently establish himself in the vicinity of the trail, Mr. Bernard B. La Riviere has the distinction of being the first to make his home directly on the trail. Two sources provide us with a wealth of information concerning the fascinating life of this remarkable pioneer. The first is the December 1879 report of the Dufferin immigration agent, Mr. J. E. Tetu.

At the same time the North American Boundary Commission established a post here for supplies. The following year, 1874, Mr. B.B. La Riviere, formerly well known to the commercial community of Ottawa, bought from the British Commissioner, Major Cameron, a log building, known as the log depot, and established a trading post in connection with a farm.

Mr. La Riviere was the first white man who, with his family, settled in the locality, and to him is due the honour of having laid down some 150 miles on the frontier the evidences of colonization in 1874, when, at that time, settlers would not venture beyond old settlements.

...Mr. La Riviere, though much occupied with his business, observed that the short and succulent grass of the country indicated a good region for grazing and settlement. He, therefore, directed his attention to stock raising, and did so well that, beginning in 1874 with four cows, two were subsequently added, and two pairs of oxen - he now counts as a result sixty-one head of cattle, the size and condition of which are perfectly astonishing, proving that his observation was correct; at least, so far as the grazing qualities of the district were concerned. The straightforward and generous way in which Mr. La Riviere dealt with the Indians has resulted in their being very honest; only once, the first year of his arrival, did he have any trouble, and this was when they stole a part of his goods. After the affair happened he communicated with the Lt.-Governor of Manitoba, Mr. Morris, who addressed the Indians a letter, in which he told them that, although they were strangers, yet they would be allowed to remain there so long as they would respect the lives and property of all the settlers without exception.

As Mr. La Riviere is a businessman and well acquainted from experience with Indian character, and being a man of some sagacity, he got up a meeting of the Indians of the district, at which the Calumet [peace pipe] was smoked and passed around. He had them organize themselves; causing them to elect a "Hogama" (Chief) and warriors, etc. To encourage them he furnished them with means and instruction, lent them oxen and taught them how to till the land, gave them seed corn and potatoes, and generally assisted them.

This generous proceeding had the desired effect, and ever since then these Indians have been law-abiding and honest; and there is not a single instance where a white man or half-breed has suffered by their acts, so that immigrants have nothing to fear in pushing forward to that attractive district.

The second of these most excellent primary sources is an interview conducted by a reporter of the Manitoba Daily Times early in July 1880. It appears in the edition of 7 July as follows:

FIRST TURTLE MOUNTAIN SETTLER
Experiences of a Former Citizen of Ottawa

Our reporter yesterday had an interview with Mr. B.B. La Riviere, of Turtle Mountain, and formerly a prominent citizen of Ottawa, the capital of the Dominion. This gentleman in the year 1869, being desirous of pushing his fortune, left Ottawa with a view of locating in the North-West and proceeded direct to St. Paul, where he remained for a short time. Not satisfied, however, with staying there, he became imbued with a notion that he would go further North-West and ply the vocation of a fur trader, and to this end proceeded as far as Crookston, [Minnesota] where he opened a general store, being the first to do so in this now rising town. Here Mr. La Riviere soon amassed A PRINCELY FORTUNE, for besides trading with the Indians he also speculated in land, and the immigration fever having just then commenced and also the Northern Pacific Railway, fortune seemed to smile upon the hero of our story. But in the hey-day of success Mr. La Riviere was destined to meet with reverses. Rivals in business brought a charge against him that he was selling liquor to Indians on a reservation not far from Crookston, and as a result of a summary conviction he had all property confiscated, store and contents, and a large supply of furs, and among the latter 30,000 muskrats valued at 30 cents each. He estimated his loss through this misfortune at $25,000, and employed Ex-Governor Davis of Minnesota to conduct a suit against the government at St. Paul, in which he was successful. The Government, by way of appeal, took the case to the Supreme Court at Washington, but the result was again favorable to Mr. La Riviere, and thus the matter stands pending further action of the Government. Finding himself persecuted and ruined, Mr. La Riviere again sought refuge on British territory, and CAME TO EMERSON, where he pursued his calling as an Indian fur trader, and again with success. At this time there was no such place as the Gateway City, nor a house except the Hudson's Bay fort, on the opposite side of the river, in what is now known as West Lynne. Mr. La Riviere, nothing daunted, and with a love for adventure, next proceeded on the trail of the Boundary Commission survey, which at that time was being prosecuted by Capt. Cameron, R.N., and settled in the Turtle Mountain country, being the first white man to locate in this now favorite fertile region, and where he was for nearly four years entirely in the company of Sioux Indians who were fugitives to this region after the terrible Minnesota massacre, and later massacre at St. Joe, Dakota. [now Walhalla, N.D.] Here, in addition to keeping a general store, Mr. La Riviere located on two sections of land - 1,280 acres - which he brought into a fair state of cultivation, and bids fair to rival the GREAT DALRYMPLE FARM in Dakota. He purchased

the buildings, outfit and commissariat stores of the boundary survey party from Capt. Cameron, and utilized them on his farm on the Pembina River in the Turtle Mountain country, which is adjacent to Whitewater Lake, and exactly 140 miles due west of Emerson. Since his advent in the region, the country along the boundary has become thickly settled and although quite a number of settlers are now surrounding himself, he says there yet remains a vast area of homestead and pre-emption land to occupy independent of any railway lands that may have to be reserved. Messrs. Williams and Harrison have erected a saw, grist and shingle mill on Mr. La Riviere's place on the Pembina River [sic] and expect to have all in good running order in a week or two. Surveys have been completed and the land office has just been opened and a post office is also soon expected, as advantage will be taken of the Postmaster General's presence in the city to interview him on this subject. Mr. La Riviere is very hopeful in regards to the future of this section of the North-West, of which he is the pioneer, and says the crops this year present a splendid appearance. The land is of excellent quality; the country is a rolling prairie with an abundance of timber in the district for all purposes, and the very best of water, together with all the ingredients necessary to make a successful agricultural community.

One point in the above article merits clarification. The stream on which Mr. La Riviere located was then known as "Long River;" on present-day maps it is designated "Wakopa Creek." It is a tributary of the Pembina River via the Whitemud River and then Badger Creek. Badger Creek and the Whitemud River join six miles north of the present site of Cartwright and four miles further north Badger Creek flows into the Pembina. The Turtle Mountain depot of the Boundary Commission, which became Mr. La Riviere's trading post, was located at the junction of a well-known route into the US, the Missouri Trail. This crossroads was just a few yards from the Commission Trail's crossing of Long River.

The post office mentioned in the above article was opened in July 1881 with Mr. La Riviere as postmaster. Some residents of the community hoped that its name would be Rosedale, others preferred Glenwood, but the most obvious choice was "La Rivieres." The department soon suggested a change of name due to the confusion with similar names elsewhere. Wakopa was suggested, and the change made in October of that year. According to local tradition, this was the title the Indians had given to Mr. La Riviere, Wa-ka-pa, "White-haired Father" both because of their high regard for him and because he did have long, white hair.

By January of 1883 Wakopa consisted of two stores, four dwelling houses, one hotel, a saw mill and post office and Henderson's Directory for 1884 states that it had a population of fifty. Three years later the same publication noted that its inhabitants had now dropped to twenty-seven in number. Shortly after the turn of the century, the original site was totally abandoned. When the Neelin - Deloraine Branch of the Canadian Northern was completed in 1905, the new village of Wakopa was born on the Wm. Coulter farm a mile and a half north of the original location. Today a cairn commemorates the original townsite that has been totally obliterated by cultivation.

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18. DESFORD
15-2-20W, Morton Municipality
A Dominion Land Office In A Tent

A thick network of small streams drains the southern half of Morton Municipality. All of them carry the waters of the Turtle Mountains of the north; those to the east are tributaries of the Pembina River Watershed, those farther west drain into Whitewater Lake. None of these streams, in summers of normal precipitation, are wide enough or sufficiently deep to provide a major inconvenience to travellers along the Commission Trail, although in wet years, they often did present some difficulties. On the other hand, they provided some of the loveliest scenery along the entire route of the Commission Trail.

The Trail forded the first of these streams, Starke Creek, some two miles beyond La Rivieres and some two miles beyond that the little Pembina was forded. A half mile beyond that, on the section line between 5-2-19W and 7-2-19W (today a mile south of P.R. 341) the trail skirts the northern shore of the lovely little Wood Lake. Some two miles farther to the northwest the trail fords the headwaters of the Pembina River and yet anther two miles, at another scenic location, the trail crossed a small creek today known as Desford Creek. A mile south of Boissevain, this stream become as tributary of Cherry Creek, which, in turn, flows into the North Pembina River and then, two miles south of Ninga, into the Pembina.

The Commission Trail ford through Desford Creek is on 15-2-20W. An abundance of fuel, water and sheltering bush at this site provide all the requirements for a first-class camp site for travellers along the trail, and, one might suppose, a permanent settlement. Although Desford never became much more than just the former, it is, nevertheless a place of some note for this was the location of the first Turtle Mountain land office, a temporary site used prior to the opening Mr. Newcombe's establishment on Turtlehead Creek. This bureau was under the administration of Mr. Newcombe's assistant, Mr. Alfred Codd, who attended to all land business in a tent. Ironically, while the precise location of Mr. Newcombe's office has been forgotten, the site where the first homesteads in the Turtle Mountain were registered and deposits taken for them on 3 August 1880 in a tent at Desford can still be pointed out.

This beautiful setting was also chosen as the site for one of the first stores erected in the Turtle Mountains. The east half of Section 15-2-20W was purchased by Mr. Frederick R. Porritt in July 1882, the west half was sold by the Manitoba South West Colonization Railroad to Mr. Erskine Nichol. The latter was in the store business as early as the summer of 1881. "Clear Grit," the Turtle Mountain correspondent of the Manitoba Free Press and a resident of Township 2-22W, informed us in his column of 9 August 1881 that Mr. E. Nichol is doing a good business in his store in 2-20. His business philosophy, according to Clear Grit, is "small profits and quick returns," a contrast, he notes, to some of Mr. Nichol's competitors who, he suggests, will soon discover that their desire for large profits will really bring them only small returns in the end.

One of the main themes of Clear Grit's columns written during the summer of 1881 is the inconvenience to all residents of the area, in particular the inhabitants of Zulu Township (that is 2-22W) resulting from the lack of a proper mail service. The opening of the post office at La Rivieres in Township 1-18 in July 1881 had alleviated the situation somewhat but the arrangements for mail further west were anything but satisfactory. Mr. J.P. Morrison, a homesteader living just northeast of Newcombe's Valley, had been hired to carry official government mail between Mr. Newcombe's and the Crystal City post office. For a period, Mr. Morrison was also able to carry a couple letters to Crystal City with Mr. Newcombe's mail, and to

bring some back. However, when Mr. Morrison's services were dispensed with, mail to and from the Turtle Mountain principally had to depend on the good will of travelers along the trail.

This miserable state of affairs west of La Rivieres was remedied in May 1882 with the establishment of the post office in Mr. Nichol's store. It received the name Desford and Mr. Nichol served as postmaster for a short time before this duty was taken over by his neighbour, Mr. F.R. Porritt. Desford never grew beyond the combined post office and store, but in 1883 it was the site of the first agricultural fair held in the Turtle Mountain.

A great deal of the history Commission Trail during the last years of the 1870s and the first of the 1880s centres around the theme of replacing the ruts of this wagon route by railroad rails. There is only one location where track was laid in the immediate vicinity of the trail – on the north slope of the Turtle Mountains. By the turn of the century, agricultural production has so dramatically increased throughout southern Manitoba that many railways companies were convinced that a secondary network of feeder lines would be paying propositions. One of these was an extension southeast from the Canadian National line between Carman and Brandon. On 2 April 1905 an extension fifty-one miles in length was opened for service linking Greenway north of Rock Lake to Adelpha at the east end of the Turtle Mountain via Glenora, Neelin, Louise, Holmfield, enterprise, Lena and Wakopa. On 11 September 1914 a further extension from Adelpha on 3-2-19 was completed to Deloraine with stations at Horton, Wassewa, Mountainside, Hazeldean, Coatstone and Leige. Much of this track was laid only a fraction of a mile north of the old route of the Commission Trail. Because some years before the Desford post office had been relocated six miles east to 14-2-19, the siding located just a mile north of the original Desford site received the name Horton while the railway station located on the same section as the Desford post office naturally received the same name. With the building of the Great Northern line linking Boissevain and Rolla, North Dakota, via Fairburn and Banner, it became railway center for here the two lines crossed. The Desford post office on 14-2-19 closed on 16 October 1955 and soon afterwards the lines through Desford were taken up, removing from the map another placename so intimately associated with the early history of the Commission Trail.

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19 .WASSEWA
19-2-20W, Morton Municipality
So Let Your Light Shine Before Men

The pioneers of the eastern Turtle Mountain country followed the very laudable practice of naming their rural municipality after an outstanding local citizen, in their particular case, one of the most remarkable men of southern Manitoba. Mr. George Morton, known after 1886 as the "Father of Boissevain," began his outstanding business career in the east, came west filled with ambitious plans for the Turtle Mountain country, and although many of them remained unfulfilled, he worked for the advancement of the district until his death. Several different locations in the district are associated with his name, one of these being Wassewa.

By far the finest outline of Mr. Morton's life and work appeared in the June 1951 edition of the Country Guide. The following is a condensation of this excellent article written by Mr. Norman Wright, the author of the magnificently documented general history of the Turtle Mountain

district entitled In View of Turtle Hill:

At the time of Confederation, Mr. George Morton was the owner of a cheese factory in Kingston and a prominent cheese broker who later was able to sell $480,000 worth of cheese to Great Britain in a single season. Probably because of his acquaintance with that famous lawyer from Kingston, John A. Macdonald, he was successful in persuading the first Dominion government to place a duty of four cents a pound on imported American cheese. Henceforth he was the "Cheese King of Canada."

Morton came to Manitoba in 1878. After travelling as far as Whitewater Lake 200 miles from Winnipeg, he believed he had come to an area highly suitable for large-scale cheese production. Here fine herds of dairy cattle could be pastured on the meadows surrounding this body of water and hay for winter feed would be provided from the thousands of wild hay land acres bordering the lake shore. Returning to Kingston, he persuaded a number of businessmen to invest in the Morton Dairy Farm Company. With the assistance of Prime Minister Macdonald, then also Minister of the Interior, the company received permission by an Order-in-Council, dated 20 May 1881, to purchase a tract of government land under the colonization regulations then in force.

His plan was to settle a large area west of Whitewater Lake with settlers each working a quarter section of land and managing a small herd of dairy cattle supplied by the company. Land and cattle were to be paid for from the proceeds of the milk processed at the cheese factory. Morton purchased a sawmill at Max Lake in the Turtle Mountain fifteen miles southeast of his settlement where unlimited timber was available. Lumber from this mill would be used to put up all the buildings in the settlement. He bought good prairie land near the mountain and close to a gristmill operated by Mr. Brondgeest that was to supply the colony with feed and flour. Finally, near the junction of the Deloraine Trail and Turtle Head Creek, a townsite was laid out to give the colonists a community and business centre. It was named Moberley and here the cheese plant was to be located supplied with milk brought to it from the farms by a narrow gauge railroad.

In later years, Morton insisted that when he completed negotiations for the land in 1881, the CPR assured him they would have a railroad into the cheese colony within a year. However, by December 1882 the end of the line was still at Manitoba City, (now Manitou) more than 75 miles away.

During the summer of 1882 the dairy colonists brought in 1,000 head of cattle, some from Emerson driving them up the Commission Trail and the rest from Brandon. The farmers from Ontario built corrals walled with swamp hay, but open to the sky, to stable them. When storms and sub-zero weather set in hundred of cattle were frozen to death where they stood, the carcasses remaining unburied until the frost left the ground in the spring. This heavy loss ended the cheese project.

Bitter experience proved to George Morton that his cheese-farming venture was impractical but it did not destroy his faith in other agricultural possibilities in the Turtle Mountain region. In 1883 he bought a store at Waubeesh and invested in another at the juncture of the Commission Trail and the road to his sawmill on Max Lake. Here, where the two

trails crossed near a small stream, a store had been opened in 1881 by Mr. E. Nichol who was also the proprietor of the Desford store four miles to the east. Because Mr. Morton thoughtfully kept a beacon burning above his place of business, a lantern on a tall pole, to guide travellers across the plains to the north on stormy nights, the Indians called the place Wassewa, "White Light." The location bears the name to this day.

When the railroad reached Cherry Creek – the future site of Boissevain - in 1885 Mr. Morton was already on the townsite with the store he had hauled a half dozen miles down of the Mountain and across the prairie from Wassewa. During the next year he built a grain warehouse and added grain buying to his long list of business ventures. By this time he was already sixty-six years of age, but two years later he built a grain elevator at Whitewater, the siding approximately halfway between Boissevain and Deloraine, thus cutting in half the distance many settlers had to haul their grain. In 1889 he became postmaster of Whitewater and in 1890 was awarded first prize at the Winnipeg Agricultural Exposition for grain and livestock he produced on his own farm. That year he was honoured by having the newly organized municipality named in his honour.

To the end of his life Mr. Morton was actively engaged in community affairs and keenly interested in the welfare of his pioneer neighbours. When seventy years of age he travelled to Ottawa to persuade his Conservative friends in power to remove what was, in his mind, an injustice to the farming community, a tariff on binder twine. On December 3, 1891, "the Father of Boissevain" performed his last service to the community by presiding at the nomination meeting for the annual municipal elections in Morton. A day or so later this seemingly indefatigable old man set out for Port Arthur on a business trip. Taking ill on the train, he was brought back to Boissevain where he died on Sunday, 22 December 1891. This remarkable pioneer farmer and businessman was laid to rest in the Boissevain cemetery.

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20. TURTLE MOUNTAIN CITY
4-3-21W, Morton Municipality
The Boiler Trail Or The Detour Around Skull Swamp

The International Boundary Commission Road – to the use the terminology employed by the members of the Commission – had two principal "branch" routes, both settlement trails. Across the flats land of the Red River Valley the POST ROAD provided access to the first settlements of the West Mennonite Reserve; north of the Turtle Mountains the BOILER TRAIL used an more northerly route in order to avoid some of the most treacherous ford through the streams of this locality. Once again it is our good friend "Buckboard" who provides us with a full particulars as to the origin of this section of the trail. Describing his July 1881 travels between La Rivieres and the Turtle Mountain Land Office he states:

In the morning we looked around at the stock and farm of our host and visited the mill. The saw for the manufacture of shingles was quite a novelty to my companion who had never seen one before and who remarked that in his country they used slate or thatch. Taking our farewell of our host, and a supply of oats, for which we had to pay two dollars per bushel, we were once more on our way westward accompanied by Mr. O'Brien, a government land guide who was on

his way to the land office. We found the trail very bad with numerous small creeks to cross, one in particular, at the location of Mr. Porritt, the horses refused to go into and after repeated attempts to force them to do so, the horses were unhitched and jumped across and the buckboard pulled over afterwards. Mr. Porritt informed us that there was a far better trail to the north known as the   BOILER TRAIL and on his suggestion we determined to strike across towards it. After striking the Boiler Trail, so called from its being made by the boiler and machinery taken out by Hugh Sutherland to the Souris coalfields, we found a much better road. Settlers going west to the land office should always take this route. It leaves the Boundary Trail about two miles west of La Rivieres and joins again in the neighbourhood of the land office. Any inquiries from any of the settlers will give you the required information to find it. The land along the "trail" is a beautiful rolling prairie distant from the timber three to six miles. The country is well watered with streams as clear as crystal of good spring water from the mountain and are not very difficult to cross. As we journeyed on, a lot of useful information was given to us by our companion, Mr. O'Brien.

It was in 1879 that Mr. Hugh Sutherland, a wealthy Winnipeg entrepreneur and capitalist, after securing mining rights in the Souris coal field in the general region of Estevan, opened a small mine. Although coal could be picked or blasted out of seams exposed in the banks of creeks and rivers without much difficulty, there was no way to accurately determine the extent of these deposits. Mr. Sutherland, realizing that proper exploration equipment was necessary, prevailed upon the Dominion government until it agreed to send out a party to make an accurate assessment of the mineral resources of that section of the North West Territories. In May 1880 drilling machinery and a large boiler and steam engine to drive it arrived in Emerson. On 1 June the Government Coal Explorers set out over the Commission Trail. With Rev. L.O. Armstrong as their guide, the party was under the management of two engineers, Messrs. McGarvie and Heiman. The renowned geologist, Professor A.R.C. Selwyn, LLd., F.R.S., F.G.S., a distinguished scholar and Director of the Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada, accompanied them.

Although several steam engines, saw mills and flourmills had been hauled over the Commission Trail to various points prior to this, this coal exploration machinery was by far the heaviest equipment transported over the Commission Trail to that date. Skeptics were certain that most of the machinery would be abandoned long before it got to its destination, most likely in the bottom of some river, possibly the Pembina. Such fears were unfounded and only ten days after leaving Emerson the party successfully forded the Pembina, made the grade up the west hill out of the valley, and set out across the prairies. The party had no difficulty either in crossing the Long River ford at La Rivieres, but two miles beyond, facing the prospects of making their way passed Skull Swamp, through Starke Creek and the various other streams flowing out of the Turtle Mountains, they decided to make a wide detour out onto the prairies. They took the route described by Buckboard in order to cross these creeks as far as possible out on the prairies. After some miles of making this new road, they once again returned to the original track of the trail and crossed Turtle Head Creek in Newcombe's Valley. Such was the origin of the Boiler Trail, the only major detour of the Boundary Commission Trail west of the Pembina Mountains.

After his first visit to the district early in January 1880, Rev. L.O. Armstrong took a keen interest in the district between the Turtle Mountains and Whitewater Lake and soon after purchased land in 34-2-21 along Waubeesh Creek. Here he hoped to establish a Church of England settlement that would be linked by a railroad to his other real estate interests in Clearwater,

Pembina Crossing and Emerson. By June 1880 his contacts with English clergy had resulted in a visit by Rev. J. Bridger of St. Nicholas Church in Liverpool, one of the nation's most prominent promoters of English Church settlements in the colonies. The following letter to the Minister of Agriculture sets the scene for us:

Emerson, June 5, 1880
Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I start westward today with one of the most valuable party of settlers that ever came to us - the Rev. Mr. Bridger's.

I drove Mr. Bridger through the country west and east and he is very anxious to continue the work which he has so well begun.

I think the result of his work of the greatest benefit to the country. His party has left more money in this place and helped more to raise the spirit of our business people than all the emigration we have yet had.

Simultaneous with this cheering advent of emigrants there seems to be a cessation of the flow to Dakota, several have come back from there dissatisfied. I think that their good country is becoming pretty well exhausted.

I have the honor to be,
Very respectfully yours,

L.O. Armstrong

Rev. Bridger's visit to the Turtle Mountains sparked his interest in the area and the following year the first of the Church of England settlers took up land in the northern portion of Township 2-21W and the southern part of Township 3-21W. Among those who arrived that first year were the Lovells and the Sankeys who took up homesteads not far from the junction of the Boiler Trail and Waubeesh Creek. According to a letter written in February 1881 to the Manitoba Free Press, early in 1881 a store was established at this ford on 3-3-21 by Messrs. Tregent and Beck, "two enterprizing business men who have come in with a large stock of well selected goods." Two years later the Waubeesh post office was opened in this store which was then sold to Mr. George Morton.

In 1881 two townsites were surveyed nearby; Whitewater directly on the trail and Turtle Mountain City just north of it on N1/2 6-3-21 and S1/2 8-3-21. By the 1 July 1881 the community was sufficiently advanced to host district's first Dominion Day celebrations with an abundant lunch being provided for all the revellers by Messrs. Tregent and Beck. Rev. Armstrong was the owner of Turtle Mountain City but, in contrast to his other townsites, this one never grew much beyond a short-lived post office and the large home he erected here looking out on Whitewater Lake two miles north. Whitewater, on the other hand, became the namesake of a siding located on the CPR line extended from Cherry Creek to Deloraine in 1886.

During these first years of the 1880s the main center of business continued to be Tregent and Beck's store and another nearby operated by Messrs. Hanson and Tobias. Mr. Tobias, one of the Church of England settlers who had come to the district as a result of Rev. Armstrong's

initiatives, later established a unique local industry; the manufacture of wooden harrows using hardwood cut in the Turtle Mountain.

Today travellers along #3 Highway pass a lasting memorial to the English settlement established by Rev. Armstrong and Rev. Bridger, a cemetery located just west of Bartons Creek now renamed on some more recent maps as Zetterstroms Creek. This is the graveyard of All Saints Anglican Church once located nearby, the parish founded and named by the Church of England settlers who pioneered in this section of the Turtle Mountains.

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21. THE TURTLE MOUNTAIN LAND OFFICE
19-2-22W, Winchester Municipality

Turtle Mountain Fever Or A Two Days Wait

In the last years of the 1870s, the Turtle Mountains held an almost magical fascination for the prospective settlers of western Canada. Widely heralded as a "Promised Land of milk and honey," this district was prophesied as destined to become one of the most populous and profitable agricultural regions of "the Great North West." Among the districts early visitors deeply impressed with its agricultural potential was Mr. Tetu, who had first visited them as a member of the Boundary Commission. Writing in December 1879, he states:

In order to ascertain as much as possible the extent of the progress of immigration, I pushed my fall inspection as far as Turtle Mountain. A few remarks on the historical part of Turtle Mountain will be of interest. Not much is known except that it was some 50 years ago a great place where Indians and half-breed traders wintered. I visited Turtle Mountain in 1873. It is 50 miles in length; the 49th parallel runs through the centre of it. A lake 25 miles in length is to be found on the top of it. This lake swarms with fish of all kinds. In 1862, after the Minnesota Massacre, a band of refugee Sioux numbering about 100 lodges encamped here; a smaller band went to Portage la Prairie at the same time. The year I visited the district there were about 30 lodges. At the same time the North American Boundary Commission established a post there for supplies. The following year, 1874, Mr. B. B. La Riviere, formerly well known to the commercial community of Ottawa, bought from the British Commissioner, Major Cameron, a log building, known formerly as the log depot, and established a trading post in connection with a farm. ...From 1874 to 1875, the number of lodges increased from 30 to 85, the product of the chase being too inadequate for the number of hunters, hunger and even starvation, resulted. The number of lodges, therefore, rapidly decreased. From that time to the present, it has varied from 10 to 40. ...There are now at Turtle Mountain about thirty-two settlers, whose chief business is stock raising, the country being so well adapted to this branch; some farming is also being done. Now that the government surveys have been extended as far as Turtle Mountain, we shall, doubtlessly, witness a repetition of the Pembina Mountain fever in that district in the next few years. As it is only about 15 miles from the Souris River to the head of the Turtle Mountain, we may expect to see immigration reach both these points during the next season.

As Mr. Tetu predicted, Pembina Mountain fever soon was replaced by another and even more virulent form of land disorder, Turtle Mountain fever. Not only was it contracted by most settlers thronging to that corner of the Northwest Territories, but its symptoms even appeared as far

away as Ottawa so that, only months after receiving Mr. Tetu's report, a decision was made in our Dominion's capital to establish a land office in the Turtle Mountains. The directive issued in April 1880 not only provided for the opening of this office, but also decreed the closure of the Emerson land office and the transfer of its agent, Mr. George F. Newcombe, to this new location. Residents of the Turtle Mountain district were delighted, but the citizens of Emerson received this news with consternation. In addition to being a highly competent and immensely popular land agent, Mr. Newcombe was also one of the Gateway City's most prominent citizens. He was one of the town councillors and had just completed a term as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba.

The April Order in Council gave no specific location of the new land office. There certainly were no suitable accommodations in the Turtle Mountains and so Mr. Martin McDonald, clerk of the newly organized Turtle Mountain judicial district, set about securing temporary quarters. Some fifty miles to the northeast he found a warehouse that would serve the purpose. It was located in the town of Milford established the previous year at the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine Rivers where an ancient Indian road coming up from the Turtle Mountains joined the Yellow Quill Trail running along the north bank of the Assiniboine to Winnipeg. Since steamboats regularly sailed up the Assiniboine past this point, Milford was a convenient jumping off place for settlers on their way to Turtle Mountain via this route.

Mr. Newcombe travelled from Emerson to Winnipeg on the train and from Winnipeg to Milford by river steamer. He arrived in time to take part in the 1880 Dominion Day celebrations and served as judge for some of the day's athletic events. His wife and children remained at Emerson where in October the Newcombe's first son, Shirley S. Newcombe, was born. Then, in mid May 1881, after being suitably entertained by her Emerson friends, Mrs. Newcombe departed for the west. In July 1881 the Newcombe's little son passed away at Milford at the age of nine months.

In the meantime, Mr. Newcombe began his work in the Turtle Mountains with the assistance of Mr. Donald Codd, the Winnipeg agent of the Dominion Lands Department. After they had set up shop in a tent on the future site of Desford, Mr. Newcombe's began the search for the most appropriate location for a permanent land office. His choice was a historic and well-known location, the junction of the trail coming from Milford with the Commission Trail, a crossroad located at a ford on Turtlehead Creek. A few hundred yards from this well-sheltered spot Mr. Newcombe erected a solid two-storey log structure to serve as a combined Dominion Lands Office and residence. Shortly after its completion, it was the birthplace of their daughter, Louise Newcombe, the first white child to see the light of day in that immediate vicinity.

Having the capable assistance of Mr. Codd to process homestead applications, Mr. Newcombe turned his attention to another matter of considerable importance, upgrading the trail linking the Assiniboine River and the Turtle Mountains. When completed this was of immeasurable value to the settlers who chose to use this route rather than making the one hundred and ninety-mile trip from Emerson to the Turtle Mountains along the Commission Trail. After the departure of Mr. Codd, Mr. Pierre V. Gauvreau was appointed as assistant agent and in June 1881, in writing to the Manitoba Daily Times, Mr. Gauvreau reported that the office had already disposed of 5000 acres of homesteads and pre-emptions. While the 1880 census of the district noted only seventeen families residing here, he further pointed out, there were now a total of fifty families with a population in the range of five thousand. The name chosen for the township,

he added, was Zulu and soon a column entitled "Zulu Zephyrs" was a frequent feature of the Manitoba Daily Times along with columns from other pioneer settlements – Rockwood Ripples and variety of others with equally melodious names.

There is no question that during the early 1880s the land office was the busiest place on the Mountain. Many pioneers spoke of seeing the entire flat in the creek bottom covered with dozens of teams waiting until their owners had completed their business here. Writing to the Manitoba Daily Times in May 1882, Mr. Newcombe reported that as many as seventy people were sometimes waiting to be served by himself and his assistant, and occasionally those who arrived early in the morning had to wait until late the following day before their turn came to be served. In July 1882 the office was temporarily closed when most of the homesteads still available in the district were placed in the railroad reserve. This arbitrary exercise immediately resulted in the redirecting of many settlers who had intended to settle in the district going south into Dakota. Fortunately, the bureaucrats rather quickly recognized their error and the office was soon reopened.

After 1882, when the town of Deloraine was established a mile and a quarter downstream from the Land Office, it was natural for writers to refer to Mr. Newcombe's place of business as "the Deloraine Land Office." However, his office was never moved to the townsite, nor did the Newcombes reside there. In September 1884 Mr. Newcombe purchased all of Section 19 on which the land office was located. The log Land Office building remained the Newcombe home until June 1893 when they left this beautiful spot they had named Sleepy Hollow. By that time, almost every quarter in the district suitable for agricultural purposes had been taken up, virtually every one of them processed by Mr. Newcombe and his staff. Although the site of the Turtle Mountain Land Office was flooded in the 1950s after the building of the dam on Turtlehead Creek and the Newcombe family has been gone from this district for almost a century, the site of their former home is still known by the same name given it by the original Turtle Mountain pioneers – Newcombe's Hollow.

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22. DELORAINE
30-2-22W, Winchester Municipality
A Barrel Of Pork, A Barrel Of Flour And A
Hair's Breadth From A Scalping Party

Today most visitors to the beautiful Turtle Mountain country, and even many of its residents, naturally assume that its namesake was the swamp-loving, long-lived, hard-shelled reptile. Only rarely do they consider that perhaps this beautiful range of hills was named after the wild pigeons known for their soft, plaintive cooing and the devotion that mates show towards each other. And yet, according to one legend, it is from the dove rather than the reptile that the Turtle Mountain takes its name. This myth relates that a turtledove set out from the shores of "Gitche-Gumee," the "Big Sea Water of the Hiawatha legend" many leagues to the west. It flew until exhausted and finally dropped to the ground and died. Its body grew and grew until there was a series of hills in the shape of a dove...and in time these became known as the Turtle Mountain.

For those who rather would have a member of the order Chelonia as the namesake of this upland, there is also an appropriate legend. According to this saga, it was a great turtle which "once started a long journey from the Big Water to the western ocean. Just before it reached the river (the Souris) it died and its body grew and grew until the mountain was formed. Along its southern edge, where the mountain rises out of the prairie, its outline resembles the outline of one side of a turtle. This resemblance probably gave rise to the legend and the name."

On the Palliser map of the 1850s, three hills are designated with names that Captain Palliser no doubt learned from his Metis guides. To the east is "The Head," in the centre is "The Heart" and to the west, "The Tail." The stream draining the southeastern slopes is noted as "Turtle Head Creek" and it was on this stream, a little more than a mile north of Mr. Newcombe's Turtle Mountain Land Office and on the trail leading to Milford, that the first centre of settlement in this district was established. Today we known the site as Old Deloraine, but in 1881 it was the location of a store opened by Mr. James Cavers. On 1 March 1882, a post office was established with Mr. Cavers as postmaster. Called upon to select an appropriate name, he chose Deloraine, his native village not far from Hawick in Roxburgshire, Scotland. Mr. Caver's store soon attracted other businesses and it was not long until a portion of the northwest quarter of 30-2-22W became a townsite with the same name as the post office. Naturally, Mr. Cavers became a leading citizen of the new metropolis and eventually expanded his holdings to include a hotel and livery stable business. In common with every other pioneer settlement, the establishment of a mill was one of the first necessities; the Deloraine mill came into operation in April 1883 with William and Thomas Shepherd as millers. Both had many years' experience in the milling business in Scotland and New Zealand before coming to the Turtle Mountain.

Turning to Henderson's Directory for 1884 will discover the following two entries for the settlement that the early settlers described as the "Queen City of the Turtle Mountain":

DELORAINE

Post settlement in the County of Turtle Mountain; mails weekly from Brandon, 63 miles; nearest telegraph, express and railroad station, Brandon; pop. 50; On Whitewater Lake, abundance of coal and wood in the vicinity; Stage leaves for Lennox, Montefiore and Waskada, Monday, 7 a.m.; leaves Waskada, Tuesday, 7 a.m.

Buckler, Rev. A.C., Methodist
CAVERS, JAMES, postmaster
Cavers and Stuart, general merchants
Cline, M.W., teacher
Davies, Rev. P.W., Methodist
ELLIOT, JOHN & SONS, agricultural implements
Fleming, James, agent for A. Harris, Son & Co.
Flesher, John, asst. land agent
Gage, John Hammill, agt. for J. Elliot & Son
Harris, A., Sons & Co., agricultural implements
Hathaway, W., blacksmith
Hays, James A., Dominion Lands agent
Jerram, Joseph, hotelkeeper and feed stable
Lyons, Henry L., carpenter
McNab, Rev. Andrew, Presbyterian

McTavish, Peter, hotelkeeper
Massey Mfg. Co., agri. implements
Medder, Samuel C., assist. postmaster
Shepherd, Thos. C., of T. & W. Shepherd
Shepherd, T. & W., millers
Shepherd, William, of T. & W. Shepherd
Stephen, Dr.
Stuart, Alfred P., registrar
Stuart, A.P., secy.-treas., Deloraine
Stuart, Fred T., barrister
Stuart, Joseph H., insurance agent
Terryberry, A., builder and contractor
Wilson, George, teamster
Wilson, William H., miller
Yorston, James F., blacksmith and wagon maker

DELORAINE
A municipality in the county of Turtle Mountain, comprising Tps. 1,2, and 3; Rgs. 20,21,22, and 23W: Fleming, John, secy.-treas., Deloraine

Our subtitle suggests that there is another dimension to Deloraine's early history. What is the story of the very close call with the scalping party?   It first appeared in the 1 March 1930 edition of the Country Guide:

When the early settlers located around Turtle Mountain, most of the native Indians had moved out. But a band of vagrant Sioux, who had taken a hand in the Custer Massacre, were living in the woods on the mountainside. Later they were rounded up and put on a reserve, as it was unsafe to have a vagrant band of Indians abroad. How unsafe it was is well illustrated by an incident related by Dr. Thornton, which took place in old Deloraine in 1885.

A Dominion Day celebration was being held and it was decided to vary the proceedings by getting the Indians to stage a pow-wow. The promise of a barrel of pork and a barrel of flour was sufficient inducement to the vagrant band to provide this part of the entertainment. The women beat the tom-toms while the braves executed their dances. One old brave was performing when the onlookers noticed a distinct change in the tone of the proceedings. His motions became more violent; he started to chant and evidently to exhort the Indians. The beating of the tom-toms became more vigorous. There was a decided air of menace in the change. No one among the spectators could understand a word of the Sioux language except a Hudson's Bay man, a Mr. Cavers. He informed the men in charge that the old fellow was boasting of the scalps he had taken and was pointing out that the white men were few and the Indians many; that the occasion seemed opportune for annexing a few more scalps, or words to that effect. In short, he was inciting them to riot and vary the proceedings by staging a massacre.

"But what can we do?" anxiously inquired the committee of men in charge. They were informed that they should roll out the barrels of pork and flour and lose no time in doing it. The women dropped their tom-toms, the old savage ceased his exhortations, and the whole band rushed in to share in the provision and another Indian rising was nipped in the bud.

Considering the fact that the prairies between the Turtle Mountains and Whitewater Lake were dotted with several townsites, each competing for the attention of every aspiring businessman

coming into the district, Deloraine's growth was rapid. Like each of the other settlements in the neighbourhood, Deloraine assumed that it would be on any railway line built into the vicinity. However, its location had a very obvious disadvantage: it was some one hundred and thirty feet above the level of Whitewater Lake on whose shores the CPR route had been surveyed. The railroad had little inclination to climb the grade into Deloraine and so, when the line was constructed during the summer of 1886, it skirted Whitewater Lake and bypassed Deloraine three miles to the north. The location selected by the CPR for their station was six miles from the settlement, just west of Medora Creek. What was to be done. There was really only one choice. During the winter of 1886-1887 most of the buildings of "Old Deloraine" were moved on sleighs to this new site.

The history of Old Deloraine is unique insofar as we have a definite record that at least one prominent citizen of the community knew what the fate of his town would be long before that misfortune overtook it. This revelation is contained in a letter to Mr. Cavers from Mr. J.H. McTavish, Land Commissioner of the CPR. Both were former Hudson's Bay Company employees; Mr. McTavish having been its land commissioner for many years. To Mr. Cavers he wrote as follows:

Land Department
Canadian Pacific Railway Company
Winnipeg, Man.,
6th January, 1884
Jas. Cavers, Esq.,
Deloraine, Man.

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 20th to hand. I will again allude to the C.P.R. location business at Deloraine but this time it is of so confidential a nature that you must not mention the contents of this letter to a living soul. Nor partner, nor wife, nor confessor must you take into your confidence, and it is only on account of old associations that I interest myself so much in your affairs and write what might induce you to sacrifice largely in order to get out of the present townsite. I would never forgive myself if on your having got out of it on my statements the road should eventually go through Deloraine but I feel so satisfied that such will never be the case that were I situated as you are and knowing what I do, I would get out of it even at a heavy sacrifice.

There have lately been strong representations made to Mr. Van Horne in favor of Deloraine by Farrow, or his friends, and other interested parties, with liberal offers to the Company should they run their line there and Mr. Van Horne referred the subject to Mr. Egan, and the latter replied in quite as strong terms as those I have used in my letter to you, saying that all the present Deloraine would not compensate the Company for the deviation to the South which would be necessary in order to reach the present town, and Mr. Egan's opinion will have every weight with the Vice-President as he is a practical Railway Engineer and went over the line with a view of seeing for himself the lay of the ground.

Yours faithfully,
J. H. McTavish
Land Commissioner

More than a dozen former townsites are located along the route of the Commission Trail, but none have a more impressive or unique reminder of the busy centres founded with so much optimism than the site of Old Deloraine. Today the house yard of Bill and Kaye Bell occupies much of what was once the north side of Deloraine's Main Street. In their barn yard, "across Main Street," is the only remaining structure of the original town on its original location, the vault of the Cavers and Stuart private bank. Constructed by a master stone mason, a Mr. Rickart who now rests in the original cemetery a mile to the southwest, the two-foot walls are as solid and straight as the day they were built. With outside dimensions of 12' x 18', this structure boasts a stone vaulted ceiling constructed, like the rest of the building, of carefully selected and cut field stones. And what does this historic site tell us? Surely it is a reminder to every visitor that a century ago the western prairies of southern Manitoba had master craftsmen who could constructed vaults patterned on some of the most remarkable structures ever erected, the Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals of Europe.

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23. MONTEFIORE
20-2-24W, Brenda Municipality
Northern Italy In Southern Manitoba? Or
The Lord Mayor Of London

The background of the place names along the Commission Trail is wonderfully varied. Some commemorate men of national or even international renown: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sir Richard Cartwright, and Lord Dufferin. Others perpetuate the memories of their pioneer founders: Stodderville, Waugh Town, Ruttanville, La Riviere's, Newcombe's Valley or, as in the case of Wakopa, an honorary title of such a settler. A few are Indian names, Wassewa for example or, in the case of Clearwater, a translation of an Indian name. The attachment the early settlers had for their former homes in the old country is brought to mind by such place names as Deloraine and Darlington. Pancake Lake takes its name from an incident in its history. Mountain City, Calf Mountain, Pembina Crossing, Crystal City and Clearwater all speak to us of their natural setting.

Montefiore is in a class by itself, for the local legend of the whys and wherefores of this musical sounding choice have been forgotten totally. Some have suggested that somehow a pioneer named it after the tiny village of Montefiorino in the Modena province of north central Italy one hundred and sixty miles northeast of Venice. It is a romantic suggestion, but it is much more likely that it rather perpetuates the memory of Sir Moses Montefiore, the first Jewish Lord Major of London. In 1884 he celebrated his one hundred birthday, an event that received extensive coverage in many of the English newspapers subscribed to by the settlers of this district.

We are better informed of the names of the original pioneers of this community. On the 6 April 1882 Mr. Gilbert F. Thronger and Charles Lucien Hanson took up land ten miles directly west of the Turtle Mountain Land Office. Mr. Thronger took the N1/2 20-2-24W; Mr. Hanson the south half. The Commission Trail passed through the section and it was not long before a small store and stopping house were established, the last stop along the trail before Sourisford sixteen miles further west. Montefiore post office was opened in this store 1885, and a school, by the same name, was built less than a mile away on the next section to the east, 21-2-24. By 1888 the post

office had been relocated to a farm home on E1/2 16-2-24 with the mail now coming from Deloraine rather than along the Commission Trail.

As in almost all pioneer communities, the Montefiore School served as the community centre for all kinds of meetings and, in this case, as a church as well. By 1900 larger educational facilities were required and a new structure was built to replace the original one. Forty-nine years later this school was remodelled, a full basement completed and a library and indoor plumbing added. Thus improved, it remained in operation for another fifteen years but in 1966 it was closed and Montefiore became part of the Deloraine Consolidated School District. Today, Montefiore remains only as a label on old maps and in the memories of its residents and pioneers.

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24. SOURISFORD
26-2-7W, Arthur Municipality
The Best Laid Plan O' Mice An' Men Or
The Director Of The Bank Of Glasgow

There are several historical sites along the Commission Trail whose long and fascinating history merit an entire volume. Sourisford certainly ranks among that number. With stories from every era of our province's history, several of the most fascinating were shared with the readers of the Country Guide some sixty years ago in an article written by Mr. R.D. Colquette. It begins with Indian lore recalled by Mr. David Elliott, a Sourisford pioneer of 1880, who had a particular interest in the many burial mounds of the vicinity:
The mounds were quite noticeable when we came in first. Some of them were round and others long like pieces of graded road. The largest of the circular ones was about eight feet high and 40 feet across. They were used as burial places and in one we found 30 human remains. The mound builders dug a circular trench about eighteen inches deep and set the bodies in it in a crouched position. Then they covered the trench with sticks and built the mound over them. The first layer was the most impervious clay they could find and when the mound was completed it was almost waterproof.
According to Mr. Elliott, the mounds in the district were opened several times. The first excavating in the early years of settlement was by the University of Manitoba and a few years later the Smithsonian Institute of Washington, D. C. sent up two men who did extensive digging. In 1907 Prof. Montgomery of the University of Toronto made a thorough examination.

Mr. Elliott is also the source of a story that provides a rare insight into the history of the district in the early 1800s:
In the fall of 1880 a half-breed came out from the Willow Bunch country. He had a Red River cart loaded with pemmican and buffalo hides which he was taking to Winnipeg. He had some trouble getting across the river and I went down to help him. He was a very old man, probably 80 years of age, and he told me of an incident that happened at the ford when he was a small boy, so long before that he could just remember it.
He was with a party of hunters who had come from the Red River. As they neared the ford they saw a camp of Grosventres, (a name which, by the way means Big Bellies).... The party of hunters saw the camp on that ridge over there east of the river and they noticed some stir as if something were wrong. Dropping down into the coulee they rode along it until they came

opposite the camp. Then they rushed it. They found that the Grosventres had been surprised by a band of Sioux on the warpath who had killed every one of them. The Sioux fled but the hunters cornered them opposite where the South Antler enters the Souris and in turn killed every one of them. The old-half breed remembered seeing one of the Grosventres partly scalped. The sudden appearance of the hunters had interrupted the proceedings and they had been left as the half-breed remembered seeing them.

Souris is the French word for "mouse" and early traders and voyageurs of this nationality named the stream Riviere la Souris – "Mouse River." Perhaps its meandering course across the prairies reminded them of the erratic scurrying of a frightened mouse. The first recorded use of this name is found in the journals of David Thompson, one of the first explorers to pass through this area. He visited this area 1797 on his way from the junction of the Souris and Assiniboine Rivers "by way of Turtle Mountain.... to the Missouri River." In 1806 David Thompson was followed by Alexander Henry the Younger travelling from his post at the junction of the Red and Pembina Rivers to the Mandan country. He must have passed Sourisford early on the morning of 16 July for he mentions Tete a la Biche, the stream today known as Gainsborough Creek (it flows into the Souris two miles north of Sourisford) and "another little river," Antler Creek which contributes its waters to the Souris six miles south of Sourisford. The entry from the younger Alexander Henry's journal reads:

On July 15 at six o'clock we came to a little river of Tete a la Biche. We had much trouble to cross it in mud up to our horses' bellies. Here we stopped for the night on a beautiful high hill...from our camp we have a good view of Turtle Mountain about eight leagues east of us. Our most direct route would have been along the western extremity of that mountain, but we have been informed that a number of Crees and Assiniboines were tented there, who would certainly steal our horses if they could - even pillage and perhaps murder us - as they disapproved of our taking arms and ammunition to the Missouri to supply the natives there, with whom they are often at war. We therefore thought it prudent to make this circuit to avoid them.

From Riviere la Souris we got some dry wood and kindled a good fire. We kept watch all night, each in turn. We had seen buffalo in great numbers westward of us and as they were just entering the rutting season, they made a terrible bellowing during the night. Some herds...passed near us; the noise they made startled our horses and made them uneasy for the night; they appeared in one body from east to west, on a quick pace as if lately chased by horsemen. At daybreak we saddled...at eight o'clock we crossed another little river.

Almost seventy years later the Boundary Commissioners utilized the ancient ford at Sourisford for their crossing, but later built a primitive but very serviceable bridge and photographs taken by the Commission show "the First Crossing of the Souris" both before and after this bridge was constructed. In 1894 a member of the commission, a Mr. L.F. Hewgill, published a small book recording his adventures during 1872, 1873 and 1874. Recalling an incident at Sourisford he writes:

From here we travelled over a level prairie until the first crossing of the Souris is reached. This stream was bridged in three days, the timber was all cut and cofferdams built which were floated out and filled with stones and sunk. A good substantial bridge was the result. Here one day our commissary shot seventeen mink. Some officers of the US commission were crossing this

stream with four mules and an ambulance when it capsized in mid stream. There were four inside and the first to appear through the window was Lt. Green, US Engineers, followed by his comrades, the last of whom was nearly drowned.

The NWMP followed the Boundary Commission and were in turn followed by the first settlers. In 1879 Mr. Walter Thomas squatted on 26-2-27 on the west side of the river. The following summer he watched Hugh Sutherland's coal barges float by on their forty-three day trip to Winnipeg and in 1882, a year of unusually high water, he began the operation of a ferry using a sixteen-foot boat he had constructed. A pioneer in every sense of the word, this gentleman was later to serve as the clerk of the municipality of Arthur for almost half a century.

Three years after the arrival of Mr. Thomas, the first commercial enterprizes were established at the Commission Trail crossing through the Souris River. In 1882 Messrs. Warren and Snider opened the first place of business here, a store on the west side of the river that was to continue in operation until 1903 when it was relocated to Pierson. Soon after a blacksmith shop was established on the east side of the river. In common with most other business centres along the Commission Trail, those at the First Crossing of the Souris also had dreams of becoming cities. Two names are associated with "the city near the ford." Souriapolis – Greek for "Souris City" may be judged the more elegant and this was the choice of its proprietors, Alfred Gould and Dave Elliott, two of the district's first settlers. Their metropolis was surveyed late in 1882. Apparently the Dominion postal authorities thought their choice a little to classical and so when a post office was opened in this townsite in December 1882 it carried the less grand title of Sourisford. Mr. Gould was the postmaster until 1896 when he was then succeeded by the other proprietor of the townsite, Mr. Elliott, who remained until 1920. Although some two thousand lots are said to have been sold in Souriapolis, it never grew larger than a handful of buildings. The most significant of these was the Land Register Office for the newly organized County of Souris opened in May 1883. The lucrative appointment of registrar was given by the Norquay regime to one of its most fervent supporters in the Turtle Mountain district, Mr. James Peterkin Alexander.

Mr. Alexander is an excellent example of how the Turtle Mountain, in common with all the other district along the Commission Trail, attracted the widest possible cross section of pioneers. He had come to the Turtle Mountain district in November 1879 when he was forty-four years of age. This former resident of Glasgow, Scotland was the eldest son of Wm. Alexander, a well-known builder and contractor of Edinburgh, Scotland. Having graduated from the University of Glasgow, J.P. Alexander entered business and eventually became a director of the City Bank of Glasgow. After being financially ruined by the failure of that bank, the Alexanders set out for Canada, arriving in Emerson in the fall of 1879 where they purchased a wagon and a team of Shaganappy ponies and set out for the Turtle Mountains. Mr. Alexander, who had his hands full attempting to control this half-broken team, rode in the front of the wagon with his two little girls, Jean and Dorothy, seated behind him as comfortably as possible on their meager worldly possessions. Mrs. Alexander, the daughter of Wm. Crawford, a wealthy Glasgow factory owner, and a "lady" in every sense of the word, walked the entire distance of one hundred and forty miles from the Red River to La Rivieres. Here the Alexanders settled on land a mile from Mr. La Riviere's claim.

Upon the formation of the electoral division of Turtle Mountain early in 1881, Mr. Alexander was

"requested by a large number of his neighbors to represent them in the provincial house...which shows that the sterling qualities of the man are appreciated in the settlement."   He was elected in the general election of November of that year and sat until January 1883 when his neighbor, Mr. Finley Young, defeated him. It was after this defeat that he received the appointment of Registrar of Deeds for the County of Souris. He served in this position from 1883 until December 1886 when he resigned after again being elected to the provincial legislature, this time for the constituency of Souris. As Mr. Alexander was a gifted pianist, his wife a trained singer, their two daughters both, their Sourisford home was the musical center of the community until their departure for Deloraine in 1888. In that community Mr. Alexander went into business and in 1900 was editor of the local paper, the Deloraine Advertiser. After the fall of the Greenway regime and the return of a Tory administration, Mr. Alexander received the position he had held twenty years before, this time as registrar of the Boissevain Land Title Office. He died in April 1913 as a result of the sinking of the R.M.S. Titanic.

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25. BUTTERFIELD
36-1-29W, Edward Municipality
Thirty-Eight Days And Seven Gothic Arches

Today the longest remaining sections of the Commission Trail are located in Edward Municipality. Here several miles of the original ruts are still clearly visible in the unbroken prairie sod along the south bank of the North Antler Creek. Butterfield, the last major historic site along the trail is also located in this same municipality. A depression on the north bank of the North Antler on the NE 36-1-29 is all that is left of a sod homestead shanty that also served as a stopping place for travellers along the trail. Originally it was the home of Dr. Joseph Dann, an 1872 graduate of the Ontario Veterinarian College and the first veterinarian to settle west of the Souris River. In 1884 Dr. Dann was selected as postmaster of the community's first post office, Butterfield.

Dr. Dann received the mail by stagecoach from Brandon, ninety-two miles distant. By the time his son, Henry Dann, (his homestead was the quarter adjoining his father's to the south) took over as postmaster a few years later, the mail came from Virden, sixty-five miles away, the nearest railroad, telegraph and express office. Henry Dann remained as postmaster until 1889 when the position was taken over by C.P. Wilcox, who held this position until 1892. Mr. Andrew Maitland was the last postmaster and served until Butterfield Post Office was closed in 1904. Although Dr. Joseph Dann, V.S., established himself in Deloraine in the early 1890s, his name was associated with the Butterfield community for many years. The story of how he saved the life of Sourisford pioneer Walter Thomas by amputating his arm, smashed several days before in a shotgun accident, is a local legend.

One of southern Manitoba's most picturesque historic sites, the fieldstone ruins of the Butterfield Church, is located four miles south of the Dann homesteads. Since it was only two miles from the Copley post office opened in June 1900, and in the Copley School District, (both named for a local pioneer) it often referred to as the Copley Church. Its original – and correct – name is St. George's, South Antler. Its history begins in the second half of the 1880s when a considerable number of Church of England settlers took up land in Townships 1-28 and 1-29W.

Most of these were people of good education; some of them members of families of note back in England. Among these was Mr. Goddard F. Gale, a native of County Surrey south of London, who came to Manitoba in the fall of 1880 with the well-known Pembina Crossing pioneer, Mr. R.N. Lea. After farming for a few years along Badger Creek, in 1885 he took up a homestead on South Antler Creek where he was soon joined by his brother Fredrick Gale.

"Services were at first held in settlers' homes by itinerant clergy of the Diocese of Rupertsland. A Rev. Cartwright is recorded as giving weekday services for two summers. By the late 1880s there was sufficient interest to petition the Diocese for a church to be built by subscription and volunteer labour," states the history of Edward Municipality, Harvests of Time. This volumes then notes that a "visit from Bishop Gale of England to relatives in the district reinforced this interest" (a reference, no doubt to the two Gale brothers) and continues, "The Rev. Charles Wood, a curate temporarily in charge of Melita, and the Rev. Frank Mercer, an Diocesan missionary, supported the petition."

By July 1890 a building committee was formed with Mr. Francis Exham as its secretary. The first site suggested was just north of the south branch of Antler Creek. It was the abandoned homestead of a Mr. Bate, (he had left for British Columbia) 2-1-29, the same section on which Mr. G. Gale was homesteading. On 25 November 1891 the Parish of St. George was "duly formed by deed" and negotiations were soon undertaken for a grant of 40 acres on the southwest corner of Section 14, another abandoned homestead consisting principally of "rocks, sand, gravel and buffalo wallows."   This was eventually secured, the first "Church Grant" by the Dominion government to the Diocese of Rupertsland. In the summer of 1892 work began on the church, the first of any denomination west of the Souris River.

That fall Mr. Fredrick Gale wrote an article for publication in England which also appeared, with sketches of the interior and exterior of the church, in the November 1892 edition of The Western World, a monthly journal printed in Winnipeg promoting western Canada. Under the heading A Model Prairie Church it reads:

   Twenty years ago, the prairies of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, (which extend for hundreds of miles between Winnipeg, the frontier city, and the Rocky Mountains) were the home of the buffalo and the wild animals of the North American continent. In 1871, (when Fort Garry, now Winnipeg, a city of 30,000, was a trading post of the Hudsons' Bay Company, with a population of a hundred) the trail across this vast wilderness was known only to the Red Indians and a few adventurous sportsmen who took them as their guides. During the last fifteen years immense tracts of this country has been mapped out like a chess board with alternating squares of 640 acres each. These have been allotted to the Government of Canada and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company whose line extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Much of this land has gradually been settled.

   In the parish of St. George, South Antler, the farmers conceived the idea of building a church on the open prairie in the center of their settlement located in the vicinity of Antler Creek. They issued an appeal that appeared in several English papers and was backed by the Venerable Robert Sutton, Archdeacon of Lewes, [East Sussex], as bona fide in every way. The fact that the colonists proposed to undertake all the manual work themselves gratuitously created so much interest - especially as a disclaimer was announced of any intent to divert large sums of money

from people in England who had many home claims - that over 200 guineas [i.e. $1,100.00] in sums from 10 guineas to one shilling was sent out from England in a few months. No one was solicited personally, except by the enclosure of a copy of the advertisement. The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge also made a grant of a fifth of the cost and the remainder of the money was found by the colonists.

Arrangements were made to commence the work in June, and plans, specifications and all preliminary preparations were completed. Contracts were made with the masons and carpenters to commence on June 1st and to complete the church on or before August 1st. The building, which is fifty-six feet long, twenty wide and twenty high, is built of stone quarried by the farmers last year and hauled to the site of the building. It consists almost entirely of grey and red granite and sandstone found in the sloughs - dried up watercourses - all over the prairie. The sidewalls are ten feet high and two feet thick and the east and west walls twenty feet in height. The church is pure Gothic, and the roof of wood, covered with shingles - wooden "slates," which look much nicer than slate and are almost imperishable in this climate.

After all the building materials of every kind were purchased, the farmers most thoroughly fulfilled their promise set forth in the appeal by delivering them to the carpenters and the masons at the building site. These were hauled by team and wagon from two towns fifteen [Pierson] and twenty-two miles [Melita] across the prairies over prairie trails - there are no roads. The first stone was laid on June 1st, and on the thirty-eighth working day from that date the carpenter drove the last nail, without a single dispute or word of disagreement from start to finish.

The consecration took place on Sunday, September 4th, the Bishop of Ruperts Land, (Dr. Machray) attending from Winnipeg. About two hundred colonists assembled to witness the consecration of church and churchyard. Quite a number were Methodists and Presbyterians who postponed their own services and came to show their goodwill. The church was filled and the services were very impressive. It was a pretty sight to see the different vehicles - "buckboards" and "buggies," the light American wagons and farmers' wagons drawn by strong horses or bullocks - grouped round the church in the sunshine, and to mark the happy faces of the colonists of various denominations who had met, clad in their best, to show their goodwill and to wish the parishioners of St. George's parish "God-Speed."

St. Georges was an impressive structure. Gothic arches framing the eleven windows and two doors and a high timbered ceiling with twenty-foot trusses across the width of the building. A number of the settlers had attended Dover College in Kent and the leather bound Bible and service books were gifts from that institution. The parishioners made some of the handsome furnishings. Sadly, the parish had one of the shortest histories in the diocese. In the last years of the 1890s a series of dry years made it evident that almost all of the land was of poor quality, more suited to feeding buffalo than growing crops. A series of crop failures led to the gradual dispersal of almost all the parishioners of St. George's; some moved only as far as the Lyleton district four miles northeast but others returned to England or found new homes in others parts of Canada. Some went to the United States or Australia. The Gales moved to Oakland, California, where Mr. Gale became a well-known teacher, artist and photographer. By 1903 St. George's had almost no parishioners. In a letter dated 3 July of that year, homestead inspector R.D. Foley reported to the Department of the Interior, "There is now a considerable settlement of church

members in the village of Lyleton and they wish to pull down the church and re-build it at the latter place and now want to be permitted to sell the 40 acres of land in order to assist them in defraying the extra expenses necessitated by the removal and rebuilding of the church."

For obvious reasons nothing came of this remarkable plan to move this massive stone structure to Lyleton and in 1913 the church was deconsecrated. A new Anglican church in Pierson, St. Johns, consecrated that same year, received the communion vessels, church hangings and service books of the Butterfield church. The organ and some of the pictures were taken to the nearby Eunola School where Anglican services were held. The abandoned church, totally uncared for, gradually deteriorated so that in July 1929 homestead inspector J.F. Drew of Winnipeg, noted that "pigeons have possession of the building, the roof shingles are rotten, the floor rotten and full of holes from livestock running in and out. ...there are two broken stones in the cemetery." This sad state of affairs was largely remedied three years later when local residents tidied the surrounding yard, fenced the cemetery with its five graves in the consecrated area and one in the unconsecrated area, and boarded up the doors and windows.

By the mid 1970s the roof was almost bare of shingles – "almost imperishable in this climate" – and the massive trusses, no longer strong enough to keep the roof from sagging, finally collapsed. Today all that remains are the stones in the cemetery and the ruins of the church's massive stone walls, a moving reminder of the dreams and aspirations of the Church of England settlement of the South Antler community. It is a historic site truly worthy of marking the western end of the Commission Trail in Manitoba.

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